



ANNUAL REPORT

2015-16

November 2016

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1. Presidents' Report

NIBS brings a "broad church" focus to important political and social issues of concern to the left and the emerging young left.

We are now a not for profit Incorporated Association. The tedious bureaucratic requirements needed for the changeover, were started by Liz Aird and finally achieved by James Krumrey Quinn. Our tax and reporting commitments are now reduced.

NIBS continues to survive with just one part time paid employee, Jonathan Rutherford. Johnathan has grown in the role and his leadership has brought change and strategic directions as seen in his report.

Rodger Smith our volunteer book keeper keeps our finances ticking over and with our recently appointed Treasurer Anastasia Buruk are a good team to analyse and plan for us.

Our shop front volunteers give their time and enthusiasm because they believe in NIBS. Without them there would be no NIBS.

We enjoy the financial support of the Search Foundation and look forward to implementing a Jacobin Reading Group and continuing our regular talk series/ events next year.

Secondhand book donations form the core of our finances. Our interesting stock brings varied customers to the shop. Sorting, pricing and replenishing and refreshing shelves are in the very capable hands of Ken Blackman and Iain Stewart.

We urge all of our supporters to continue to spread the message at any opportunity that we take books at any time of the year and of all genres, except old textbooks.

The NIBS Board has new, young, enthusiastic and talented members who are active in some of the many NIBS activities however these activities are shared by too few hands. There are vacancies for Board members and of course shop volunteers.

Finally I would like to acknowledge a recently retired Board member – Liz Aird, honorary secretary of more than 7 years who was a key and active member. She designed and implemented The Australia Series for more than 3 years, sorted many of our records, and was always there. Thank you Liz.

Thank you NIBS all.

Cavell Zangalis, November 2016

2. Coordinators' Report

From my perspective NIBS has had another successful year, building on the progress made last year. As always, there are challenges but I think the direction is positive.

The shop continues to be supported by a variety of customers, from one-off visiting tourists, to regulars who continue to buy both new and second-hand books at NIBS. Several

activist/community groups regularly use our meeting room, and we are now holding regular events (see Section 6) which have generally been well attended.

Over the course of the last year I believe we have improved the shop by:

- Running regular monthly events that help promote the shop and build;
- Making our book collection more accessible by improving our sorting and ordering of books, and making several changes to the layout of the shop;
- Increasing our left classics stock, so our customers know that you can always get famous titles when at NIBS.

Our financial viability continues to be highly dependent on second-hand books (accounting for around 60% of shop sales revenue – see financial results below) which are generously donated by our supporters. As coordinator I have been inspired by hearing about how other secondhand bookshops (similar to ours) continue to thrive. Going forward I believe crucial to our success will be increasing the number of book donations we receive, and further improving the quality and layout of the books in the shop. Hopefully over time we can develop a reputation among customers for having quality, bargain secondhand books.

One of the big positives of this past year has been the quality of our volunteer team. A big thankyou to all of you! NIBS are so lucky to have such a reliable, helpful and engaged group of volunteers – without them this place could not function.

On the events front, this year has been a big learning curve for the entire committee. The events themselves have taken us on a roller-coaster of emotion – with some great success, and some, well, let's say opportunities for learning! I think, however, we are onto something with our "Left Q&A" series, focussing on panel discussions aiming to bring together diverse sections of the left/progressive movements. It seems to me that if there is one contribution NIBS can make, in an often divided, confused and sectarian political culture, is too bring divergent groups, tendencies and voices together for a conversation. We continue to think this is a contribution worth making.

Jonathan Rutherford, November 2016

3. Who is NIBS?

The New International Bookshop Carlton Inc is an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* (Vic). NIBS was originally founded as a Co-operative. In 2013 a motion was passed at the Annual General Meeting that NIBS become incorporated and that the Model Rules be adopted. On 13 July 2015 NIBS was incorporated.

History

The New International Bookshop Cooperative was founded in 1994 to continue the legacy of the International Bookshop. Operating under the auspices of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), the International Bookshop was a Melbourne institution selling Left books and periodicals from the 1930s until the early 1990s when the CPA disbanded.

NIBS opened for business in Trades Hall in 1996 and occupied the space directly above our current location until late 2008, when we moved downstairs into the Trades Hall basement.

Our Vision

NIBS has been established to operate a bookshop and to develop complementary activities. It will cater mainly for the interests of people whose concerns about justice, democratic rights and the environment lead them to a vision of an alternative society. NIBS will provide for those who want to read and discuss critiques of contemporary capitalism as well as informative analyses of gender, class, environment and other important issues from a progressive viewpoint

4. Who is NIBS?

Coordinator

The current coordinator is Jonathan Rutherford. He was appointed in March 2014. He works part-time (20 hours per week) at the bookshop.

Committee Members

Current members of the NIBS committee are:

- Cavell Zangalis (President & Secretary)
- Theresa Cahillane (Secretary)
- Catherine Noone (Event Coordinator – Joined April 2016)
- Anastasia Buruk (Joined May 2016)
- Alex Welsh
- Adrian Graves
- Marko Beljac
- Ciaran Tully
- Melissa Corbett (resigned June 2016)
- James Krumrey-Quinn (Treasurer – resigned May 2016)

Under the Model Rules, all governance is carried out by the committee. This involves:

- a regular monthly committee meeting at NIBS, normally held at 6pm on the second Tuesday of the month;
- management and oversight of the NIBS finances and daily activities and ensuring NIBS complies with the Model Rules and the *Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012*. Each committee member is responsible for ensuring NIBS complies with its legal obligations;
- undertaking tasks that may from time-to-time arise out of committee meetings.

Volunteers

NIBS relies on volunteers who both staff the shop and help sort & price our second-hand book donations. This year we have had a wonderful team of regular and reliable volunteers. Without their weekly contribution NIBS would be unviable. The following people volunteered at NIBS for three months or more during 2015-16. We thank them for all their efforts

- Nic Barnard

- Marko Beljac
- Ken Blackman
- Theresa Cahillane
- Ryan Carolan
- Melissa Corbett
- Bec Goldsmith
- Madeline Gourlay
- James Krumrey-Quinn
- Rob Macfarlane
- Stefan Mirt
- Tristan Nelson
- Lindy Nguyen
- Sophie Schmidt
- Michael Scour
- Iain Stewart
- Ciaran Tully
- Alex Welsh
- Aldo as well

Members

NIBS had 50 paid up members in 2015/16. While this is a good result, we hope to build the number in coming years. Having a strong membership base is vital for NIBS and is an area we hope to work on and improve over the coming year. Members not only provide NIBS with financial assistance but also are typically highly engaged in all activities of the shop, including as customers of the shop and as attendees of our events. We have identified that we need to work to engage our members more actively throughout the year so that they can play a more active role in the organisation. One idea going forward is to invite members to write short reviews of new books they have bought and read at the bookshop and include in our monthly newsletter.

Donors and sponsors

NIBS receive generous support from the following:

- **Search Foundation:**
 - In 2015-16 NIBS received \$880 per month and \$10,560 for the financial year. This financial support has been essential for us to meet our running costs.
 - The money was provided to increase the hours of the NIBS Coordinator so that NIBS could run regular events aimed at the political left in Melbourne. The purpose of the funding was also to make Search known, through the forums but also provision of Search materials and publications in the shop. Renewed activity in Search activities implemented and planned in Melbourne provide the opportunity for NIBS to become a centre for Search initiatives.
- **Book donors:**
 - Throughout the year NIBS receives many generous donations of books from our supporters. This was especially the case in the lead up to the Big Red Bookfair which ensured it was, yet again, a great success. As mentioned, regular second-hand book donation will be crucial to our future viability.

5. Financial Results 2015-16

Corporate information

Australian Business Number (ABN)	41 846 245 128
Address	Trades Hall 54 Victoria Street Carlton Vic 3053
Bankers	Bendigo Bank
Auditors	Phil McCann

Overview of Financial Report

See [Attachment B](#) for full Financial Report

See [Attachment C](#) for Auditors Report

Income

Book Shop Sales: Overall, nearly 9% up on 2014/2015 sales, with New Books up 8% and Second Hand Books up 22% but Non-Book Items down 68%. Gift Vouchers are a new item introduced only in the last 3 months of the financial year

Fundraising & Events: Overall, down 30% on 2014/2015, with Events down 69% and Room Hire up 43%.

Grants & Donations: Overall, down 3% on 2014/2015, with Interest Earned down 19% and SEARCH Grant down 2%.

Sundry Income: The largest component of this is a repayment of a reimbursement, mistakenly paid twice.

Total Income: Overall, this is a reduction in 2015/2016 of 5.2% (over 2014/2015).

Cost of Goods Sold (COGS)

Basically, COGS is the cost of the stock we buy for later resale to our customers. Overall, just over 7% higher than in 2014/2015 (but importantly nearly 27% of our Total Income).

A key accounting ratio for enterprises such as NIBS is the Inventory Turnover Ratio. In our case, this is New Book Sales + Non-Book Items Sales divided by Stock On Hand – this is 0.54 for NIBS. While the optimum Inventory Turnover Ratio will vary depending on the type of business, I suggest that a rate between 1.5 and 2.0 is probably appropriate for a bookshop.

Expenses

Bookshop & Admin: Overall, up 177% on 2014/2015 figures, due largely to Advertising (up 30%), General Bookshop Expenses (up 85%) and Staff & Volunteer Expenses (up 245%).

Equipment & Repairs: Overall, down 32% on 2014/2015 figures. A key issue was that our Auditors determined that there was no need for a Depreciation Charge in 2015/2016.

Event Expenses: Overall, up 114% on 2014/2015 figures. For some reason, no expense was recorded for the 2014/2015 AGM.

Financial Expenses: Overall, up 21% on 2014/2015 figures, with the main difference being Government Charges (fee for Consumer Affairs and fee for new ABN).

Wages & Salaries: Overall, virtually unchanged from 2014/2015 figures.

Utilities, Rent & Other: Overall, down 49% on 2014/2015 figures. However, the 2014/2015 figures were distorted by the payment of considerable Rent arrears. Sundry Expenses are largely Cash Float for Big Red Book Fair (\$800) and Donation to Film (\$139.49).

Total Expenditure: Overall, this is a reduction in 2015/2016 of 18.9% (over 2014/2015 figures).

Summary

The surplus for the year of \$2,144.19 is very pleasing. Two major expenses are the employment of our Coordinator (41% of our Total Income) and Rent (nearly 15% of our Total Income) but these expenses are largely not controllable by NIBS.

Our next major expense is Cost of Goods Sold – the stock we purchase for later resale - and amounts to nearly 27% of our Total Income (24% in 2014/2015). Importantly, this expense is totally controllable by our Coordinator.

Overall, 2015/2016 has been a very successful year and, with the ongoing and active support of NIBS Board and members, I look forward to an even more successful 2016/2017.

6. What has NIBS done in 2015-16?

In the Shop

What we have done well:

- Organising a regular team of volunteer book sorters who come in on Tuesdays. The regular work done here enables us to turn over the book stock and keep the shelves neat and well ordered
- Putting our major secondhand categories in alphabetical order to make it easier for customers.
- An improved focus on ordering adequate stock for Christmas which helped us to , record a taking of over\$5,000 in December; more than double the previous year.
- We continue to try and broaden and improve our new book stock, specialising in left titles from across the world. A successful strategy has been to focus on stocking left-classics which always sell well.

Areas for improvement include:

- MYOB retail manager, our main point of sale program, needs to be refreshed to better reflect our existing stock. This is a very important task as without an accurate record in MYOB it is hard for us to accurately track what we are selling.

- Improve the sale and promotion of our gift vouchers, which currently sell very poorly.
- Increasing the number and quality of donations we receive. We believe many of our supporters are under the impression we only accept donations in the lead up to the bookfair. We need a campaign to change that perception so that we are receiving books on a regular basis.

Marketing

Our committee members Ciaran and Alex have been a terrific help in improving our promotional materials. Ciaran took on the roll in the first half of the year and did a great job in designing basic event fliers, despite only having a basic background using Adobe Acrobat. Since coming onto the committee Alex has built on this foundation and used his creative skills to develop professional and engaging looking event fliers, FB banners as well as a wonderful NIBS brochure which we plan to use at public stalls.

The NIBS website continues to be regularly updated and well used. The coordinator has received quite a number of inquiries about book donations and volunteering via the site, so it clearly plays an important role. It is also used to promote our events. At this stage there is no e-commerce capacity on the site and adding this capacity continues to be an issue to consider in the future.

We make regular use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to advertise its events and new stock. The number of 'likes' on our Facebook page has increased from 1,200 to 1,350 in the last year. We have 500 followers on Twitter, up from 400 last year. This year we also started an Instagram page which is regularly updated by our volunteers.

NIBS Events

In April 2016 we have been very excited to hire a new volunteer events coordinator, Catherine Noone, this year. Catherine has already played a key role in helping us to improve the organisation and delivery of our events.

Throughout the year we made several changes to the branding of our event series. Half way through the financial year the former "Australia Series" was re-branded as "Search Talks" in order to acknowledge the role of Search Foundation in supporting NIBS and also better use the events to promote Search membership in Melbourne. We also introduced a new series "Left Q&A," which was initially aimed to be focussed on panel events bringing together people from diverse parties/groups to debate/discuss issues.

Before long, however, we discovered that trying to run three events per month was simply too ambitious for a small organisation like NIBS. Therefore, at the end of the (financial) year, it was decided to brand all our panel/talk events under the one name of "Left Q&A"

Going forward NIBS will have the following two event series:

- **Left Q&A** - Monthly panels/talks aimed at enhancing dialogue and debate among the organised left in Melbourne.

- **Subversive Cinema** - monthly film nights in which we showcase new and classic films & documentaries which challenge the status quo.

Over the 2015-16 financial year held 15 speaking/lecture/panel events as part Search /Australia Series and another 4 Left Q/A Panel Events. We also held 2 Subversive Cinema events, for an overall total of 21 events held across the financial year - see [Attachment A](#). This represented a major increase on the number of events held compared to previous years. However, it would be fair to say that in future we will focus more on quality rather than quantity.

In general, most of our events were well attended, with an average audience of about 30, but substantial variation either side of that figure. Some events were very poorly attended (i.e lower than 5) leading the committee to reflect hard about the keys to organising successful events and deciding to reduce the number of events next year.

The events have generally been advertised via our mailing list (approximately 740 emails on the list) as well as using social media (Twitter and Facebook).

Some of the highlights included:

- A sold out audience packed into our meeting room to watch Naomi Klein's documentary, *This Changes Everything*.
- Our first *Left Q&A* panel event proved that the concept of panels which bring together different parties/groups on the left is an excellent model for us going forward – the discussion on Corbyn and Sanders attracted an audience from across different parties and involved passionate debate and discussion from the packed audience.
- Our first event held at the Bella Union Bar – a venue we plan to hold more events at next year – which saw a packed audience and lively discussion generated by an excellent talk by economist Bill Mitchell on a progressive manifesto for the left.

Areas for future improvement include:

- Making sure that event subjects and theme are appropriately topical and address issues that people in the left want to hear more about. Sometimes this year that were either not topical, or failed to spark the interest of our supporters.
- The formation of a sub-committee, comprising of SEARCH members and NIBS committee members,
- Develop a promotional strategy to improve the reach of our promotional efforts.

Big Red Bookfair

The Bookfair was once again the major fundraising event for the shop. It was held on Saturday June 25th and attracted a large number of bargain hunters. The bookfair made a total of approx. \$4,000 after expenditure which was about the same figure as last year. Once again this was crucial in ensuring that NIBS was able to end up with an overall profit for the year.

This was the first year that Jonathan, as Coordinator, managed the running of the bookfair. He felt there were a number of lessons to be learned for improvement next year including.

- Pricing our quality books a bit higher. A decision was made to price all books at \$1 or \$2 dollars for organisational simplicity. Although this improved efficiency of pricing and sorting in the lead up to the fair, it meant less money was made on the day. Many books were sold far too cheaply. Next year there should be a large \$1 section and then another area in which books are individually priced.
- A decision was made to put lots of the quality donations into the shop – this, however, did not really work as most people do not associate the shop with the fair and not a great many people looked in that area.

Meeting room hire

The meeting room is hired out to activist/community groups at a flat rate of \$30 for a night session or \$50 for an entire day. We also hire out our projector and our sound system for \$20 each. The room has been used quite regularly this year, mostly on weeknights by a range of mainly environmental, socialist and anarchist groups. In total the bookshop raised approximately \$2,367 from room hire in 2015-16 which was a 43% improvement on the previous year. Moving forward, efforts should be made, to improve our advertising of the bookshop to activist groups. Our space should be very attractive for groups with limited means, as it offers one of (if not the) cheapest meeting room hire space in Melbourne!

Public Stalls

NIBS seek to have a presence at major progressive events, such as Talks & seminars and rallies throughout the year. NIBS held successful stores at the Anarchist Bookfair, the Climate March, the labour history conference and several others across the financial year. This is an area the committee has identified as a key area for future improvement. We are working on developing a kit for our stalls including banners, brochures and easy ways to transport equipment.

7. Looking forward.

NIBS held a planning meeting facilitated on Sunday 7th August 2016. The meeting was highly successful and productive. The following goals were identified for the current financial year and will be reviewed at a similar planning meeting in the middle of 2017.

- Run regular NIBS stalls at major speaking events and rallies in 2017.
- Update and improve NIBS retail manager system so that we can more accurately track sales of stock in the shop.
- To begin a 'Red Review' segment of the monthly newsletter where volunteers/members write reviews of books we sell.
- Aim to run 10x Left Q&A event + 10 x subversive cinema events per year (i.e 20 x events a year).
- Have a member strategy and a promotion plan. Aim to have 75 members (currently 40) by the end of 2017, and then aim to get them actively involved.
- To make an overall financial profit for the year 2016-17
- Take steps to build/improve the relationship with Search Foundation.

- Reduce our rent with Trades Hall (possibly to move out of storeroom), might cut down by rent by \$400.
- Rearrange secondhand book layout in the shop.

Attachment A – 2015-16 NIBS Events

Search Talks /Australia Series

Date	Title	Speaker/s	Approx. Attendance
August 18 th	<u>Recession and Austerity in Greece: Can Syriza Solve the Crisis?</u>	Petros Constantinou	30
August 21 st	<u>Book Launch - Fighting on all fronts: Popular Resistance in the Second World War</u>	Donny Gluckstein	50
August 27 th	<u>The Steady State Alternative to Endless Growth - A sustainable vision for the future</u>	Geoff Mosley	40
September 10 th	<u>Book Talk - The 1% and the Rest of Us</u>	Tim Muzio	20
September 22 nd	<u>Book Talk - Decolonizing Solidarity</u>	Clare Land	50
October 1 st	<u>Book Talk - Breaking Out: Memories of Melbourne in the 1970s</u>	Susan Blackburn	20
October 22 nd	<u>Book Talk - Australia's Boldest Experiment: War and reconstruction in the 1940s</u>	Stuart McIntyre	40
October 29 th	<u>Turkey in turmoil: Is Erdogan's bubble about to burst?'</u>	Jeremy Salt	25

December 9 th	<u>Book Launch - Crooked Deals and Broken Treaties</u>	John Tully	20
December 15 th	<u>Book Talk - The Dismissal Dossier</u>	Jenny Hocking	40
March 24 th	<u>Towards an Ecological Civilization</u>	Arran Gare	40
April 30 th	<u>Labor's Historic Mission</u>	Brian Ellis	5
May 26 th	<u>The Transnational Capitalist Class</u>	Andrew Self	20

Left Q&A

Date	Title	Speaker	Approx. Attendance
April 21st	<u>Corbyn and Sanders: The limits and possibilities of the New Parliamentary Left</u>	Panellists: Andrew Irving from the Communist Party of Australia Race Matthews member of the Australian Labor Party Alex Waters PhD student from RMIT Lucy Honan from Solidarity	50+
April 28 th	<u>Left Q&A After Paris - Where to now for the environmental movement</u>	Panellists: Hans Baer (Associate Professor at Melb Uni, member of Socialist Alliance) Nicola Paris (Activist & Coordinator of CounterAct) Anitra Nelson (Associate professor at RMIT, Convener of the Australian Environmental Justice project) David Spratt, Prominent Climate campaigner and author of Climate Code Red.	30

May 19 th	<u>Fighting the Corporate Takeover - Anti-TPP Activism & Strategies</u>	Panellists: Kevin Bracken - TPP Union Roundtable Pier Moro - Australian Asia Worker Links (AAWL) Andrew Dettmer - Australian Fair Trade Investment Network (AFTINET)/ Aus Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) Sam Castro - Friends of the Earth (FOE).	10
June 23 rd	<u>Left Q&A - Election 2016</u>	Panellists: Robert Manne - Public Intellectual and Emeritus Professor at Latrobe University Zane Alcorn - Socialist Alliance candidate for the Seat of Wills Senator Janet Rice - Greens candidate for the Victorian Senate Phillip Sutton (replacing Adrian Whitehead) - Save the Planet candidate for Batman	35

Subversive Cinema

Date	Title	Approx. Attendance
March 3 rd	<u>This Changes Everything: The Film</u>	50+
April 7 th	<u>This Is a Coup - A Documentary on Syriza</u>	30

