

**National Cultural Policy Submission**

1468295

Public

Individual

Jenny Mustey



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I'm Jenny, and I'm a Library Services Manager

In the next National Cultural Policy, I'm joining Australia Reads in calling for the Australian Government to invest in a reading nation.

Reading provides better education and employment outcomes, reduces our stress and loneliness, supports social connection, and increases our empathy for others.

I was fortunate to have the love of reading fostered from a very young age and it has continued right throughout my life. There is nothing I love more than spending time with a book and sharing my thoughts and recommendations with others. Reading is a very much loved and necessary part of my life, personally and professionally. I have a new grandson and it has been a joy to watch him discover books and for his parents to foster the same love of reading I grew up with. We pass it on and if we miss this generation of doing so we will not be in a good place.

But reading rates are in decline. 30% of Australians didn't read or listen to a book last year, 1 in 3 students can't read proficiently, and 25% of Australian kids don't get a bedtime story.

That's why we need urgent action from the Albanese Government to turn the tide on reading.

To ensure all Australians have access to the life-changing benefits of reading, I'd like to see the National Cultural Policy include interventions that provide:

National reading campaigns for adults, children and young people, helping them overcome the barriers to regular reading.

A library in every school, with professional staff and collection budgets, and more support for educators and parents to create strong reading cultures for students.

Greater community access to books and reading through author touring initiatives, voucher schemes, and book club programs.

Promotions that showcase Australian stories, highlighting contemporary titles and First Nations creators.

Kind regards,

Jenny Mustey