

National Cultural Policy Submission

1468342

Public

Individual

David Slater



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm David Slater, a retired businessman and father of two children now in their 30's that I used to read to all the time when they were kids.

My daughter has gone on to work in the publishing industry, and Australian literary world more generally, for which I am immensely proud.

She now does work with Australia Reads, who are calling for the Federal Government to invest further in a reading nation in the next National Cultural Policy.

Their formal and detailed research has shown that higher reading rates result in better education and employment outcomes, reduces stress and loneliness, supports social connection, and increases empathy for others.

Anything that can assist today's kids in reducing stress, and getting off social media (which is a large part of the problem) and into the pages of a book, I think is a good investment in our country's future, and a good spend of my taxpayer dollars.

Again, as the Australia Reads research shows, 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.

Following on from the Government's recent restriction to access for young people to social media apps, I believe the timing is perfect for additional resources to be dedicated to early reading programs to help kids "fill the attention gap" in the best (and most productive) manner.

I would like to support the call by Australia Reads to ensure that the National Cultural Policy supports additional interventions that provide for:

- National reading campaigns for adults, children and young people, helping them overcome 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.

Best regards,

David Slater

