

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Organisation

Writing WA

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

A sustainable Australian writing and reading culture depends on a bold strategic vision and committed investment. Writing WA (WWA) is pleased to submit on behalf of reader's and writer's issues of note for the new National Cultural Policy.

1. The next National Cultural Policy should encompass a truly inclusive system with coordinated investment, stronger institutions and long-term policy responsibility funneled through a reinstated cultural ministerial council reporting to National Cabinet.
2. WWA works with and connects to a national infrastructure for writers and the wider sector – operating in a State-wide context where access to opportunities, particularly to publishers, regular events alongside national and international authors is subject to the isolation experienced uniquely in Western Australia (WA). Distance from the eastern states and the State's geographical size requires particular attention and WWA believes increased investment in First Nations writers, illustrators and storytellers, including cultural protocols, community consent, ICIP protections and industry standard payment for First Nations authors, publishers, Elders and cultural authorities (Pillar 1: FIRST NATIONS FIRST)
3. Australian writers represent the largest single artistic occupation in the country, with an estimated 8,800 practicing professionals. WWA supports the creation of an Australian Book Fund for new and culturally significant work and extend offsets and Incentives to book publishers. WA has significant independent publishers Upswell, Magabala Books and Fremantle Press who face precarity (Pillar 2 BACK AUSTRALIAN BOOKS AND PUBLISHERS.)
4. State based Writing Centers are crucial to supporting writers development and work being undertaken by the National Writers' Centre Network allows for shared resources for writers, greater reach for activities and reduces duplication of services. It ensures that local delivery has national connectivity and national impact. (Pillar 3 SUPPORTING AUTHOR'S CAREERS.)
5. Books Create Australia and Writing Australia provide national forums for disparate parts of the ecosystem to connect, form sectoral partnerships and advocate and we support funding uplift to Writing Australia. On a national level we support the National Writing Centre Network receives ongoing investment that recognises the critical whole-of-system role state based centers play to provide Australia wide perspective and nationally significant programs with discrete areas of expertise and delivery, as part of a connected national infrastructure (Pillar 4: STRENGTHEN INFRASTRUCTURE).
6. Reading is a cultural practice that supports wellbeing, social connection, creativity, dialectical thinking, identity formation, public debate and democratic participation. WWA supports a library in every school, a national reading campaign and stronger promotion of queer, people of colour, working class and First Nation stories.