

**National Cultural Policy Submission**

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Public

Individual

Sam Elkin



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am a published author and regular contributor to literary magazines and prize judging. My debut book was shortlisted for a VPLA and the National Biography prize. In the first year after my book was published, I spent many thousands of dollars travelling to local and interstate writers' festivals and events to promote my book, which was tantamount to a part-time job on top of the full-time job that I do to pay my mortgage and bills. I'm so proud of my book and grateful for all the opportunities I've had to tell people about it, but I have only been able to do this because I have a full-time job that was flexible enough to allow me time off to promote the book. The advance I received was symbolic at best, and I spent more money promoting the book than I have ever received from royalties. I would love to become a full-time writer (or even a part-time writer), but, due to the lack of government funding for writers, it really isn't possible to do that. I must fit in writing in between mornings, evenings and weekends. I cannot imagine a time when I would be able to take a year off to work on a book. There should be more fellowships for emerging and mid-career authors to take six months or a year off to really focus on writing a novel or non-fiction book of substance. AI is also a huge issue for writers. There should be tax-free literary prizes and grants for authors, this is a simple change the government could make to assist writers. I believe we should have a universal basic income for creatives such as in Ireland, and a tax-free threshold for creative income to recognise how much unpaid work we are doing. We need Writing Australia to be properly resourced to help support state centres like Writers Victoria. We need a national plan to coordinate funding for writers' centres.