

Office for the Arts
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
GPO Box 594 | CANBERRA ACT 2601

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18th May 2026

I am an author based in Brisbane and a former winner of the Prime Minister's Literary Award and the Queensland Premier's Literary Award. I have been writing at a professional level for around thirty years. For the past five years I have been working full-time as an author, a situation that has only been achievable because of the ongoing economic support of my wife. My annual earnings from my writing — which include royalties, ELR, PLR and copyright payments and fee for service arrangements such as school visits — do not reach the level of the national minimum wage.

I am grateful for the initiatives introduced in *Revive* to assist with the sustainability of author and illustrator careers. However, we continue to face increasingly precarious conditions. Without immediate support, the viability of the book industry in Australia is clearly at risk.

I am calling for:

Direct investment in authors and illustrators via:

- Multi-year fellowships supporting mid-career authors by providing them with time to write. I see this as vital if we are to strengthen our national literary profile.
- Seed money for emerging writers.
- A basic income pilot, involving 300 authors.
- A continuation of the investments being made into First Nations-led writing and publishing
- A top up to the Lending Rights budget. For many of us, this is a significant source of income.

Solutions to the unprecedented theft of Australian authors' work by multinational tech companies operating within Australia via:

- Transparency on copyright inputs for, and outputs from, generative AI models.
- Research into the impact of generative AI on creative careers and Australian cultural output.
- Structural solutions to bring multinational AI companies to the licensing table with Australian rightsholders.

Tax reform to support author careers, including tax-free literary prizes and grants, and a specific tax-free threshold for writers and illustrators.

Adequate resourcing for Writing Australia to deliver:

- Increased coordination between federal and state funding.
- Commissioning of research to provide baseline data from which to measure impact for the book industry.
- Express guarantees included in every funding grant, ensuring that authors and illustrators engaged in funded projects will be paid at or above the ASA recommended rate, and that generative AI will not be used to replace or diminish the role of human creators in government-funded projects.
- Coordination of a book-to-screen pipeline.

Commitment to educational interventions that support Australian authors and writing careers, especially via a nationwide authors-in-schools program funded out of education budgets.

I am a member of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and fully support its submission.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Yaxley