

Office for the Arts
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19/05/2026

I am an author with two non-fiction books published on the topic of gender diversity and inclusion. I have been writing for over a decade and in that time have probably earned less than \$25,000 for my writing alone. I would be creating so much more work and developing my arts practice if there was more accessible and viable financial support and more budgetary support for literature and the arts in general. At this stage, much of a writer's career and energy goes toward grant applications rather than the writing itself, in a desperate attempt to secure some funding and time to focus on writing. Should there be more support for authors, that time and energy could be spent producing work that would enhance not only the literary sector but the Australian economy more broadly. We run the risk of a future arts industry that is filled only by people of a certain economic background and experience should we not better support creatives, this would be a tragedy to the diversity and richness of our literary sector.

I am grateful for the initiatives introduced in *Revive* to assist with the sustainability of author and illustrator careers. However, since the introduction of *Revive*, authors have been facing increasingly precarious conditions. Without immediate support, we risk the viability of the book industry in Australia.

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.
 - Seed money for emerging writers.
 - A top up to the Lending Rights budget.
 - A basic income pilot, involving 300 authors.
- **Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing.**
 - Multi-year mentorship programs for emerging writers
 - Community houses and organisations for First Nations' writers
 - More First-Nations centred grants and fellowships in the hands of First Nations' people
- **Solutions to the unprecedented theft of Australian authors' work by multinational tech companies** operating within Australia. For instance:
 - 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 tax-free threshold for writers and illustrators.
- **Adequate resourcing for Writing Australia** to deliver:
 - Increased coordination between federal and state funding.
 - Commissioning of critically-needed 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, ASA recommended rates
 - 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:**
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 - Nationwide authors-in-schools program funded out of education budgets.
 - Reversal of the failed Job-Ready Graduates program.

I am a member of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and support its submission alongside the book industry submission by Books Create Australia. Our industry is in dire need of support for its sustainability.

Yours sincerely,

Nevo Zisin