

National Cultural Policy Submission

1470053

Public

Individual

Dani Netherclift



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Office for the Arts

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,

Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

GPO Box 594 | CANBERRA ACT 2601

19 May 2026

I am an author with a narrative nonfiction book out in Australia and North America, published by Upswell Publishing and Assembly Press respectively. I am the president of the Mansfield Readers and Writers Festival. After 20 years spent working in sales, I returned to university in my 40s post children and completed a BA (Hons) and a PhD in creative writing, graduating in 2024. I have since written another book and have commenced a third. I've been supported by my husband through my studies and during subsequent writing, but we are by not well off. We rent, and I care for our severely autistic son. We live regionally, so the only writing related work available to me is freelance, local (in the case of the festival, the work is unpaid) or online. After seven years of study to learning my craft, it is financially precarious to attempt to continue a writing career. My book, Vessel: The Shape of Absent Bodies was part of the Meta/LibGen data scrape.

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:
 - o Multi-year fellowships supporting mid-career authors by providing them with time to write.
 - o Seed money for emerging writers.
 - o A top up to the Lending Rights budget.
 - o A basic income pilot, involving 300 authors.
- Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing.
- Solutions to the unprecedented theft of Australian authors' work by multinational tech companies operating within Australia. For instance:
 - o Transparency on copyright inputs for, and outputs from, generative AI models.
 - o Research into the impact of generative AI on creative careers and Australian cultural output.
 - o 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:
 - o Increased coordination between federal and state funding.

OFFICIAL

- o Commissioning of critically-needed research to provide baseline data from which to measure impact for the book industry.
- o 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.
- o Coordination of a book-to-screen pipeline.
- Commitment to educational interventions that support Australian authors and writing careers:
 1.
 - o Nationwide authors-in-schools program funded out of education budgets.
 - o Reversal of the failed Job-Ready Graduates program.

Yours sincerely,

Dani Netherclift

OFFICIAL