

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Dear Minister Burke,

I am writing as a passionate supporter of independent bookshops to urge the Government to include meaningful support for bookshops within the new National Cultural Policy.

My local bookshops, Petrarch's Bookshop and Quixotic Books in Launceston, Tasmania, play an invaluable role in our community. Independent bookshops are far more than retail businesses; they are essential cultural infrastructure. They are community gathering places where people encounter stories, history, philosophy, ideas, and perspectives on current events and the wider world. They foster curiosity, connection, and lifelong learning.

Bookshops are often where children and adults first develop a love of reading, and where future writers and literary careers begin. Beyond selling books, my local bookstores host author signings, talks, discussions, and even quiet communal reading evenings that bring people together in meaningful and enriching ways.

Despite their immense cultural and social value, independent bookshops continue to face increasing pressure from online retail giants and discount department stores. Each closure represents not just the loss of a business, but the loss of an important cultural and community space.

Australia lags behind comparable countries such as France, Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom, all of which have introduced measures to protect and strengthen their independent bookselling sectors. These policies have proven successful in sustaining vibrant literary and cultural communities. Australia should follow their example.

I strongly support the Australian Booksellers Association's call for local bookshops to be formally recognised as cultural infrastructure. Independent bookshops are irreplaceable, but without meaningful support, many more will disappear.

As both a reader and a community member, I ask you to stand up for these vital cultural spaces before they are lost.

Yours sincerely,

