

19 May 2026

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

Dear Office for the Arts,

Trans Book Festival (TBF) is the only writers' festival in the southern hemisphere focused on uplifting and celebrating trans and gender diverse (TGD) literary excellence. As Festival Director of TBF, I am also a member of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and support its submission as well.

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 literary industry in Australia.

TBF is calling for:

- Direct investment in authors and illustrators, in particular marginalised creatives including trans and gender diverse (TGD) writers:
  - Multi-year fellowships supporting mid-career authors
  - 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 for:
  - Fellowships for First Nations writers and illustrators, including mentoring by experienced First Nations creators
  - Editing and publishing by First Nations arts workers.
- Solutions to the unprecedented theft of Australian authors' work, including:
  - Mandated transparency on training data and AI-generated content
  - Requiring developers to license copyright content as a condition of deploying their models in Australia
  - Providing ongoing compensation to the creators whose works have already been stolen and ingested
  - Ensuring compliance with ICIP protocols.

- Tax reform to support author careers:
  - Tax-free literary prizes and grants
  - A tax-free threshold for writers and illustrators.
- Resourcing for Writing Australia to deliver:
  - Multi-year funding for literary festivals, including seed funding for new festivals to establish
  - Increased coordination between federal and state funding
  - Commissioning of critical research to provide baseline data from which to measure impact for the book industry
  - Guarantees in every funding grant to ensure 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.
- Educational interventions that support Australian authors and writing careers:
  - Nationwide authors-in-schools program funded from education budgets
  - Reversal of the Job-Ready Graduates program.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions at [REDACTED]

or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



Eli Sutherland  
Festival Director