

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



19th May 2026

My name's Damon Young, I'm an author of some two decades' experience. My fourteen books are published internationally and translated into fourteen languages, including German, Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Korean, and Chinese.

I've also published short stories, poetry, and hundreds of essays. I've written in several genres, including fantasy, science-fiction and horror. My work has featured in magazines and newspapers including *Meanjin*, *Overland*, *The Saturday Paper*, *The Guardian*, *Aeon*, the ABC and BBC.

The Literary Review praised my 'delightful combination of humour and insight', while *The Australian* described my work as 'readable, rousing and hugely intelligent.' In the United States, *Publisher's Weekly* simply said: 'Young has nailed it'.

Despite all this, my career's fragile and my earnings scanty. Writing's rarely been a lucrative trade, but things are demonstrably worse now – even for those who had stable work a decade ago. We toil for scraps.

I'm pleased by the introduction of the *Revive* policy, and welcome efforts to encourage Australian literature. But we need more support, or many gifted and hard-working authors will simply give up. And those who remain will suffer needlessly from poverty and ill health.

Here are some policies I'd like to see, taken partially and with gratitude from the Australian Society of Authors:

- i. More generous fellowships for established writers, offering security over years.
- ii. More financial support for individuals and organisations in marginalised communities, e.g. Indigenous, transgender.
- iii. A higher Lending Rights budget.
- iv. Basic salaries for authors (as in Iceland).
- v. Greater research into, and protections from, exploitative AI companies.
- vi. Tax reform, e.g. tax-free prizes and grants (as in Turkey and Ireland).

Nobody gets into the arts to become rich. We do it for the love of it. It'd be nice to get some love back.

Yours,

Damon Young