

National Cultural Policy Submission

1470192

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

As an avid reader, I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process for the National Cultural Policy.

Storytelling is central to our identity. To protect and celebrate Australian culture, we must actively support reading, authors, libraries, and bookshops. The new National Cultural Policy presents an important opportunity to strengthen Australian cultural life by placing books and reading at its heart.

I urge the Government to prioritise the following actions:

1. Invest in national reading campaigns for adults, children, and young people

Reading strengthens both individuals and communities. It fosters empathy by allowing readers to engage with experiences and perspectives different from their own, helping to reduce division and build social understanding. Literature also preserves our shared history, values, and diverse voices for future generations. By encouraging a strong reading culture, Australia can nurture a more connected, informed, and culturally rich society.

2. Ensure schools are equipped to build a strong reading culture through properly funded libraries

Not every public school in Australia currently has a library. School libraries, staffed by qualified librarians, are essential to both academic achievement and digital literacy. Libraries provide equitable access to books, technology, and safe learning spaces, while librarians teach students how to critically assess information and navigate misinformation online. Research consistently demonstrates that schools with trained librarians achieve stronger literacy and academic outcomes, making them indispensable to student success.

3. Support community bookshops and local libraries

Libraries and bookshops are vital cultural institutions that strengthen local communities and expand access to knowledge. Libraries provide free and equitable access to books, technology, educational resources, and community programs, helping bridge social and economic divides. Independent bookshops also play a critical role in supporting Australian authors, promoting local culture, and creating spaces for community connection and conversation. Continued investment in these institutions is essential to maintaining a vibrant and inclusive cultural landscape.