

Office for the Arts
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
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20 May 2026

I am an author. I have been writing children's books, specifically picture books and young adult novels, for the past six years. During this time, I have submitted multiple manuscripts to multiple publishers (primarily picture books), done live pitches, feedback sessions, attended workshops and conferences, and entered various competitions for picture books, short stories and mentorship opportunities. I have had one short story short-listed and published in an anthology.

One of the biggest challenges I face as a children's literature creative is the lack of opportunity to be published as a new author, especially as a picture book author, and especially by bigger commercial publishers. The cost of buying picture books continues to increase with production costs, yet families have less and less available income to spend outside household necessities. Publishers are depending on celebrity names and revamping 'classics' and 'creating' books from TV shows more and more to bring guaranteed income, while creators like me struggle to find a space for our work to be genuinely looked at with an opportunity, let alone actually getting published. It feels like smaller publishing houses are cutting back on how many books they are putting out each year, and those spots often go to authors with an established track record. It feels like we are at risk of losing new voices in this space, while at the same time being concerned that children of all ages are becoming less engaged in reading. Making it harder to create then access new books is only furthering this issue.

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:

- Funding allocated for all publishers to produce works in all streams of writing, specifically illustrated children's books, to be focused on new and emerging Australian voices.
- Accountability on publishers to produce genuine new written material created for children by Aboriginal and disabled authors and illustrators, encouraging more diverse characters to be authentically embraced in fun and engaging stories that don't need to focus solely on the difference of their identity.

- Funding for smaller and start-up publishers, especially those focusing on children's literature, to enable lower production costs and lower retail costs, allowing more Australian stories to reach the hands of our children.
- More accessible grants in smaller amounts, and more opportunities to access them, to allow writers and illustrators of children's literature access to time with fewer restrictions – for many of us, caring for our children as well as having to work part- or full-time around that means we are left with little to no time to create, edit or submit work, and no access to extra funds for conferences, feedback or assistance from professionals, etc.
- Funding for small writer/illustrator groups such as Book Links and Write Links (based here in Brisbane) to provide more opportunity at even lower costs to writers and illustrators.

I am a member of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and support its submission.

Yours sincerely,

