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I am an emerging author. I have spent the last five years writing my first novel, dropping back to part time work to fit this into my life. I have not earned any money from my creative practice yet. This is a significant upfront entry cost to starting a creative career as an author with no guarantee of any payback. Even once published, there is no pathway to an ongoing career and very little support for maintaining a consistent income to write a subsequent book. This results in long delays in developing good writers. There is a need for supporting both breadth and width in the profession.

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 due to economic conditions, flooding of the market by low quality self-published and AI generated work and an already low arts funding climate. We're in the midst of a global reading crisis. 30% of Australians didn't read or listen to a book last year, 1 in 3 students can't read proficiently and 25% of Australian kids don't get a bedtime story. Without immediate support, we risk the viability of the book industry in Australia.

I am calling for the next cultural policy to deliver:

- **Direct investment in authors and illustrators** via:
 - Multi-year fellowships supporting mid-career authors by providing them with time to write.
 - Seed money for emerging writers.
 - A top up to the Lending Rights budget.
 - A basic income pilot, involving 300 authors.

- **Solutions to the unprecedented theft of Australian authors' work by multinational tech companies** operating within Australia. For instance:
 - Transparency on copyright inputs for, and outputs from, generative AI models.
 - Research into the impact of generative AI on creative careers and Australian cultural output.
 - Structural solutions to bring multinational AI companies to the licensing table with Australian rightsholders.

- **Tax reform to support author careers** including tax-free literary prizes and grants, and a tax-free threshold for writers and illustrators.

- **Adequate resourcing for Writing Australia** to deliver:
 - Express guarantees included in every funding grant, ensuring 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.
 - Recognition that an Australian screen-industry cannot survive without a strong writing industry.

- **Commitment to educational interventions that support Australian authors and writing careers:**
 - Nationwide authors-in-schools program funded out of education budgets.
 - Reversal of the failed Job-Ready Graduates program.
 - National reading campaigns for adults, children and young people, helping them overcome the barriers to regular reading.
 - A library in every school, with professional staff and collection budgets, and more support for educators and parents to create strong reading cultures for students.
 - Greater community access to books and reading through author touring initiatives, promoting and providing greater digital access to books through libraries, second hand book redistribution and book club programs.

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

Yours sincerely,

Carol Bracken