

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



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To whom it may concern,

My name is Hayley Scrivenor. I am the number-one bestselling author of two novels, with work published both in Australia and internationally. I write to you as someone who has directly benefited from the support and advocacy of the Australian Society of Authors, and I am proud to lend my voice in strong endorsement of the ASA's current demands.

Australian authors matter. Australian stories matter. While 'Revive' gave us reason for hope, what has followed has given us cause for alarm. The conditions in which writers in this country must work are increasingly untenable – and the time for government action is now. I urge decision-makers to act on the following four areas:

1. Direct investment in authors and illustrators

This should include:

- Multi-year fellowships supporting mid-career authors by providing them with the time to write.
- Seed money for emerging writers.
- A top-up to the Lending Rights budget.
- A basic income pilot involving 300 authors (I would urge you to support an equitable spread of authors, so that it functions differently to the more usual grants process which tends to reward literary fiction).
- Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing.

2. Solutions to the theft of Australian authors' work by multinational tech companies

The use of Australian authors' work to train generative AI models without consent is an unprecedented threat to our creative industries. The ASA is right to demand:

- 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.

On the question of tax reform: it is genuinely absurd that if an author bets on the outcome of the Miles Franklin Award and wins, they pay no tax – but if they actually win the prize itself, they are taxed on it as income, often at the highest rate, because it arrives in the same year as their other earnings. This punishes authors at the very moment of success and prevents them from using that recognition to invest more time in their craft. Tax-free literary prizes and grants, alongside a tax-free threshold for writers and illustrators, would make a meaningful difference.

3. Adequate resourcing for Writing Australia

This must include:

- Increased coordination between federal and state funding.
- Commissioning of critically needed research to provide baseline data from which to measure impact for the book industry.
- Express guarantees included in every funding grant, ensuring that authors and illustrators engaged in funded projects will be paid at or above the ASA recommended rate, and that 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.

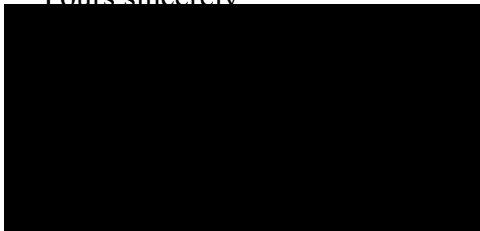
4. Educational interventions that support Australian authors and writing careers

- A nationwide authors-in-schools program funded from education budgets.
- Reversal of the failed Job-Ready Graduates program.

On this last point: I am a product of the very educational system these policies affect. Had I faced the higher fees imposed under the Job-Ready Graduates scheme, I may not have pursued the studies that shaped me as a writer. I am now a contributing member of society who has sold hundreds of thousands of books. The logic of placing a heavier financial burden on students studying the humanities and creative arts is not only short-sighted – it is demonstrably wrong. My career is the evidence.

I am proud to add my name to the ASA’s call for action. Australian stories are worth fighting for – and so are the people who tell them.

Yours sincerely



Hayley Scrivenor

Internationally-bestselling and award-winning author

Member, Australian Society of Authors