

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I'm Alex and I'm a parent of school age children, a lifelong reader and the Partnerships Manager at [REDACTED] in Australia.

In the next National Cultural Policy, I'm joining Australia Reads in calling for the Australian Government to invest in a reading nation.

Regularly reading with children supports early brain development, strengthens literacy and learning outcomes, supports wellbeing, and fosters connection within our communities.

However, access to books and reading opportunities is not equal, and many children grow up in homes without children's books or bedtime stories. This inequality is compounded by children attending schools without a school library, author visits, or budgets for books.

At the [REDACTED] we provide children and their families with high quality picture books delivered to their home. Much of our work is in communities considered 'book deserts'. We see how families are transformed by the opportunity to read with their child, discuss books at the preschool gate, and see themselves reflected in pictures and stories.

That's why we need coordinated national action to support reading at every stage of life.

To ensure all Australians can access the benefits of reading, I would like to see the National Cultural Policy include:

National reading initiatives that encourage reading for pleasure across all ages, supporting families, children and young people to build regular reading habits.

Early childhood reading investment, ensuring every child has access to books in the home from birth, particularly in communities experiencing disadvantage.

Stronger support for schools, libraries and educators, including school libraries with professional staff and sustainable book collection funding.

Support for Australian stories and creators, showcasing diverse voices including First Nations authors and illustrators.

Investing in reading is an investment in Australia's future — strengthening education, wellbeing, and community connection.

Kind regards,

Alexandra