

National Cultural Policy Submission

1471318

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am an author and a teacher of creative writing.

Writing and reading are not only products or careers. For many people, they are primary ways of understanding the world and making it livable. More than livable. Profound and joyous, culturally nuanced and wonderful, worth being alive for! I write to hold the memory of the dead and to continue the lineage of communication that is only done through books. It is irreplaceable by any other art form or mode of communication.

I am not supported as an Australian author. I have contributed an award winning book, written for free. I have worked and over-worked as an author for free while raising children, and I have done this because writing and reading books is essential to a good life on earth.

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:

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.

Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing.

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:

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, 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.

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.

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