

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


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National Cultural Policy Submission

I am an award-winning writer of young adult and middle grade fiction whose books are published in Australia and internationally.

I'm one of many writers whose books have been stolen to train large language models and am a member of the recently settled US class action against Anthropic.

Writers are facing an increasingly precarious work environment, IP theft being just one of many challenges.

A key part of any healthy culture is a strong publishing industry, which must include properly remunerated authors and illustrators.

Without immediate and stronger support for authors and illustrators – established and emerging – the viability of our book industry is at risk: the golden goose is starving, typically earning an income from writing significantly below the poverty line.

Books and reading are the cornerstone of a well-educated, productive and creative population.

We need primary and secondary school students who are growing up reading, inspired to explore, discover and create.

Without immediate and stronger support for school libraries we will not improve the situation of one in three primary and secondary students not meeting basic national standards in reading and writing. Students need support to thrive.

Thriving doesn't simply mean having functional literacy; it means having access to reading for pleasure, with all the connection, conversation and critical thinking that flows from it. This can only be engendered through well-supported and appropriately staffed school libraries.

Becoming a reading nation must be a priority in our national cultural policy.

I am a member of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and support its submission to the national cultural policy along with those of Books Create Australia and the Australian Booksellers Association (ABA).

Fiona Wood
Writer

The Boy and the Dog Tree

How to Spell Catastrophe

Take Three Girls

Cloudwish

Wildlife

Six Impossible Things