

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

[REDACTED]

24 May 2026

Dear Minister for the Arts, Hon. Tony Burke MP and *Revive* policymakers,

I am a freelance editor and emerging writer currently in my final year of a PhD in Creative Nonfiction writing at The University of Queensland. I also hold professional positions as a casual research assistant at AustLit, the national database of Australian Literature, and as a casual events manager for a local independent bookshop in Meanjin/Brisbane, Queensland.

Firstly, I wish to recognise and celebrate the initiatives introduced in *Revive* thus far to assist with the sustainability of author and illustrator careers. There is much still to be done, however, in terms of long-term planning, coordination and viability for the sector.

Since the introduction of *Revive*, authors have been facing increasingly precarious conditions. In my experience (8+ years) working in the Arts and Higher Education industry, job insecurity and funding cuts have resulted in continuous precarity to the point where the only way I can continue to work in the industry I am trained for, and passionate about, is to hold **2–3 casual jobs**. For the past three years, the only stability afforded has been the RTP Scholarship (\$35K) while undertaking my PhD full-time. This is **unsustainable** both from a health and well-being perspective (particularly as someone navigating chronic illness), and also financially with non-primary employment being taxed at a significantly higher rate.

Aside from my individual situation, I wish to emphasise **the immense negative impact of AI on the entire creative sector**. AI is a substantial threat to the ecosystem of artists and their original creative outputs. The Australian Government **MUST** act now to ensure policy and guidelines protect authors and creators from this rapidly evolving technology. This is not only to protect and compensate Australian creators from their work being misappropriated and outright stolen by AI companies; this is also to stress widespread bias and misinformation that AI is proliferating, as well as the fallout from resource-heavy environmental devastation.

Without immediate support, we risk the imminent downfall of the book industry in Australia.

In this next iteration of *Revive*, I am calling for:

- Direct investment in authors and illustrators via:
 - Multi-year fellowships supporting mid-career authors, particularly writers and creators who identify as Indigenous, CALD, LGBTQIA+ and/or D/disabled.
 - Seed grants for emerging writers, particularly writers and creators who identify as Indigenous, CALD, LGBTQIA+ and/or D/disabled.
 - A top up to the Lending Rights budget, including provisions for audiobooks and other accessible formats.
 - A basic income pilot, involving 300 authors.

- Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing.
- Protections against, and compensation for, the unprecedented theft of Australian authors' work by AI and the multinational tech companies enabling mass piracy.

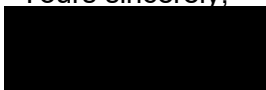
For instance:

- Transparency on copyright inputs for, and outputs from, generative AI
 - Structural, policy-driven solutions to bring multinational AI companies to the licensing table with Australian rightsholders
 - Adequate compensation for copyright holders whose work has been stolen.
- Tax reform to support author careers including **tax-free literary prizes and grants**, and a \$40,000 annual **tax-free threshold** for writers and illustrators.
- Adequate resourcing for Writing Australia to deliver:
 - Increased overall coordination between federal and state funding.
 - **Funding for AustLit, the national database of Australian Literature** to ensure longevity of legacy infrastructure, enhanced cybersecurity and dedicated operational funding to enable open access (currently the database is wholly reliant on subscriptions from schools, libraries and universities).
 - Commissioning of critically needed research to provide baseline data from which to measure the impact of AI on 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.
 - **Investment in national reading programs** in local and council libraries
 - **Investment in Humanities and Arts degrees** in Australian universities
 - **Subsidised subscriptions to AustLit** for Australian schools
 - Reversal of the failed Job-Ready Graduates program.

I wholly endorse the following submissions:

- Australian Society of Authors (ASA)
- Australian Publishers Association (APA)
- Books Create Australia
- Reading Australia
- AustLit

Yours sincerely,



Bianca Millroy