

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

Sunday, May 24, 2026

I am one of many Australian creatives whose work has been scraped to train AI models without compensation or consent.

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 arts and creatives industries in Australia.

I am primarily calling for solutions to the unprecedented theft of Australian creatives' work by multinational tech companies.

For example:

- * No exemptions to IP and copyright laws for the purposes of training AI models
- * Mandated transparency on copyright inputs for, and outputs from, generative AI models
- * Require AI companies to license copyright content as a condition of deploying their models in Australia
- * Provide ongoing compensation to the creators whose works have already been stolen and ingested by AI models
- * Guarantees that generative AI will not be used to replace or diminish the role of human creators in government-funded projects

In reference to AI companies licensing content, the University of NSW scientia professor of artificial intelligence Toby Walsh was recently quoted on the ABC as saying: "They're [the AI companies] worth hundreds of billions of dollars. They could easily pay Australian copyright holders for their content. Why are they being such cheapskates?"

I am also calling for:

- * School supports such as mandatory school libraries (with adequate resourcing) and a nationwide authors-in-schools program
- * Investment in authors and illustrators via multi-year fellowships for mid-career authors and seed money for emerging writers
- * Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing
- * 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

Yours sincerely,

M. Johnston