

Office for the Arts
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
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[REDACTED]

24 May, 2026

I am a multi-award winning author. I write for children and teenagers – my first two books have won awards (CBCA and Qld Literary Award) and my third book was published this month. I also work as a freelance editor and professional speaker in schools, running workshops and presenting talks as my royalties do not allow me to support myself or my family financially. At the moment, I am working six days a week to fit in my editing work, presenting at the recent Melbourne and Sydney Writers Festivals as well as regular school talks, and writing my next two books.

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:

- 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.
- Libraries in ALL primary and secondary schools with fully qualified librarians.
- Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing.
- Support for state writing centres such as Writers Victoria.

Solutions to the unprecedented theft of Australian authors' work by multinational tech companies operating within Australia:

- 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

- This includes 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 the ASA recommended rate, and that 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

Yours sincerely,

Karen Comer