

Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network
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The Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the National Cultural Policy consultation.

Who we are: The Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network is a not-for-profit incorporated body listed with the ACNC as a charitable organisation. Members are teacher-librarians, librarians, library aides and technicians from state and private schools and public libraries. The network coordinates the Ipswich and Somerset/Lockyer regional CBCA Qld Readers Cup competitions and delivers the Story Sports competition in partnership with Ipswich Libraries. A biennial festival of children's literature, *StoryArts Festival Ipswich*, was organised by the network from 1995 to 2024, free for all P-7 children to attend. From 2026, the IDTL Network is partnering with Storyfest to deliver *Storyfest West Moreton* annually. The network also publishes a book and online resources each year providing teachers, teacher-librarians and public librarians ideas for celebrating Children's Book Week. This helps fund the network's activities.

Jenny Stubbs coordinated the Network from 1989 to 20025. She is currently Vice-President of the Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network, past Director of StoryArts Festival Ipswich (1995 - 2025), President of Book Links Qld Inc (since 2011) and Coordinator of CBCA Qld Readers Cup (since 2004). She has been recognised for her commitment to literacy and engagement through reading and writing including winning the Dromkeen Librarians Award 2002, the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Qld Branch Dame Annabelle Rankin Award 2009, the Queensland Writers Centre Johnno Award 2009 and the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award 2023.

The Network has won multiple awards including Queensland Library Promotion Council: Library Promotion of the Year Award - Winner 1984 and Equal winner 1986, Education Queensland: Ipswich District - Showcase Award for Excellence 2000 - Equal First, Schooling 2001 Award - Education Queensland and International Association of School Librarianship - SIRS Commendation Award 2001.

Response to Pillar 2: A Place for Every Story

All Australian children deserve access to high-quality books that reflect their culture, and authors and events that build a love of reading.

- Provide more financial support for Readers and Writers Festivals in schools, author visit programs in schools such as LitUp and Storyfest, and programs that promote reading of quality Australian literature in schools such as Children's Book Council of Australia Readers Cup. (The Qld competition this year has over 900 teams competing this year in regional competitions equating to around 4363 children reading a total of 17,888 books. ACT introduced this competition a few years ago and NSW is running their first trial this year, both following the model of Qld.

- Provide public libraries and school libraries with stimulating physical facilities and resources, including qualified professional staff who can provide reader guidance to young readers, and ensure they have access to quality Australian literature in their collections.

Response to Pillar 3: Centrality of the Artist

We should support our Australian book creators so that they can earn a fair living from their work, enabling them to continue creating. Children will then be able to see themselves reflected in the books they read or have read to them.

- Continue support for literary prizes such as the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards that have promoted Australian creators for the past 80 years.
- Provide support for the organisations that assist emerging writers and illustrators such as Writers Centres and organisations like Book Links.
- Provide funding to schools for author visits so they can afford to pay a fair wage to the book creators.
- Establish State Centres for Story and a National Centre for Australian Children's Literature in Canberra where children can visit to celebrate our local book creators through interactive exhibitions, performances and programs based on books. The national centre would be the national archive for Australian Children's Literature.

Response to Pillar 4: Strong Cultural Infrastructure

Australia does not currently guarantee a library in every school, minimum standards for collections or staffing. In the past decade, there has been a decline in the number of teacher-librarians across Australia. Australia Reads recommends that the next National Cultural Policy mandate a library in every school with qualified staff and appropriate collection funding.

- Provide a qualified teacher librarian in every school or access to shared staff for smaller schools. This position should be mandated and not be used for non-contact cover or relief (unless as a last resort). Staffing levels should be based on student numbers with national guidelines provided for teacher-librarians and library support staff.
- Library collections should be developed according to minimum standards based on the school population and special needs. A well-resourced school library, led by a qualified teacher librarian, is one of the most effective interventions available for improving both literacy outcomes and the development of a lifelong reading habit.

Response to Pillar 5: Engaging the Audience

To get more children reading more often, we need targeted campaigns that increase the visibility of reading so that reading books is a norm.

- Invest in campaigns that encourage reading such as Australia Reads and parent and child book clubs in schools.
- A national reading campaign supporting book creators in bookshops, public libraries and schools.



Sincerely,



Jenny Stubbs

Vice-President Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network www.idtl.net.au

