

Submission to:

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

[REDACTED]

23.5.26

I write to you as an author, my three novels, *An Accidental Terrorist*, (UQP), *88 Lines About 44 Women*, (Penguin), and *Hinterland*, (UQP), all either won or were short-listed for major literary awards, both in Australia and the wider Commonwealth. I have also been the co-director of the independent extended writer's festival Outspoken Maleny for the last 16 years, interviewing national and international authors in an in-conversation format.

I live in Queensland.

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:

Direct investment in authors and illustrators via:

- 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.

I also wish to see:

Investment in First Nations-led writing and publishing.

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, including 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,

Steven Lang