

National Cultural Policy Submission

Going Down Swinging

Submitted: as a not-for-profit arts organisation.

What challenges and opportunities do you see in the pillar or pillars most relevant to you?

– A place for every story/ Strong institutions

The fragility of arts funding and the very small portion of it that goes to literary organisations is likely to wipe out the industry's most interesting and diverse and exciting artforms first. It threatens first those organisations most in touch with the emerging and under-represented writers, those who are not already vaunted and familiar with the pathways towards publication and support.

The literary and publishing field has very high barriers for entry, with unpaid internships and incredibly low pay for writing the absolute norm. A spate of articles and research published in the last five years— from ABC, the Guardian, Hack, Kill Your Darlings, Books+Publishing, et al.— reflects the tendency of unpaid internships to reinscribe social divisions. Their prevalence in the arts and media sector effectively excludes those without family support or independent means.

Adequate funding for writing organisations should provide an alternate entry point for emerging editors from financially disadvantaged/low socio-economic backgrounds. Diversification of representation in publishing roles will promote a long-term cultural shift in editorial practice, culture and priorities.

A place for every story starts with resilient institutions and funding that meets the realities of literary production – funding that recognises the creative and vital support of editors and operations included.

Please tell us how each of the 5 pillars are important to you and your practice and why.

– A place for every story/ Strong Institutions

Going Down Swinging is both one of Australia's longest running lit journals (over forty years) and one of Australia's foremost avenues for experimental and hybrid writing. We offer a unique home to writing that pushes at the boundaries of form as well as demonstrating a commitment to developing the work of emerging and under-represented writers.

In 2022, our usual funding program (one that we have depended upon for over five years as our main source of organisational funding) disappeared without warning. The grant did not open. We are currently at risk of closing indefinitely.

We offer a steppingstone to writers, a way to traverse their way up the chain of youth-based publications towards the top tier of publications. Without adequate support, we can't continue and would take our valuable offering to Australia's literary landscape, one upon which careers have been built, out of action.

At Going Down Swinging, we're committed to providing a platform for high quality publications and events that support writers and artists to tell stories worth sharing. We foster new work and support this by valuing the work of editors and the development for those voices still emerging. We can only continue and sustain this if bolstered by sustained, robust and realistic financial support.