

# National Cultural Policy Submission

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## Submission on National Cultural Policy

I am a Visual Arts educator working part time in an inner city primary school in Melbourne and I have been a practicing children's book author/illustrator for nearly twenty years. I have observed firsthand the benefits of Australian stories in the development and engagement of our young learners in the classroom. School libraries are fundamental in promoting our stories and need to be maintained and supported. All Australian schools and all Australian children should have access to quality library resources. Our stories are vital to our nation's pulse, prosperity and cultural development.

In my role as a supporting creator on the Australian stand at the Bologna Children's Book Fair in 2016 and 2017, I was fortunate to experience the popularity of Australian Children's Books in the international market. The feedback from many of the international publishers and associations attending the fair was extremely favourable, specifically in regards to the depth and diversity of our Australian stories and creators. The response to our indigenous First Nation stories and publications were extremely popular and attracted strong interest.

I would like to see appropriate and proportionate remuneration, funding and development for immersive cultural programs that would incorporate creative authors, illustrators and First Nation cultural leaders into all Australian primary schools. Having worked in many extra curriculum programs providing these immersive face to face experiences, I have observed positive student responses from varied learning abilities. Students demonstrated extended attention, curiosity and passionate inquiry. The learning environment is always enhanced by quality personal connections which illuminate the students engagement and evoke emotional experiences. A visiting author / illustrator or cultural leader can share stories and bring them to life in a familiar environment with new perspectives. These learning experiences are collaborative and formative for many students and are often mentioned in student reflections throughout their schooling as highlights and significant memories.

Personal visits from cultural leaders such as First Nation Artists and facilitators help children to make authentic learning connections that are real and relevant. Students develop resilience, respect and awareness of others who role model other ways of knowing from new perspectives. The whole school community is extended with new skills and knowledge from local artists and cultural leaders.

Authors are at the heart of our national culture but are struggling to make a basic living.

The literature sector needs Government support to reach its full potential and to nurture the talent of the future. There is an exciting opportunity to introduce policy settings to support authors' work,

invest in the creative economy and enjoy the cultural, social, educational, health and economic dividends that follow.

I do give permission for my submission to be made public and published on the Office for the Arts website.

Yours sincerely,

*Anne Ryan*  
*Author/Illustrator/Visual Arts Educator*

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