

National Cultural Policy Submission



The Small Press Network

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Founded in 2006, the Small Press Network represents over 250 small and independent Australian book publishers. Our members range from one-person, one-book self-publishers to some of the best-known, award-winning publishers in the country. We welcome the opportunity to participate in this important policy review.

Following consultation with our board and members, we make the following suggestions for cultural policy reforms that will strengthen the vibrant, diverse and essential small press sector.

1. We need a plan, a policy forum, and new funds for books and reading that reflect the entire book community.
2. Government must approach publishing as a creative industry facing unique disruptions, risks and opportunities. This is all the more so for small publishers.
3. We call for increased Government support targeting First Nations writers, mentorships, publishing and rights/export development.
4. There is a strong need for targeted support for independent publishers (including self-publishers) via project and multi-year funding. This would facilitate independent publishing's role as an incubator for new writers and new ideas.
5. Re-fund the Australia Council to offer many more writers (and illustrators) a living wage as they write.
6. Reform of the Lending Rights scheme is needed urgently to include digital lending rights.
7. Make books (and ebooks and audiobooks) GST-exempt.
8. There is a need for government support for the publishing, literary and reading NGOs that constitute a key part of the sector's infrastructure.
9. Valuing Australian content in schools and teaching institutions and valuing the journal publishers featuring Australian research and literary journals that give so many Australian writers their start.
10. Taking Australian voices to the world and the development of global markets. Increased funding for smaller publishers to attend book fairs. Permanently staffed positions in London, New York and Beijing to support attendance at book fairs and facilitate rights deals.

11. Introduce a book postal rate so Australian booksellers and publishers are on an even playing field with overseas online retailers.
12. Return of the print bounty to encourage local printing.
13. Support for Australia Reads: an ongoing national reading campaign.
14. The government prioritise a copyright regime that ensures creators and rights holders are appropriately remunerated for the sharing, use, and copying of their works, including by governments, the education sector, and taxpayer-funded institutions.
15. One-off government support to retool the information infrastructure supporting the national supply chain will 'future-proof' the industry and grow reader participation. We also need support to make the book supply chain greener and more sustainable.