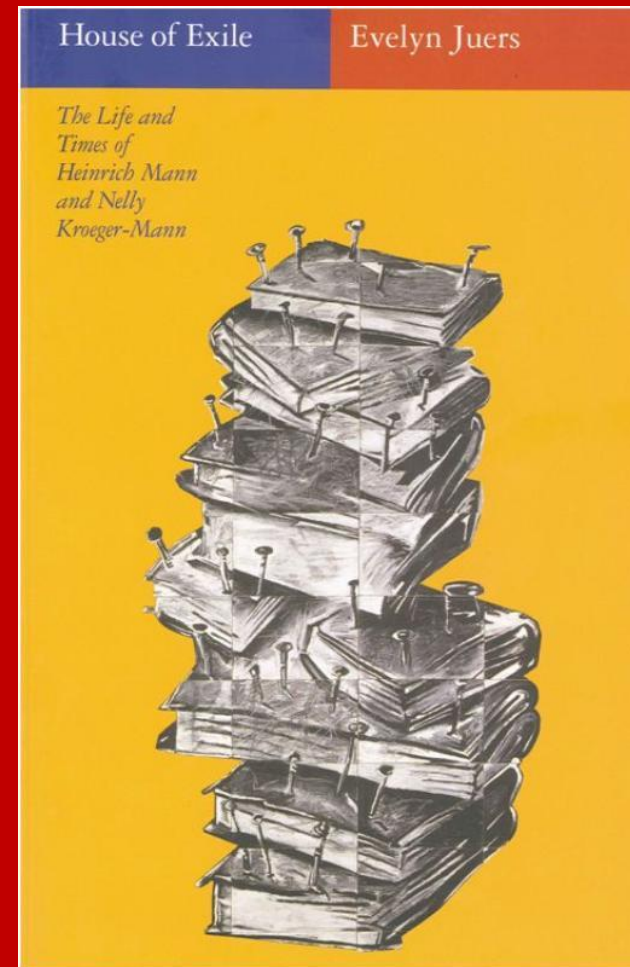


# Literature sector plan 2011-2012



## 1.1 The Literature Sector in Australia

The literature sector in Australia comprises the writing, publishing and performance of literary fiction, non-fiction, poetry and play-scripts for adults and children through print, media and the performing arts.

*The Economic Analysis of Literary Publishing in Australia*, commissioned by the Australia Council and published in 2008, identified 234 businesses as book publishers. Sixty percent of the books sold in Australia originate from Australia. Approximately 22% of books sold are those termed as 'literary'. Of those surveyed, 72% of literary publishers were situated in New South Wales and Victoria.

The past five years have seen increased exposure to and respect from the international market for Australian writers. Australian authors are regularly short-listed for major international awards including the Man Booker, the Commonwealth, the Orange and the Pulitzer awards. Australian capital city writers' festivals are now among the largest in the world and in recent years have been joined by a proliferation of festivals in regional towns across the country.

The Australia Council's 2009 report on Australian Participation in the Arts indicated that 84% of Australians identify themselves as readers (the highest participation in any artform) and 16% as writers.

Nationally, increased media attention to literary prizes, and the new Prime Minister's awards have increased the respect Australians have for their writers. There is a new vibrancy in the field of Australian literature. Writers are moving beyond the confines of a national identity to engage with a wider perspective and the issues that confront us all.

They are assisted by the arrival of the digital era. The conversion of text into e-book formula has been embraced by Australian publishers. It is now commonplace for publishers, large and small, to market their books in both paper and digital format. Book-lovers can now buy from a range of e-book readers, with prices decreasing annually. Blogging, social networking and e-marketing are adding to the distribution and appreciation of Australian books, particularly in the field of children's and young adult fiction.

## 1.2 The Literature Sector and the Australia Council

The Australia Council, through its Literature Board supports a broad range of literary activities including writing, publishing, reading and debate. Board and staff members meet and consult regularly with the sector to ensure that the Board is meeting current needs in a rapidly changing environment.

Through its funding programs, the Literature Board funds the creation of literary works with direct grants to authors, giving them the time and space to write. Authors may also apply for residencies at the Australia Council's Paris or Rome studios, or organise their own

interstate or international residency projects.

Writers from across the country regularly apply for the Australia Council's ArtStart grants, allowing recent graduates to take their first steps in a career as a professional artist. In addition, in partnership with its stakeholders in the publishing industry, the Literature Board funds skills-development programs for book editors.

Over the past four years, the Literature Board has been particularly active in the area of digital writing and publishing. There is now a separate category within the New Work funding program to support writing for the new media and Literature Board staff meet regularly with other sections of the Australia Council that support this growing creative field.

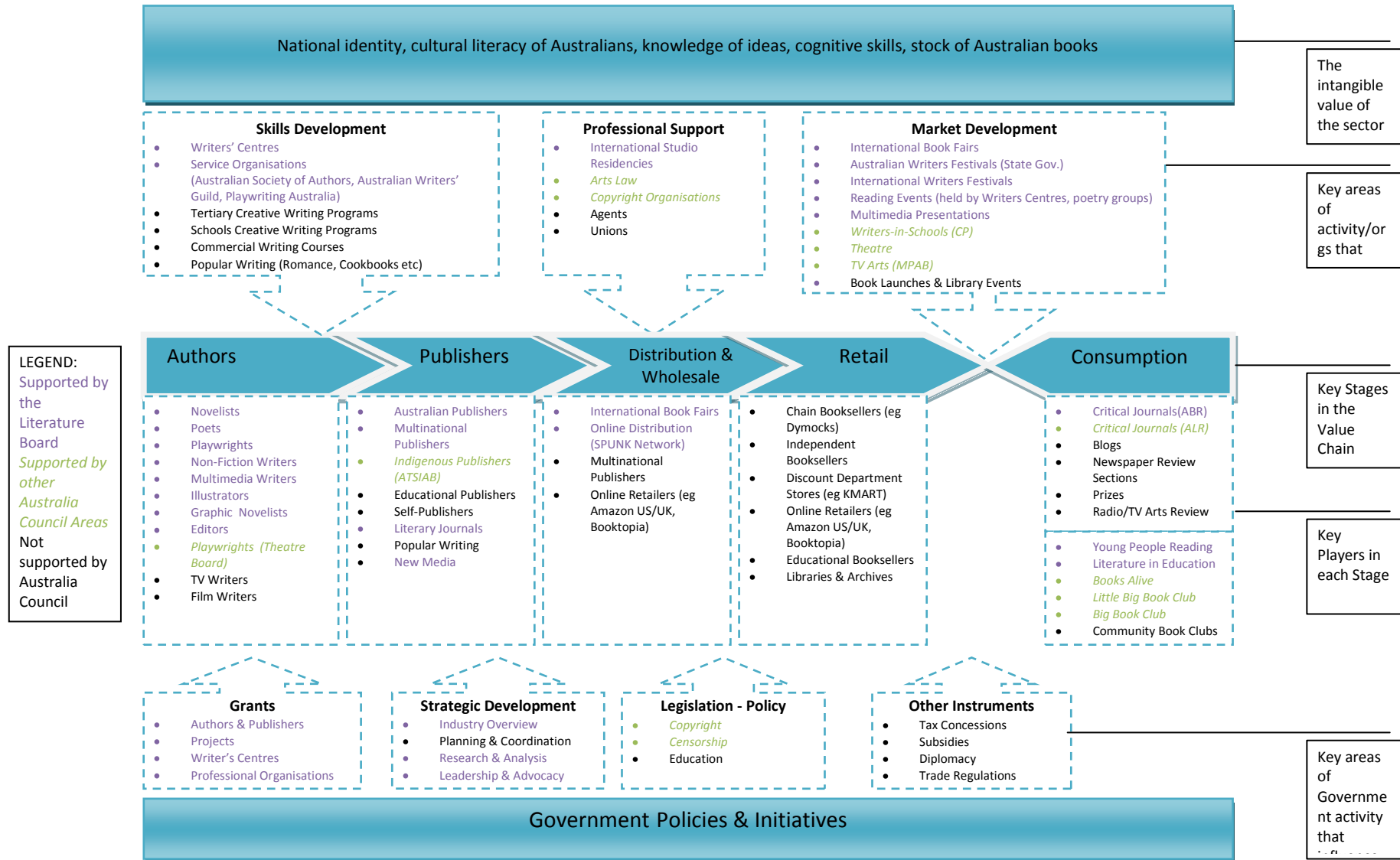
The Board acknowledges that the Australian publishing industry is experiencing rapid change, brought about by the introduction of digital technology and the e-reader. As a step towards improving its support of the publishing industry, from the beginning of 2012 the Board will fund publishers through program grants, rather than by individual title. This will enable publishers to use Australia Council funding in their areas of greatest need.

Grants to overseas publishers and to literary magazines and journals will remain the same. The Board continues to acknowledge the importance of providing Australian authors with a range of opportunities to present their work and generate income.

In 2010 the Literature Board completed its review of literature's triennially-funded key organisations and agreed a new structure to be in place from the beginning of 2011. This sector now includes Australia's leading literary journals and a range of writers centres who support writing and publishing across all genres. Two new emerging writers' organisations, Australian Poetry Limited and Writing Australia will work over the 2011/13 triennium to develop new programs to promote and support a vibrant literary sector.

The Australia Council also supports programs that encourage infrequent readers to read more good books. In addition to Literature Board grants through its Promotions Category, the Australia Council funds the attendance of Australian publishers at international book fairs and the national Get Reading program, to encourage new readers to enjoy books by both Australian and international authors. The annual Visiting International Publishers program brings international publishers and

# 1.3 The Australian Literature Sector Ecosystem



## Sector issues of concern to the Literature Board

- E-publishing, blogging and writing for multi-media applications are part of a volatile and fashion-conscious creative arena. The challenge for funding programs is to keep pace with change, without losing sight of the Literature Board's key policy to support excellence in writing and publishing.
- Increases in the cost of living make it more and more difficult for writers to find 'time out' to write. New Work funding becomes increasingly important as a means of support and should be expanded.
- Support for Australian publishers has been static for the past ten years, decreasing in real terms. With increased costs to publishers for digital conversion as well as print publishing, the Literature Board recognises the need for an increase in financial support to the small to medium Australian publishing sector.
- With the competing attractions of screen and hand-held devices, Australian children must not lose their love of stories and pictures, whether they are delivered digitally or in book-form.
- Within the context of a relatively small national marketplace for literary writing, it is vital for Australian writers to break into more lucrative international markets.

# 1.4 Literature Board Goals 2011-2012

## Goals and Key Performance Indicators

### Promote the value of literature to Australian culture

- Literature summit planned and scheduled
- Attendance by Literature Board members to at least four major festivals
- Regular contributions to Australia Council social media outlets

### Encourage innovation and cultural diversity in the literature sector

- Number of grants offered for multimedia writing projects
- Recruitment of board member with digital expertise
- Seminars for new writers offered nationwide

### Support a sustainable literature sector

- Revised structure for publishing grants advertised and promoted
- Seminar on philanthropic funding offered to literature key organisations
- At least six small/medium publishers attending overseas book fairs

### Provide income-generating opportunities for writers

- Maintain number of new work grants offered to the sector
- At least two promotional activities for literary journals
- At least eight writers attending overseas festivals
- Established three-year partnership with Edinburgh International Book Fair
- Established three-year poetry tour of Ireland

# 1.5 Literature Board Work Plan 2011-2012

## 1. Promote the value of literature to Australian culture

- Plan a national summit on Literary Writing and Publishing for 2012
- Encourage Literature Board members to participate in writers' festivals and promote the sector
- Promote Literature's activities and clients through the Australia Council's Facebook
- Increase media attention to funded writers, particularly the Fellowship and Emeritus Award

## 2. Encourage innovation and diversity in the literature sector

- Fund writing for multimedia through the New Work grants category
- Recruit literature board expertise in digital writing and production
- Contribute to Australia Council digital programs
- Commission a seminar series designed to offer skills and information to writers from a non-English speaking background

## 3. Support a sustainable literature sector

- Increase funding for Australian publishers
- Provide program grants for Australian publishers
- Provide skilling workshops in accessing philanthropic funds to literature key organizations
- Support training for literary editors
- Promote Australian publishers' attendance at international book fairs
- Support programs which encourage a growing readership for Australian Literature

## 4. Provide income-generating opportunities for writers

- Maintain the level of funding offered through the New Work categories
- Support Australian writers' festivals
- Promote and support the publishing and readership of Australian literary journals
- Encourage applications from overseas writers' festivals
- Promote Australian Literature internationally
- Support the translation of Australian literature