



THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF AUTHORS
TE PUNI KAITUHI O AOTEAROA (PEN NZ INC)

23 October 2025

To the Honourable Erica Stanford
To the Honourable Paul Goldsmith,

Dear Minister Stanford and Minister Goldsmith,

We have written to you both recently, to highlight the critical need for investment in books, literature, school libraries and reading, and provided links to studies and data that support the correlation between local content and school libraries, and literacy, life outcomes and achievement. That letter received no reply.

Visionary international campaigns have just been launched, receiving global press, and we submit four links below to bring these to your attention.

Books and reading and the literature sector are in desperate need of investment and advocacy within government. While appreciating fiscal constraints, given the links between literacy, reading for pleasure and educational achievement, and improved social, health, justice, and well-being outcomes, we believe investment should be prioritised, with a joined-up approach through government, as is being done in countries to which New Zealand is closely aligned.

We want NZ to be a clever country, yet the book sector is ghettoised within the creative sector and lacks any champion in government. Books and reading were not mentioned within the 35-page Amplify Arts Strategy, therefore rendered invisible, despite it being a linchpin of the creative industries. Public Lending Right reform evaporated from the draft strategy, despite it being the only compensation mechanism for the government requisition of authors work (private property), via copyright act exceptions, that mandate free public access through libraries.

The NZSA calls for a strategy to address this and to champion books and reading. Books remain the only artform/creative industry without dedicated investment, advocacy, or agency, within government. We attach again, the MCH chart displaying arts and recreation entities currently worthy of investment.

These international initiatives are impressive:

[England to have a library in every state primary school by 2029 in new funding announcement](#)

[NSW Government announce \\$3.2 million investment in writing and literature strategy](#)

[Go All In: UK National Year of Reading 2026 promo video](#)

[Revive – Arts strategy includes new strategy for literature: <https://creative.gov.au/writing-australia>](#)

A national hui on reading is taking place November 5 at the National Library to champion literacy; the Coalition for Books has recently launched a book sector strategy Mahi Tahī to 2030 – and we ask for meaningful support and priority investment.

Books and Reading receive no dedicated attention across government.

The Coalition for Books is a sector-led organisation that works to make NZ books and writers more visible and to champion literacy. The NZSA is a founding member. The Coalition has one part-time worker, 10 hours a week, and is operated by volunteers, who already have full-time roles across an exhausted sector. The Coalition is allocated \$75k to operate for 2026, through a contestable funding round from Creative NZ. The NZSA has over 1800 members, has 2 x FTE and will receive \$100k in 2026 from Creative NZ.



The NZSA requests an urgent meeting to discuss sector outcomes, investment and increased resourcing across the literature and literacy sector.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Vanda Symon
President
The New Zealand
Society of Authors

Jenny Nagle
Chief Executive
Te Puni Kaitiaki o
Aotearoa

NZSA is the principal organisation representing over 1800 writers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Founded in 1934, we administer prizes and awards, provide professional development opportunities, offer mentorship and assessment programmes, trade discounts, share communications, and industry news, and provide spaces for writers to meet up via a regional network of 9 branches with online and in-person regional and national events. NZSA collaborates across the book sector to make NZ writing and NZ writers more visible. We advocate for writers' rights and champion fair reward. NZSA is a not-for-profit incorporated society and a registered charitable entity.