MELBOURNE

UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Monitoring Report reflects on the specific activity initiated by the Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature Office between 2017 and 2020. This period included the 10th anniversary of Melbourne as a UNESCO City of Literature.

The report reflects on activities that were outlined in our first Monitoring report as described in that report's Attachment 2 - Strategic plan 2017-2019. It is noted that as we plan strategically on a three year funding cycle our plan included in this one includes the year the report was written in. It should be noted that writing a report that includes the time period you are reporting on is challenging and in the main this report isn't in a position to comment on 2020.

The Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature Office is a joint initiative of Creative Victoria and City of Melbourne and is hosted by The Wheeler Centre. Opened in 2014, the Office works towards the Creative City goals as well as towards the goals and direction of its steering group.

These following areas address the aims of the Creative City Network as well as the needs for Melbourne as a City of Literature:

1 CONNECTING THE CITY OF LITERATURE

2 REFLECTING THE CITY OF LITERATURE

3 SUPPORTING THE CITY OF LITERATURE

The Office has three streams of activity to work on the above aims:

■ **Strategic initiatives** One-off programming led by the Office.

■ **Partnership programs** Initiatives working with partner organisations to support their activities when they are addressing one of our strategy areas.

■ **International exchanges** Programs that begin in Melbourne, in partnership with another Creative City, that have the ability to travel and be used around the network.

The following report will frame its responses to the outlined areas of the UCCN through referring to the above framework. This report is more qualitative than quantitative and with the limits of report size only provides an overview of each outlined activity. This report speaks little of the advocacy, communication, and leadership that a City of Literature Office is required to do as a part of its day to day.

The UNESCO Creative Cities Directorate included the aspirations for Creative Cities to program towards the Sustainable Development Goals in the middle of this reporting period. As such activities are not directly linked back to these goals, although many can be so linked.

Melbourne is of course a big and dynamic Creative City and reporting on the work of the Office pays a disservice to the richness of activity happening. This report takes the opportunity to touch on some activity independent of the Office programming as well as reflecting quantitatively on the level of activity that Melbourne has as a leading Literary City.

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Name of the city **Melbourne**

2.2 Country **Australia**

2.3 Creative field of designation **Literature**

2.4 Date of designation **November 2008**

2.5 Date of submission of the current report **November 2020**

2.6 Entity responsible for the report
Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature Office

2.7 Previous reports submitted and dates **November 2016**

2.8 Focal points of contact, including:

David Ryding
Director
Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature Office
c/o The Wheeler Centre
176 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne Victoria 3000

Michael Hudson
Director, Strategy, Screen and Design
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Melbourne Victoria 3000

3 CONTRIBUTION

to the network's global management

3 CONTRIBUTION
to the network's global management

3.1 Number of UCCN annual meetings attended in the last four years **Two. One missed and one cancelled due to COVID-19.**

A representative from Melbourne City of Literature has attended all City of Literature annual meetings held during this period.

3.2 Hosting of a UCCN annual meeting and dates **No**

3.3 Hosting of a working or coordination meeting addressed to one or more specific UCCN creative field representatives **Yes**

3.4 Hosting of an international conference or meeting on specific issues salient to the Creative Cities with a large participation of members of the Network **Yes**

3.5 Financial and/or in-kind support provided to UNESCO's Secretariat in order to ensure the management, communication and visibility of the UCCN (type of contribution, estimated value, main objectives, and dates) **N/A**

3.6 Serving as cluster coordinator or deputy coordinator and period **Representative of Literature sub-network Krakow General Summit 2018.**

3.7 Participation in the evaluation of previous applications (number of applications evaluated per Call for Application), of previous Membership Monitoring Reports (number of reports evaluated per reporting exercise) **All applications assessed 2017 and 2019. Melbourne fully participated in the evaluation of Monitoring Reports in 2019 and 2020.**

MELBOURNE IS A CITY OF LITERATURE

Author Bruce Pascoe, has been brought on board by The University of Melbourne's Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences as their new Melbourne Enterprise Professor in Indigenous Agriculture.

Pascoe's bestselling nonfiction book, *Dark Emu*, and its younger readers counterpart *Young Dark Emu* uses primary resources to examine Australia's history, and explores the agricultural and engineering methods used by First Nations people, challenging widely held views on what Australia was like before European occupation. It offers up the idea that there is much to be learned from Indigenous culture and landcare.

Pascoe's work with both *Dark Emu*, which was selected for the inaugural Parliamentary Book Club, and his new faculty role which is "designed to build knowledge, understanding, engagement and research in Indigenous agriculture within the Faculty" means that the environmental lessons in his book and from his research will reach a wider audience and potentially have a significant impact on how Australia handles the ongoing environmental crisis.

This activity by University Of Melbourne addresses SDG Goal 15: Life on Land

4 MAJOR INITIATIVES

implemented **at the local level**

to achieve the objectives of the UCCN

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implemented at the local level to achieve the objectives of the UCCN

4.1 PARLIAMENT OF THE CITY OF LITERATURE

A support and connect the City of Literature activity

The Parliament of the City of Literature was an event bringing all the 'citizens' of the City of Literature together for a parliament to look at and challenge the future of Melbourne as a City of Literature as part of the 10th anniversary of our designation. This was half conference and half town hall meeting. This program addressed how literature, and the City of Literature, can work towards the UNESCO 2030 goals.

The Parliament was designed to be a moment for a snapshot of our City of Literature to reflect what we hoped for when we became a UNESCO City of Literature, as well as a vision of what we should work towards. It was aimed, as the majority of our 10th anniversary celebrations, to reinforce that all of Melbourne is a City of Literature. Many times people just refer to the Office as the City of Literature, forgetting that the designation extends across everything. It was also designed for stakeholders to appreciate that the Office was there for them and they could have an influence on its direction.

It was also designed to be a celebration, unlike the usual VIP drinks events. It was also combined with a storytelling event the night before, **Our City of Literature at 10**, which was a sell-out event.

Parliament's success at visioning was pronounced. The result of the Parliament was the drafting of suggested 'laws' and a feeling of enthusiasm and energy at the opportunities of being a UNESCO Creative City.

The laws were:

1 Create or change existing institutions to make them more appealing and accessible to all members of the literary community

2 Commitment to improving representation in the literary community and its industries

3 Protecting and improving financial remuneration for artistic labour

4 Providing support for educational and literary organisations and spaces

5 Continue to broaden the City of Literature's (and its constituents) interpretation of what constitutes literature

6 Resourcing development programmes that provide personal and professional support for all members of the literary industry

7 Decolonise the structures of literature to combat erasure and acknowledge sovereignty of Indigenous people, languages and stories

▶

Over 2019 the Office worked with 12 professionals from across our City of Literature, who in the main had been part of the Parliament, in designing the **2020 - 2022 Strategic plan**.

This group looked at what the Office has done, where Melbourne was in 2019 as a city of literature, and visioned a future raft of activities for the Office. This group created a snapshot of the health of, and challenges for, the literary sector.

The Parliament was a unique event in the life of Melbourne as a literary City. I believe the 10th anniversary is the ideal one to celebrate and also to challenge the core reasons for being in the network. For Melbourne, who has been part of a now very different moment, it was essential for us to reconnect with what being a Creative City really meant. The Parliament of the City of Literature succeeded with its aims and provided a starting point for a successful visioning. We look forward to revisiting it in 2030.

Of note four Cities of Literature visited for the Parliament – Edinburgh, Krakow, Iowa City and Reykjavik. Aside from participating in the Parliament as Observers they also had a chance to experience the cultural life of Melbourne as well as attend a roundtable with the participants of the Edinburgh Exchange program. A reflection for Justyna Joachim from Krakow can be found **here**.

Videos of the Parliament can be found **here**.

> **This strategy addressed goals 3, 4, 5 and 6 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Develop hubs of creativity and innovation and broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector
>
> ■ Improve access to and participation in cultural life, as well as enjoyment of cultural goods
>
> ■ Fully integrate culture and creativity into local development strategies and plans

4.2 READING VICTORIA

A reflect the City of Literature activity

Reading Victoria was a series of short pieces (stories, non-fiction etc.) that were set in/dedicated to/inspired by the suburbs of Melbourne and across Victoria and released weekly for free.

As with all 10th anniversary celebrations it was essential that we highlighted that Melbourne was the City of Literature, not the Office. It was also important that we reflected back to Melbourne the quality and diversity of what makes us a City of Literature.

Reading Victoria was made up of 60 pieces of writing, of any style and genre, which was edited by five editors. Each editor commissioned a few pieces as well as responding to an open call out which saw over 400 submissions.

On average each piece was read by 3000 through a combination of subscription and social media sharing. It concluded to be a positive program and with an average of 2500 readers per post with 10,000 readers for Nayukia Gorrie's piece on Fitzroy. We also co-produced an audio tour of Reading Victoria which was listenable on the Melbourne Eye wheel as part of Melbourne Writers Festival.

As a publishing project Reading Victoria was successful but it was always a celebration of the range of writers that make us a City of Literature and for that it achieved the goals we set for it. It is a legacy program as well, and we have made use of much of the work in exchanges with our sister Cities of Literature and their projects. For example, Heidelberg's World Poetry Book has two Reading Victoria pieces within it.

Reading Victoria can be viewed **here**.

> **This strategy addressed goal 3 and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services at the local level.
>
> ■ Improve access to and participation in cultural life, as well as enjoyment of cultural goods

4.3 REGIONAL FESTIVALS SUPPORT

A support the City of Literature activity

Melbourne City of Literature Office has a regional focus across our state of Victoria. Within this state there are 23 separate literary festivals and event organisations. These festivals are massively under-resourced, often isolated from peers, with no long term security. Despite this, they deliver results which extend beyond standard literary programming and into community development and health.

The Office has looked at ways to support them, resource them, and enable them to deliver their festivals as effectively possible.

The main thing we have done is an annual roundtable convened for the last four years.

The roundtable is a two-day event where regional literary programmers come together to share best practice, problem solve local issues, and connect. Hosted by the Office this event has seen every festival in Victoria attend once, and half of them attend every year.

From this program we have looked for strategies to support them, as well as provide a constant place of contact for questions. One strategy included a unique **map of the festivals** that was circulated to Libraries and Councils across the state.

We have also initiated a regional reporters scheme to promote their work. This was a simple program using non-traditional reporters to ▶

highlight the work of a range of festivals. Some of their work can be found **here**.

The Regional Festivals Support highlights that much of the work of a Creative City Office falls between the cracks. We provide a focal point for our City to look for opportunity, to look for resources and to look for support.

Feedback from regional literary programmers can be found **here**.

> **This strategy addressed goals 2, 3, 4, and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Stimulate and enhance initiatives led by member cities to make creativity an essential component of urban development, notably through partnerships involving the public and private sectors and civil society
>
> ■ Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services at the local level
>
> ■ Develop hubs of creativity and innovation and broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector
>
> ■ Improve access to and participation in cultural life, as well as enjoyment of cultural goods

4.4 TOOLKITS

A connect and support the City of Literature activity

The Toolkit series are one off programs designed for one area of the City of Literature to professionally develop another as a method of both connecting them as well as providing professionals development.

The term "Melbourne – a City of literature" covers a wide range of stakeholders. Libraries, booksellers, publishers, writers, readers,

literary organisations, schools... the list goes on. In a City of this much activity, with this much population, there is a lot going on – but many times the circles of activity don't cross over. This was an activity (piloted in 2019) to see if we can influence these circles to interact more.

In 2019 we partnered with the Emerging Writers' Festival to run a one-day masterclass for librarians called Booked Up as part of that year's festival. This was a full-day masterclass focused on innovative programming that fosters creative communities. In short – how can librarians learn off literary programmers when planning their libraries programming and outreach. The Office resourced it and provided oversight in the programming.

With all of our library services running programming the need to look at the how and why of doing it seemed a good first opportunity. This program sold out with a high level of positive feedback from the librarians involved and a desire for continued work in this area.

The Office is looking for perceived need for the next Toolkits series as well as programming that it itself can run to help resource and support Melbourne as a City of Literature.

> **This strategy addressed goals 3, 4, and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services at the local level
>
> ■ Develop hubs of creativity and innovation and broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector
>
> ■ Improve access to and participation in cultural life, as well as enjoyment of cultural goods

> **MELBOURNE IS A CITY OF LITERATURE**
>
> **100 Story Building** is an organisation dedicated to fostering creativity, imagination and literacy in children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Throughout the year they run a series of free programs that focus on storytelling, using this as a springboard to help children have their voices heard, to build up their confidence, and pave the way for future success.
>
> One innovation is 100 Story Building's **Story Hubs**, which are physical spaces co-designed with the young people who will be using them, to encourage imagination "outside the boundaries of their classroom".
>
> In 2020 however, as face-to-face interactions are less and less possible, the Story Hubs program was extended and built upon, with the organisation offering 16 Story Hubs educators **professional learning sessions** to help them tackle the challenge of remote learning, offering techniques on how to keep students engaged and stimulated in an online classroom environment.
>
> **This activity by 100 Story Building addresses SDG Goal 4: Quality Education**

5 MAJOR INITIATIVES

implemented **through inter-city cooperation** **to achieve the objectives of the UCCN**

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implemented through inter-city cooperation to achieve the objectives of the UCCN

5.1 EDINBURGH EXCHANGE

A connect the City of Literature activity

A biennial exchange program between Melbourne and Edinburgh literary programmers. In 2018 we sent seven programmers to spend eight days in Edinburgh. They attended Edinburgh International Literature Festival, a roundtable session, professional development activities, and one on one meetings. They also visited Dundee (City of Design) and Glasgow (City of Music). This program was coordinated by us in partnership with the Edinburgh Office.

Outwardly looking, Melbourne is largely isolated from the rest of the network. This has two effects: firstly, we do not have an easy opportunity to reflect on the depth of reasons of why we are a City of Literature or, more bluntly, how good we are. Secondly, it is hard for Australian writing to travel and as a result to build new international audiences and connections. This program was initiated to address these challenges.

The following people travelled to Edinburgh for this opportunity: Marian Blythe (Homecooked Comics Festival), Christine Gordon (Readings Bookstore), Izzy Roberts-Orr (Emerging Writers' Festival), Maryanne Vagg (Geelong Regional Libraries), Khalid Warsame (Footscray Community Arts Centre) and Helen Withycombe (The Wheeler Centre). They were joined by Julia Tsalis from NSW Writers' Centre who received independent Copyright Agency funding.

The program provided an impactful opportunity for the participants which has resulted in ongoing relationships and opportunities between the participants, their organisations and contacts they made in Scotland. The 10 days program saw 20 potential partnerships established between the delegates and the 22 Scottish cultural organisations that participated

It has become an ongoing initiative for the Office looking to visit other sister Cities of Literature.

This group was also used by the Office to connect with international visitors including the delegation of Cities of Literature directors who attended the Parliament of the City of Literature.

Feedback from participants can be found **here**.

This strategy addressed goals 1, 4, and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:

- Strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development

- Develop hubs of creativity and innovation and broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector

- Improve access to and participation in cultural life, as well as enjoyment of cultural good.

5.2 SLAM O VISION

A connect & reflect the City of Literature activity

Slam O Vision was a spoken word version of Eurovision involving a group of the Cities of Literature.

As previously highlighted Melbourne is distinct from the network and while we do utilise travels, connection activity resources don't permit us to rely on physical travel. We constantly look for online initiatives to connect us, and through that connection reflect the network back to Melbourne and of course Melbourne to the network.

Our model is to design a platform within Melbourne and initially host it then pass the online resource around. Slam O Vision is the third time we have undertaken this process.

Slam O Vision can be argued to be just a colour and movement activity but its foundation is a little more solid. Firstly, it highlighted an area of literary activity which is robust and active but often forgotten in our world of publishing and awards – the spoken word artists. An area of literary activity which is universal across our network.

Secondly, it aimed to highlight one of the greatest challenges, and strengths, of the network –mother tongue. No other network within the UNESCO Creative Cities is so challenged by language but also celebratory. Slam O Vision was a celebration of this.

In all 11 Cities took part with their own local level guided activity which resulted in a video entry. These video entries were followed by a time of online voting. Melbourne conducted an online competition via our Facebook page as well as linking with Melbourne Spoken Word. All the Cities scoring were then announced at a finale held as part of the Melbourne Writers Festival.

The finale at Melbourne Writers Festival was well appreciated and well attended and the website keeps gaining viewership. The next stage of this project is passing the web infrastructure onto the next City and coordinating the project with them and hopefully see it grow

Slam O Vision can be viewed **here**.

> **This strategy addressed goals 1, 3, and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development
>
> ■ Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services at the local level
>
> ■ Improve access to and participation in cultural life, as well as enjoyment of cultural goods

5.3 SLEIPNIR TRAVELS

A connect & reflect the City of Literature activity

A Children's literacy website shows the journey of the mythical horse Sleipnir and enables children to write short flash fiction about its journey.

Sleipnir Travels, inspired by Reykjavik's literacy work, was designed to both connect children within our Cities of Literature network and work as a tool for literacy and writing education.

Like Slam O Vision this was an online initiative to connect us and through that connection reflect the network back to Melbourne and of course Melbourne to the network.

Sleipnir Travels was designed to be a simple website which could be recoded to be any language within the network. It was visioned that it would be used across the network and eventually provide a legacy of writing from children within the network. Through this it was viewed that it would provide a unique connection tool as well as its aim as an online literacy tool.

Sleipnir Travels was initially used by Melbourne Writers Festival and Bendigo Writers Festival. The website was then used by Heidelberg for

a feature event at their Literature Festival. The website has now been updated so that authors of postcards can email a copy of their postcard to themselves, or someone else.

Most recently it was used as a COVID response program during the Victorian school holidays and a **workshop** was added to it

Sleipnir Travels is not a "set and forget" website. It is a tool that needs programming and resourcing. Its most successful times have been when this has happened, be it in person workshops or digital addition. When it's been programmed as a "set and forget" activity it has done nothing. We continue to work developing and refining this tool.

Sleipnir Travels can be viewed **here**.

> **This strategy addressed goals 1, 3, and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development
>
> ■ Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services at the local level
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5.4 VISITING INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PROGRAMMERS ROUNDTABLE

A connect & reflect the City of Literature activity

A hosted study trip and networking roundtable of International Festival Directors and Literary Programmers. Delivered previously in 2017, 18 and 19 in partnership with Melbourne Writers Festival and the Wheeler Centre.

▶

The program combines an opportunity to experience the Writers Festival, engagement with Melbourne's cultural sector, as well as a unique professional development and exchange program for the participants. The result is that the participants are exposed to new Australian writers while getting a deeper understanding of Melbourne as a Creative City

Of note, this is the only International Activity where we don't solely focus on our sister Cities of Literature. While they were a part of it, they weren't the main focus. Rather we looked to connect with festivals that could provide international connections for Melbourne authors as well as support festivals within our region.

Participants have come from:

International Festival of Authors	Toronto	Canada
Emirates Literature Foundation	Dubai	Dubai, UAE
NPO Literary Festival PRIMA VISTA	Tartu	Estonia
Heidelberg Literary Days Festival	Heidelberg	Germany
Apeejay Kolkata LIterary Festival	Kolkata	India
Makassar International Writers Festival	Makassar	Indonesia
Ubud Writers and Readers Festival	Ubud	Indonesia
Literature Ireland	Dublin	Ireland
Bookcity Milano	Milan	Italy
George Town Literary Festival	George Town	Malaysia
Auckland Writers Festival	Auckland	New Zealand
Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival	Dunedin	New Zealand
Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival	Dunedin	New Zealand
New Zealand Festival Writers Week	Auckland	New Zealand
Lit Crawl Wellington	Auckland	New Zealand
Arts House Limited	Singapore	Singapore
Arts House Limited	Singapore	Singapore
Arts House Limited	Singapore	Singapore
eThekwini Municipality	Durban	South Africa
Granada UNESCO City of Literature	Granada	Spain
Southbank Centre	London	United Kingdom
Festival of Ideas Bristol	Bristol	United Kingdom
National Centre for Writing	Norwich	United Kingdom
Town Hall Seattle	Seattle	USA

This has been a dynamic and impactful program for Melbourne as a City of Literature, combining leadership in the literary festival world, soft diplomacy, and an ongoing increase in artist mobility for Melbourne's writers.

Of note, this program has been duplicated and run in Dubai as part of the 2020 Emirates Literary Festival as inspired by the Director's trip to Melbourne in 2018.

Feedback from past participants and survey data can be found **here**.

> **This strategy addressed goals 1, 3, 4, and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
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> ■ Strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development
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MELBOURNE IS A CITY OF LITERATURE

The Stella Prize is an annual award that celebrates Australian women's writing, and was created "to counter the gender bias rife in the Australian literary landscape at the time".

Every year one Australian woman writer is awarded $50,000. While the prize in itself is of huge benefit to an individual writer and their career, there are non-financial benefits of having a women-centred award to the careers of writers who are shortlisted and longlisted as well as to the reading community and the overall literary landscape.

In addition to the prize, the Stella team also tackle gender disparity in Australian literature by running a schools program which encourages students to "critically engage with their own reading habits and imagine a future not limited by their gender", and the Stella Count "tracking the number of books by men and women reviewed in our major newspapers and literary magazines".

This activity by The Stella Prize addresses SDG Goal 5: Gender Equality

PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

for the forthcoming mid-term period of 4 years

6 PROPOSED ACTION PLAN
for the forthcoming mid-term period of 4 years

Please find the draft of our next strategic plan attached.

See Attachment Two.

MELBOURNE IS A CITY OF LITERATURE

The Next Chapter is an annual program that is run through The Wheeler Centre with support by the **Aesop Foundation**. Introduced in 2018, every year 10 writers are each awarded $15,000 and carefully paired with a mentor who can best shape their project and career.

Established in order to help provide publishing pathways for writers whose voices might otherwise have difficulty being noticed, The Next Chapter aims to not only help individual creatives, but to challenge the conventional publishing channels in order to diversify and enrich Australia's literary landscape in years to come.

This activity by The Wheeler Centre addresses SDG Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

MELBOURNE IS A CITY OF LITERATURE

To support vulnerable and at-risk library users, including those experiencing homelessness, The City of Melbourne has committed to investing in a **dedicated full-time social worker** to work in its libraries.

Melbourne's Lord Mayor Sally Capp pointed to the state's 1.5 million library visitors each year, highlighting the importance of ensuring that libraries are "welcoming, inclusive and safe spaces".

The program was successfully trialled for four months in 2019, and the social worker's role is not only to work proactively with library visitors, but also to provide training and support to library staff so they will have the skills to allow them to respond appropriately to patrons with complex needs.

This activity by City of Melbourne addresses SDG Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities

Initiatives undertaken in

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

7 Initiatives undertaken in RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis has focused the Melbourne City of Office's work towards the key area of Supporting the City of Literature, while forcing postponements of the majority of the Office's 2020 initiatives. Of note, 2020 would have seen the most amount of international travel facilitated by the Melbourne City of Literature Office with the second iteration of our exchange program (this time to Quebec City) and our pilot program of Booksellers in Residence in Edinburgh, Nottingham, Norwich and Seattle.

The majority of the COVID-19 reactive activity has been initiatives looking to commission as many different writers as possible. This has been a combination of new work and the postponement of future initiatives. At this time we have commissioned 167 writers, illustrators and arts managers to do work for the Office in 2020. In a normal year on average we commission 20.

The focus for the Office as this crisis continues is now connection. How can the Office connect both the sector to itself again, as well as Melbourne to an International network which is now more distant than it has ever been? Also how can the Office best support the City of Literature at this time? Arguably some challenges, wellness for example, have become too big for the Office's creative acupuncture to handle.

The twin questions of how to connect Melbourne as a City of Literature at a time when the world seems more distant (and travel is heavily compromised) and where best can we support during this ongoing crisis will be the challenges for the rest of 2020 and beyond.

7.1 THE CITY OF LITERATURE COLLECTION

In response to the COVID-19 crisis and the loss of work for many writers we put together an open call out for writing. The work we have received and are continuing to receive will be used at different points over the next two years. Some of it will be for readers here in Australia and some will be for readers in our Cities of Literature network.

We did not ask for ideas/pieces that highlight, feature, or relate to COVID-19 (coronavirus) or stories about being in isolation.

This was a way of providing some support to writers across Victoria and in the main called for writers who had lost regular work to apply.

We received 140 submissions to this initiative and commissioned 28. This amount of work has meant the Office has a lot of content it can use over the next couple of years. The challenge remains that the Office does not slip into becoming a publisher, and just reflects upon itself much like a UNESCO Book Capital does.

This program has seen some work published **already** as well as some used overseas. Most notable the **Ulyanovsk Literary tram**.

7.2 THE POET LAUREATES OF MELBOURNE

In response to the COVID-19 crisis the Office initiated a weekly newsletter using the Reading Victoria subscriber base, with a new poem by a different Victorian poet being sent out each Saturday. The aim is a collected volume to give away in 2021.

Through the newsletter, the city seeks to support local creatives by providing them with an income while enhancing a reflection on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic especially on the cultural ▶

and creative sectors. The initiative is foreseen to continue until December (inclusive) after which, the collected works will serve as an encapsulation of the most defining and remarkable moments from this period of time, and provide a literary time capsule for this unprecedented situation.

34 poets from various backgrounds and stages of their career are currently participating in this project. Started in May 2020, the newsletter has already received more than 3000 subscriptions, which illustrate the cosmopolitan essence of the city.

The combined result will be collated in a publication in early 2021 both to celebrate this period and to provide a solid record of this moment in history.

Past posts can be viewed **here**.

7.3 SECTOR SUPPORT

In response to COVID-19 we looked for tools, initiatives and simple ways to provide support across our City of Literature. In particular we looked at organisations who didn't have the immediate resources to continue their work during COVID and the resulting lockdown.

The Office read many draft funding applications from creatives and purchased a Zoom account for small and unfunded organisations to use. We also reached out to CEOs of small to medium organisations to connect and see how they were managing the crisis.

This sector support was followed with a strategic examination of the literary sector and its plans for 2021, coupled with a mapping of possible opportunities for collaboration. This work continues.

We also looked beyond our borders to ways we could connect with our network. We initiated a Social media group, **Work in Progress**, for writers within the Cities of Literature and also initiated a series of regular staff meetings for the City of Literature Offices.

The Victorian Government announced various economic support measures to help individuals, businesses and organisations that have been impacted by coronavirus. To date, the Victorian Government has announced a total of $90 million to help the state's creative sector.

It includes:

- $13 million to support almost 100 non government arts and cultural organisations state-wide including multi-year funded literary organisations and events, through the Strategic Investment Fund (stages 1 and 2), including The Wheeler Centre, Writers Victoria, Emerging Writers Festival, Melbourne Writers Festival, Creative Clunes (Clunes Booktown), Express Media, Melbourne Writers Festival and Mildura Writers Festival

- $4.7 million in quick response grants for independent creatives and micro-businesses across the state through the new Sustaining Creative Workers initiative including nearly $300K to independent writers, publishing companies and literature projects.

- $1.6 million in grants through Creative Victoria's programs focusing on activities that can be undertaken in the current climate, such as the research and development of new creative works, professional development activities and new ways of reaching audiences.

- $1.1 million to support the urgent needs of key creative organisations and facilities, benefiting many hundreds of individual artists and small businesses.

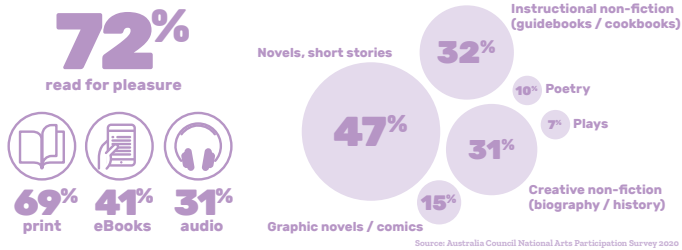- $700,000 to commission original creative content for the Victoria Together online platform.

APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT ONE

MELBOURNE IS A CITY OF LITERATURE
by the numbers 2017-2019

AUSTRALIAN READING HABITS

72%
read for pleasure

69% print
41% eBooks
31% audio

Novels, short stories

32%
Instructional non-fiction
(guidebooks / cookbooks)

47%

10% Poetry

7% Plays

31%

15%

Graphic novels / comics

Creative non-fiction
(biography / history)

Source: Australia Council National Arts Participation Survey 2020

$15.9 million
invested by Creative Victoria
since 2016/17 in grants to
writers, publishers, festivals
and professional development
organisations

275
libraries in Victoria

12,280
hours spent open

30 million
visitors every year

2 million
Victorian members

Source: Victorian Public Libraries Network

1.8 million visitors to State Library of Victoria a year

CITY OF MELBOURNE LIBRARIES	MELBOURNE WRITERS FESTIVAL	THE WHEELER CENTRE
3,892,872 Books borrowed	**1089** Events	**773** Events
4,535,762 Library visits	**146,900** Attendances	**158,935** Attendances

All above provided by named organisations

In 2019 ...

4.5 million
Australians attended
book or literary events
or festivals.

8%
of Australians attended a writer
talk or book launch, book club,
reading or writers festival

15.6
was the average number of
events attended by those who
attended book or literary events.

**Across the Australian population, this equates to 2.2 book or literary
events attended for every Australian aged 15 years and over.**

Source Australia Council National Arts Participation Survey 2020

ATTACHMENT TWO
2020 - 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

The role of the Office is to support the work and networks that exist, nurture and develop new opportunities and networks, make connections across the industry and audiences, and champion all things Melbourne as a City of Literature.

Melbourne is the fourth biggest in population within the Cities of Literature. Due to its size and richness of present literary activity, we don't need to mirror the activities of the other City of Literature Offices in producing a lot of literary programming.

Melbourne is also the second most isolated of the Cities of Literature and the challenges of connecting with a world-wide network, if not our own local south east Asian/Pacific region, is a major one.

The Office works in three broad areas of action that address the aims of the Creative City Network as well as the needs for Melbourne as a City of Literature:

1 **Connecting the City of Literature**

2 **Reflecting the City of Literature**

3 **Supporting the City of Literature**

In doing this Office has three streams of activity:

■ **Strategic initiatives** One-off programming led by the Office.

■ **Partnership programs** Initiatives working with partner organisations to either deliver more extensive programming or to support their independent activities when they are addressing one of our strategy areas.

■ **International exchanges** Programs that begin here, in partnership with another Creative City, and then have the ability to travel and be used around the network hopefully with a legacy of infrastructure. In the main these are digital projects.

With a City of nearly 5 million there are many people operating on the above, and broadly speaking the SDG 2030 agenda and goals of the Creative City network in their own way. How does the Office differ?

The Office combines bringing some creative acupuncture to areas of need with the opportunity to do activities no one else will undertake as well as the opportunity to make use of a wide network of international connections to develop opportunities for our City of Literature.

CONNECTING THE CITY OF LITERATURE

Melbourne is a well-connected City both locally and internationally

Outwardly looking, Melbourne is largely isolated from the rest of the network. This has two effects: firstly, we do not have an easy opportunity to reflect on the depth of reasons of why we are a City of Literature or, more bluntly, how good we are. Secondly, it is hard for Australian writing to travel and as a result to build new international audiences and connections.

Melbourne's literary ecosystem also works largely in isolation. Libraries wonder about engaging publishers, arts organisations strategise to engage with libraries and all aim to engage one group – readers. And so the cycle continues. The Office looks to play a

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helicopter role with an eye to matchmake opportunities and expand awareness and partnerships.

As a sector it can be opaque, intimidating and in many ways inaccessible to people not already within the bubble. It also throws up barriers to entry when seemingly trying to encourage accessibility.

Literature as a whole can often remain siloed within itself and within the arts sector and thus isolated from general arts conversations. The Office looks to play a role in connecting it through the facilitation of initiative cross arts opportunities.

> **We aim to address this strategy by:**
>
> - Developing initiatives to connect with our sister Cities and the region we live in
> - Developing initiatives that connect across the City of Literature
> - Creating opportunities to increase the people connected with the City of Literature

INITIATIVES

1 10th Anniversary Exchange

As a way of highlighting our sister Cities time in the network, as well as providing an alternative to the Offices who regularly ask for us to send writers, we have instigated a policy of sending a writer to sister Cities when they turn 10.

Sourced through an open call, the writer is selected by the host City who accommodates them and pays fees and we pay for their fares. – International exchange. Dublin in 2020, Norwich in 2021

2 Exchange Program

A biennial exchange program between Melbourne and another City of Literature. In each case we provide an amount for travel costs for a delegation made up of individuals appropriate for the host City for a

short-term study trip. – International Exchange Quebec City in 2020 and Durban in 2022

3 Sleipnir

A Children's literacy website which shows the journey of the mythical horse Sleipnir and enables children to write short flash fiction about its journey. On its journey between the Cities children are encouraged to write postcards from Sleipnir which are publishable (and email-able) from the website.

Delivered in partnership with Reykjavik City of Literature. – International exchange. Ongoing

4 Penpal Network

The Office will develop a website that connect individual writers from Melbourne with other Cities across the network. This is also a Reflect the City of Literature activity – International Exchange. Scoped in 2020

5 Residency Program

To become an active participant in the Cities of Literature merging residency network, the Office will scope the possibility of a residency for overseas writers.

The initial idea is for the writer to spend two weeks regionally, linking with the regional festival for a public presentation, and then two weeks in Melbourne with another event with an appropriate programming organisations. Partnership programs – Scoped in 2021

6 Toolkits

The Toolkit series is made up of occasional one day seminars designed for one area of the City of Literature to professionally develop another. Previously the Emerging Writers' festival held a one-day symposium for librarians. – Partnership program. Ongoing

7 Translators Digital Summit

A seven-day program of talks between translators from Cities of Literature to be held 30th September 2020 and delivered via a web portal.

Delivered in partnership with Iowa City of Literature. – International exchange 2020

8 Visiting International Literary Programmers

A hosted study trip and roundtable of International Festival Directors and Literary Programmers. Delivered previously in 2017, 18 and 19. Delivered in partnership with Melbourne Writers Festival and the Wheeler Centre. – International exchange. Ongoing

> **This strategy aims to address goals 1 and 3 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> - Strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development
> - Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services at the local level
>
> **They also respond to Prosperity and Livelihoods from the Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda.**
>
> **This strategy addresses City of Melbourne's Goal 2: A creative city**

REFLECTING THE CITY OF LITERATURE

Melbourne values itself as a leading City of Literature

Core to the work of a UNESCO Creative City is activating the City and making people aware that they are part of the network. Alongside of this is the opportunity to reflect the City to the wider network.

This is typified by the classic model of airport signage, bookish type sculptures and short story vending machines (among many other ideas).

These sort of activities align more with the goals of a **UNESCO Book Capital** than a Creative City but it is still an important area of focus for the Office although Cities which just focus on promoting themselves have been shown to run out of steam.

The Office works to the mantra of "surprise and delight" with its reflection activity.

> **We aim to address this strategy by:**
>
> ■ Developing initiatives that highlight the richness and depth of the City of Literature
>
> ■ Using opportunities to showcase Melbourne as a City of Literature internationally
>
> ■ Activating our communication's plan (outlined in "Communicating with the City of Literature")

INITIATIVES

1 BookMap – Lit Map of Melbourne

The BookMap is an A1, two colour map of inner CBD Melbourne and inner suburbs. Highlighting bookshops and other areas of literary interest, it is aimed at visitors to Melbourne. The BookMap is renewed biennially and the next iteration, which will be the project's third, will look for an increase in literary history and landmarks.
Strategic initiative

2 City of Literature Network Requests

The Office aims to respond positively to requests from its sister Cities for content for their programming (i.e. providing poetry to Krakow for projecting in their town square) the only requirements from us are that a) the writers are paid and b) the work isn't commodifying the writer.

3 Online Journals

We will continue the publication and distribution of our online journals **Reading the City of Literature** and **Poetry in the City of Literature** as well as continue with our international newsletter.

4 Published Snapshot – Living the City of Literature

The published snapshot will be a downloadable magazine highlighting Melbourne's literary history as well as the latest releases. It will mix advertising with samples of the latest Melbourne writing. It would be developed and designed so that publishers and organisations would have pages directly updateable by them within the online journal.
Strategic initiative 2021

5 Tramlines

Tramlines is a series of pieces of writing delivered via unique podcasts. In the series writers put together a story to be listened to on a tram. The story makes use of the location, the time and the ambient sounds to be part audio book, part spoken word and part locative literature.
Strategic Initiative Beginning in 2020

6 Website

The website is a major initiative for the Office and is in a constant state of development, most recently with the addition of **a map** and a newsletter for the **events calendar** It is still working towards the goal of being the first stop for anyone looking at Melbourne as a literary City and/or looking for an event.

> **This strategy addresses goals 1, 5 and 6 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development
>
> ■ Improve access to and participation in cultural life as well as the enjoyment of cultural goods and services, notably for marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals
>
> ■ Fully integrate culture and creativity into local development strategies and plans
>
> **They also respond to Prosperity and Livelihoods from the Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda.**
>
> **This strategy addresses City of Melbourne's Goal 1: A city for people and Goal 4: A knowledge city**

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SUPPORTING THE CITY OF LITERATURE

Melbourne is a sustainable City of Literature

As the **City of Literature in 2020** highlighted Melbourne has some ongoing challenges in its literature ecology. Writers and literary workers are overworked and underpaid with little security to the point where it is detrimental to their mental and physical health. The funding and support mechanisms are also insufficient for the activity happening and the results unrepresentative of the cultural landscape.

The Office has a unique opportunity to provide a helicopter view of the sector and look for the gaps that need filling and provide interventions where it can in order to broadly help the City to keep its capacity to be a City of Literature and to work toward being a sustainable City of Literature and the **2030 vision**.

> **We aim to address this strategy by:**
>
> ■ Curating initiatives that encourage an equity of opportuning for everyone working in what could be referred to as the City of Literature
>
> ■ Encouraging communities of like-minded organisations and individuals who develop a rapport and desire to work together and support each other

INITIATIVES

1 Equity Initiatives

Our city of literature can often be opaque, intimidating and in many ways inaccessible to people not already within its bubble. It can also throw up barriers to entry when seemingly trying to encourage accessibility.

The Office will explore ways to open this up. Initially the Office will work with Organisations who provide grant writing workshops as a revenue stream to look at them as a community partnership model aimed at people who can't access them.

2 Mentorships

2.1 Formal mentorship program. The Office will develop and pilot models for formal mentorships for areas of the city which are not getting an equity of opportunity. **Strategic Initiative. Ongoing**

2.2 Informal mentorships. The Office will continue to conduct informal relationships with the emerging and smaller organisations within the City of Literature. This is an unadvertised program and will continue to be developed on an ad hoc basis. **Strategic Initiative. Scoped 2020**

3 Regional Support

The regional festivals, while rich in content and community, are poor in resources and time and the Office continues to look for ways to support them, highlight them, as well as build a community of support within them.

3.1 The Regional Roundtable is a two-day event where regional literary programmers come together to share best practice, problem solve local issues, and connect. It is envisioned that from this the Office will explore some capacity building initiatives for regional organisations.

3.2 Regional Reporters is an initiative to send social media reporters to visit a few festivals and report on them in innovative ways. **Strategic Initiative. Ongoing**

4 Roundtables

Many areas within the City of Literature do not have the ability to look out from their day-to-day to view opportunities and possibilities. Many also rarely get a chance to talk to similar organisations and initiatives.

The Office will continue to propose and host roundtables with areas of the City that are either disconnected, lacking a helicopter view of their situation or challenged by a present problem or situation. This has been done previously with festival programmers (2019)

literary journals (2016), playwrights (2018), and volunteer interns within the Wheeler Centre (2016). **Strategic Initiative. Ongoing**

5 Wellness

The arts sector has largely responded to the pressure on arts worker with a number of initiatives for mental health and wellness support. In all of these case while writers and literature are included it is mostly in name only without any real addressing of the distinct challenges of our sector

The Office will look to develop a cross sector approach to this area. Strategic Initiative. **Scoped 2020. Piloted 2021**

> **These strategies address goals 3, 4 and 5 of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network aims:**
>
> ■ Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural activities, goods and services
>
> ■ Develop hubs of creativity and innovation and broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector
>
> ■ Improve access to and participation in cultural life as well as the enjoyment of cultural goods and services, notably for marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals
>
> **They also respond to Knowledge & Skills and Inclusion & Participation from the Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda.**
>
> **This strategy addresses City of Melbourne's Goal 1: A city for people, Goal 2: A creative city and Goal 4: A knowledge city**

ATTACHMENT THREE
BUDGET
2020 - 2022

		2020	2021	2022
INCOME				
Creative Victoria		50%	50%	50%
City of Melbourne		50%	50%	50%
TOTAL		**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
EXPENDITURE *Percentage of budget expenditure*				
Salaries	subtotal	44%	45%	45%
Travel	subtotal	6%	6%	6%
Marketing	subtotal	11%	6%	6%
Strategies	subtotal	33%	37%	37%
Admin	subtotal	6%	6%	6%
TOTAL		**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

ATTACHMENT FOUR
COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS PLAN

Our vision is to be the best connected City of Literature, both internally and externally.

The aim is to raise awareness and appreciation of Melbourne as a leading City of Literature as well as highlighting the depth of activity across Melbourne as well as providing when needed a spotlight on the initiatives of the Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature Office.

The Audiences can be categorised as:

1 City of Literature Supporting the activity that makes us a City of Literature in finding its audience and appreciation

2 The Literary World Reflecting Melbourne to itself and the international Cities of Literature, global UCCN Network and other literary cities

3 Stakeholders Connecting our initiatives with the right organisations

TOOLS

1 Facebook Audiences 2 and 3

Facebook is for publishing various initiatives, projects and content that reflects and connects Melbourne to audiences 2 and 3, as well as regional audiences and organisations that heavily use the site. We also schedule Instagram posts through our Facebook page.

On Facebook we follow anything Cities of Literature and other UNESCO Creative Cities.

We promote Melbourne through posting of unique opportunities, news relevant to our literary audience such as literary prize winners, and Office announcements. We also answer people who post questions.

2 Collateral Audience 2

We develop collateral to give away to UNESCO Summits and Cities of Literature as well as to small unfunded organisations and visiting guests.

3 International Content Audience 1

We develop unique content in partnership with our sister Cities, and with local content producers, to reflect the depth of their literary Cities.

4 International newsletter Audience 2

We publish a **quarterly newsletter** for fellow UNESCO Creative Cities. We limit reporting on our activities to one entry.

5 Instagram Audiences 1 and 2

Instagram is a developing platform, giving a face to the Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature Office with behind the scenes looks into the everyday goings on, showcasing our projects and initiatives to the literary community, as well as increasing the reach and the profile of Melbourne as a City of Literature.

6 Map Audience 1

An at a glance resource for residents of and visitors to Melbourne, showcasing popular and useful locations/spots of literary interest and helping residents/visitors to Melbourne make the most out of and appreciate Melbourne as a City of Literature.

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7 News Alert Audience 3

The Office maintains an e-newsletter list to announce the opening of any specific Office initiatives as well as sister City of Literature residency call outs. This list is able to be signed up to on the website

8 Online Journals Audience 1

We publish online journals reflecting Melbourne writing activity for distribution overseas **Reading the City of Literature** and **Poetry in the City of Literature**.

9 Regional Blog Audience 1

The Festival's Road Trip Blog is a platform where we curate all of the online and digital content made by our regional festival reporters, either by providing links to the online published content or hosting the content itself. This is a readily accessible, public platform, that we encourage regional festival reporters to have access to and utilise for the extent of their role as a reporter.

10 Twitter Audiences 1 & 3

Twitter is for conversing with our City of Literature and primarily a way to link with the City and raise the profile of the Office, our initiatives, and goals as a City of Literature.

On Twitter we follow anything Melbourne, and anything literary.

We retweet Melbourne literature that we think won't get attention and that is relevant to our audience, and engage with the everyday reflections and concerns of Melbourne literary citizens and literary organisations.

- We highlight the depth of international literary activity back to Melbourne
- We highlight the depth of the City of Literature in posting and retweeting

- Hashtags are used for one off non-promotional activity — #cityoflitadventcalender, #summerinthecityofLit #readingvictoria

11 UCCN event form Audience 2

We publish all of our initiatives to the **UCCN website**.

12 Web calendar Audience 1

The website is user based and we encourage organisations to upload their events. We support them with constantly updating this site as well as two newsletters — Monday morning on what's new and Friday afternoon highlighting the weekend ahead.

13 Website Audiences 1, 2, 3

The website is user based, hosting the Web Calendar and a Map function (which users can search for the nearest bookshop, library or other area of literary interest), and overall providing an overview to the literary happenings in Melbourne. The website is the outward face of the Office and its activities, providing visitors to Melbourne an access point to Melbourne as a City of Literature, and is the hub of all activity done by the Office.

ATTACHMENT FIVE
FEEDBACK

EDINBURGH EXCHANGE

"The exchange program to Edinburgh hosted by the City of Literature was a truly amazing experience... Much of the conversation with various leaders in the field centred on costings of events and festivals, audience participation, supporting writers, encouraging indigenous language and cross promotion with other players... These conversations did change my thinking around many issues that I battle with in my role, and certainly it did change my ideas for the Readings 50th year celebrations... By sending us to the other side of the world, we realised the importance of working together and staying in touch with each other's objectives."

– Christine Gordon
Events Manager, Readings Bookstore

'I learned so much on the trip. Not just about programming, but about people, and the importance of loving what you do and remembering why you're doing it... Meeting these people, discussing how and why we make planning and programming decisions, and sharing ideas and hopes for the future was by far the most beneficial part of the trip... I'd like to say an enormous thank you to...my fellow delegates who gave me so much joy and inspiration, and have already made me better at my job(s)."

– Marian Blythe
Director – Homecooked Comic Festival

"The exchange program offered by the Melbourne City of Literature Office was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity... some of the deepest and most productive learning took place in discussions with representatives from other literary organisations both Edinburgh based and from further afield... One of the most important 'take away' learnings from the experience was that literary and cultural programmers face similar challenges in the UK as we face here."

– Maryanne Vagg
Manager Events and Programming,
Geelong Regional Library Corporation

'Taking part in the Edinburgh Exchange gave me the opportunity to visit venues, experience events, and meet with the key people working in literary organisations. This would never have been possible without the knowledge and connections of the Edinburgh and Melbourne Cities of Literature... The curated program provided us with an opportunity, in a very short space of time, to meet the most relevant people who are working creatively and effectively in our field... An unanticipated benefit of the Exchange was meeting and getting to know the Melbourne based literary programmers. The knowledge we shared and connections we made have been of immediate benefit."

– Julia Tsailis
Program Manager, Writing NSW

PARLIAMENT OF THE CITY OF LITERATURE

Dear All

Ali, John, Kristin, and Lara were recently in Melbourne celebrating the 10th anniversary of its designation as a UNESCO City of Literature. Thanks to some strategic decisions about my geolocation this year, I was allowed to tag along too. And I'm really grateful for the opportunity. I was hoping that you'd indulge me by reading some of my reflections on the experience.

You see, the team at The Wheeler Centre managed to accomplish something that we always talk about. They put the City of Literature on stage, front and center, and I haven't been able to stop thinking about how good it all was.

They organized a remarkable series of events, called the Literature Parliament. Divided into a House and Senate and composed of an incredible cross-section of writers, editors, poets, playwrights, academics, librarians, publishers, spoken word artists, comics, cartoonists and illustrators and more, the Parliament gave the five of us and other audience members in the gallery the opportunity to participate through active listening. The House and its elected Ministers took us back in time and made us reflect on the Melbourne City of Literature of 2008, where it was then and what it hoped to achieve. They then brought us to the now, and we heard assessments of what was accomplished (or not) by 2018 and what they hoped was yet to come. The ministers proposed bills, put forward values and ideals for a better Melbourne by 2030. And the next day, the Senate proposed its own views and evaluated the presumptions, intentions, and visions of the House, ensuring that they are all checked and balanced to reflect the needs, experiences, and rights of every citizen of the City of Literature. Thanks to some ingenious programming, the House and Senate were more-or-less representative of establishment vs. the non-establishment voices of the literary community. Lachlann Carter presented his reflections by writing a story featuring the CITY OF LITERATURAWWWRR!! monster and thus highlighting **One Hundred Story Building**'s efforts to promote children's literacy; **Alistair Baldwin** talked about the significance of digital platforms for writers with disability, especially those living far from creative industry nodes; **Rachel Ang** beautifully illustrated her thoughts on racism and identity in Australia through comics. **Emilie Collyer** made an eloquent case for support of Melbourne-based and Australian theater, and **Sister Zai Zanda** reminded us of the meta, the centrality of decolonialization to our work and the importance of challenging one's own biases, especially when you think you don't have any. We listened to over 40 people actively creating the City of Literature! The result of this two-day event was a set of values, laws, that will inform Melbourne C of L's next strategic document, but more importantly, a stronger community.

This model, experiment, this grand success that combined theatre, literature and democratic dialogue, mirrored back to the audience the brilliance — as in the shiny star and bright light — that is Melbourne. It meant that the big host institution, the Wheeler Centre, had to sideline its assumptions and interests. Or perhaps that is my own presumption... Perhaps at the crux of all of this is that the Wheeler Centre knows that it is in its interest that this Literary Parliament takes place, and continues to take place and that its assumption is that the literary community will exceed all expectation and help the Centre better serve them. I think that sounds more accurate. It gave the actual people who make the City of Literature tick and tock around the clock, and who fill forms with content, the microphone.

What it demonstrated to me are Melbourne's confidence in its community, its trust in the individuals' intention to work for the improvement of the city (despite sometimes differing views and approaches) and its strong backbone. If ego was present in the room, it was channeled for the purpose of working together, not working against with suspicion, self-pity or insecurity. That was a very secure room — no matter how nervous any one person felt on stage, presenting their manifesto and opinion — the collective was encouraging, uplifting and secure in itself. It sent the message that the City of Literature is not the coordinator, not an office, not a single director, extroverted personality or even the institutions that are its public face, but each individual who does their part to contribute with good-will and the sometimes elusive, but ultimately integral, sense of mission, trust, openness and proactivity.

We all have struggled with the question of how to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for our respective City of Literatures and the well-being of its citizens and engagement with all things creative and literary. Melbourne has just given us a glimpse into its approach. The focus on representing the whole community, not just the privileged bits, democratic conversation and connection, confidence in social ties and kinship, and the right to creative expression and participation in it... that is the common cause. It's not surprising that Melbourne made the coffee mugs that say "Citizen of a City of Literature", which is not just cute merchandise. It walks that talk.

Without a doubt, this was a special event, the impact of which will reverberate within the city and well beyond its limits. For those who ▶

have not yet made their lives better by reading the beautiful content that Melbourne has been sending out every week on Mondays over the past 49 weeks of 2018, you can rectify that by going to this **website**. If you wish to hear the stories presented by 10 authors during the wonderful evening that preceded the Parliament, **listen here** David has said that the podcasts from the Parliament will be made available soon, so keep your eyes and ears out for that. They will "put you in the room".

Justyna Joachim
Director, Krakow City of Literature

REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE

From: Vicky Daddo <Vicky.Daddo@latrobe.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 3 December 2018 11:13 AM
To: David Ryding
Subject: Regional Literary Programmers Roundtable

Good morning, David

I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy coming to the Roundtables, not just because it's a group of like-minded people meeting, but because I really learn something from the events. I think the Roundtables provide an opportunity for knowledge-sharing, tips and tricks, networking on a comfortable scale and for us to realise that literary festival programming is done by passionate, driven, time-poor people who do it because they love it.

You can use the Roundtables as a starter pack for setting up a festival or you can share the experiences of those who've been doing it for years — take your pick. The biggest take home for me is always the variety of differences and commonalities that are demonstrated. One person's free ticket is another person's paid event and no two audiences are likely to be the same. The Roundtables show me just how diverse Victoria is in terms of festivals, thinking, creating and dreaming.

Cheers,

Vicky Daddo
Events, Programs and Marketing Officer - Libraries
Latrobe City Council
(Mon to Fri, 9am to 3pm) Phone: 5128 6406

VISITING INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PROGRAMMERS

■ **How many Australian writers have you presented over the last 5 years?**
Individual average: **7.4**
Projected total (all delegates): **59**

■ **How many Australian writers do you hope to present over the next 5 years?**
Individual average: **14.3**
Projected total (all delegates): **114**

■ **Can you estimate how many Australian writers you saw / had exposure to at events?**
Individual average: **14**
Projected total (all delegates): **300**

■ **Did you see, or find out about, Australian writers you were not already familiar with?**
Yes: 100%
No: 0%

■ **Approx. how many new professional connections have you made with Australian publishers or literary organisations?**
Individual average: **10.4**
Projected total (all delegates): **240**

■ **Can you estimate how many Melbourne Writers Festival events you attended?**
Individual average: **6.8**
Projected total (all delegates): **160**

■ **Did the round table program and delegates' activities meet your expectations?**
Yes: 100%
No: 0%

"It was a unique experience to be able to connect with peers from around the world... I would now like to work closer with, not only with Australian literary organisations, but with all of the delegates markets as well."

– Emirates Literature Foundation

"I made a number of important connections which will hopefully lead to more partnerships in the future. We plan a special focus on Australian cities in our work next year...[and] I am thinking of running a similar programme in our Festival of the Future City in 2019."
– Festival of Ideas Bristol

"Extremely useful! A nice mix of structure and un-structured conversation... I learned a great deal."

– Town Hall Seattle

"The programme is one of its kind and coming from a region where there are few literary organisations and even fewer literary arts programmers. It was immensely beneficial from a professional development standpoint."

– Singapore Arts House

Has your engagement with or awareness of Australian literature changed as a result of the program?

"I have seen the diversity in the nature of Australian literature and been exposed to Aboriginal literature, for the first time."

– Emirates Literature Foundation

"[I] was always aware that there are many, many writers in Australia but was not so much clued in on how varied they are in terms of background. For example, very few Aboriginal Australian writing makes it to Asia."

– Singapore Arts House

"I was lucky to meet other indigenous writers also at the party. I am particularly interested in writers of colour and indigenous voices and the talk on aboriginal culture, language and traditions was excellent."

– George Town Literary Festival

"The roundtable was very well conceived... it was a pleasure to interact with my counterparts from across the world, and gain from their experience. I particularly enjoyed the interactions with the various literary organisations at the Wheeler Centre... We would like to see more Australian writers in India, and familiarise Indian readers with their work."

– Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival

MELBOURNE

UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE

UCCN Monitoring Report
2017 - 2020

Submitted 31st December 2020

Melbourne
City of
Literature

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization