



The
Literature
Centre

www.thelitcentre.org.au

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023





Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The Literature Centre acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Our work takes place on Ancestral lands. The Literature Centre itself is based on the land of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, where our home within the old Fremantle Prison is a site of memorial for many. Our work also takes us across the traditional lands of many other areas of what we now know as Western Australia.

As we learn and play, we respect the knowledge embedded within the First Nations Custodianship of this land, First Nations writers, illustrators and storytellers, and the stories they share.

Contents

Our vision	3
Our purpose	3
Our values	3
Our goals	4
Our story	5
Our people	6
Structure	6
Board	7
Staff	9
Recruitment and retention	12
Succession	12
Our program	16
Schools program (for primary and secondary students)	16
Public program	16
Artist development	17
Sector services	17
Our place in the sector	18
Our partners, collaborators and colleagues	19
Situation analysis	21
Strengths and opportunities	21
Threats and development areas	22
Our strategies and key performance indicators (KPIs)	23
Our approach to Risk Management	29
Administration and oversight	29
Risk Management framework	29
Our approach to our Finances	30
Administration and oversight	30
Income and expenditure	30
Budget forecasts	31
Cash reserves	31
Appendixes	32

Our vision

We imagine a future where...

- All children and young adults in Western Australia (and beyond) have access to quality Australian literature created by a thriving, valued community of authors and illustrators.
- Where young writers (and their teachers and schools) have the access, skills and inspiration to write their own stories.
- Where young readers (and their friends, families and communities) are able to find their diverse experiences represented in the pages of their books (in print and online).
- And where children's and young adult literature is recognised as a critical part of Australian culture.

Our purpose

To achieve this vision, The Literature Centre will:

- Create and present a range of relevant and accessible programs, events and opportunities for young readers and writers, to inspire, empower and celebrate the creativity of WA's children and young adults in their own right.
- Nurture, profile and provide opportunities to writers and illustrators of Australian literature for children and young adults.
- Support, promote and advocate on behalf of the art form of Australian literature for children and young adults, and of the importance of expanding audiences for Australia's diverse stories (locally, nationally and internationally).

Our values

These are the values that underpin all that we do:

- **Nurturing:** We encourage the creativity of young readers and writers, build capacity in authors and illustrators, and celebrate and advocate for Australian literature for children and young adults.
- **Access:** We bring Australian literature into the lives of children and young adults who may otherwise miss out.
- **Impact:** We create meaningful experiences for readers and writers that have long-term and transformational effects (from increasing confidence to inspiring careers).
- **Excellence:** We strive for excellence in all of our programs, work practices and partnerships.

Our goals

From 2020-2023, our work will focus on four strategic goals:

- **Goal 1 (young readers and writers):** We will deliver relevant, effective and inspirational schools and public programs for children and young adults across WA (and beyond), with a particular focus on increasing access for children and young adults from lower socio-economic or marginalised communities and regional areas, and nationally through our online programs.
- **Goal 2 (artists and art form):** We will support and build capacity of authors and illustrators encourage the creation and appreciation of Australian literature for children and young adults.
- **Goal 3 (access and reach):** We will extend the organisation’s profile and reach, raise awareness and understanding of the impact of our work, and grow our reputation as a leader through our sector development and advocacy work.
- **Goal 4 (sustainability, succession and legacy):** We will maintain our financial diversification and viability, and successfully transition the organisation to the next stage of its leadership.

“I never thought a girl like me, in a town like this, would get to spend a whole day four times a year with real authors, because that’s what I want to be”

– Kerry, student, South Hedland

Our story

For nearly 30 years, The Literature Centre (TLC) has provided a focal point for Australian literature for children and young adults.

Originally established as the Fremantle Children's Literature Centre in 1992, TLC's work has gradually expanded far beyond our physical location within the old Fremantle Prison to encompass the whole of Western Australia (and beyond, through our online programs).

Our work has been supported by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Training (as a project of national significance), the Western Australian Government through the Department of Education WA and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Lotterywest, Healthway, BHP, The Trust, Ian Potter Foundation, Rowley Foundation, and a range of other philanthropic trusts and foundations, corporate sponsors, donors and more.

Together, we have positioned WA as home to Australia's only literary institution with an exclusive focus on Australian literature for children and young adults and a broad, WA-wide remit and program.

Some of our recent program highlights include the launch of our Annual Celebrate Reading National Conference in 2012 (the only one in the country to exclusively feature Australian writers and illustrators) and our unique multi-disciplinary performance work, 'The Sound of Picture Books'. This collaboration with composer Matt Ottley, West Australian Symphony Orchestra and Yamaha Australia has been running in Perth, outer metropolitan and regional areas since 2015 and has been a key part of Perth Festival's family program in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

This Strategic Plan includes succession planning and resourcing targets in order for new leadership to ensure TLC continues to inspire generations to come.

“Australia is one of the world's leaders in children's literature. The Literature Centre is one of the major reasons why.”

– Jackie French AM, Australian author and former Australian Children's Laureate

Our people

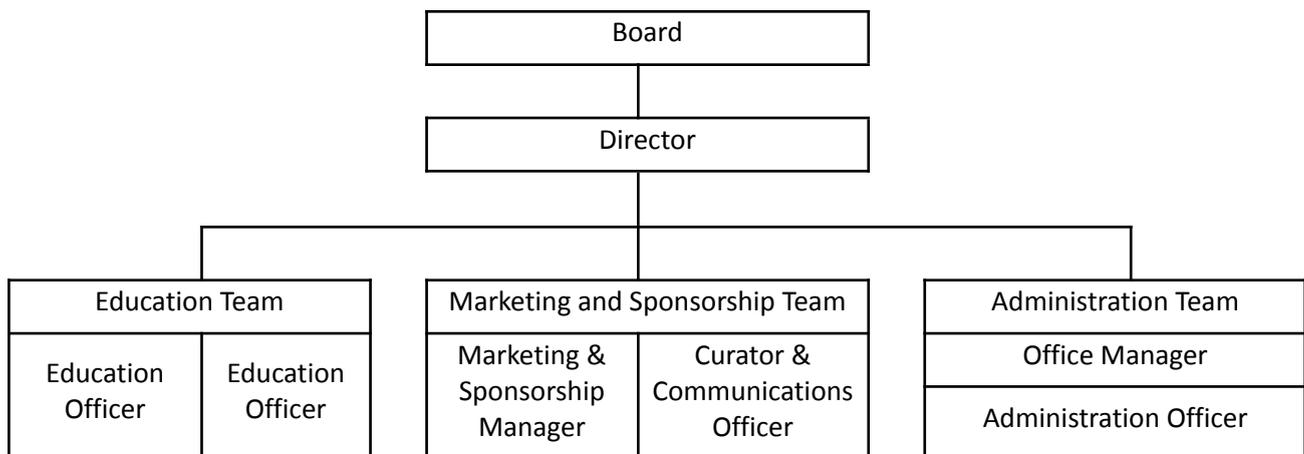
The Literature Centre is a not-for-profit incorporated association governed by a volunteer Board of Management.

The Board provides leadership and strategic guidance for TLC in addition to overseeing and supporting the implementation of our Strategic Plan. Our Board members have been recruited from the community and stakeholders we seek to serve, including senior levels of the Association of Independent Schools WA, Department of Education WA and WA Curriculum Council (now amalgamated), business and not-for-profit sectors. Currently, this includes authors, publishers, metropolitan and regional teachers, former TLC program participants, financial and legal experts.

The Board convenes quarterly in addition to our Annual General Meeting and annual strategic planning day. Each meeting's agenda and reports cover every aspect of TLC's operations and structured discussion of our strategic goals, strategies and key performance indicators. The Board is supported in terms of financial governance through the quarterly reports and annual audit.

TLC's staff team is a dedicated cohort of passionate professionals with a broad range of experience across the arts, education, not-for-profit and commercial business sectors. One of TLC's key points of difference is our close alignment with the education sector, which has always included a commitment to appointing trained and experienced teachers to all our Education Officer roles.

Structure



Board

Julia Lawrinson, Chairperson

Julia is a writer and governance professional. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, an admitted lawyer, and has a PhD in Writing. Her novels for children and young adults deal with friendship, family and identity – always with warmth and humour. She has regularly presented across Australia and South East Asia, and in her spare time loves dogs, the beach, and learning new things.

Julia joined the Board in 2020.

Deb Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chairperson

Deb is the author of six novels for adults, young adults and children. Her two YA novels were named Notable Books by the Children's Book Council of Australia. Deb has a Master of Arts (creative writing) from UWA and regularly teaches creative writing to children, young adults and adults. Deb is the recipient of a 2020 May Gibbs Children's Literature Trust Creative Time Residential Fellowship to write her next novel. Her latest book is 'The Spectacular Spencer Gray'.

Deb joined the Board in 2020.

Amila Kandambige, Treasurer

Amila is a finance professional with an analytical mindset and sound commercial acumen derived from over ten years of experience in the areas of business valuations, management consulting, financial due diligence, investment analysis and business performance improvement. He joined the Board in August 2021.

Katie McCallister, Secretary

Fortunate to have grown up on Menang Noongar Boodjar in Albany, Katie now lives

and works on Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar near Galup in Perth.

She was lucky to be a student of the Literature Centre's Young Writer's Days during high school. She is a Fogarty Foundation Regional Scholar, completing her Honours in creative writing at UWA and looking forward to starting her PhD. After running debating competitions for students in regional WA, she is working towards her Licentiate in AMEB and Trinity College Speech and Drama, to continue teaching young people to believe in themselves and their voice.

After a brief stint as a brekky radio presenter for ABC Great Southern, Katie is a producer for the Heywire competition - a program that empowers young people from right across regional Australia to share their story.

Katie joined the Board in 2020.

Jane Fraser

Jane Fraser is CEO and sales and rights manager at Fremantle Press in Western Australia, a not-for-profit publishing company dedicated to publishing the work of Western Australian writers and artists.

She began her career in educational publishing in Sydney over 25 years ago before moving into editorial and trade publishing.

After five years in San Francisco with an international co-editions publisher she returned to Sydney and worked in tertiary publishing.

For a decade prior to joining Fremantle Press as non-fiction publisher, Jane worked in corporate marketing and communications.

Jane joined the Board in 2020.

Angela Knight

Born and bred in Western Australia, Angela Knight has travelled the world and worked with the Education Department since 1987.

In 2010, she moved to Hedland SHS as Head of Learning Area for English. With the support of BHP, one of the first online projects between Tom Price DHS, Karratha SHS and Hedland SHS saw a group of students travel to Tom Price for a three-day camp with The Literature Centre. This highly successful venture led to six years of Young Writers Collective workshops in the Pilbara.

Since Angela's move to Central Midlands SHS, students and staff have been able to experience a similar program aimed at expanding their understanding of visual literacy.

Angela joined the Board in 2016.

Frané Lessac

Frané Lessac is an author-illustrator, creating over fifty books for children worldwide. She grew up in a small town outside of New York, lived on the Caribbean island of Montserrat and later London before moving to Australia in 1990. Frané has served on the executive committee of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA), was the inaugural West Australian Regional Advisor for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) and is presently the (PAL) published member's advisor. She was the WA State Ambassador for the National Year of Reading and currently serves as an Ambassador for both Room to Read and Books in Homes. Frané is a recipient of the Muriel Barwell Award for Distinguished Service to Children's Literature.

Frané joined the board in 2021.

Cohen Augustson

Cohen Augustson first encountered the Literature Centre as a student in Albany, where he counted the Young Writers workshops as some of his favourite days of the school year. As a member of the Board, he is thrilled to be able to offer and expand programs like these for students all over the state.

Staff

Elizabeth Spencer, Director



Elizabeth's most recent role has been of Western Australia. There, she led the award winning state-wide Better Beginnings Family Literacy Program, information services and digital inclusion for library clients and communities, support for services to the community through the public library network across WA, the Storylines platform for the digital repatriation of Aboriginal collections, stories and family history and the Disrupted Festival of Ideas.

Earlier in her career she had a number of roles at the (then) Department of Culture and the Arts, commencing with Project Officer Young People and the Arts, and this background provided her with a solid understanding of The Literature Centre and its operations.

Prior to working for government, Elizabeth trained at WAAPA and worked in theatre, film and radio industry for more than a decade.

Kath Wisken, Office Manager

After many years in administration and office management in the finance industry, Kath turned her back on the corporate world and found a love of teaching.

After completing a Bachelor of Education as a mature aged student and receiving Edith Cowan University's Australian Literacy Educators' Association Prize in her final year of study, she discovered a passion for sharing her love of books and reading with primary students. An excursion to The Literature Centre with her class opened her eyes to the world of children's literature and sparked a desire to be a part of the organisation.

Kath has worked with us since 2011.

Nicole Clarke, Marketing and Sponsorship Manager

Nicole has used her love of relationship building, creativity and customer service to shape her career in the arts, property, retail and tourism industries.

Following her passion for people and places, she completed a Bachelor of Business in Tourism, Management and Marketing at Edith Cowan University. She spent several years in the tourism and hospitality industries in sales, business development and event roles in Perth and Broome. She then moved into the retail and property industry in marketing, sponsorship and events management roles.

Since joining The Literature, Nicole has honed her skills as a marketing all-rounder, intuitive sponsorship practitioner and accomplished events manager.

Nicole has worked with us since 2011.

Natalya Simon, Education Officer

Natalya has been a primary school teacher for almost a decade, having taught mainstream classroom alongside specialist roles including science and performing arts.

She is currently studying with Oxford University in Writing Fiction, and is her third consecutive year as an Edith Cowan University (ECU) mentor.

Natalya graduated from ECU with a Business Degree with a double major Human Resource Management and Management. She then continued to complete her Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary), and has since worked in private Catholic, independent and public schools.

She is an active member of the Dyslexia SPELD Foundation, Vice President of the Children's Book Council of Western Australia and Steering Committee member of the ECU Education Alumni Chapter.

Natalya has worked with us since 2020.

Sarah Newton, Curator and Communications Officer

Sarah is an arts professional with over five years of experience in the industry.

From her childhood in the Kimberly, Sarah's career began in the South West where she completed a BA in Visual Art at Edith Cowen University in Bunbury.

Over this time, she worked in events management and continued her art practice before relocating to Victoria. In 2019, alongside working as a curator, Sarah completed her MA in Arts Management from RMIT and graduated with distinction.

Throughout her various roles, Sarah has worked closely with diverse communities and has curated exhibitions and events in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Perth.

Sarah has worked with us since 2020.

Jane Lochrie, Communications Assistant

Jane is a young and emerging creative with a special interest in art, literature and digital media.

Growing up between Scotland and Australia, Jane finally settled in Perth to complete her BA in Literature and History at the University of Western Australia. She continued her studies in a different direction, completing a Diploma of Graphic Design in 2020.

Her previous experience includes customer service, events, copywriting and graphic design, alongside voluntary work with various arts and culture initiatives.

Jane has worked with us since 2021.

Déborah Lucas, Administration Officer and Program Coordinator

Déborah has worked in the book industry for almost fifteen years. She studied Information and Communication at l'Université Montaigne in Bordeaux and completed an Advanced Diploma in Bookselling and Publishing in 2000.

Over the course of her career, Déborah worked in various bookstores in France and in the UK, including four years at The European Bookshop in London where she organised book orders of for schools, libraries and literary events at The French Institute. She also developed and managed a French graphic novels section and assisted the UK publisher Knockabout Comics with translations and book events sales.

For five years, Déborah worked as a rights manager for various UK book publishers of illustrated non-fictions, negotiating co-edition rights in 14 languages across Europe.

Déborah regularly attended major international book events including the

London and Frankfurt Book Fairs and the Angouleme International Comics Festival.

completed her Cert III in Education Support and signed up as a volunteer at The Literature Centre in 2018.

After settling in Western Australia in 2012, Déborah worked at Elizabeth's bookshop, worked on several TV subtitles translations,

Déborah has worked with us since 2020.

“The success of their programs is due to the incredible professionalism, passion and tireless work of Lesley Reece and the staff of The Literature Centre”

– Amanda (AJ) Betts, WA author

Recruitment and retention

TLC's ongoing strategies for the recruitment and retention of Board and staff members include:

- Identification of skill sets required.
- Building of networks and targeted recruitment.
- Staff salaries benchmarked against Department of Education WA whenever possible.
- Full inductions of Board and staff.
- Identification of and addressing gaps through training and professional development.
- Flexibility of work terms, hours and locations.
- Contractual notice periods, including handover periods and documentation for transition of key personnel.
- Exit interviews.

Succession

TLC takes a multi-level approach to succession planning, which encompasses governance (strategic direction and organisational policies), operations (procedures and contingency plans), and transition planning (human resource management and transition of key roles).

Governance

Recent governance succession planning activities include:

- Adoption of new Own Rules (constitution) in 2020, in line with the obligations arising from the Associations Incorporation Act 2015.
- Appointment of new Chairperson, Julia Lawrinson, in 2020.
- Appointment of new Board subcommittees and creation of terms of reference, including:
 - People, Capability and Culture Committee (PCC)
 - Finance and Risk Committee (FRC)
- Decision by Director to resign from the Board accepted in 2020, along with decision for Director role to no longer be a Board member in future.
- New Governance Policy approved in 2020, including:
 - Confirmation of Board terms. Board members will now serve terms of two years and may be re-elected to a maximum of six consecutive terms. We will make an exception for the period of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan to ensure continuity during the current Director's transition period.
 - Confirmation of annual policy review process.
 - Confirmation of annual Board performance review.
 - Confirmation of annual strategic planning day.
- New Board Member Agreements adopted in 2020, including demographic / diversity monitoring.

Other governance succession planning activities planned or already underway include:

- Review, formalisation and adoption of policies (for completion by June 2021), in priority order:
 - Priority 1: Risk Management Policy (in collaboration with FRC), including:
 - Health and safety
 - Child protection
 - Emergency management
 - Business continuity and contingency planning
 - Priority 2: HR Policy (in collaboration with PCC), including:
 - Update of existing Employee Handbook and adoption at governance level
 - Priority 3:
 - Financial Policy (in collaboration with FRC)
 - Privacy Policy (in collaboration with FRC)

- Communications Policy (in collaboration with PCC)
- Access and Inclusion Policy (in collaboration with PCC), including:
 - Priority engagement groups
 - Reconciliation Action Plan
 - Disability Action Plan
- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Fundraising and Development Policy

Operations

Recent operational succession planning activities include:

- Handover periods and documentation for transition of key personnel (as required).
- Contingency Plan documenting shared relationships and responsibilities created in 2020.

Other operational succession planning activities planned or already underway include:

- Review, formalisation and documentation of procedures, starting with:
 - Documentation of authorities and permissions.
 - Documentation of procedures (finances, operations, program, communications, CRM, etc).
 - Confirmation of procedures review process.

HR Transition

This Strategic Plan includes succession planning and resourcing targets in order for Director and founder Lesley Reece to start to hand over her legacy to new leadership to ensure TLC continues to inspire generations to come.

Recent transition planning activities include:

- Organisational structure review in 2019, which saw us restructure our full time Registrar role to a part time Office Manager position supported by administrative assistants. This has created a more dynamic and robust business model and reduced the workload of our Director and Marketing & Sponsorship Manager, as well as reduced overheads.
- Confirmation of resourcing targets for Director transition.

Other transition planning activities planned or already underway include:

- Confirmation of new funding agreements with Department of Education WA and Department of Local Government, Sport and Creative Industries.
- Undertaking a review/benchmarking of Director's salary in order to attract best possible candidates.
- Allocation of cash reserves to cover funds required for extended handover period (equivalent to at least 2-4 weeks).
- Allocation of cash reserves to cover funds required for post-handover support (equivalent to at least 4 weeks).
- Development of recruitment plan and timeline, including extended handover period.
- Development of handover documentation.
- Provision of extended handover.
- Provision of post-handover support (as required), with model to be confirmed with successful candidate.

Our program

Our annual program of free and fee-for-services activities is comprised of the four major artistic streams. The locations and artists employed in all of these activities vary according to community demand, availability of authors and illustrators, and other opportunities as they arise.

Schools program (for primary and secondary students)

- Young Writers Collective (previously called the Talented Young Writers Program) – our unique multi-year program in which award-winning WA and interstate authors present four full day creative writing workshops at TLC, metropolitan and regional schools (one per term).
- Young Writers Online – our new online program launched in April 2020 makes our Young Writers Collective workshops available to students via a series of video links. Students receive a series of sequential creative writing sessions from one author each term, tailored to their year level.
- Exhibition and other workshops – including our interactive, exploratory and creative workshops that unpack the creation of Australian picture books. These are delivered by our Education Officers (who are fully trained and experienced teachers) in line with one of the five exhibitions available each term at TLC or one of more than 30 exhibitions that tour to metropolitan and regional schools. This unique visual literacy program gives students access to drafts, research, storyboards, dummy books and actual preliminary artwork.
- Author and Illustrator in Residence program – these residencies at TLC, metropolitan and regional schools include exhibitions, ‘Meet the Author/Illustrator’ sessions and/or creative writing/illustration and exhibition workshops.
- Sound of Picture Books at TLC – in partnership with West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Yamaha’s Alf Demasi, and illustrator/composer Matt Ottley, our unique multi-modal performances take the audience on an interactive journey through music, narration, visual imagery and drama.

“An awesome day. I enjoyed being around people who shared my interest in writing because I don’t know anyone at my school who does.”

– Amy, student, Mount Barker

Public program

- Sound of Picture Books at Perth Festival and in regional areas where possible.
- Young Writers Online.
- Australian Story Tellers Festival – a free annual festival for children and young adults at TLC in Fremantle.
- Annual Celebrate Reading National Conference at TLC.
- Open Gallery Evenings at TLC – free picture book exhibition showings at TLC in Fremantle.
- Book launches at TLC – WA and interstate artists and illustrators.

- Annual Leslie Rees Fremantle Lecture - which honours WA writer Leslie Rees (beloved friend of TLC and winner of the very first Children’s Book Council Book of the Year in 1946 with his picture book, The Story of Karrawingi the Emu, illustrated by Walter Cunningham).

“The recorded sessions were very informative and interactive. It was just like I was there in person.”

– Imogen, student (online program), Nagle Catholic College Geraldton

Artist development

- Annual Celebrate Reading National Conference – focused profile opportunities for Australian authors and illustrators of literature for children and young adults, and a range of professional development opportunities.
- Artistic Residencies at TLC – residencies for authors and illustrators for periods of creation, reflection, research or recovery. Each artist receives full access to TLC staff and facilities as well as free accommodation.
- Introductions and brokering opportunities for authors and illustrators on behalf of other organisations.
- Capacity building support for WA and interstate authors and illustrators of children’s and young adult literature (including marketing support, book launches, training on how to deliver workshops, support on funding applications, guidance on publishing, mentorships, and observation of Young Writers Collective authors and illustrators).

“Whenever I spend time at the Centre, I come away inspired and I know that the children who visit are given the chance to develop not only as readers and possible writers of the future, but as people.”

– Markus Zusak, Australian author

Sector services

- Book shop – the only one in the country to exclusively stock Australian literature for children and young adults. Our free book consultancy service matches the best books to their potential readers.
- Sector development and advocacy work.

Our place in the sector

The Literature Centre is the only Australian arts organisation with an exclusive focus on Australian literature for children and young adults and a broad, WA-wide remit and program.

The breadth and diversity of our program includes workshops and opportunities for children and young adults (including teacher- and artist-led incursions and excursions for schools and the general public, and a free festival at our home in Fremantle), professional development for authors and illustrators (through the only conference of its kind in Australia), professional development for teachers and teachers-in-training, exhibitions, performances, events, a venue, writers' residence, library, book shop (the only one in the country to exclusively stock Australian literature for children and young adults), as well as our sector development and advocacy work.

While some of our closest state and national comparators provide some of these programs or services with smaller or different geographical remits, TLC is the only one who does it all. TLC is also the only organisation that has always had a commitment to appointing trained and experienced teachers to all our Education Officer roles.

“All the teachers commented that they had learned new skills and the modelling had increased their confidence in using those skills in the future. It was wonderful for the children to have the opportunity to engage with the illustrator's work and this program, as many of them would not have the resources to access this type of program due to their socio-economic status. Thank you!”

– Grant Kennedy, Principal, North Balga Primary School

Our partners, collaborators and colleagues

TLC is committed to sustaining and evolving our existing partnerships, and seeking out new partners who share our vision and values.

While we technically compete for funding, audiences and participants with other organisations, we work in collaboration to complement rather than compete with our colleagues.

In the Fremantle and greater Perth area, State Library of WA and Paper Bird Books deliver some programs that share similar elements with ours. However, these tend to be one-off workshops (as opposed to our multi-year Young Writers Collective program), have a smaller geographical focus, and/or are not led by qualified teachers. And none of WA's other writers' residences (Katherine Susannah Pritchard Writers Centre, Peter Cowan Writers Centre and Tom Collins House) have a focus on Australian authors and illustrators of literature for children and young adults. Recent collaborations with these organisations include our cross-promotion of the tour of TLC's exhibition of Shaun Tan's 'Cicada' to State Library of WA, cross promotion of Paper Bird activities, and provision of free registration to our Celebrate Reading Conference. We also hope to explore potential collaborations with Centre for Stories over the next few years.

Across WA, our work is most closely aligned with Children's Book Council WA (CBCWA) and Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI Australia West), though CBCWA's programs for young readers and writers are primarily focused on Book Week and Country Week and SCBWI is more focused on authors and illustrators. Recent collaborations with these organisations include cross-promotion, hosting CBCWA's annual prize giving ceremony and providing member discounts to our Celebrate Reading Conference. We also hope to increase our collaboration with Magabala Books over the next few years.

Nationally, the programs of Book Links (Qld) Inc: The Centre for Children's Literature (Queensland), the May Gibbs Children's Trust (South Australia), The Writing Workshop (New South Wales) and the State Library of Victoria's Centre for Youth Literature (recently closed), 100 Story Building and commercial providers such as G.A.T.E.Ways (all in Victoria) share some elements with ours. However, all of these interstate organisations have smaller geographical remits and/or do not deliver across the full breadth of our program areas. We also hope to explore potential collaborations with Melbourne-based #LoveOzYA and national young writers' organisation Express Media over the next few years in order to maximise publication opportunities for our writers in Voiceworks magazine.

“How I would have loved to have had the chance as a young writer to come to such a place and write, to listen to writers talk about their craft”

– Isobelle Carmody, Australian author

In the last three years alone, we have also collaborated, worked with or assisted:

- Australian Children's Laureate, national

- Australian Society of Authors, national
- Between the Lines Literacy Festival, Bunbury and Busselton
- Book Links (Qld) Inc: The Centre for Children’s Literature, Brisbane
- Books Illustrated, Melbourne
- Children’s Book Council WA
- Edith Cowan University
- Ipswich Children’s Literature Festival/Story Arts, Ipswich
- Fremantle Arts Centre
- Fremantle Press
- Magabala Books, Broome
- National Centre for Children’s Literature, Canberra
- Notre Dame University
- Perth Festival
- Reading Australia, national
- Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI Australia West)
- State Library of WA
- WA Symphony Orchestra
- West Words, Sydney
- Writing WA

“The Literature Centre is not only a valuable resource for students and creators like myself, but an essential cultural hub in the landscape of Australian children’s literature.”

– Shaun Tan, WA author and illustrator

Situation analysis

Strengths and opportunities

- Our people. Our staff and Board are experts in the field and their expertise, knowledge and commitment is our biggest asset – for the organisation and our sector. Our new Chairperson and renewed Board membership have brought a new energy and confidence at Board level.
- Our long history and legacy, which will see TLC celebrating our 30th anniversary in 2022.
- Our exclusive focus on Australian literature for children and young adults (and on WA's young readers and writers in particular).
- Our home in the old Fremantle Prison hospital, which includes four galleries, a bookshop, offices, archives, a self-contained two-bedroom writers' residence, as well as spacious grounds and shady verandahs. We currently hold a five-year lease with Fremantle Prison with three five-year options to renew. And we have recently confirmed funding of \$500,000 to restore and renovate TLC in late 2020 and early 2021.
- Our unique program offerings, in particular our Annual Celebrate Reading National Conference, Sound of Picture Books program, Young Writers Collective and Young Writers Online workshops, which provide opportunities for children and young adults to engage directly with authors and illustrators.
- Our trusted, interactive workshops in which teachers know exactly what they're getting, including the ability of our Education Officers, guest authors and illustrators to tailor delivery to get the best outcomes for students, and the professional development they provide to teachers.
- Our access and outreach programs that get Australian literature to places and people that may otherwise miss out (including regional areas and lower socio-economic public schools).
- Our reputation for taking care of authors and illustrators as WA's largest literary employer.
- The renewed national focus on Australian literature and the promotion of literacy within WA and national education curriculums.
- Our new national reach through the launch of Young Writers Online in April 2020. Such online technologies allow us to explore new avenues to increase participation and overcome the tyranny of distance in WA. NBN and other telecommunication improvements may also lead to better regional service opportunities.
- Our diverse, multi-level markets and audiences, which include: primary and secondary school students (state-wide and nationally through our online programs); primary and secondary school teachers and librarians; pre-service teachers from tertiary training institutions; public librarians; emerging and established WA and Australian authors and illustrators; publishers; and the general public.
- The impact of our work and the way it creates pathways to future learning, writing and employment through normalising the experience of being able to interact with authors and illustrators and to imagine a career in the arts.
- Our long standing, positive relationships with partners and funding bodies including our primary partner Department of Education WA (which invests \$400,000 in our partnership

work each year), Department of Local Government, Sport and Creative Industries, Healthway and Copyright Agency.

- Growing national interest and engagement in reading. The newly released Australia Council Arts Participation survey demonstrates that 72% of Australians read for pleasure (an increase of 17% since 2016). In 2019 alone, 4.5 million Australians attended book or literary events or festivals.
- Growing demand for more diverse voices and for Australian stories that depict the authentic, lived experiences of people from marginalised and under-represented groups.
- Growing national focus on mental health and wellbeing of children and young adults and acknowledgement of the positive impact of creative learning to improve confidence, capacity and mental health.
- Opportunity to use the experience of COVID-19 to rethink what we do and how we do it, including allocating time and resources to review our business models in order to continue to increase our earned:grant income ratio over this Strategic Plan period.

Threats and development areas

- Impact of COVID-19 on income, intrastate travel and ability to work with interstate writers.
- Challenge of servicing a vast geographic region, including high cost of delivering services and programs in regional areas.
- Recent national arts funding changes that have increased competition for the Government, philanthropic and corporate funding and opportunities that remain. Literature receives the smallest proportion of federal arts funding.
- Reduction of WA's mining industry has shifted the corporate investment landscape.
- Reduction in funding to public schools since 2016 (and the impact on regional and lower socio-economic schools in particular), which has seen many schools being no longer able to continue to take part in our programs.
- Ongoing need to find new business models or funding for our work in regional areas and with lower socio-economic schools in order to ensure we reach our mission of providing access to our programs to all children and young adults.
- Relationships with new metropolitan and regional schools rely on being able to find a liaison/champion in each school (which requires resources and time).
- Impact of drought, bushfires and the recession on regional and remote access.
- Ongoing challenge of delivering a big remit with a small team, including meeting demand, maintaining a positive and effective work culture, and avoiding burnout.
- Ongoing challenge of ensuring our Board and staff are as diverse as our communities.
- Ongoing challenge of balancing the delivery of our programs with our ambitions to extend our promotion, reflection, or to measure the long-term impact of our work.
- Ongoing challenge of engaging with metropolitan First Nations authors and illustrators on site at the old Fremantle Prison, which is a site of memorial for many.

Our strategies and key performance indicators (KPIs)

Goal 1 (young readers and writers): We will deliver relevant, effective and inspirational schools and public programs for children and young adults across WA (and beyond), with a particular focus on increasing access for children and young adults from lower socio-economic or marginalised communities, regional and remote areas, and nationally through our online programs.

We will achieve this by... (key strategies)	We will measure this by... (KPIs)			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Delivering Young Writers Collective workshops for Year 6, 7/8, and 9-12 school students, including: delivering excursions for school groups at TLC; and increasing our workshops in regional schools.				
Developing new online program for schools, groups and individuals (Young Writers Online).				
Delivering Young Writers Online workshops, including: expansion of online program options and models; and increasing participant numbers and reach (including regionally and nationally).				
Delivering exhibition and other workshops for primary and secondary school students, including: delivering excursions for school groups at TLC; workshops in metropolitan schools; increasing our workshops in regional schools; and increasing our workshops in lower socio-economic areas.				
Developing workshops for two new travelling exhibitions each year.				
Delivering Author and Illustrator in Residence program, including: residencies and activities for school groups at TLC; residencies and activities in metropolitan schools; increasing our residencies and activities in regional schools; and increasing our residencies and activities in lower socio-economic areas.				
Delivering Sound of Picture Books, including: performances at TLC; performances at Perth Festival (80% capacity); and performances in other metropolitan and regional venues.				
Delivering free annual Australian Storytellers Festival at TLC.				
Providing professional development for teachers through, including: Professional Learning sessions at TLC; and tailored Professional Learning sessions for schools.				

Providing professional development for teachers in training in partnership with tertiary institutions.				
Undertaking a process of continual review and improvement, including:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Involvement of staff, Board, and participating authors and illustrators in planning and evaluation. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtaining and responding to quantitative and qualitative evaluation feedback, including: feedback from various sources (participants, partners, teachers, parents, etc); and via various means (printed and online forms, focus groups, interviews, etc). 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue exploring more and different ways for young people to contribute and/or co-design our programs. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making sure our work remains relevant and responsive to changes in the education curriculum for our schools programs, technologies and interests by reviewing and updating workshop topics, pedagogies and delivery methods (including incorporation of new technologies for both onsite and online delivery). 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing ongoing professional development and guidance for TLC staff, participating authors and illustrators (including Child Safety Protocols, disability access, cultural awareness, etc). 				

Goal 2 (artists and art form): We will support and build capacity of authors and illustrators, and encourage the creation and appreciation of Australian literature for children and young adults.

We will achieve this by... (key strategies)	We will measure this by... (KPIs)			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Delivering picture book exhibitions at TLC, including: at least one First Nations picture book exhibition each year; and Free Open Gallery Evenings at TLC of free picture book exhibition showings.				
Delivering touring picture book exhibitions; including exhibitions in metropolitan schools; increasing our exhibitions in regional schools; and increasing our exhibitions in lower socio-economic areas; developing two new touring exhibitions each year.				

Delivering Annual Celebrate Reading National Conference, including: profile opportunities for Australian authors and illustrators; professional development opportunities for authors, illustrators and the general public.				
Offering two free registrations to the Annual Celebrate Reading National Conference to WA First Nations authors and illustrators each year.				
Increasing the number of delegates (including national and international delegates) at the Annual Celebrate Reading National Conference each year.				
Delivering Artistic Residencies at TLC, including: creative development outcomes; public outcomes.				
Delivering Annual Leslie Rees Fremantle Lecture.				
Delivering book launches for WA and interstate artists and illustrators.				
Selling Australian literature for children and young adults through our book shop.				
Providing networking and capacity building support for WA and Australian authors and illustrators of children's and young adult literature (including marketing support, book launches, training, support on funding applications, guidance on publishing, and mentorships, etc.).				
Increasing attendance and sales at public events by 10% each year.				
Monitoring and increasing diversity of participating authors and illustrators across our entire program, featuring at least one First Nations, one culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), one Deaf or Disabled, and one emerging author or illustrator each year.				
Extending relationships with local First Nations Elders, authors and illustrators to continue to address the inherent challenges of engaging on site at the old Fremantle Prison.				

Goal 3 (access and reach): We will extend the organisation’s profile and reach, raise awareness and understanding of the impact of our work, and grow our reputation as a leader through our sector development and advocacy work.

We will achieve this by... (key strategies)	We will measure this by... (KPIs)			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Formalising our Communications Policy at governance level and updating our Communications and Marketing Strategy and procedures annually to order to increase the knowledge, profile and reach of TLC, as well as to increase income generation through sales.				
Formalising our ‘TLC champions’ campaign in order to leverage our relationships with the principals and teachers in the schools we work with already to develop new relationships with more schools across the State. This may include: asking teachers to make introductions; or offering taster sessions.				
Maintaining the timely promotion of programs and events through our website, social media and e-newsletters.				
Increasing online engagement across all platforms by 10% each year.				
Continuing to nurture relationships with key literary editors, columnists and broadcasters, including maintaining regular media presence.				
Maintaining and increasing our advocacy, lobbying and engagement on behalf of authors, illustrators and Australian literature for children and young adults to Governments, funding bodies, publishers, organisations, event managers, and other decision makers (in line with shifting arts and education landscapes).				
Maintaining and increasing the number and scope of our cross-artform and cross-sector partnerships and collaborations, including exploring new and/or deeper relationships with: Centre for Stories, Magabala Books, #LoveOzYA and Express Media (Voiceworks magazine).				
Maintaining and increasing cross-promotion and/or sector development support for sector partners (such as WritingWA, SCBWI or CBCWA), authors and illustrators.				
Continuing to support the Australian Children’s Literature Alliance and network.				

Continuing to offer a mixed program that includes free events, pro-bono work, and subsidised activities, in addition to fee-paying activities.				
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Goal 4 (sustainability, succession and legacy): We will maintain our financial diversification and viability, and successfully transition the organisation to the next stage of its leadership.

We will achieve this by... (key strategies)	We will measure this by... (KPIs)			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Exploring the cost-benefit of maintaining COVID-19 fees if doing so allows us to access more schools.				
Exploring the introduction of a sliding scale of fees for different types of schools and/or different areas before fees return to pre-COVID-19 levels.				
Growing online program options, models and participation to continue to address the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on earned income, intrastate travel and ability to work with interstate writers.				
Confirming new funding agreement with the Department of Education WA (HR transition milestone).				
Confirming new funding agreement with Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (HR transition milestone).				
Formalising our Fundraising Development Policy at governance level, updating our Fundraising and Donor Strategies annually, and streamlining our fundraising procedures in order to identify and target potential philanthropic, corporate and donor support.				
Strengthening governance of the organisation, including: appointment of new subcommittees (2020); adoption of new Governance Policy and Board Member Agreements (2020); and scheduling further policies for development (2021), including:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalising Finance and Risk Committee, Policy and procedures, including: post-COVID-19 cashflow recovery timeline; replenishment of retained earnings (cash reserves); and streamlining of Annual Budget and budget management processes. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalising People, Capability and Culture Committee, HR Policy and procedures, including: mutual employment expectations; internal communications procedures; external stakeholder 				

procedures; investing in professional development as required; and creating more opportunities for Board and staff interaction.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalising Communications and Privacy Policies and procedures, including: streamlining relationship management processes; and development of a new CRM (late 2020). 				
Monitoring and increasing diversity of TLC staff and Board, including introduction of new Board Member Agreements (2020) and HR Policy and employment documents (2021) that allow us to track demographic information.				
Maintaining and expanding our ongoing monitoring of TLC's workplace culture and staff wellbeing, including: the introduction of annual staff satisfaction survey to be led by the Board.				
Reviewing/benchmarking Director's salary in order to attract best possible candidates (HR transition milestone).				
Confirming/allocating funds for Director extended handover period and post-handover support (HR transition milestones).				
Developing Director recruitment plan and timeline (HR transition milestones).				
Ongoing streamlining and documentation of operational systems, procedures and processes.				

Our approach to Risk Management

Administration and oversight

TLC's Board is responsible for minimising and managing risks in our governance and operations. This includes, but isn't limited to:

- Approving and monitoring the Risk Management Policy within our Policy Manual, internal controls and reporting systems.
- Agreeing or ratifying all policies and decisions on matters which might create significant risk to the organisation.
- Reviewing reports from the Director on compliance with policies, legal and regulatory requirements, including:
 - Regulatory monitoring of Australian activities (according to the Associations Incorporations Act and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act).
 - Strategic Plan monitoring (including delivery on funding KPIs).
 - Financial monitoring and risk management.
 - Managing risks to the organisation's reputation.
 - Oversight of operations and human resources.
 - Dealing with sensitive or unusual matters, referred by the Director.

In 2020, the Board introduced a new Finance and Risk Committee (FRC). The FRC's Terms of Reference outline the responsibilities of the committee, which include:

- To provide oversight on, input into, and approve TLC's policies on risk, aligned with our values and strategy.
- To establish a risk appetite statement to guide the organisation.
- To ensure all relevant risks are identified, documented and assessed according to the severity of consequence and likelihood of occurrence.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of risk management.

In the first half of 2021, the Board will formalise our Risk Management Policy and review/update associated procedures, including: health and safety; child protection; emergency/crisis management; business continuity and contingency planning. This will include the development of 'heat map' indicators to show the highest risks at any one time, and ongoing embedding of a risk-aware organisational culture through mitigation policies, procedures and instructions.

Risk Management framework

TLC's Risk Management framework (see Appendix 5) is reviewed as part of the Board's annual planning process. The Director provides updates on new or changing risks to the Board on a regular basis. Recommendations of action to be taken to reduce or mitigate risk are approved by the Board.

Our approach to our Finances

Administration and oversight

TLC's Director and Office Manager are responsible for the financial administration and management of the organisation. Our Director's responsibilities include: funding applications and acquittals; contractual negotiations; managing partnerships; budgeting; and liaison with Macri Partners. Our Office Manager's responsibilities include: payroll; bookkeeping; BAS; financial reports; banking; booking confirmations and invoicing; book sales and orders.

TLC's Board is responsible for overall financial oversight. In 2020, the Board introduced a new Finance and Risk Committee (FRC). The FRC's Terms of Reference outline the responsibilities of the committee, which include:

- To review Annual Budgets initially prepared by staff, to help develop/maintain appropriate procedures for budget preparations, and ensure a consistency between the budget and the organisation's plans;
- To ensure regular and accurate monitoring and accountability for funds and report to the Board on any financial irregularities and concerns;
- To create (if necessary), monitor and report to the Board on internal controls, financial policies and procedures;
- To work with staff to design financial reports and ensure that reports are accurate and timely.

In the first half of 2021, the Board will formalise our Finance Policy and review/update our associated financial procedures, including: post-COVID-19 cashflow recovery timeline; replenishment of retained earnings (cash reserves); streamlining of Annual Budget and budget management processes.

The Board is also supported in terms of financial governance through quarterly reports, annual audit and ongoing advice from Macri Partners.

Income and expenditure

TLC currently receives income from a varied range of sources including the State Government (through the Department of Education WA and Department of Local Government, Sport and Creative Industries), Lotterywest, Healthway, Copyright Agency, philanthropic trusts and foundations (including Crown / Packer Foundations and more) and donors, as well as significant earned income through our programs.

In 2020, some of the shortfall in our program income experienced due to COVID-19 has been offset by the Federal Government's JobKeeper program, the Australian Tax Office's cash flow boost, Fremantle Prison's six-month rent waiver, and significantly reduced program activity (including cost savings on author fees, travel and accommodation costs, etc).

Budget forecasts

Each year's operating budget is confirmed as part of TLC's annual Budget and Business Planning process.

We originally projected small, decreasing deficit budgets over the course of this Strategic Plan period, as the organisation continued to adjust to the unexpected decision by BHP not to renew our partnership at the end of 2017 due to a change in internal priorities. This staged approach was made possible by the organisation's strong cash reserves (see below).

We are currently in the process of developing our 2021 Budget (pending confirmation of our Department of Education WA funding and projections of likely earned income levels post COVID-19), as well as forward budget projections.

Based on estimations so far, we now anticipate that we will end 2020 with an unusually high surplus (in the area of \$150,000) and will return to more usual, incremental surplus budgets from 2021 (in the area of \$2,000).

Cash reserves

TLC has a consistent history of allocating retained earnings to our substantial cash reserves in order to cater for unforeseen contingencies.

At the end of 2019, these cash reserves were \$421,383 (approximately 31% of turnover), after reporting a -\$120,304 deficit in 2019 due to the cessation of our BHP partnership. In spite of this change, TLC was still able to deliver our full program and maintain our reach throughout Western Australia in 2018 and 2019.

We are currently in the process of developing our 2021 Budget (as above). Based on estimations so far, we now anticipate that we will end 2020 with cash reserves in the area of \$600,000 (approximately 45% of turnover).

This includes forward budget projections that make allowances for ongoing uncertainty post-COVID-19 (including the potential to allocate cash reserves for contingency and/or other strategic purposes) while maintaining cash reserves of at least 20% of turnover.

Appendixes

1. Governance Policy (adopted September 2020)
2. Board Member Agreement template (adopted September 2020)
3. People, Capability and Culture Committee Terms of Reference (adopted October 2020)
4. Finance and Risk Committee Terms of Reference (adopted October 2020)
5. Risk Management framework