

Biennial Report 2022–2023



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Thank you for
taking this two-year journey with me.
I have had the most wonderful time as the
Australian Children's Laureate and have met with
around forty thousand people all over Australia.

I wish you all the very best with your reading,
drawing and writing. Remember, your imagination is your
most treasured possession. Keep it alive and healthy,
nourish it every day. It can only grow stronger.

Gabrielle Wang

Australian Children's Laureate, 2022-2023



1 Introduction

With the appointment of Gabrielle Wang as the 2022-2023 Australian Children's Laureate we were blessed to have someone who so powerfully promoted diversity via her role.

From the launch of her term with the wonderful Lion Dance in Melbourne, and throughout her travels around Australia, Gabi brought her unique perspectives to her audiences over the two years, both digitally and in person, sharing her stories, wisdom, and of course, her dragons.

Gabi visited every state and territory and made inroads for the Foundation in talking about diversity in children's books, storytelling and illustration. In doing so she helped expand the Foundation's reach and promote the value and importance of reading in new and unique ways. She visited 140 schools and in a first for the Laureate, presented the Wang GungWu Lecture in front of a live audience at the ABC.

The Foundation continues to build on its strengths; enriching the lives of young Australians through the power of story. Our seven past Laureates have all brought their unique perspectives, skills and styles to the role and each has built on the legacy of the ones before. We are grateful that they continue to be involved and live the mantra of Once a Laureate, always a Laureate.

We are able to continue our work through the amazing support of our sponsors and donors, including the Australian Government, and we have created new partnerships with Bolinda Audio and the Deafness Foundation that are allowing us to extend our reach even further in new and exciting ways.

None of this happens without the fantastic work of our team, including Program Manager Kris, who gets ever more imaginative and creative with the Laureate Program each year. She is supported by Justine who looks after all our administration and marketing. A special thanks must go to Lee who stepped down from the administration role but continues to support us with her amazing design work, including this beautiful publication.

The past two years have seen us welcome three Observers from The Observership Program, providing them with board participation experiences and each of them has brought special skills and perspectives that have enhanced our thinking, expanded our knowledge and enriched what we can offer. They joined an amazing group of people who make up the Board of the Foundation. This group gives their time, knowledge and skills willingly to support me and bring the Laureate Program and all the things we do to life.

And now, onward with the 2024-2025 Laureate, Sally Rippin. We are so excited to have Sally as our eighth Australian Children's Laureate. She has already made a huge impact ... but more of that in our next Biennial Report, when we will be able to tell you how Sally has added to the fabric of the Foundation and opened up new ways for us to bring the wonder of books, reading and story to our next generation of readers.

Reading
Changes
Lives!



Bruce Ellis

**Chairman
Australian Children's Laureate Foundation**

The Laureate spoke to 40,000 people in-person and online, during her official Laureate days. She visited 140 schools and also attended countless other events and supported many new initiatives throughout her term.



(Photo: State Library Victoria; James Braund)

The Australian Children's Laureate Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their connection to the land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their culture, to the Elders past, present and emerging.



Reading
Changes
Lives!



Farewell Message

I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to participate in farewelling Gabrielle and to sing her praises. I share with her the fervent desire to allow children's imaginations and creativity to flourish, especially through story and image. I wish I could be there in person to give her an enormous hug to thank her, not just for her amazing opus, but particularly for her incredible efforts, energy and enthusiasm over the last two years.

I've often thought it must be odd for a writer who basically works alone to have a demanding public schedule to fulfil.

But right from the start of her tenure, Gabrielle has proven time and time again what a fabulous choice she was to be our Children's Laureate. Opening libraries, Q&As, panel discussions and seminars, projects and interaction with children, teachers and parents all over the country – Gabrielle has done all this and much more. Her influence on the many lives she has touched will be felt long into the future.

My sincere congratulations on being shortlisted in the Prime Minister's Literary Awards, and I can't wait to see what new works emerge after all your Laureate experiences on the road.

Thank you again Gabrielle, and my very best wishes for everything you do in the future.

Noni Hazlehurst AM

ACLF Patron



2 Background to the ACLF

Reading Changes Lives! The Australian Children's Laureate Foundation (ACLF) is a not-for-profit organisation whose vision is 'enriching the lives of young Australians through the power of story'.

The ACLF is a collegial and inclusive organisation with representation from across the field of children's and young adult literature. Founded in 2008 as the Australian Children's Literature Alliance (ACLA), in 2014 the ACLA secured DGR status. In 2018 the ACLF changed its name to clarify the focus of its work.

Reflective of our founding objectives, the ACLF's second Strategic Plan (2020–2023) articulated six values:

- ~ DYNAMIC ADVOCACY
- ~ EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
- ~ INCLUSIVENESS
- ~ COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT
- ~ INNOVATIVE APPROACH
- ~ OPERATIONAL INTEGRITY

Reading
Changes
Lives!



About the Laureate

The Laureate is the national ambassador for reading, championing important issues affecting the entire industry. The Laureate also forms strong international links with Laureate counterparts and this has led to further participation in, and promotion of, Australian creators at international literary forums. The establishment of an Australian Children's Laureate program to promote the importance of reading is based on the successful implementation of this idea in the UK. There are Children's Laureate programs in: UK, The Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, Wales, Italy; a National Ambassador for Young People's Literature in the US; and the Ti Awhi Rito New Zealand Reading Ambassador for children and young people, the second of whom, Alan Dingley, was announced in 2023.

The Children's Laureate must be an Australian author and/or illustrator of children's and/or youth literature, who is making a significant contribution to the children's literature canon of this country. The Laureate is appointed on a biennial basis and promotes the transformational power of reading, creativity and story in the lives of young Australians. The ACLF continues to take the Laureate to marginalised and disadvantaged communities and to share the joy of reading with as many young people as possible.





3 Executive Summary

The 2022–2023 Laureate, Gabrielle Wang, building on the efforts of six previous Laureates, is now widely regarded as a key spokesperson on children’s literature, and as an influential ambassador for reading. During her two year term, she has reached countless people in person and via the media.

Each Laureate has pursued a project based on a powerful message:

‘Imagine a Story’

(Gabrielle Wang, 2022–23)

‘Read For Your Life!’

(Ursula Dubosarsky, 2020–21)

‘Stories Make Us’

(Morris Gleitzman, 2018–19)

‘It’s Your Story’

(Leigh Hobbs, 2016–17)

‘Share a Story’

(Jackie French AM, 2014–15)

‘This is My Place’

(Alison Lester AM, 2012–13)

‘Storykeepers’

(Boori Monty Pryor, 2012–13)

Each Laureate has had a distinctive voice and approach which is reflected in their different projects, and this enriches and refreshes the ACLF’s messages and widens our audiences during each term. Each Laureate remains vitally connected to the ACLF program.

The ACLF enlarged its audiences during the pandemic through increased online offerings but we were pleased to be able to return to a face-to-face program as well as our online events in 2022–2023.

The ACLF has:

➤ Implemented six consecutive Laureate terms with seven Laureates, and planning for our 2024–2025 program is well advanced. In February 2024, the eighth Australian Children’s Laureate was announced.

➤ Continued to provide an online program.

➤ Expanded the ACLF’s social media presence and website including films, interactive and downloadable free resources.

➤ Participated in and initiated the International Children’s Laureate Summits, the sixth of which was held at Bologna Children’s Book Fair in 2023.

➤ Held three Australian Children’s Laureate Summits, the third of which ‘One Loud Voice’ was held on 11 May 2023 hosted by The Chau Chak Wing Museum at the University of Sydney and attended by previous Laureate, Ursula Dubosarsky.

➤ Consolidated partnerships with a wide range of organisations including national and state libraries, and national and state Children’s Commissioners.



➤ Partnered with Story Box Library which has filmed several Laureates for the Australian Children’s Laureate Series, including the ACLF Patron, actress and writer, Noni Hazlehurst AM, reading Laureates’ works.

➤ Continued to receive repeat invitations from the organisers of major Australian and international children’s literary conferences, festivals, annual lectures and other events.

➤ Reached remote Indigenous audiences working with the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia [AISWA], and other culturally diverse groups.

➤ Raised the profile of children’s literature via increased media coverage.

➤ Conducted joint promotion with the Copyright Agency’s Reading Australia website: <https://readingaustralia.com.au/themes/australian-childrens-laureate/>

(Photo bottom left: Foto Minopoli, by BolognaFiere)



4 Achieving Our Objectives

Honouring Our Values During the 2022–2023 Program

Dynamic Advocacy

The ACLF maintains and develops the Laureateship as a powerful advocacy body, participating in campaigns, liaising with government and engaging in national and international advocacy. The announcement of Gabrielle Wang as the seventh Australian Children's Laureate (2022–2023) took place at the Pauline Gandel Children's Quarter of the State Library Victoria in Melbourne on 8 March 2022.

The Laureate

Gabrielle Wang is a widely regarded and acclaimed writer and illustrator, born in Melbourne of Chinese heritage. Her maternal great grandfather came to Victoria during the Gold Rush and her father from Shanghai. Her stories are a blend of Chinese and Western culture with a touch of fantasy. Gabrielle's first children's novel, *The Garden of Empress Cassia*, won the 2002 Aurealis Award, was shortlisted for the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards and was a CBCA Notable Book. *The Pearl of Tiger Bay* was shortlisted for the 2004 Aurealis Award and *The Lion Drummer* was a Notable Book in the 2009 CBCA Book of the Year Awards. *A Ghost in My Suitcase* won the 2009 Aurealis Award, was a CBC Notable Book, was shortlisted for the 2011 Sakura Medal and received a Highly Commended in the 2010 Prime Minister's Literary Awards. Her first young adult novel, *Little Paradise* also received a Highly Commended in the 2011 Prime Minister's Awards. Gabrielle's picture book *The Race for the Chinese Zodiac* (2010) illustrated by Sally Rippin and Regine Abos was a Notable Book in the CBCA

Awards for 2011 and shortlisted for the 2011 YABBA and WAYBRA awards. Gabrielle has created two popular characters *Poppy* and *Pearlie* for the highly successful 2011 *Our Australian Girl* series. *The Wishbird* was a CBCA 2014 Notable Book and was shortlisted for the 2014 Australian Book Design Awards, Yabba Awards, Kroc Awards, Koala Awards, Cool Awards and Crystal Kite Award. Other recent books include the suspenseful *The Beast of Hushing Wood* for middle readers, and a sequel to the award-winning *A Ghost in my Suitcase*, called *Ting Ting the Ghosthunter*. Gabi's new book *Zadie Ma and the Dog Who Chased the Moon* was released in June 2022 and was shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, the Queensland Literary Awards 2023, and the Prime Minister's Literary Awards 2023. She is an advocate for diversity in literature and her Chinese-Australian heritage informs that advocacy.



Our imagination is your most treasured possession and I want to encourage all children to use their imaginations regularly by reading, drawing and writing stories.

Imagination is like a muscle, if you don't use it, you can easily lose it. So remember to keep imagining, reading and immersing yourselves in stories!

'Imagine a Story'
Gabrielle Wang
Australian Children's Laureate,
2022–2023





4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Launch

Gabrielle's project during her term as Laureate was to encourage children and young people to use their imaginations and to recognise the value of stories from many different perspectives. The launch was held at the Pauline Gandel Children's Quarter at the State Library of Victoria. Due to ongoing COVID restrictions, it was primarily a digital audience (attended by 2,250 students from 59 schools online from across Australia and New Zealand, and over 420 people watching via YouTube) with 10 children and 40 industry supporters in the room. Her term was launched by ACLF Chair, Bruce Ellis, and by a traditional Chinese lion dance. She shared her vision for the year and answered questions from children, as well as leading the audience through a dragon drawing experience. In attendance at the launch were past Laureates Leigh Hobbs and Alison Lester.



The Laureate followed this with a visit to the Immigration Museum, Melbourne where she worked with 21 students from the Victorian College for the Deaf on 29 March 2023. Both events were Auslan translated thanks to support from the Deafness Foundation.



It was fantastic to host Gabrielle Wang at the Immigration Museum last year. Gabrielle ran a workshop for our flagship Culture Makers Lab program. Students had the opportunity to learn about Gabrielle's writing and art practice, as well as participate in meaningful activities and discussions to produce their own creative work. Students left the workshop feeling inspired and excited after having the unique opportunity to meet and learn from an award winning and established author like Gabrielle. As a museum that champions stories of identity and belonging, it was a privilege to be able to host Gabrielle's excellent workshop.

Gurmeet Kaur
Education Programs Producer,
Immigration Museum



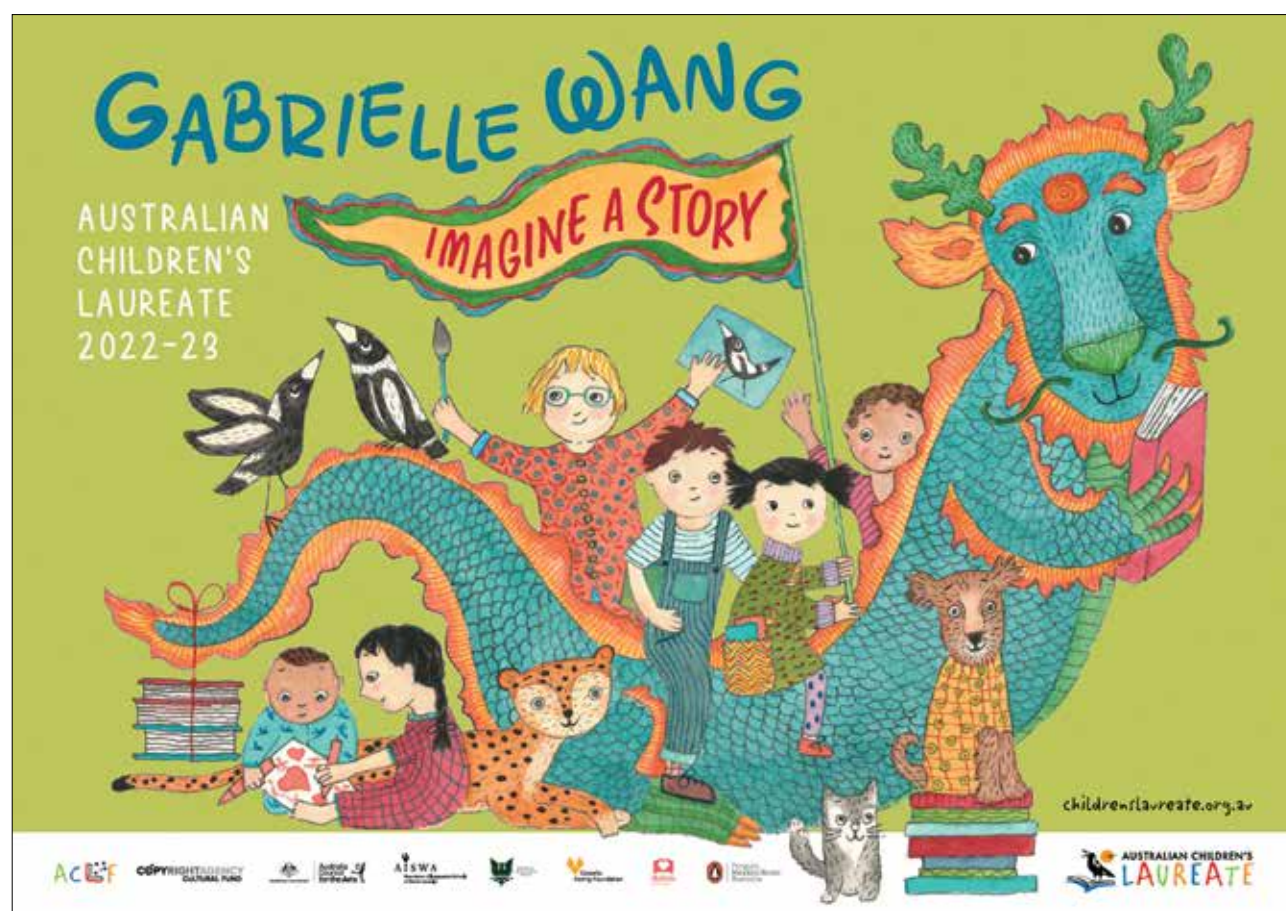
4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

'Imagine a Story' Poster

Gabrielle's message 'Imagine a Story' was promoted by a poster illustrated by Gabrielle featuring children's books and a dragon!

3,500 posters were produced in association with Penguin Random House Australia, Gabrielle's publisher. Magpies magazine distributed 2,400 posters to schools, libraries and subscribers and 1,100 were also used as promotional materials at Laureate events, and available for free as a download on the ACLF website.



The Newsletter

Gabrielle has written regular messages for the website newsletter (delivered to the current 2.3K subscribers) with a different theme each month to inspire children's writing, illustration and reading.

Seeing everyone engrossed in their drawings at Gabrielle's launch, it was clear that her term as Laureate was going to be special. Gabrielle's message about fostering empathy, belonging and pride is as pertinent for children as it is for adults. This was a Laureate who truly understood what it meant for young Australians to see themselves and their communities reflected in the stories they read.

Jenny Ryan
Reading Australia Editor,
Copyright Agency Cultural Fund





4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

National Advocacy

- ✧ The Laureate engaged in 14 official 'Laureate days' per year and was the spokesperson at one day national events advocating reading promotion – National Simultaneous Storytime, Indigenous Literacy Day, Love Your Bookshop Day, Australian Reading Hour, CBCA Book of the Year announcement, World Teachers Day, International Literacy Day, International Children's Book Day, World Poetry Day, World Book Day, Library Lovers Day – these were promoted across a combination of newsletters and social media posts.
- ✧ She was also invited to at least ten other key events and countless other smaller events privately arranged.
- ✧ The Laureate has directly engaged with around 40,000 people in person or online.
- ✧ She visited all State Libraries except Tasmania and the NT, but in both states did visit local libraries or museums. She visited SLSA, SLNSW, SLWA, SLQ, SLV and Libraries ACT.
- ✧ She also visited local libraries in a variety of regions including Gladstone, Queensland, Alice Springs, NT, regional Victoria, Adelaide Hills, SA, and regional NSW.
- ✧ She visited remote Indigenous communities in WA via AISWA's support.
- ✧ She provided a message to be included in the BookPeople's Kids Reading Guide (2023–2024) distributed to 90,000 people through over 90 Australian bookshops.
- ✧ She was an invited speaker at the BookPeople Conference in 2022.
- ✧ One of her focuses was to visit regional art galleries and museums and to conduct workshops with students encouraging them to engage with their collections which she did in Tasmania, Western Australia, SA, NSW and Victoria.
- ✧ Gabrielle has also been asked to comment on a broad variety of reading campaigns and events as Laureate.
- ✧ The ACLF Board also played many important national advocacy roles during her term.

Gabrielle was highly engaging, inspiring and informative about her approach to writing and drawing. It was such a valuable experience for the students and teachers who came along. One of the teachers said the workshop linked directly back to their current unit on writing historical fiction from different points of view. The merchandise was greatly appreciated by the teachers and students too.

Warrnambool Library, Victoria





4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued



It was a pleasure and privilege to host Gabrielle Wang, Australian Children's Laureate for 2022–2023 at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery as part of our annual Lift Off! Festival for children and young people.

Organising Gabrielle's attendance with Kristin Darell worked seamlessly. Kristin always responded in a timely fashion to any requests or suggestions we had, which was enormously helpful as we had many programs to coordinate.

Gabrielle was totally reliable, professional, and friendly, visiting the space the day before and clear about anything she needed.

Most importantly the two hour-long workshops fully engaged the upper primary aged participants as well as their parents and carers. Gabrielle's ability to tell stories, talk about her ideas and inspirations and show people how to draw a Qilin were enthusiastically received.



Gabrielle's gentle nature was much appreciated and many participants and parents/carers came up afterwards to say how much they had enjoyed their experience.

Gabrielle's beautiful book reading from *Zadie Ma: the Dog who Chased the Moon* took place in a very large, public space in the museum – visitors tuned in from all over the gallery and even from the mezzanine level. The large backdrop with the Australian Children's Laureate imagery enabled people to quickly realise what the event was.

The day certainly worked well to publicise the Australian Children's Laureate role, and to encourage reading and writing stories. We are enormously grateful to the Australian Children's Laureate Foundation for providing TMAG and its visitors this opportunity.

Kate Morris

Senior Producer Learning Programs, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery



4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

The Grade 3 & 4 students and staff of St Joseph's Primary School, had a fantastic time with Gabrielle Wang, the Australian Children's Laureate. Gabi was very engaging and entertaining, and as a speaker was a great story-teller! Something that not every author manages.

Because the children were so engrossed, as were the adults, Gabi very generously extended both of the sessions that we had with her. As well as being highly entertaining and funny, the content of Gabi's talk was remarkably refreshing and honest, with information that would be very beneficial for young students to hear. The children responded to her questions with some remarkable answers and loved learning about and drawing 'Peng' the Qilin (dragon).

Brenda Wellman
Education & Public Programs Curator,
Benalla Art Gallery, Victoria

We loved having Gabrielle Wang visit us at Lake Mac, and were so excited when The Australian Children's Laureate Foundation (ACLF) offered us the opportunity to host her. We held sessions for both school students, as well as a meet and greet for local CBCA members and members of the public which included teachers, librarians and local authors and illustrators.

Gabrielle's passion for children's literacy was obvious, and this came through in her presentations, which were engaging for both adults and children. Her Laureate's theme of 'Imagine a Story' was summed up perfectly in her sessions, where she stressed the

importance of both adults and children to continue to use their creativity. Her sessions offered an insight into her work as an author and illustrator, and where she takes inspiration for her stories.

The ACLF were fantastic to deal with, professional with clear communication. We again thank them for this opportunity, and their generosity which included them covering expenses for the visit and supplying stationery, bookmarks and booklets for the sessions.

Rachel Mallaby
Children's and Youth Officer,
Lake Macquarie Museum of Art & Culture, NSW





4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

International Advocacy

International touring resumed during Gabrielle's term. Her appearances have included:

~ The sixth International Laureate Summit at the Bologna Children's Book Fair in Italy in March 2023 on a panel with Laureates from the UK, Ireland, Friesland, Italy, Wales and Sweden. She also took part in a closed-door International Laureate Summit, and was joined by former Australian Children's Laureate Alison Lester and ACLF Board Member Lindy Batchelor. Program Manager, Kristin Darell, also participated in the Summit discussion with her counterparts from other Laureate programs. While in Bologna, Gabrielle spent time at the Australian stand, conducting joint promotions with the Australian Publishers Association, demonstrating her illustration and creative process, and discussing her mission to encourage everyone to 'Imagine a Story'. Kristin and Lindy also furthered the work of the ACLF in exploring program opportunities that could bring together all International Laureates to add further weight to their common goals.

~ The ACLF initiated a joint international campaign video in late 2020 promoting reading with the slogan 'Read Around the World' in which nine international Laureates participated and which continues to be promoted.

The ACLF thanks our funding partners: Creative Australia (formerly Australia Council for the Arts), the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund and the Australian Publisher's Association for making Gabrielle's attendance at the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2023 possible.



Though we may be working on opposite sides of the world, the ACLF and CBI/Laureate na nÓg are very much working towards the same goals – to ensure that every child has access to reading, and that they can see themselves in those stories.

At the Bologna Book Fair earlier this year our Laureates, Áine Ní Ghlinn and Gabrielle Wang, were able to express that shared vision in our joint session with international colleagues. The common ground shared across the International Laureate Network is something very special, and something we hope to build on alongside the ACLF.

It is a huge support to find friends equally committed to sharing stories and inspiring children to tell their own.

Ruth Ní Eidhin
Project Manager, Laureate na nÓg
(Ireland's Children's Literature Laureate)



I have worked alongside the ACLF for over a decade in my role as convenor of the biennial Children's Laureates summits at the Bologna Children's Book Fair. It has always been a pleasure to work alongside colleagues who are so passionate about the importance of the role of the Australian Children's Laureate and are willing to go every extra mile to make sure that the Australian CL can reach as many children as possible.

In particular, for the Children's Laureate summit in Bologna March 2023, the Australian CL team produced a booklet of all the CLs and were quickly identified as one of the natural leaders of the two day summit. Largely because Kristin Darell was willing to do so much work! Alongside the Project Manager for Ireland's Laureate, she also took on the important work of keeping the Children's Laureate coordinators connected in the months following the conference. It inspired us all to do better!

It was all of great benefit for the Australian CL as it brought the wonderful work that Gabrielle Wang is doing into sharp focus.

For countries who already have a Children's Laureate and for countries looking to put one in place this kind of information sharing has been a vital way of keeping us all informed about the work of the Children's Laureates that is taking place around the world.

Julia Eccleshare MBE
British journalist and former Children's Books Editor, The Guardian



4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Effective Communication

The Laureate Program relies on the Laureate communicating a strong message to the community. The theme 'Imagine a Story' encourages children to write about their lives, their imagination and to express different perspectives on life according to their diverse cultural backgrounds.

The Laureate has spoken to approximately 40,000 people via appearances and has potentially reached millions online. [See Dynamic Advocacy above.]

Gabrielle spoke at conferences, festivals, events and award ceremonies and was like her predecessors, in constant demand as a speaker throughout Australia.

Young readers have been encouraged to engage with the Laureate by contributing magpie and dragon drawings to the website.

She visited 140 schools in person or spoke to students and schools online in all Australian states and territories, and overseas.

Publishers used Laureate stickers, or wording inside titles, including Gabrielle's *Zadie Ma and the Dog Who Chased the Moon*, promoting the ACLF.

Key Media Partners

The ACLF has also benefitted from the contributions of three Key Media Partners:

Incite

ALIA's Journal published an article on Gabrielle Wang's Laureateship in 2022, which is sent to ALIA members and around the world. See: Incite Vol 43, Issue 3, May/June 2022 <https://www.alia.org.au/Web/Web/Research-and-Publications/INCITE/INCITE-Magazine.aspx>

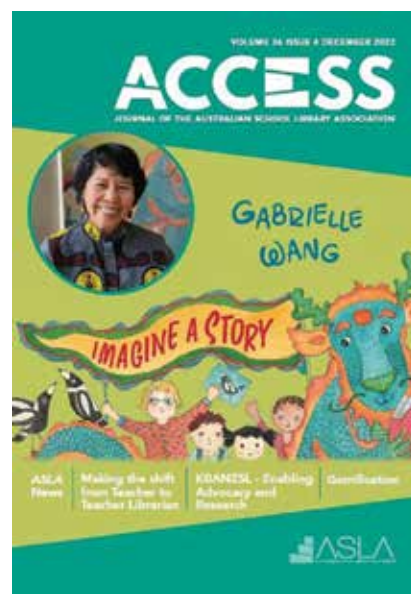
Magpies Magazine

has released an article on each Laureate and the latest article reached 2,400 schools, libraries and subscribers. See: "Imagine a Story: Gabrielle Wang, Australian Children's Laureate 2022-3" Magpies Volume 37, Issue No 1, March 2022, pp 4-7.

Story Box Library

has curated an 'Australian Children's Laureate Series' containing films and readings from their works: <https://www.childrenslaureate.org.au/laureate-videos>

The ACLF also contributed articles to ACCESS Journal, ALIA Scoop, Arts Hub, and Connections Journal (School Catalogue Information Service).



PR & Media Coverage 2022 & 2023

The launch was promoted by Deb McInnes, DMCPRmedia, and resulted in widespread media coverage as Gabrielle gained media attention throughout her term. [See Appendix B. for brief list.]

Apart from the launch, there have been several major events attracting huge digital audiences, for example:

National Simultaneous Storytime videos partnering with ALIA – 10,000 views per year.

Wang Gungwu Lecture introduced by Senator the Honorary Penny Wong, Australian Foreign Minister

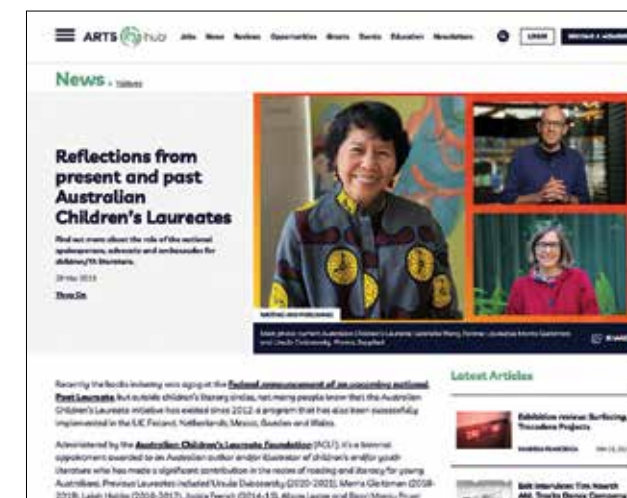
✧ ABC iview: 873 (Eng), 281 (Chinese)

✧ FB impression: 121 K
~ ABC Asia – Video
~ ABC Australia – Video

✧ Chinese language social total: 78.8 K includes:
~ ABC Australia Weibo:
~ ABC Australia WeChat:
~ ABC Chinese TW
~ ABC Chinese FB
~ ABC Chinese YT

ABC TV Early Education Team (video from Playschool chair) – shared on ABC Kids Community FB page with 329K followers – where her clip was viewed over 1.6K times, and the ABC Kids Early Education website – where her clip was viewed 1.5K times.

LittleScribe Festival (around 30,000 children registered for the event) estimated 1,000 viewers.



Website & Social Media Strategy and Outcomes

The ACLF has implemented a social media strategy which has resulted in the following:

Current Social Media Statistics

(to End November 2023)

Instagram:

2.56K followers (2.5% increase from Jan 2023)

X:

3.5K followers

Facebook:

6.8K followers (1.5% increase from Jan 2023)

Website:

(over 12 month period)

Site sessions 10,629. Unique visitors 7,074

Bolinda

Bolinda is a major sponsor and has provided a series of free audiobook titles each month by diverse authors to the ACLF as part of their support. The Program has been massively successful in promoting the value and pleasure of reading, offering stories to young readers in a different and accessible format, as well as highlighting the work of authors from diverse backgrounds. We are currently working with Bolinda to continue offering free audiobooks during the next Laureate's term.

Statistics are as follows:

✧ 1546 plays in the last 12 months

✧ +291% plays in the previous 12 months

✧ Top three titles were *Young Dark Emu* by Bruce Pascoe, *The Peasant Prince* by Li Cunxin and *Anne Spudvilas*, and *Catching Teller Crow* by Ambelin Kwaymullina and Ezekiel Kwaymullina.



4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Newsletter

Newsletter: 2.3K, 38% open-rate for the most recent quarter (average in arts sector is 21.3%)

Statistics for 2022 & 2023 Laureate Events

Live audience (including Online)		Pre-recorded content engagement	
# of kids	10,862	For kids	19,655
Total kids reached	29,517		
# of adults	2,916	For adults	5,235
Total adults reached	6,051		
Total People Engaged	38,668		



Sales Data

There was a 26% increase in sales in the first year of Gabi's Laureateship. The sales of *Zadie Ma* and *the Dog Who Chased the Moon*, published that year were at a higher level than first publication year sales of Gabrielle's previous novels. It also received a record number of award short listings:

NSW Premier's Literary Awards
SHORTLISTED • 2023
• PATRICIA WRIGHTSON PRIZE
FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Prime Minister's Literary Awards
SHORTLISTED • 2023
• CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Queensland Literary Awards
SHORTLISTED • 2023 • CHILDREN'S

CBCA Book of the Year Awards
NOTABLE BOOK • 2023
• YOUNGER READERS

**Lisa Riley, Laureate Publisher,
Penguin Random House Australia**

It has been our pleasure to partner with the Australian Children's Laureate Foundation and Gabrielle Wang for the last two National Simultaneous Storytime campaigns. Both Gabi and the ACLF share our goal of championing the value and power of reading and literacy of all kinds, and their creativity, generosity and collaborative spirit have helped make NSS such a success from year to year.

**Katrina Gee
Australian Library and Information
Association (ALIA)**

ABC Kids Community and Play School is delighted to have connected with Gabrielle Wang during her time as Australian Children's Laureate (2022–2023).

As ongoing advocates for the fundamental value of rich language and literacy experiences right from the start, particularly experiences with quality children's storybooks, Play School enjoyed supporting the Children's Laureate Foundation to build ABC audience engagement around Gabrielle's role as this year's spokesperson.

As an in-kind social media content collaboration, ABC Kids Early Education was delighted the Foundation was able to facilitate logistics for Gabrielle to be with the Play School team on set in Sydney.

Many thanks to Gabrielle Wang and the Children's Laureate team.

**Laura Stone
Early Childhood Education Producer, ABC Kids Education**





4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Inclusiveness

✧ The Laureate has spoken to a number of diverse audiences in partnership with organisations focussed on cultural diversity.

✧ The Laureate's Chinese heritage saw her visiting the Chinese Australian Museum, Melbourne and running Chinese Art workshops in Alice Springs, NT and Perth and Albany, WA.

✧ During her AISWA tour in July 2023 she visited Perth, Kalgoorlie and Albany and spoke to First Nations students in a variety of settings.

✧ In June 2023, she also visited Alice Springs and Arrernte lands where she spoke to Grades 7-8 students followed by Grades 3-6 on School of the Air. Some students beamed in from Fiji and Papua New Guinea, while others logged in from remote cattle stations.

✧ The ACLF Board has partnered with generous sponsor Bolinda Audio in 2022-2023 (which was also a foundation sponsor of the Program). Monthly releases of audio books have been tied to our Program.

✧ The ACLF has received support from the Deafness Foundation to create specific materials for hearing-impaired readers.

✧ The One Loud Voice network launched in 2021, aims to embrace a wide range of audiences.

✧ Members of our Board also attended the 'Volume' seminar initiated by Australia Reads which brought key stakeholders together on 21 September 2023. <https://australiareads.org.au/volume/>

✧ Our Program Manager attended a TWC Youth literature forum.

✧ The last official Laureate event was an 'in conversation' with Asphyxia, an award winning deaf author, at the Wheeler Centre in Melbourne. Hosted by nineteen-year-old Zuva Goverwa, they talked about diversity in its many different forms. (This is available online <https://www.childrenslaureate.org.au/professional-development/>).



Working with Gabrielle at the NT Writers

Festival was a highlight – a teacher at Bradshaw School said they had never seen a Friday afternoon group of students so focused and engaged. At the Library session, I could see the students were hanging off her every word. It was so inspiring to see how she held their attention throughout the presentation and encouraged the students' imagination by asking them creative questions. She brought such a warm, generous, and encouraging energy – and engaged the adults as much as the students. Everyone seemed completely delighted by the session. Thank you Gabrielle!

Betty Sweetlove

Alice Springs Program Officer and Schools Program Coordinator, NT



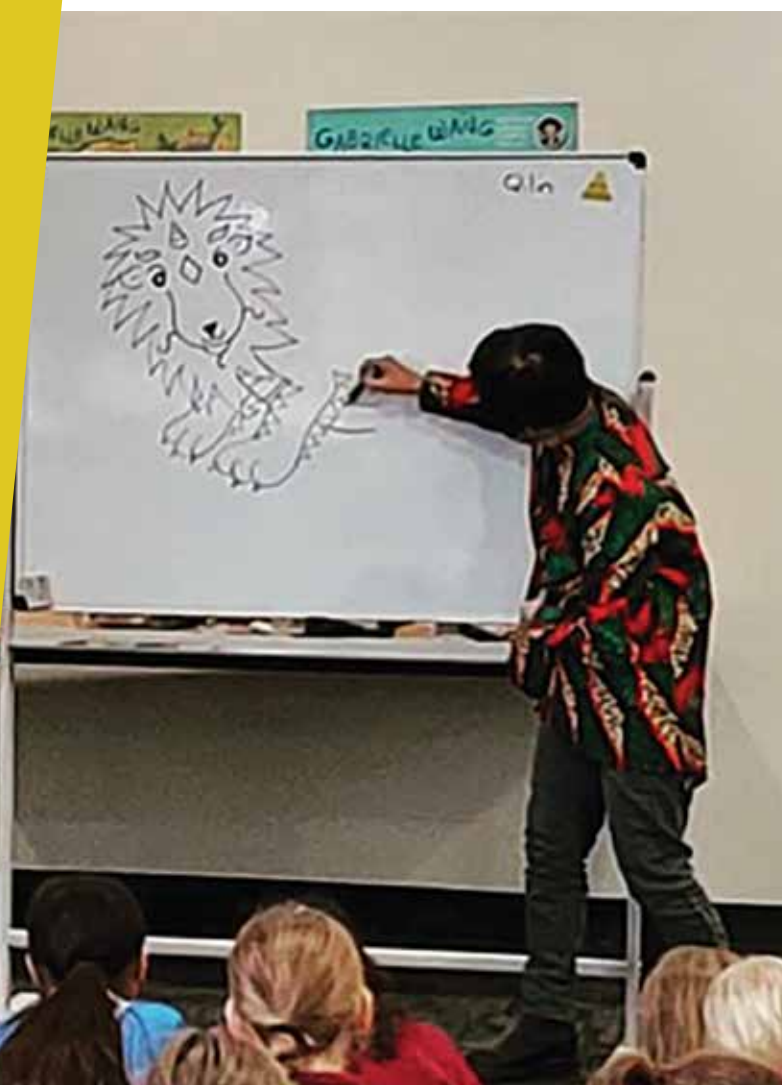
4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Children's Laureate Gabrielle Wang visited each campus to work with students in Years 3-6. We loved hearing about how Gabrielle creates her books and really enjoyed learning how to draw some fantastic creatures. It was great to see how well students engaged in the step-by-step drawing process to produce excellent artworks they could be proud of! Each student received a bookmark and a special drawing book.

Thank you Gabrielle!

Emma Bell
Kangaroo Island
Community Education, SA



I really value the partnership between the Wheeler Centre and the Australian Children's Laureate Foundation, both of which have a vested interest in literacy and the engagement of young people with books and reading. I'm very grateful for our collaborative partnership, being able to work together to bring out the best of both organisations in events that connect with our audiences and community.

Bec Kavanagh
Youth Programming Manager, The Wheeler Centre, VIC

Thank you, Australian Children's Laureate 2022-2023, Gabrielle Wang, for visiting our Gladstone region and hosting author talks for our students and teachers! Gabrielle visited Central State School, St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School, St Francis Catholic Primary School and Boyne Island Primary School. Students learnt how to draw a Qilin (pronounced chee-LIN) a mythical Chinese creature, with lots of enthusiasm from the participants. Students were engaged throughout the talk, and many expressed an interest in reading Gabrielle's books after the session which was reflected in the borrowing statistics months after her visit.

Sarah Johnstone
Librarian Youth Collections and Programs, Community and Lifestyle,
Gladstone Libraries, QLD



4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Collaborative Engagement

The ACLF has developed many robust and mature partnerships. We have partnered with existing and new partners to work together to champion reading. [See Appendix A. Acknowledgment of Partners & Sponsors below.]

✧ Engagement with the library sector has been detailed under Dynamic Advocacy. We have also worked with the Australian School Library Association (ASLA).

✧ The educational sector is widely engaged with the program. AISWA is a major partner in the touring program. Other partners have included Kangaroo Island Community Education, MARC Victoria, Independent Schools Victoria Initiative, Deakin University, Children's University Australasia and Africa.

✧ The ACLF also engages with the early childhood sector. Over the past two years, we have shared creative resources and encouraged early childhood engagement with the resources. We also connected with the ABC Early Childhood Education unit to create resources for parents around accessing quality diverse literature that can be read and shared with children from birth.

✧ Publishing and bookselling industry promotion is vital. The Children's Publishers Sub-Committee of the Australian Publishers Association has supported the program since 2013. The APA supported Gabrielle's attendance at Bologna in 2023. Penguin Random House Australia supported the promotion of Gabrielle's term as Laureate.

✧ The ACLF has collaborated with BookPeople (formerly the ABA). [See National Advocacy.]

✧ We stay in regular contact with past Laureates, maintaining their involvement in the program, for example, Ursula Dubosarsky participated in the One Loud Voice event in May 2023; Alison Lester joined the Bologna International Laureate Summit and Morris Gleitzman joined Gabrielle and Ursula providing input for an article published by Arts Hub on the announcement of a Poet Laureate position.

✧ The CBCA and its state branches have collaborated with the ACLF in a variety of ways.

✧ Zart Art has supported the ACLF by providing materials for regional workshops.



The Australian Publishers Association (APA) worked with the ACLF to generate international interest in Australian Children's Laureate Gabrielle Wang and the other Australian creators attending the 2023 Bologna Children's Book Fair. Gabrielle spoke at the Australian Stand Party at Bologna, her laureateship was featured in the Australian Stand Catalogue, and her artwork was used to promote the Creators' Table.

Andrea Hanke
Industry Development, Australian Publishers Association





4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

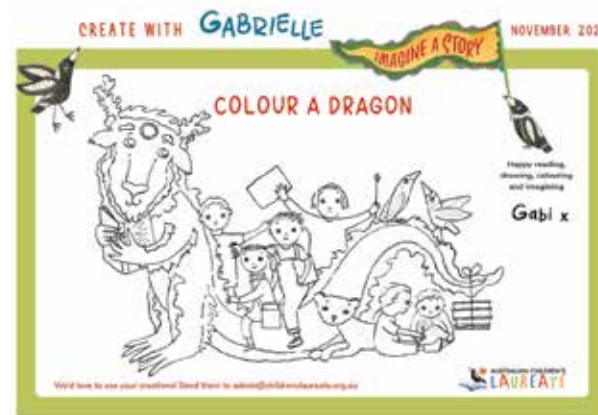
Innovative Approach

The ACLF explores inventive projects, investigates new approaches and creates new ideas.

We have created a range of promotional materials including activity books, drawing books, new activities almost every month, book marks to colour in, word searches, crossword puzzles, chatterbox, word finders, all available on our website.

'Laureates Online' <https://www.childrenslaureate.org.au/laureates-online> a series of virtual workshops by current and previous Laureates was launched in October 2021 and continues to be developed providing writing workshops for students and professional development for teachers.

Lendlease and Bendigo Bank partnered with the ACLF to provide \$10,000 worth of books to three new Victorian Lendlease community schools – Strathtulloh Primary School, Lollipop Creek Primary School and Edgars Creek Primary School [\$6,500] – and also supported the Laureate to appear and conduct student workshops and open their new school libraries.



Laureates
online

It was such a pleasure to meet Gabrielle. She was warm and inviting and not only was I mesmerized with her story telling, she managed to capture the attention of our grade 5/6 students for a few hours, which is a superb effort. It just goes to show how well she can engage her audience both through her amazing writings and her beautiful personality.

Thank-you Gabi.

Laurie Worsley

Library Assistant, Lollipop Creek Primary School, Victoria (Second Lendlease school)

My friends and I can now experience the most up to date top quality books from around the world.

Logan

Strathtulloh Primary School, Victoria

What a wonderful time we had with Gabrielle. The children thoroughly enjoyed her visit. Many children were talking to me about her story of the witches' castle and her drawing abilities.

Thank-you so very much for your time, passion, patience, joy and love for reading and writing today, Gabrielle.

We all, especially me, enjoyed spending time with you and hearing about your author journey.

Sara Johns

Wellness Leading Teacher, Edgars Creek

This generous program has enabled our newly established school to provide students with contemporary, top-quality resources. Many students in our community come from families where English is not their first language. Having access to quality, current resources in the school library gives students the opportunity to share books with their families and not just educate the student but also allow the whole family to learn together.

By providing a grant which allows our culturally, socially, and economically diverse school community to access appropriate books where students and families similar to them are depicted with sensitivity and in an inclusive way upholds our school values.

Krista

Library Technician
Strathtulloh Primary School



We are pleased that the Deafness Foundation were able to support the ACLF's expansion of resources on your website and by the use of Auslan translators at some of your events. The ACLF demonstrated what an impact they had, and will continue to have, with a large number of schools and individual students, supporting deaf and hard of hearing children.

Marie Fram

Chair, Grants Committee 2022
Deafness Foundation



4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Operational Integrity

Strategic Planning & Governance

The ACLF is managed by an experienced nine person voluntary board, with expertise in education, literature and publishing, legal and financial matters and philanthropy. The Board thoroughly revised its Strategic Plan in 2020 for the next 4 years and included values which more accurately reflect the objectives which have driven the organisation since its inception. Our Strategic Plan drives a Biennial Report process. We have recently engaged in a new planning process which will result in a revised and more streamlined Strategic Plan for 2024 and 2025.

Board & Staff

The Program is directed by the Board, and managed by two part-time staff members whose dedication and expertise we greatly value – Kristin Darell, Program Manager and Justine Burton, Marketing and Administration Officer. Former Office Administrator, Lee Burgemeestre, offers expert freelance design skills to the team.



Bruce Ellis
ACLF Chair



Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright
ACLF Deputy-Chair



Bill Hanlon
Treasurer



Emily Banyard



Lindy Batchelor



Laurine Croasdale



Ron Gorman



Kim Kane



Many van den Elshout



Kristin Darell
ACLF Program Manager



Justine Burton
ACLF Office Administrator



Lee Burgemeestre
Freelance Designer

Our network of volunteers and supporters across Australia assists the ACLF in a variety of ways. A Board Skills Matrix ensures that appropriate skills are either represented or being sought after.

There is a strategic team approach for each state and territory that includes the Board liaising with representatives from:

- ✧ The National Library of Australia and each State Library
- ✧ Universities in Australian capital cities or select regional areas
- ✧ The National and State Commissioners for Children and Young People
- ✧ The Departments of Education
- ✧ Children's literature organisations
- ✧ Booksellers, publishers and related advocacy organisations
- ✧ Other volunteers

The ACLF has also engaged with The Observership Program <https://www.observership.com.au/> which recruits skilled individuals via application and interview to voluntarily assist the ACLF's development in key areas. We thank Amanda Lauchlan (2022) and Daniel Carlin and Christopher Kong (2023) for their expert work with the ACLF.

Working with a Laureate who is an avid listener of audiobooks, to inspire a generation to use their imagination through storytelling has been a great honour. What's more to share the many and wonderful diverse stories through Gabrielle's tenure has made the world of difference to children across Australia especially those like Gabrielle who growing up have felt like they didn't really fit in.

Gabrielle's personal curation of audiobooks by local diverse authors has been a perfect companion and comfort for all of her fans. It's been a real honour to be a part of it.

Rebecca Herrmann
Founder, Bolinda Audio

Reading
Changes
Lives!





4 Achieving Our Objectives

continued

Treasurer's Report

The Australian Children's Laureate Foundation presents the Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023.

During the 2023 financial year, the Foundation reported a surplus of \$2,245 (2022: \$21,706) and a net cash balance of \$129,221 (2022: \$128,878).

Total Assets were \$129,262 (2022: \$129,209) and Total Liabilities were \$53,030 (2022: \$55,221) with Total Member Funds of \$76,233 (2022: \$73,988).

The Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund is very pleased to support the Australian Children's Laureate and the important connections the role makes with young readers, teachers, students, parents, and the writing sector in general. Gabrielle Wang has been another outstanding Laureate, and we offer her our sincere congratulations for such enthusiasm, dedication, copious amounts of energy, and goodwill in carrying out this role. We are delighted to have one of Gabrielle's books on Reading Australia so that more teachers can introduce her work to young readers.

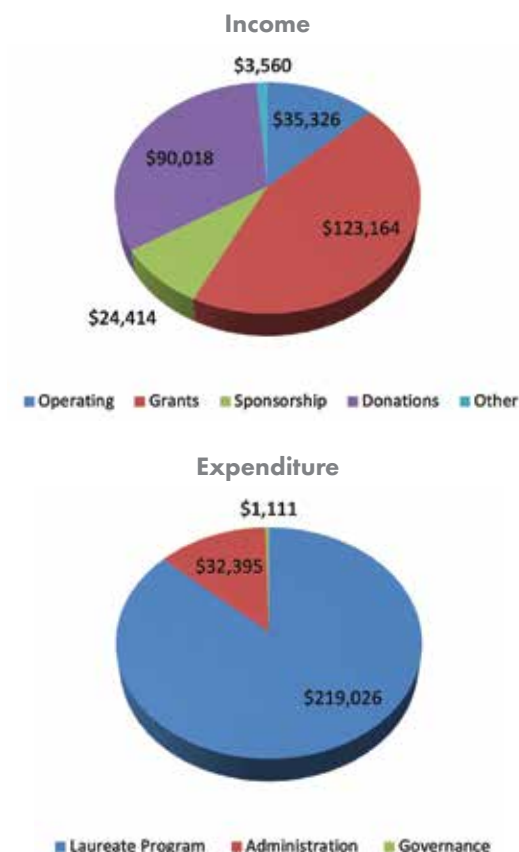
Josephine Johnston
CEO, Copyright Agency

The Income Statement shows Total Revenue of \$130,734 (2022: \$145,728). Revenue was made up of Operating and Other Income of \$24,177 (2022: \$14,709), Grants \$47,562 (2022: \$75,602) which includes Copyright Agency Cultural Fund and Creative Australia (formerly Australia Council for the Arts), and Sponsorship and Donations of \$59,015 (2022: \$55,417). The Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA) also generously supports touring and operating costs.

Total Expenses of \$128,509 (2022: \$124,022) represented a small increase of \$4,487 or 3.6% on the total for the previous year.

Generous support by the Gourlay Charitable Trust, the Deafness Foundation and a number of industry partners and sponsors.

Our financial accounts are audited by Dennis J Clark FCPA CA.



Dymocks Children's Charities were delighted to have the opportunity to work with the 2022-2023 Australian Children's Laureate, Gabrielle Wang. Gabrielle and the ACLF supported the promotion of our programs that work to inspire a love of reading and improve literacy outcomes for disadvantaged children across Australia.

We were also honoured to have Gabrielle as a book club author from July – September 2023. Our book club, Lit Club 4 Kids caters to children aged 8-13 and is a safe, inclusive space for children to discover new authors, books, and genres. The book club members read *Zadie Ma and the Dog Who Chased the Moon* by Gabrielle Wang and were beyond inspired by her creativity, generosity of time and insights. In our online Q&A designed to deliver impactful author interactions to children who may otherwise go without, Gabrielle shared her journey becoming an author, her illustrations, insights into the creation of characters and tips for our budding writers on creating stories. It was also fascinating to learn more about Gabrielle's Chinese heritage and how this informs her work.

ACLF supported Dymocks Children's Charities through the creation of amazing activities and worksheets for our book club members.

Gabrielle's dual role as a writer/illustrator gave children a beautiful, well-rounded glimpse into the creative process of writing and creating a book. The book reviews shared by the children we work with articulately summarise the amazing impact Gabrielle had as well as how the ACLF enriches the lives of young readers through the power of story. Thank you!

Megan Harte
Digital Marketing & Communications Officer,
Dymocks Children's Charities

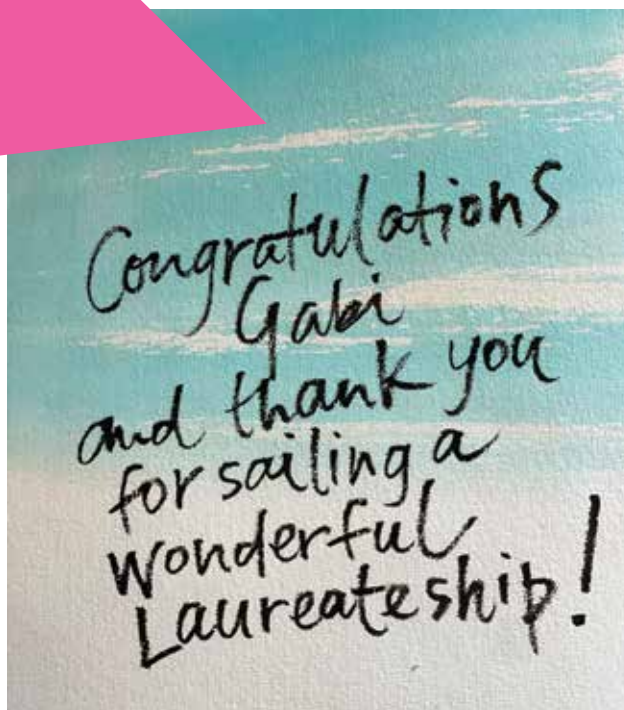


5 Conclusion

The ACLF has achieved most of its objectives in 2022–2023. It has embarked on an exciting review of its Strategic Plan in November 2023, for the next Laureate's term which will streamline our focus based on potential outcomes. Each term has created a step up to another level firmly based on the extraordinary talents and interests of each Laureate.

As the Laureate Program becomes more firmly established in each state and territory we are able to deepen our reach into communities and develop the resources we provide to children, parents and teachers. The Program remains dynamic and evolving with each new Laureate due to the focus they wish to take during their term. This offers us ongoing opportunities to reach a broad range of young readers, including diverse cultures, neurodiverse and those with reading difficulties, and to help them discover ways in which they can embrace reading.

A reading nation delivers a community that is more empathetic, better educated, tolerant and forward thinking. And the ACLF's mission is founded on contributing to this transformative power of reading and storytelling.





Appendix A

Acknowledgement of Partners & Sponsors

Major Creative Partners 2022–2023: Copyright Agency Cultural Fund, Creative Australia (formerly Australia Council for the Arts), The Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA), Penguin Random House Australia, Children's Publishing Committee (CPC) of the Australian Publishers Association (APA), Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), Bolinda, Book Links (Qld) Inc.

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CULTURAL FUND



Private donations and benefactors include:

Gourlay Charitable Trust, Lendlease, Bendigo Bank, Deafness Foundation and CBAH Asha Daan Philanthropic Trust.

Arts and Educational Organisations and Partners in Activities:

ABC Early Education TV and Radio, Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE), Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA), Australian Publishers Association (APA), Australia Reads, BookPeople (formerly Australian Booksellers Association), Children's Book Council of Australia (and various state and sub-branches), Copyright Agency Reading Australia, Dymocks Children's Charities, Children's University, Deakin University, Foundation for Learning and Literacy, Independent Schools Victoria, Indigenous Literacy Foundation (supported), Kangaroo Island Community Education, Life Without Barriers, Lost in Books, MARC Victoria, NCACL, PETAA Webinars for both metro & regional and remote audiences, School of the Air, Story Box Library, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, The Wheeler Centre (metro and regional partnership events in person and online).

Conferences & Keynotes: BookPeople Conference, ALIA Schools, AATE/ALEA National Conference, PETAA Conference, FFL Symposium, 21CL Symposium, Book Links (Qld) Narelle Oliver Lecture

Festivals: Bologna International Laureate Summit, Littlescribe Mini-Writing Festival, NT Writers Festival, Melbourne Writers Festival, Write Around the Murray, Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery Lift Off! Festival, CBCA Readers Cup, Bendigo Writers Festival, Headland Writers Festival Fishy Stories, Bendigo Writers Festival, DCC Lit Club 4 Kids, YABBA Awards.

Libraries: State Library of NSW, State Library of Victoria, State Library of Western Australia, Stirling Library SA, Greater Dandenong Libraries, Gungahlin Library, Gladstone Regional Libraries, Strathtulloh Library, Inner West Libraries, Central Coast Libraries NSW, Newcastle Library NSW, Warrnambool Library Vic, Alice Springs Library, Springvale Library.

Galleries and Museums: Benalla Art Gallery, Lake Macquarie Museum of Art & Culture, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hahndorf Gallery SA, and Immigration Museum.

Bookshops: Gleebooks, Sydney; Paper Bird Children's Bookshop, Fremantle; Little Bookroom, Melbourne.

Schools: Gabrielle also visited more than 140 schools around Australia.

Charities: Library Boost Project, an initiative by Dymocks Children's Charities (DCC).

International Events: Read Around the World Campaign 2020+, Bologna Children's Book Fair 2023.

Other: Our continued thanks to Feathers of Australia artists Andre and Catherine van Niekerk who built the successful business – Feathers of Knysna – in South Africa. Having built an international reputation in their field, they immigrated to Australia on a distinguished talents visa. They generously create the beautiful magpie sculptures presented to each of the Laureates at the beginning of their term.

Our thanks too, to Splitting Image Colour Studio which generously subsidised scanning costs; to Zart Art for providing stationery supplies for launch guests and for many of our event partners in regional and remote locations, and to Gartelmann's Wines who have supported several events during the Laureate's term including her farewell event.



Appendix B

Media Coverage

Print: The Age, SMH, The Australian, The Canberra Times, Corowa Free Press.

Radio: ABC Perth, Triple R Melbourne, ABC Canberra. ABC Melbourne, ABC Hobart, ABC Sydney, ABC Darwin, 3CR Melbourne, 2SER Sydney, 88.3 Southern FM, RN Sunday Extra (The Year that Made Me), 2GB Sydney, ABC Nightlife, ABC WA Statewide, ABC Weekend Nightlife The Books That Made Me.

Television: ABC News Breakfast.

Podcast: First Time Podcast, isPodcast (Independent Schools Victoria), Words and Nerds.

Online: Good Reading Magazine, Kids Book Review, 7 News (7Life), Books + Publishing, ArtsHub Australia, In Queensland, Child Mags, Booked Out, Readings, The Canberra Times, SBS, AAP story which appeared on 68 regional outlets, Connections Mag (Lending Rights School Library survey), ASA (May Member Spotlight), ALIA SCOOP, Australian School Library Association (ACCESS Magazine), FFL Literature Symposium, 21CL Symposium.

Videos: Hook into Books, SBS Need for change, ALIA National Simultaneous Storytime, ABC kids top 5 tips, Dymocks Children's Charity, Koala Awards, ISV Poetry Competition, Story Box Library.





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