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Book Authors and their Changing Circumstances: Survey Method and Results

David Throsby,¹ Jan Zwar and Thomas Longden

ABSTRACT

This paper reports the results of a survey investigating the experiences of Australian authors in the contemporary international book industry – in particular, whether authors are adapting their creative and work practices in response to the technological changes that are currently affecting the book industry worldwide. More than one thousand authors completed the survey, which was conducted during February 2015. The researchers recruited a diverse range of authors including literary and genre authors, educational and academic writers and experimenters with digital forms. Authors were asked about their employment, time allocation, publishing formats, income, relations with their publishers, promotion activities, funding sources, and copyright issues. Only the aims, methods and main results of the survey are reported here; the testing of specific hypotheses and more detailed analyses will be reported elsewhere.

Keywords: book authors; publishing; professional writing; innovative practices; copyright; promotion

JEL classification: Z10 Z11

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1. INTRODUCTION

The transformation underway in the global book industry is well-known, driven by factors including the development of digital printing, the introduction of e-retailers including Apple, Amazon and the Book Depository, the popularity of new formats such as ebooks, and an increased emphasis on the role of social media in promoting titles. Revolutions in the publishing industry are not new and despite predictions of gloom in the 2000s about the future of books, global sales of books (including print and ebooks) remain strong.

The book industry is of interest to economists because it is driven by commercial and cultural motivations, with the titles of many memoirs and scholarly studies reflecting these two imperatives, such as *Literature, Money and the Market* (Delany 2002), *Reluctant Capitalists* (Miller 2006), and *Merchants of Culture* (Thompson 2010). Examples of investigations into the book industry by economists include: the practices of authors as creative and cultural producers (Throsby and Zednik 2010; Walls 2014); the “superstar” effect on book sales (Adler 2006; Peltier and Moreau 2012); debate about blockbuster versus long-tail sales patterns (Anderson 2006; Elberse 2013); the impact of ebooks (Cheng and Wang 2011; Farchy, Gansemer, and Petrou 2013; Benhamou 2014); the diversity of book sales (Benhamou and Peltier 2007; Ginsburgh and Weber 2011; Ginsburg, Weber and Wever 2011); the case for open access publishing (Mueller-Langer and Scheufen 2013; Blommaert 2014); and industry studies (Caves 2000; Canoy, van Ours and van der Ploeg 2006). Scholars working in the fields of publishing history and literary history have increasingly acknowledged the role of market forces in influencing the types of books which are written, published, circulated and read.² Eisenstein (2005, p. 115) notes that authors’ ambivalence between “serving the muses” or “serving the market” date back to the sixteenth century.

Australians are enthusiastic book readers and buyers, with total household expenditure on books in 2009–10 amounting to more than \$2.03 billion.³ While this level of demand provides substantial support for the local market, onshore sales have contracted in recent years as an estimated \$200+ million of sales moved offshore to overseas-based online retailers and ebook suppliers. Onshore sales declined during 2009–2011 and then plateaued, with trade (consumer) sales in 2013 estimated at \$1 billion plus another \$1.5 billion in educational sales. A 2014 overview by Nielsen BookScan reported an increase in total sales during 2014 of 2.3 percent in volume and 2 percent in value, mainly due to increased sales of children’s books; however, sales have contracted again in 2015.

In this environment, writers struggle to make a living. A survey of Australian artists’ incomes in 2009 found that “professional writers remain the least well rewarded artistic occupation for their creative work”, with annual income ranging from under \$1,000 for members of writing centres, to slightly more than \$12,000 for other professional writers (Throsby and Zednik 2010, p. 45). Although the Romantic poets popularised the ideal of writers as being above and beyond worldly concerns, the reality is different for most working authors. Professional book authors are increasingly finding themselves obliged to prepare for the new book publishing and retailing environment through training, experimentation, networking and new publishing ventures (Masson 2013). Contemporary authors’ associations offer their

² See, for example, Eisenstein (1983); St Clair (2004); Carter and Galligan (2007); Davis (2008); Rak (2013); Bode (2014).

³ ABS 4172.0 – *Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview*, 2014.

members training in the craft of writing, business skills, marketing their work and other professional practices. However, while there is extensive anecdotal discussion about the impact of industry changes on book authors, including blogs, newsletters, newspaper articles and other online material, there are few scholarly studies to date of changes in the creative and professional practices of contemporary authors. The 2009 Artists Survey referred to above, provided a range of data about the economic circumstances of practising professional writers. Changes in the industry in the six years since that study was undertaken have been so rapid that a more up-to-date investigation is needed, targeted at the full range of book authors and dealing directly with the radical impacts of major industry transformation that are affecting writers around the world. The present study aims to fill that gap.

Australia is an excellent site for such a study for several reasons:

- It is one of the world's largest English-language markets for books, with estimates of 2014 onshore turnover worth approximately \$2.1 billion (Ibisworld, 2014) plus offshore purchases.
- Australian authors are extensively networked into other English-language markets including the US, the UK, Canada and New Zealand, and the authors in this study have had their work translated into over 40 languages, giving the study significant international reach.
- The industry is served by a strong infrastructure, including: major associations representing authors, publishers, literary agents and booksellers; writers' centres; academic departments engaged with literature, creative writing, publishing, etc.; writers' support networks; and a variety of funding agencies and sources.

This Report provides a detailed account of the methodology employed in the survey of book authors undertaken in 2014–15 by the Macquarie University research team, and presents some of the principal results. More detailed analyses of the data generated by the survey will be reported in subsequent publications.

2. OBJECTIVES

The study aims to provide systematic and generalizable information about the creative and cultural practices of contemporary Australian authors. The objectives of the survey were explained to potential survey respondents as follows:

The survey investigates the experiences of Australian authors in the contemporary international book industry. It examines authors' experiences of e-publishing, self-publishing, use of social media and other promotional strategies, changes in income, and copyright infringement. It also examines whether authors are changing their creative and work practices in response to shifts in the industry. We are interested in the views and experiences of a diverse range of professional Australian authors in the book industry.

3. PREPARATORY RESEARCH

During 2014 the team's preliminary research involved meetings with representatives of authors' associations, a literature review, and the design and operation of an online forum with over fifty Australian professional book authors to refine the themes for the survey. Researchers met, emailed or held telephone discussions with a range of relevant industry personnel, including: Angelo Loukakis, the Executive Director of the Australian Society of

Authors (ASA); Susanne Gervay and Frané Lessac, Australian Regional Advisors for the Society of Children’s Writers and Book Illustrators (SCWBI); Australian Poetry executives including Peter Matthews and Nell White; Leisl Leighton, President of Romance Writers of Australia Inc.; state writers’ centre directors including Meg Vann (Queensland), Jane McCredie (NSW) and Kate Larsen (Victoria); Lisa Storrs, a member of the Alliance of Independent Authors and founder of the Historical Novelist Society Australasia; and Simon Groth, Manager of if:book Australia. These discussions confirmed some areas of investigation identified by the research team and also introduced additional themes.

During July and August 2014 the research team ran an invitation-only private online discussion forum for four weeks with over fifty professional Australian book authors. Authors discussed the impact of industry changes on their practices and career paths to assist the design of the survey questionnaire. The authors’ discussion was summarised in a series of articles published in *Australian Author Online*⁴ under the following titles:

Australian Authors and Ebooks
Authors’ Contact with Readers
Australian Authors and Self-Publishing (Part One)
Australian Authors and Self-Publishing (Part Two)
Australian authors and promotion
Global communities of authors
Authors’ experimentation
Authors’ income

The outcomes from the discussion forum helped to inform the drafting of the survey questionnaire, a preliminary version of which was provided to the Australian Society of Authors for detailed feedback. In December 2014, twelve participants from a range of authors’ associations completed a full draft of the survey questionnaire online and provided helpful comments. Feedback was also provided by James Tweed, Manager of Surveys and Monitoring at Copyright Agency Limited. These processes informed a further stage of refinements before the full final questionnaire was produced, as described further below.

4. CHOICE OF SURVEY METHODOLOGY

A survey such as this can be implemented in several different ways, including by personal face-to-face interview (the most expensive, but potentially yielding the most accurate data), by telephone (less expensive, but with some loss of precision), or over the Internet. In the first of these approaches, sampling would normally be carried out on a locational basis using a complete listing of the targeted population. In the case of telephone surveys, random dialling and CATI methods (computer-aided telephone interviewing) can be used. Use of the Internet either involves access to an online panel recruited by a survey company, or the in-house development and administration of an online survey by the research team with direct recruitment of survey participants.

For the present survey we chose the last-mentioned approach, i.e. carrying out the survey via the Internet using in-house expertise. This decision was made for the following reasons:

⁴ Links to the articles are available at:

http://www.businessandconomics.mq.edu.au/our_departments/Economics/econ_research/reach_network/book_project/about

- *Lower cost:* As there is no need for manual data entry, costs are lower for an online survey compared to a face-to-face or phone survey; however, an online survey creates other costs, namely costs of programming the survey.
- *Increased speed:* An online survey allows a great number of respondents to fill out the questionnaire at the same time, and not consecutively as is the case when interviewers are used. Further, the answers of respondents are automatically entered into a data sheet and therefore immediately accessible and free of mistakes possibly made during a third-party data entry process.
- *More flexibility:* Online surveys are clear and user-friendly in regard to questionnaire design, in that they only show questions a respondent is asked to answer. Questions that are not relevant to a particular respondent are skipped and do not appear on the respondent's screen while navigating through the survey.
- *Respondent convenience:* Respondents can complete the questionnaire when and where it suits them and there is no threat of interviewer influence.

Our decision to administer the survey in-house was also influenced by the capabilities of a team member with the skills and expertise to manage an online survey successfully.

5. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The first requirement in considering sampling issues is the definition of the target population. We are interested in authors who have published one or more books. The Artists Survey referred to above (Throsby and Zednik 2010) estimated that there were approximately 7.6 thousand practising professional writers in Australia in 2009, but some of these (e.g. playwrights) may not have published a book. In the Australian Census of 2011, the number of people nominating "book author or script editor" as their "main occupation last week" amounted to 4,283 persons (ABS 2011), although again this number will include some who have not published a book. In any case, the actual number of book authors is likely to be much higher than indicated by the Census data, because few book authors can afford to work at their profession full-time, and therefore many professional writers might not have selected this occupational classification as their "main occupation last week" at the time of the Census. Further, people in a range of other occupations, including journalists, academics, teachers, subject matter specialists and public figures, write books either as an output of their main profession or in addition to it. Thus, the size of the target population is unclear.

In regard to sampling, several alternatives were considered. The approach used in the 2009 Artists Survey referred to above was to compile a list of names of eligible artists covering the majority of the target population by putting together membership lists supplied by a wide range of representative organisations. In our present case, however, while authors' associations expressed strong support for the survey, recent amendments in legislation to ensure the protection of consumer privacy did not permit the associations to provide their membership information to the researchers. Therefore, we were not able to follow a recruitment methodology which involved random sampling from the membership lists of cooperating organisations. Instead we had no alternative other than to use an opt-in approach, with the comfort of knowing that the resulting sample could be compared with known characteristics of the target population, such that in the event of any apparent sampling biases, results could be corrected by appropriate weighting procedures.

The recruitment methodology was developed as follows. A list of just over 30 Australian writers' organisations and key institutions relevant to professional book authors was prepared, representing authors writing in a broad range of genres and covering a national geographical spread across Australia. The research team contacted each organisation by phone, briefed their representative about the survey and emailed follow-up information including draft text about the survey for provision to their members. The great majority of organisations that were contacted agreed to cooperate. Altogether a total of 28 organisations assisted by emailing their members and/or promoting the survey using social media. These communications, which were sent out in January/February 2015, provided members of the organisations with a direct link to the online survey.

6. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

6.1 ELIGIBILITY

It was necessary for the questionnaire to establish at the outset whether a potential respondent to the invitation to participate was in fact eligible; i.e. whether he or she could be categorised as a professional book author. After discussion with representatives of industry associations, the screening question to ascertain eligibility for the survey was finalised as follows:

Q1.1 Are you the author of one or more published books including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, short stories, educational books and scholarly works?

A book publication includes: traditional print publishing, epubublishing, self publishing, multi-platform works or other equivalent book-length publications (including other digital platforms and related performance works).

It does not include: marketing-based activities on websites, blogs or social media, online games, TV programs or films.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If respondents answered yes, they were eligible to progress online to complete the survey.

6.2 INCENTIVES

It is usually necessary for sample surveys of any kind to offer some sort of incentive to encourage eligible respondents to give up their time to answer the questions. In the present survey, after consultation with authors' organisations, the following incentives were communicated to potential survey participants:

- potential respondents were advised that the findings would improve understanding of their profession in the Australian book industry and would be available to authors' associations in representing their interests;
- survey respondents could opt to be emailed a summary of the research findings;
- a prize of \$1,000 each was offered to two randomly-selected eligible respondents who completed the survey in full.

A disincentive to participate could arise if completion of the survey would be likely to take a long time. Trials indicated that the original draft of the survey questionnaire took 25 minutes or longer to complete, more than standard recommendations of 10-15 minutes maximum to motivate a high level of participation and completion. However, feedback from authors who completed the pilot questionnaire was very positive; they praised the design of the questions and expressed satisfaction that authorship was the subject of a serious academic study. Therefore, the researchers were hopeful that with some streamlining in the final draft, the length of the survey would not be a major impediment to participation. The researchers briefed organisations that participants could expect to take 20–25 minutes to complete the survey and that they could “save” their place in the questionnaire and return to it later, so long as the same device was used. This somewhat longer than usual expected completion time was a factor in the decision to offer the two generous prizes as an incentive. As it turned out, the average time taken to complete the survey by the respondents who are in the final sample was approximately 20 minutes.

6.3 PRIVACY

In order to protect the anonymity of authors, the preamble to the survey questions contained the following information:

This survey is anonymous and the analysis will be performed using de-identified data. In order to protect your anonymity, your responses will be randomly assigned an identification number. After the data collection stage of the survey is completed, your contact details will be stored separately from the de-identified raw survey data in another file that is accessible by only one team member. This file will be destroyed at the end of the project. Your name and contact details will only be used by the researchers for administrative purposes (such as emailing research findings, invitations for the 2016 and 2017 survey, notification of prizes etc.).

The ethical aspects of the survey were approved by the Macquarie University Ethics Committee (*Ethics Application 201400498 - The Australian Book Industry*), and respondents were provided with information as to how they could seek advice on ethical issues if required.

6.4 QUESTIONNAIRE STRUCTURE

Following the preamble, the questionnaire itself was laid out in sections covering the following major issues:

- Respondent’s book industry involvement: degree of establishment, professional status, etc.;
- Impact of recent changes in the industry on work as a writer;
- Body of work: genre, range of formats, etc.;
- Education, training and development of career as a writer;
- Time allocation to creative work, other work etc.;
- Promotion issues: major players, levels of satisfaction, etc.
- Funding sources;
- Income;

- Copyright issues;
- Socio-demographics: age, gender, place of residence, etc.

The full questionnaire can be seen in the Appendix, where a complete listing of the raw data is given.

7. SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION

The online survey went live for the month of February 2015. Participation rates were monitored by the researchers during the month, with some organisations contacted and asked to issue reminders on social media. During the third week of the survey, the number of completed responses reached 1,000. The survey was extended for an additional week to encourage respondents with survey questionnaires in progress to complete and submit their answers.

At the conclusion of the survey, a total of 1632 responses had been received. Of these a number were from respondents who had stopped in the middle of the survey and not re-started. In addition, a number of responses did not pass the screening questions. These responses were removed, as were clearly questionable responses, rank outliers and those where important variables had missing values. These adjustments left a total of 1027 usable responses. Of these 34 were from writers living abroad. Their responses were set aside, to be analysed separately in a subsequent study of expatriate writers. The present Report focuses on authors who reside in Australia; thus, a total of 993 responses comprises the dataset included in this analysis.

8. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS AND WEIGHTING ISSUES

As we have adopted an opt-in approach to sampling for this survey, it is important to compare our final sample with appropriate characteristics of the target population. Two data sources for this comparison were chosen as relevant: the 2011 ABS Census, and the population of writers as defined in Throsby and Zednik (2010).

The 2011 Census included the occupational classifications *2122 – Authors, and Book and Script Editors*. We use this category as a basis for comparison, despite the fact that it is not an exact parallel for the target population – our classification of authors includes scholarly authors and focuses upon people who have written a book but may not identify their primary occupation as being an author. There is a more specific (6-digit) sub-group *212211 – Novelists, Playwrights, Poets, Screenwriters and Script Writer* in the ABS data but unfortunately access to the data for this group was not available.

Turning to the population targeted in the 2009 Artists Survey, we note that it identified practising professional writers. The present survey includes a question asking respondents to classify themselves according to a self-assessed degree of professionalism. Exactly half of our sample indicated that they regarded themselves as professional writers (full- or part-time). This subgroup of our data can therefore be used as a more specific basis for comparison, using the population defined in the 2009 survey as the reference group.

Comparisons between sample and population distributions for gender, age and State of residence are shown for the two population measures in Figures 1-6. It can be seen that there is a somewhat greater proportion of females in our sample than in the Artists Survey

population, but our gender distribution is very close to that defined in the ABS data (Figures 1 and 2). In the case of age, the sample and population distributions track very closely for the professional writers' group, although there is a greater proportion of younger writers in the ABS data (Figures 3 and 4). Finally, the distributions by State in both cases are very close.

Overall we are able to conclude that the sample generated for the present survey, while not precisely reflecting the target population data in the respects examined, is sufficiently representative of the population of Australian book authors at the present time to indicate that it will not be necessary to weight our results to account for any discrepancies.

Figure 1 – Gender – Sample compared to the 2011 ABS Census

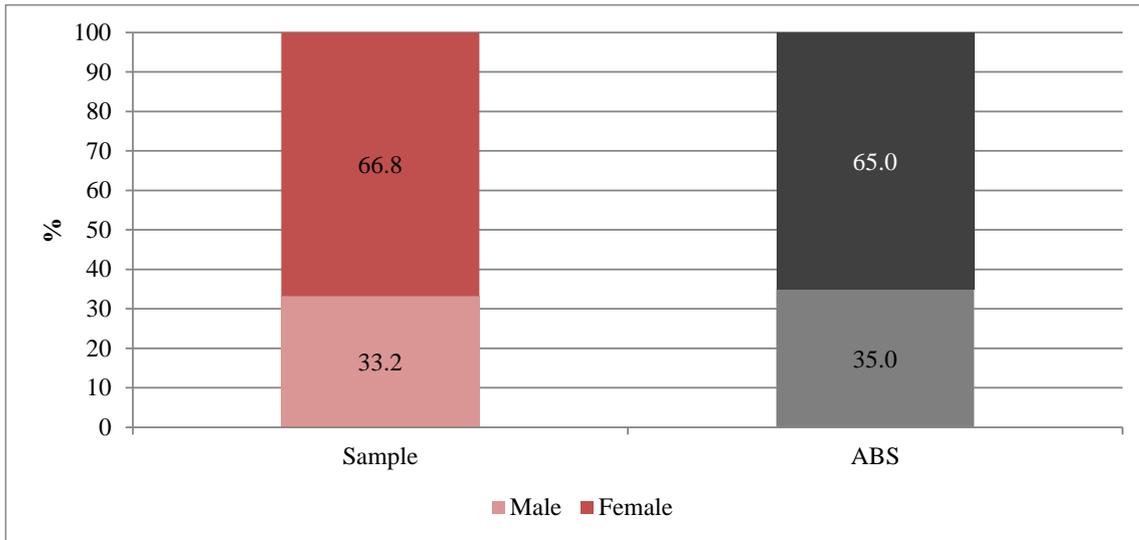


Figure 2 – Gender – Reduced sample compared to the 2010 Professional Artists Survey

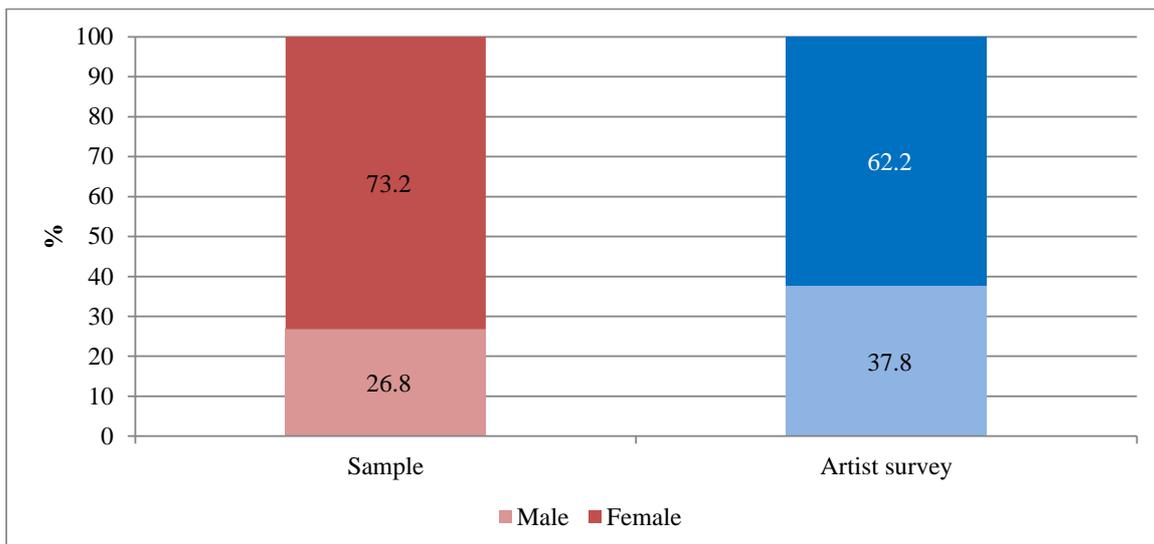


Figure 3 – Age – Sample compared to the 2011 ABS Census

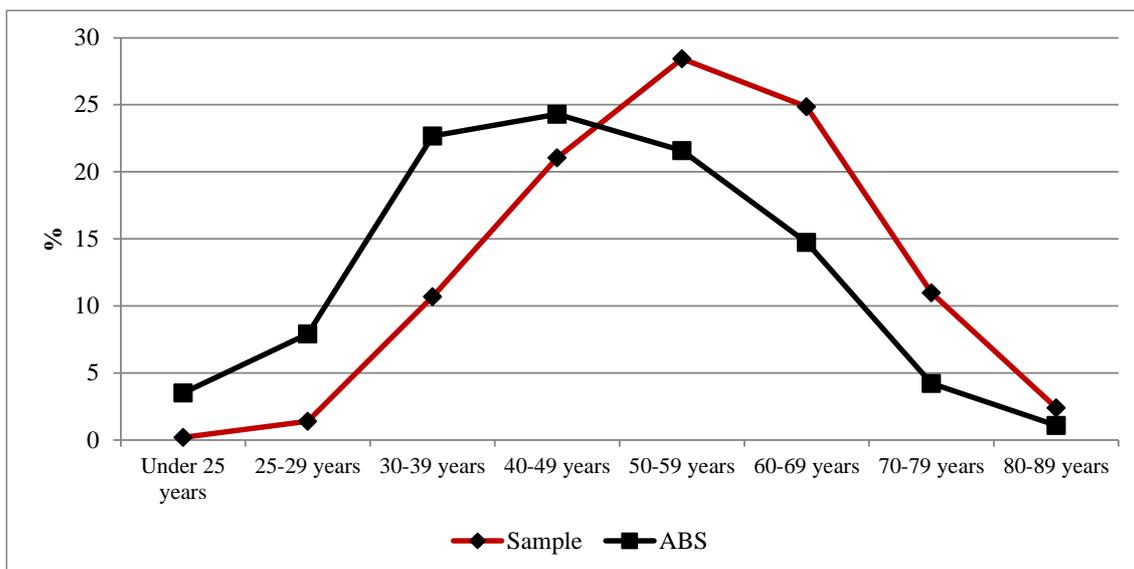


Figure 4 – Age – Reduced sample compared to the 2010 Professional Artists Survey

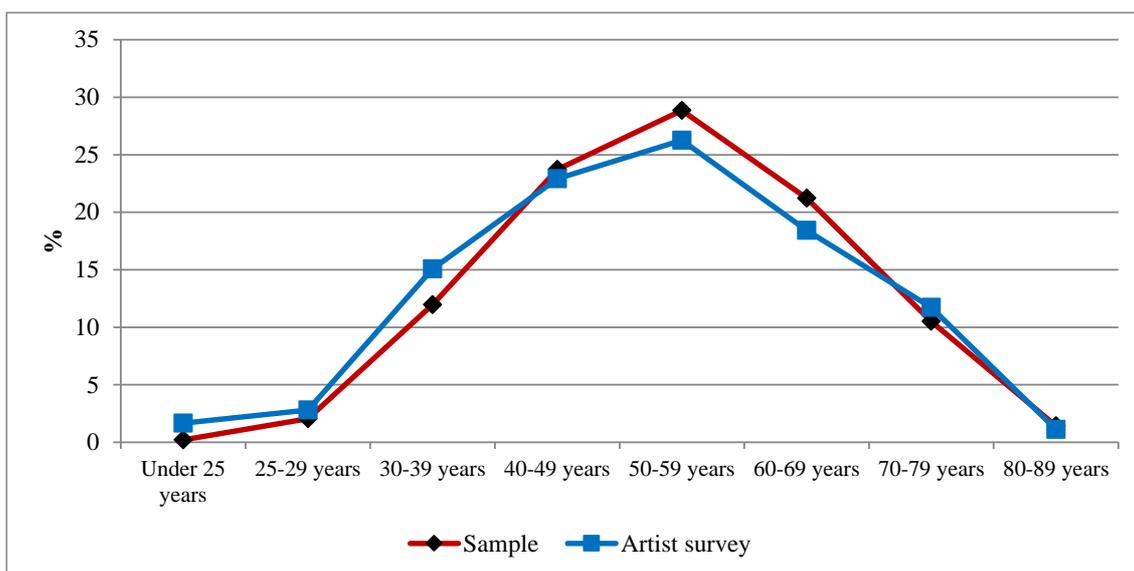


Figure 5 – State – Sample compared to the 2011 ABS Census

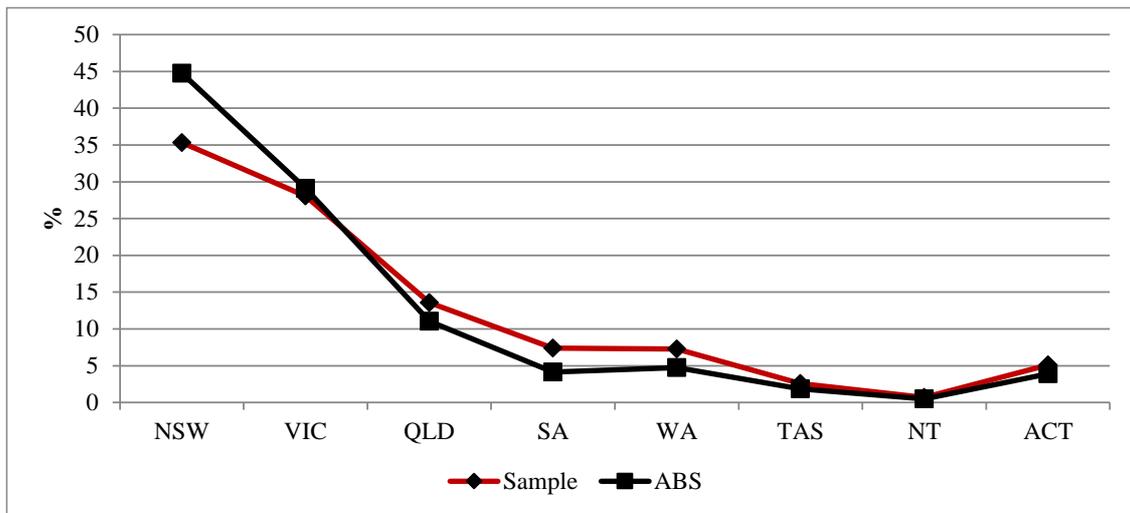
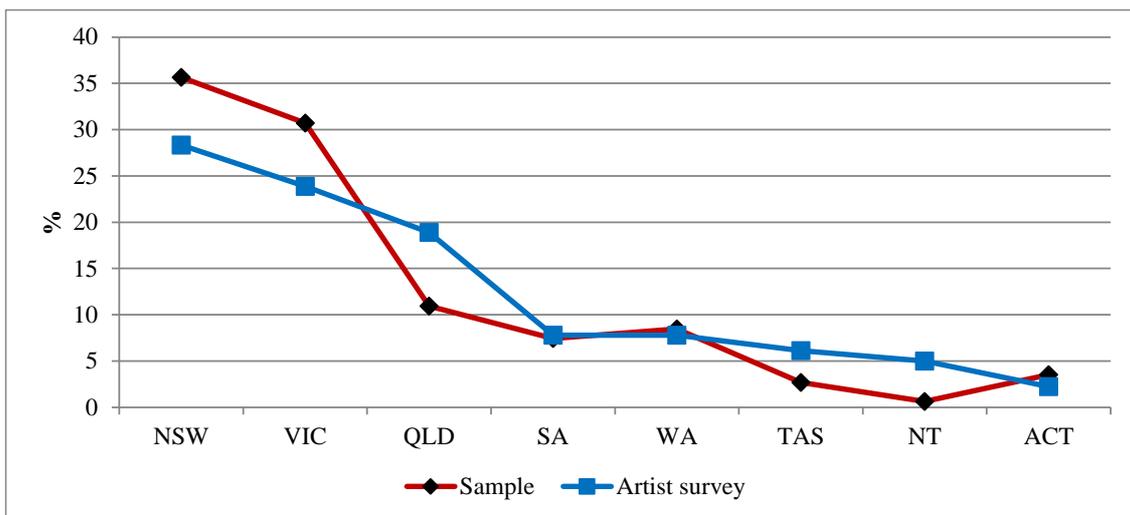


Figure 6 – State – Reduced sample compared to the 2010 Professional Artists Survey



9. PRINCIPAL RESULTS

9.1 AUTHORS' LITERARY GENRES

Books are published across a range of subject matter, from novels to technical manuals, and from children's stories to textbooks. The ways in which books are grouped and classified is an ongoing, changing process (Frow, 2006). Authors are well aware of the ways in which their books are classified, ranging from their location on shelves in physical bookstores to categories on Amazon and other online booksellers. Another well-known system of classification in the publishing industry is that used by Nielsen BookScan. After discussions with authors' associations concerning classification issues, a full list of book genres was generated as shown in Appendix Table 3.1 and summarised as follows:

(1) *Trade books*

- Fiction
 - Literary fiction
 - Genre fiction
 - Children's fiction
- Non-fiction
 - Creative non-fiction
 - Other non-fiction
- Poetry
 - Poetry

(2) Educational books/text books

(3) Scholarly books/research monographs

The literary fiction category refers to fiction written with literary intent or aspiring to literary quality standards; such books are of a sort that may be nominated for a literary prize. Genre fiction includes works written in a range of specific styles and in particular subject areas including the following: crime/mystery/detective, action/adventure, fantasy, historical, horror, thriller, romance, erotica, science fiction and urban fantasy⁵. There is discussion among academics, reviewers and other industry players concerning a blurring of the boundaries between literary and genre fiction, for example because genre titles have been praised for their literary qualities, and indeed some genre authors have acquired over time the status of having written canonical works. However in adopting the above classifications in our study we are simply following conventions that are well understood by authors and within the industry generally.

A similar distinction applies across non-fiction books. We distinguish between creative non-fiction and other non-fiction. The former includes works of extended journalism, essay, memoir, auto/biography, history, travel, and true crime that display an essentially narrative style and quality of writing; these books are sometimes referred to as narrative non-fiction. The “other” category includes a range of books such as technical manuals, guides, atlases, sporting books, cookery books, self-help books and so on.

An author may publish books in more than one category – a scholarly author may also write a novel, or a children's writer may publish poetry. However, ultimately all authors can define the genre that is most important in defining their writing and publishing activity. In the survey we asked respondents to indicate the genre most important to their work as a writer. Table 1 shows the distribution of authors across genres, broken down by gender. It can be seen that three quarters of all authors write trade books, with genre fiction writers making up the largest single category within this group. Across the board, women make up about three quarters of the author population, with children's writers being predominantly female.

⁵ Other fiction genres nominated by authors included: women's, Christian, contemporary, contemporary commercial, general inspirational, rural, nautical, comedy, LGBT romance, science fiction romance, spiritual romance and short stories. Where possible, these responses were redistributed into the categories provided.

Table 1 – Authors’ most important genre, by gender: percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Child- ren's	Creative non- fiction	Other non- fiction	Poetry	Sub- total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Female	65.2	76.2	86.9	65.3	67.4	60.7	72.0	54.4	47.5	67.0
Male	34.8	23.8	13.1	34.7	32.6	39.3	28.0	45.6	52.5	33.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	95	84	747	147	99	993
% of authors	9.0	28.4	10.0	9.9	9.6	8.5	75.2	14.8	10.0	100

In subsequent tables we continue the disaggregation of authors into the above categories, classifying respondents into genres according to the genre they identify as “most important to their writing”.

9.2 WRITING AS A CAREER

It might be said that writers are born, not made, insofar as there are no formal training pathways leading to a career as an author, as there are for musicians, dancers, actors or visual artists. Some writers learn some aspects of their craft from creative writing courses or workshops, but it is generally acknowledged that the foundations for entry into the writing profession are laid in the general processes of education and life experience that everyone goes through, beginning at an early age.

Writers as a group are markedly better educated than the population as a whole, with almost half of them having completed a postgraduate degree, and more than 80 percent of them having attended university, as shown in Table 2. Not surprisingly the highest educational qualifications are held amongst scholarly writers, with 96 percent of them having a postgraduate degree. Just under 6 percent of writers hold a creative doctorate.

Formal education is of course only one of the means towards a career in writing. A range of more specific avenues exist for gaining training and experience in writing practice. In the survey we asked respondents to indicate which types of such training they had undergone, and which of them did they consider to have been the single most important one in improving their writing skills and enhancing their career. Table 3 lists a range of training avenues and shows the proportions of writers within each genre who nominated the various avenues as the most important one in improving their writing and contributing to their development as a writer. It is remarkable that almost half of all authors said that the most important influence in improving their writing was “reading good quality writing by other authors and practising the craft of writing on my own”, i.e. learning by doing. It is apparent, nevertheless, that workshops, mentorships, feedback from a more experienced writer and peer support groups all have a role to play. Note that formal university education is not seen as most important by many writers, except for authors of literary fiction.

Table 2 – Highest level of education completed: percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
No schooling	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
Completed Primary school	0.0	0.7	1.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.4
Completed High school or equivalent	4.5	12.8	12.1	7.1	4.2	4.8	9.0	0.7	0.0	6.9
Completed Trade Certificate/Associate Diploma/Advanced Diploma	4.5	15.2	13.1	10.2	16.8	8.3	12.5	4.8	0.0	10.1
Completed Bachelor Degree	23.9	27.7	30.3	6.1	22.1	20.2	23.2	23.1	2.0	21.1
Completed Postgraduate Diploma	9.1	14.5	20.2	14.3	11.6	15.5	14.3	21.8	2.0	14.2
Completed Postgraduate Degree	58.0	28.7	23.2	62.2	44.2	51.2	40.3	49.7	96.0	47.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	88	282	99	98	95	84	746	147	99	992

Table 3 – Most important type of training: percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Workshops: writers' centres	1.2	12.7	9.5	9.4	4.6	6.1	8.8	5.5	0.0	7.6
Workshops: other	0.0	9.1	8.4	1.2	4.6	1.2	5.5	4.6	1.2	5.0
Training in IT	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.2	2.3	0.0	0.6	0.9	2.5	0.8
TAFE or on-award study at a university	1.2	0.7	3.2	2.4	1.1	1.2	1.4	2.8	0.0	1.4
Undergraduate degree related to writing	4.9	3.6	0.0	3.5	8.0	8.5	4.4	1.8	0.0	3.7
Postgraduate degree related to writing	13.4	4.3	5.3	4.7	4.6	2.4	5.4	2.8	4.9	5.0
Mentorship	14.6	10.9	20.0	15.3	11.5	18.3	14.0	15.6	13.6	14.2
Membership of a writer's group	8.5	15.2	13.7	4.7	6.9	14.6	11.9	11.0	3.7	11.0
Writer's residency	6.1	1.4	2.1	3.5	2.3	8.5	3.3	0.0	1.2	2.7
Reading / learning by doing	48.8	40.2	36.8	52.9	52.9	39.0	43.7	53.2	69.1	47.2
Other	1.2	1.8	0.0	1.2	1.1	0.0	1.1	1.8	3.7	1.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	82	276	95	85	87	82	707	109	81	897

A fully established career as a writer does not occur instantaneously, but takes time to develop from the first tentative experiments to the full confidence of the recognised professional writer. This sequence can be condensed into the following self-explanatory stages:

- emerging
- developing
- established
- established but working less intensively than before

There could be a fifth stage, being retirement or exit from writing altogether, but unlike musicians or dancers for example, writers can and do continue indefinitely, although perhaps increasingly they fall into the fourth category listed above as time goes by.

The proportions of writers who classify themselves in each of the above categories are shown in Table 4. The researchers were made aware of varying definitions of these stages based on funding organisations' criteria and conventions in different genres. Ultimately, rather than impose a definition we decided to encourage writers to make a selection based on their own genre. It is notable that overall numbers are split evenly between writers who are not yet established and those who are (around 49 percent each). Amongst literary fiction authors there appear to be relatively fewer established writers, and relatively more who hope to be, than for the other groups. There are also substantially more established writers amongst educational/scholarly authors than amongst authors of trade books, to some extent reflecting the comparative security of employment of academics and teachers that enables them to maintain an established writing practice.

Table 4 – Degree of establishment as an author: percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Emerging	20.2	26.2	19.2	15.3	21.1	10.7	20.7	12.9	10.1	18.5
Developing	48.3	34.0	30.3	31.6	31.6	40.5	35.3	13.6	18.2	30.4
Established	21.3	29.8	37.4	32.7	26.3	31.0	29.9	31.3	45.5	31.6
Established but working less intensively than before	6.7	9.6	11.1	18.4	17.9	11.9	11.9	38.1	23.2	16.9
None of the above	3.4	0.4	2.0	2.0	3.2	6.0	2.1	4.1	3.0	2.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	95	84	747	147	99	993

An issue of considerable debate in arts circles generally is that of professionalism.⁶ Artists frequently have difficulty in being identified as professionals, despite the fact that their qualifications and experience may be every bit as strong as in other professions. In the art world generally, professionalism is judged more on the standard and quality of the work that artists do or aspire to do, rather than on external indicators such as income. Even so the classifications may be somewhat blurred such that there is no clear line between “professional” and “amateur”.

In the survey we asked writers to classify themselves as “professional” (full- or part-time) or “semi-professional or serious amateur”, with a further category to catch those such as academics, editorial staff etc. who are professional in some other field where writing is an important output. Table 5 shows the results. It is apparent that only half of all writers see themselves as professional, with a quarter opting for the semi-professional category, perhaps because of doubt as to whether the standard of their work matches that required of the fully professional writer. A small number of authors (less than 7 percent) were unable to place themselves in any of the given categories. This group is likely to include individuals who have published books but who do not in fact see themselves as “writers”, and those emerging writers who are not yet well enough developed to regard themselves as professional or even semi-professional.

Table 5 – Professional status: percent within each genre

	Literary Fiction	Genre Fiction	Child- ren's	Creative non- fiction	Other non- fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Educa- tion	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Full-time professional	23.6	30.9	26.3	16.3	13.7	14.3	23.4	6.1	6.1	19.1
Part-time professional	36.0	38.7	40.4	27.6	30.5	29.8	35.1	26.5	6.1	30.9
Professional in another field	18.0	7.1	11.1	21.4	28.4	22.6	15.3	42.9	70.7	24.9
Semi-professional or serious amateur	18.0	19.1	20.2	27.6	23.2	22.6	21.2	10.9	9.1	18.4
None of the above	4.5	4.3	2.0	7.1	4.2	10.7	5.1	13.6	8.1	6.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	95	84	747	147	99	993

9.3 PRODUCTIVITY

Table 6 shows the number of books published by the average author in each genre and in total over the author’s whole career and in the previous year. Note that in the career totals, each edition counts as a separate book. The results indicate a range from 13 percent of authors who have published only one book in their career to a quarter of all authors who have

⁶ For discussion of the issue of professionalism in different areas of the arts, see for example, Jeffri and Throsby (1994); Swindells et al. (2001); Bennett (2008).

published 15 books or more. The most prolific writers are education writers and authors of children's books. Last year the average writer across all genres published 1.6 books, bearing in mind that in this case the number does not include new editions of previously published works. It seems that genre fiction writers are the group currently showing the highest productivity. Literary fiction authors have the lowest current output levels, reflecting the very difficult conditions facing such authors at the present time, together with the long timeframe that such writers typically face in bringing works to completion.

In what formats did authors' works appear in the last 12 months? Table 7 lists a range of possible formats, and indicates the proportions of writers within each genre who published work in the various formats. The impact of formats such as e-books and self-publishing on authors' publication strategies over recent years is striking. Well over half of all authors had work published as an e-book last year, whilst significant numbers engaged in self-publishing. The use of e-books is significantly more marked amongst genre fiction writers, and these writers are also more prominent in self-publishing. It is noteworthy that self-publishing appears to hold little interest for literary fiction writers and for authors of scholarly books.

Table 6 – Number of books published during career and number released in the last year: average number of books

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Educational	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Published during career	2.2	9.2	14.5	6.4	8.6	6.3	13.5	17.5	4.8	18.3
<i>n</i>	132	444	173	212	176	169	805	300	177	993
Released in the last year	1.1	2.8	2.3	1.4	2.3	1.2	2.7	2.7	1.4	1.6
<i>n</i>	28	266	62	83	51	50	454	82	62	993

Table 7 – Publishing formats of work published or released in the last year: percent of total

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Print book by a traditional publisher	59.4	49.0	66.2	56.9	32.4	52.0	51.4	74.3	73.3	56.7
Ebook by a traditional publisher	48.4	65.6	39.7	33.3	28.2	10.7	45.3	34.3	49.3	44.2
Self-published print book	4.7	21.2	14.7	22.2	18.3	10.7	17.1	14.3	2.7	15.3
Self-published ebook	7.8	35.3	11.8	20.8	23.9	6.7	22.8	8.6	2.7	18.9
Publication in a literary journal	46.9	8.3	13.2	22.2	23.9	80.0	25.7	9.5	28.0	23.7
Publication in a magazine	42.2	15.8	25.0	29.2	36.6	45.3	27.6	13.3	20.0	24.9
A work in an anthology	31.3	23.7	23.5	15.3	33.8	70.7	30.6	3.8	21.3	26.1
<i>n</i>	64	241	68	72	71	75	591	105	75	771

9.4 THE BUSINESS OF WRITING

As noted in the Introduction to this Report, economic circumstances have a range of significant impacts on the work of creative writers, affecting the time they can spend on creative work, the type of work they can produce, and the income they can earn. Authors generally are obliged to pay attention to business-related matters such as revenue sources, promotion, copyright issues, piracy and so on.

A key issue in analysing the business of writing is to situate their work as a writer in the context of the full range of work that they are engaged in. In common with artists in other fields, writers typically hold more than one job. In fact, a standard interpretation of the occupational choices of creative artists in general distinguishes three types of work:

- work on the artist’s core creative practice, including activities to support and maintain that practice;
- work in an occupation where the artist’s creative skills are used, but does not involve production of creative work – for example teaching in the artist’s artform; and
- work outside the arts altogether.

These three types of work are labelled “creative work”, “arts-related work” and “non-arts work” respectively.

For authors, we adapt this classification to fit the specific characteristics of a writer’s working time allocation, designating the following groupings:

- work on the writer’s core practice of original writing in their own genre;
- work at another writing-related occupation;
- creative work in another field not related to writing; and
- work at another occupation unrelated to writing.

The mean allocations of the working time of authors between these types of work are shown in Table 8. It is apparent that authors spend on average almost two-thirds of their time at writing work of one sort or another, although the proportion of time that they can allocate to their core practice falls short of 50 percent for all categories of author. Writers of educational, scholarly or “other” nonfiction books spend relatively the smallest proportion of their time on original writing, and correspondingly the highest proportion of time at other occupations. Across all genres the average working week turns out to be around 40 hours in total. Writers of all sorts of fiction spend around 20 hours at their creative work in an average week.

Table 8 – Time spent on work in a typical working week: average percent and hours

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Percent										
Working in a creative occupation as a writer	45.3	50.5	47.7	47.6	35.8	42.0	46.4	29.0	38.0	43.1
Working at another writing-related occupation	25.7	12.8	20.2	15.8	20.9	21.8	17.8	24.4	29.5	19.8
Creative work in another field not related to writing	2.4	4.8	7.6	3.8	5.3	4.7	4.8	8.5	2.6	5.1
Working at another occupation unrelated to writing	15.3	23.8	12.5	16.9	22.8	17.0	19.5	26.4	17.6	20.3
Studying and training	3.5	2.4	5.6	2.3	5.4	5.3	3.6	2.3	4.4	3.5
Voluntary or unpaid work	7.8	5.7	6.4	13.6	9.8	9.2	8.0	9.4	8.0	8.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	95	84	747	147	99	993
Hours										
Working in a creative occupation as a writer	21.9	26.9	19.8	20.2	16.2	17.3	22.0	9.6	17.3	19.7
Working at another writing-related occupation	12.4	6.6	7.0	6.2	8.4	10.2	7.9	9.0	11.3	8.4
Creative work in another field not related to writing	1.8	2.3	2.0	2.5	3.5	2.7	2.4	2.9	1.2	2.4
Working at another occupation unrelated to writing	10.0	11.1	7.1	9.1	11.2	10.8	10.2	10.5	7.9	10.0
Studying and training	1.2	1.2	2.6	1.2	2.5	2.3	1.7	1.5	1.8	1.7
Voluntary or unpaid work	3.7	3.6	3.3	5.0	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.3	4.4	3.7
Total	50.9	51.6	41.5	43.9	44.9	46.4	47.8	36.9	43.8	45.8
<i>n</i>	89	282	98	98	95	84	746	147	99	992

In the survey, respondents were asked to indicate the factors that prevented them from spending more time at their writing. The results are shown in Table 9. More than half of all authors mentioned “Insufficient income from creative work and/or the need to earn more income elsewhere”, and “Domestic responsibilities / household duties / childcare care for another family member”. The former was referred to particularly frequently by literary fiction authors, again reflecting the difficult economic circumstances within this genre.

Table 9 – Factors preventing authors from spending more time writing: percent of authors within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Educational	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Insufficient income	70.5	57.5	59.8	44.8	60.4	58.5	58.2	42.7	29.3	53.0
Marketing and promotion	19.3	46.8	28.9	16.7	18.7	9.8	29.6	4.2	2.0	23.1
Other tasks associated with writing	26.1	35.4	37.1	22.9	23.1	23.2	30.0	14.0	33.3	28.0
Domestic responsibilities	58.0	63.9	63.9	47.9	53.8	54.9	58.9	45.5	39.4	54.9
Community or cultural responsibilities	13.6	12.1	12.4	26.0	20.9	8.5	14.9	13.3	15.2	14.7
Illness	14.8	10.0	11.3	10.4	13.2	12.2	11.4	9.1	5.1	10.5
Study	5.7	8.2	8.2	3.1	9.9	4.9	7.1	8.4	8.1	7.4
Demands of another job	34.1	39.6	23.7	25.0	41.8	36.6	34.9	47.6	41.4	37.4
Other	4.5	11.1	10.3	18.8	14.3	15.9	12.1	20.3	22.2	14.3
<i>n</i>	88	280	97	96	91	82	734	143	99	976

In regard to income, we can identify earnings derived from the various work activities listed above, as shown in Table 10, in which the categories of income match the occupational classification system referred to above. The relatively high income of educational and scholarly authors reflect of course the fact that most occupy academic or teaching jobs that provide a regular income, unlike the situation of the freelance writer who predominates in the other genres. The total incomes of writers of trade books on average are considerably less than those of professionals in other occupations who have comparable levels of training and experience. In particular, we note that annual income from practising as an author lies between \$9 thousand and \$15 thousand for most genres of creative writing; poets are the exception, with average annual incomes from their writing of only \$4 thousand.⁷ Royalties and advances make up about half the creative income of authors of trade books. Note the small but significant amounts that writers receive from PLR/ELR payments, especially authors of children's books, reflect the strong demand for such books from lending libraries. For some authors, especially educational writers, revenues from payment for educational copying distributed by the Copyright Agency are an important source of income.

⁷ Note that these figures for creative incomes are broadly comparable, after adjustment for inflation, with those reported for practising professional writers in Throsby and Zednik (2010).

Table 10 – Average gross income in 2013/2014 financial year: thousand Australian Dollars

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Income from practising as an author	13.4	15.2	14.7	12.2	9.2	4.0	12.5	16.3	11.2	12.9
Royalties	4.1	4.3	2.5	3.3	1.9	0.4	3.1	9.5	3.1	4.1
Advances	3.9	5.3	3.8	1.2	1.1	0.1	3.2	0.7	0.2	2.6
Revenues from self-publishing	0.2	2.6	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.2	1.2	1.3	0.0	1.1
PLR/ELR	0.5	1.1	3.6	1.3	0.2	0.2	1.2	1.1	0.1	1.1
Copyright payments from CAL etc.	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.4	0.3	0.4
Grant/Commission	1.8	0.4	0.2	1.4	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.5	0.6
Payment from an educational institution	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.5	0.2	2.1	0.6
Salary/wages from working as an author	0.0	0.1	0.3	1.8	2.6	0.1	0.6	1.0	3.4	1.0
Other income from practising as an author	2.2	1.0	3.2	1.8	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.0	1.4	1.6
Income from another occupation related to writing	18.8	7.4	8.1	11.6	11.8	17.5	11.1	14.7	37.6	14.3
Income from creative practice in another field	2.3	5.4	3.2	1.4	4.0	2.1	3.7	2.2	3.7	3.5
Income from occupation unrelated to writing	17.5	19.6	12.2	15.8	21.6	17.5	17.9	31.5	22.0	20.3
Other income	6.2	6.0	7.6	16.9	10.0	9.8	8.6	15.8	21.1	10.9
Total income	58.2	53.7	45.8	58.0	56.7	51.0	53.8	80.4	95.7	62.0
<i>n</i>	88	280	99	98	95	84	744	147	99	990

An important revenue source for writers is funding support provided by the Australia Council, State and Territory arts authorities, cultural foundations, and so on. Table 11 shows the proportions of writers within each genre who have applied for funding and whether or not they were successful. Note that some columns in the table sum to more than 100 because some writers applied more than once or to more than one source. It can be seen that writers of literary fiction and poetry are the most likely to apply for funding, and a greater proportion of these writers have received funding compared to other genres. Authors in the more commercially-oriented genres such as education and “other” non-fiction are the least likely to seek funding. There is considerable variation in the apparent success rates of applicants across the genres, with poetry, creative non-fiction and scholarly authors appearing to be relatively more successful than other groups.

Promotion of books plays a major role in determining sales levels, so it is not surprising that writers have to be concerned about the amount of promotion their work receives, and who is responsible for arranging it. Table 12 shows the most important people for promoting their

work as nominated by respondents to the survey. It is apparent that writers of trade books across the board are themselves the most important people in promoting their own work; about half of these authors nominated themselves as the most important, whereas the major promoters of education and scholarly books are publishers. It is noteworthy that the amounts of time authors are obliged to spend on promotion is increasing – almost half of authors say they are now spending more time on promotion than they did five years ago.

With the growth of the internet, piracy has become a major issue for artists everywhere. Writers are especially prone to having their copyright infringed. Almost 30 percent of respondents in the survey indicated that their creative work had been stolen. A further 26 percent was unsure, reflecting the fact that work may be copied or downloaded from the internet and the author may have no way of knowing. Of those who knew that their work had been pirated, the majority (around 60 percent) said that this had occurred through file-sharing sites or social media.

Table 11 – Funding applications and success: percent of total

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Applied and received	20.2	6.4	13.1	17.3	5.3	26.2	12.5	3.4	18.4	11.7
Applied and did not receive	28.1	13.1	21.2	11.2	7.4	16.7	15.4	0.7	13.3	13.0
Applied and outcome is unknown	5.6	1.1	5.1	1.0	1.1	0.0	2.0	0.7	5.1	2.1
Did not apply	52.8	81.2	64.6	73.5	86.2	58.3	72.7	95.2	68.4	75.6
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	94	84	746	147	98	991

Table 12 – Most important people for promotion of own work: percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
My agent or manager	3.1	2.4	0.0	6.8	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	1.6
My publisher	35.9	20.7	40.0	18.6	30.3	20.0	26.3	67.6	53.2	34.8
My readers	14.1	20.2	12.5	16.9	13.6	12.7	16.4	4.9	9.7	14.1
Me	39.1	52.9	45.0	54.2	51.5	63.6	51.1	20.6	27.4	44.5
Book sellers	6.3	2.9	2.5	0.0	1.5	0.0	2.4	6.9	4.8	3.3
Other	1.6	1.0	0.0	3.4	3.0	3.6	1.7	0.0	4.8	1.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	64	208	80	59	66	55	532	102	62	696

9.5 IMPACTS OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE INDUSTRY

A primary focus of this research project is on the ways in which new information and communications technologies have affected the book industry at all points in the supply chain and have led, and are continuing to lead, to significant shifts in industry structure, conduct and performance. Authors have been affected by new technologies over the last 50 years or so, ranging from the invention of the electric typewriter to the e-reader devices that prevail today. In addition, the practice of writing as a business or profession has experienced a range of impacts, some regarded as positive, others not.

In the survey respondents were asked to indicate whether new technologies or new digital formats had had an impact on their process of writing or on the ways in which they published or promoted their work. Table 13 shows the proportions of writers within each genre who identify particular impacts of new technologies on their work and their careers, and the proportions of those reporting an impact who regard it as having been positive. The most widespread impacts have been felt in the ways in which work is published or distributed, and the ways in which authors interact with or access new readers. Around two-thirds of all authors mentioned these sorts of impacts, and of these, four in five believed that the impact on their career was positive. Over three quarters of authors have engaged in new promotion activities with a large majority of authors finding this beneficial. Only 17 percent of authors have changed or expanded the range of genres in which they write as a result of new technologies, but three quarters of the authors that did so found this positive. In almost all cases, the majority of authors that have been affected by new technologies have found the impact to be positive. Note that authors of genre fiction are those most likely to report significant and positive impacts of new technologies on their careers as writers.

Respondents to the survey were also asked to indicate whether overall they thought that new technologies had affected their financial position for better or for worse. As shown in Table 14 the largest group of authors (around 40 percent) were those reporting no discernible change. Only about 15 percent reported an improvement, with similar numbers saying their position had worsened, and similar numbers again unable to say; the latter group contains those who have not been writing for long enough to be able to have experienced any shift. The greatest proportion of respondents experiencing no discernible change were poets and scholarly authors, followed by creative non-fiction and education authors.

Table 13 – Authors reporting impacts of new technologies: percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)	<i>n</i>
Proportion of authors on whom new technologies have had an impact (percent within genre)											
Creating drafts	50.0	47.5	44.9	54.2	57.1	63.1	51.3	66.7	67.0	55.1	544
Gain inspiration	36.7	37.6	37.5	34.7	39.8	46.4	38.4	50.3	43.2	40.6	398
Ways to publish/ distribute	60.7	84.0	47.4	63.2	72.4	73.5	71.1	57.3	60.4	68.1	667
Interaction with readers	69.7	87.5	72.4	55.8	66.3	60.2	73.5	40.6	47.9	66.2	650
Genre of writing	13.8	21.4	13.7	12.6	18.4	18.1	17.6	14.7	14.7	16.9	165
Opening new avenues	44.4	78.5	51.6	44.2	47.4	69.0	61.4	47.2	36.7	56.8	557
Release of backlist	43.3	45.2	32.0	40.4	38.5	28.6	39.9	23.9	28.4	36.4	356
Access new readers	63.3	85.8	59.4	56.8	61.9	64.3	70.4	40.1	54.7	64.5	632
New promotion activities	74.4	91.1	83.5	73.7	78.4	82.1	83.2	54.2	65.3	77.3	759
Proportion of authors affected who regard the impact as having been positive (percent within genre)											
Creating drafts	93.3	92.5	93.2	88.2	89.3	88.7	91.1	90.5	93.8	91.3	495
Gain inspiration	87.5	91.4	91.7	90.9	76.9	84.6	88.0	86.1	87.8	87.7	348
Ways to publish/ distribute	81.5	85.6	73.3	81.7	81.7	80.3	81.5	85.6	73.3	81.7	549
Interaction with readers	79.0	91.8	84.5	83.0	80.0	84.0	86.4	77.6	82.6	85.4	554
Genre of writing	58.3	86.7	69.2	83.3	44.4	66.7	73.8	71.4	85.7	74.5	123
Opening new avenues	85.0	90.9	85.7	92.7	89.1	81.0	88.5	75.8	69.4	85.8	476
Release of backlist	84.6	86.5	66.7	63.2	81.1	79.2	79.9	78.8	74.1	79.4	281
Access new readers	87.7	93.8	89.5	92.6	90.0	88.9	91.6	91.1	80.4	90.6	571
New promotion activities	88.1	91.8	88.9	87.1	93.4	79.7	89.3	85.5	85.2	88.6	670

Table 14 – Change in financial position due to changes in the industry: percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Improvement	9.0	26.6	7.1	12.2	15.8	8.3	16.6	12.9	9.3	15.3
No discernible change	36.0	26.6	32.3	46.9	40.0	54.8	36.0	43.5	54.6	39.0
Deterioration	30.3	14.2	19.2	10.2	17.9	9.5	16.2	15.0	10.3	15.4
Greater variability	5.6	11.7	14.1	8.2	3.2	9.5	9.5	10.2	5.2	9.2
Don't know/ Can't say	15.7	16.3	25.3	16.3	17.9	13.1	17.3	16.3	16.5	17.1
Other	3.4	4.6	2.0	6.1	5.3	4.8	4.4	2.0	4.1	4.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	95	84	747	147	97	991

Socio-demographics

The variables commonly used to describe the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents to sample surveys such as this one are age, gender, educational status, occupational status, income, location, marital status, etc. For the present survey, the distribution of the sample by gender, age and State/Territory have been shown in Figures 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6 respectively, and details of gender and educational status across genres have also been provided (Tables 1 and 2 respectively). Here we show the age and State distribution of the sample, by genre.

Table 15 shows the age of authors within our sample. Almost three quarters of the authors in the sample are aged between 40 and 70 years old. The highest concentration of younger authors (under 40 years old) is in genre fiction with almost one quarter of genre fiction authors in this age bracket. At the other end of the age spectrum, it appears that creative non-fiction writers are amongst the oldest, with almost two-thirds aged 60 or above.

Table 15 – Age by author's most important genre – percent within each genre

	Literary Fiction	Genre Fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Educa-tion	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
Under 25	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.2
25 - 29 years	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0	1.1	2.4	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.4
30 - 39 years	9.0	18.4	11.1	4.1	5.3	11.9	12.0	6.8	6.1	10.7
40 - 49 years	23.6	26.6	29.3	11.2	23.2	15.5	22.9	10.9	18.2	20.6
50 - 59 years	37.1	30.5	29.3	20.4	30.5	25.0	29.2	29.3	21.2	28.4
60 - 69 years	21.3	12.1	20.2	39.8	27.4	29.8	21.8	34.7	34.3	25.0
70 - 79 years	9.0	7.1	9.1	18.4	10.5	13.1	10.2	12.9	16.2	11.2
80 - 89 years	0.0	0.7	1.0	6.1	2.1	2.4	1.7	5.4	4.0	2.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	95	84	747	147	99	993

Table 16 shows the state of residence of authors in the sample. In common with artists in other art forms, and indeed with the Australian population as a whole, the majority of authors reside on the east coast of Australia. Note that 37 percent of respondents reside outside of New South Wales or Victoria.

Table 16 – State of residence by author’s most important genre – percent within each genre

	Literary fiction	Genre fiction	Children's	Creative non-fiction	Other non-fiction	Poetry	Sub-total (trade)	Education	Scholarly	Total (all authors)
NSW	46.1	29.1	42.4	38.8	33.7	36.9	35.6	31.3	36.4	35.0
VIC	31.5	26.2	23.2	26.5	31.6	26.2	27.2	36.7	24.2	28.3
QLD	6.7	17.7	10.1	8.2	13.7	13.1	13.1	12.9	16.2	13.4
SA	6.7	9.9	6.1	7.1	5.3	8.3	7.9	5.4	7.1	7.5
WA	4.5	9.6	10.1	6.1	5.3	6.0	7.6	8.2	4.0	7.4
TAS	1.1	2.8	6.1	4.1	2.1	3.6	3.2	0.7	2.0	2.7
NT	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	3.2	2.4	0.8	0.7	0.0	0.7
ACT	3.4	4.3	2.0	9.2	5.3	3.6	4.6	4.1	10.1	5.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	89	282	99	98	95	84	747	147	99	993

10. CONCLUSION

The picture of the writing profession that emerges from this study is one of considerable diversity and dynamism. Australian writers are active across a range of literary genres, and produce significant numbers of books in all categories. In so doing they are providing the unique Australian content that is the lifeblood of the Australian book industry and that makes a vital contribution to Australian cultural life. Over recent years all players in the industry have had to adapt to the advent of new technologies and new means of social and cultural communication. Authors have been in the vanguard of dealing with these technological changes, experimenting with innovative ideas in the production and distribution of their work, and interacting with their readers in new and previously unheard-of ways.

Nevertheless, a primary long-term feature of writing as a profession has not changed. Despite the support that writers receive from many sources, including copyright payments, lending rights and grants, authors remain amongst the lowest paid creative workers in the cultural industries across the board. There is considerable scope for new public policy arrangements affecting the book industry to initiate innovative programs to improve the income position of creative writers, and indeed the economic health of the entire Australian book industry.

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APPENDIX

Complete listing of raw survey results

Section 1 – Involvement in the book industry

Table 1.1 – Q2.2 – Has any of your work been published, performed, showcased, commissioned or paid in a professional context?

	%
Yes	96.1
No	3.9
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 1.2 – Q2.3 – Has any of your work been critically considered by your peers, reviewers, professional associations or funding bodies?

	%
Yes	88.0
No	12.0
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 1.3 – Q2.4 – Which one of these statements best describes the degree of your establishment as an author?

	%
Emerging	18.5
Developing	30.4
Established	31.6
Established but working less intensively than before	16.9
None of the above	2.5
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 1.4 – Q2.5 – Which one of these statements best describes you as an author?

	%
Full-time professional writer	19.1
Part-time professional writer	30.9
Professional in another field where writing is an important output	24.9
Semi-professional or serious amateur writer	18.4
None of the above categories	6.6
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 1.5 – Q2.6 – Have you received payment from the sale of your creative writing (including non-fiction)?

	%
Yes	93.9
No	6.1
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 1.6 – Q2.7 – Do you currently have an agent?

	%
Yes	18.8
No	81.2
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 1.7 – Q2.8 – Are you a member of any of the following organisations?(If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Australian Society of Authors	30.7
Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators	7.4
Australian Poetry	6.3
Romance Writers of Australia	11.2
Alliance of Independent Authors	.4
The Australia Council for the Arts	0.9
Copyright Agency Limited	47.6
A state, territory or regional Writers' Centre	30.1
Another authors' association	20.3
None of the above	13.8
<i>n</i>	993

Table 1.8 – Q2.9 – Where did you hear about this survey? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Australian Society of Authors	18.4
Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators	2.2
Australian Poetry	3.8
Romance Writers of Australia	9.3
The Australia Council for the Arts	.4
Copyright Agency Limited	25.9
A state, territory or regional Writers' Centre	8.8
Another authors' association	6.7
My publisher	1.6
Macquarie University	2.6
Other	23.2
<i>n</i>	993

Section 2 – The impact of changes on your work as a writer

Table 2.1 – Q3.2 – Firstly, thinking about new technologies and new digital formats, have any of these had an impact on your actual process of writing? For example, have they affected:

	The way you create drafts of your work?	The ways in which you generate creative ideas and gain inspiration?	The ways in which you publish or distribute your work?	The ways you interact with your readers?	The genre or genres in which you write?
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	55.2	40.4	67.9	65.9	16.7
No	42.9	55.8	28.0	29.0	79.7
Unsure	1.9	3.8	4.1	5.1	3.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	993	993	993	993	993

Table 2.2 – Q3.3 – Have these effects on your work as a writer been positive or negative?

	The way you create drafts of your work?	The ways in which you generate creative ideas and gain inspiration?	The ways in which you publish or distribute your work?	The ways you interact with your readers?	The genre or genres in which you write?
	%	%	%	%	%
Entirely positive	46.9	38.5	33.0	35.5	33.1
Mostly positive	44.5	49.4	49.6	49.8	41.1
Neither positive nor negative	7.7	11.6	14.2	14.0	23.3
Mostly negative	0.9	0.5	3.2	0.8	2.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	542	395	663	645	163

Table 2.3 – Q3.4 – Have any of these new technologies or new digital formats had any of the following effects:

	Opening up new avenues for you to publish paid original work?	Giving you the opportunity to release your backlist as e-books?	Allowing you to access new readers?	Providing new opportunities for the promotion of your work?
	%	%	%	%
Yes	56.6	36.5	64.2	76.9
No	35.9	53.1	18.0	13.3
Unsure	7.5	10.5	17.8	9.8
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	978	976	978	980

Table 2.4 – Q3.5 – Have these effects on your work as a writer been positive or negative?

	Opening up new avenues for you to publish paid original work?	Giving you the opportunity to release your backlist as e-books?	Allowing you to access new readers?	Providing new opportunities for the promotion of your work?
	%	%	%	%
Entirely positive	38.2	36.4	45.5	40.2
Mostly positive	47.5	42.7	45.0	48.5
Neither positive nor negative	13.2	19.2	9.1	10.5
Mostly negative	0.9	1.7	0.3	0.8
Entirely negative	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	552	354	626	751

Table 2.5 – Q3.6 – Thinking about all the changes taking place in the book industry, overall, have they had a direct effect on your financial position as an author? (Please indicate which, if any, of the following statements best describes your own situation) Overall, the changes in the industry have led to:

	%
An improvement in my financial position as an author	15.3
No discernible change in my financial position as an author	39.0
A deterioration in my financial position as an author	15.4
Greater variability in my financial position as an author	9.2
Don't know/can't say	17.1
Other (please specify)	4.0
Total	100
<i>n</i>	991

Section 3 – The impact of changes on your work as a writer

**Table 3.1 – Q4.2 – In which of the following categories have you published work?
(If appropriate please choose more than one option)**

	%
Literary fiction	17.5
Fiction: crime/mystery/detective	7.9
Fiction: action/adventure	4.4
Fiction: fantasy	8.0
Fiction: historical	7.2
Fiction: horror	2.6
Fiction: thriller	2.8
Fiction: romance	13.0
Fiction: erotica	3.5
Fiction: science fiction	5.6
Fiction: urban fantasy	3.2
Fiction: other	4.2
Baby books and books for early readers (excluding picture books)	1.4
Children's picture books	8.5
Children's illustrated books	5.4
Children's fiction (excluding picture books and illustrated books)	11.5
Young adult literature	11.3
New adult literature	2.3
Graphic novels and comics	1.6
Poetry	20.3
Short stories	26.7
Essays	15.1
Performance works (such as poetry, essays or storytelling)	4.5
Non-fiction: autobiography/biography	15.7
Non-fiction: history	3.4
Non-fiction: cooking	1.3
Non-fiction: sport	1.8
Non-fiction: travel	5.3
Non-fiction: true crime	1.0
Other narrative/creative non-fiction	15.2
Education: primary	11.6
Education: secondary	13.4
Education: tertiary	12.0
Professional education and instructional/technical writing	12.3
Scholarly (academic trade)	22.1
Other	9.0
Ghostwriting	2.8
<i>n</i>	993

Table 3.2 – Q4.3 – Select the category that is the most important for your work as an author nowadays

	%
Literary fiction	9.0
Fiction: crime/mystery/detective	3.3
Fiction: action/adventure	0.4
Fiction: fantasy	3.1
Fiction: historical	2.8
Fiction: horror	0.8
Fiction: thriller	0.8
Fiction: romance	8.4
Fiction: erotica	0.7
Fiction: science fiction	1.4
Fiction: urban fantasy	0.9
Fiction: other	1.6
Baby books and books for early readers (excluding picture books)	0.1
Children's picture books	3.8
Children's illustrated books	0.9
Children's fiction (excluding picture books and illustrated books)	5.1
Young adult literature	4.0
New adult literature	0.1
Graphic novels and comics	0.0
Poetry	8.5
Short stories	2.1
Essays	0.6
Performance works (such as poetry, essays or storytelling)	0.0
Non-fiction: autobiography/biography	5.7
Non-fiction: history	3.5
Non-fiction: cooking	0.0
Non-fiction: sport	0.2
Non-fiction: travel	0.5
Non-fiction: true crime	0.3
Other narrative/creative non-fiction	6.4
Education: primary	3.3
Education: secondary	6.0
Education: tertiary	2.3
Professional education and instructional/technical writing	3.1
Scholarly (academic trade)	10.0
Other	0.0
Ghostwriting	0.0
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 3.3 – Q4.4 Approximately how many books have you published in each of these categories? (Please count each edition as a separate book)

	Min.	Mean	Median	Max.	Std. Dev.	<i>n</i>
Literary fiction	1	2.2	1	16	2.4	132
Fiction: crime/mystery/detective	1	2.7	1.5	12	2.8	68
Fiction: action/adventure	1	3.0	2	12	2.9	35
Fiction: fantasy	1	3.4	2	40	5.1	72
Fiction: historical	1	4.0	2	57	7.8	59
Fiction: horror	1	1.9	1	8	1.9	20
Fiction: thriller	1	2.0	1	6	1.6	25
Fiction: romance	1	7.3	3	97	13.2	119
Fiction: erotica	1	9.6	3	187	32.2	33
Fiction: science fiction	1	3.4	2	22	4.4	40
Fiction: urban fantasy	1	5.2	1	82	15.5	27
Fiction: other	1	7.3	2	100	18.0	32
Baby books and books for early readers (excluding picture books)	1	25.8	8	200	53.9	13
Children's picture books	1	6.7	3	60	10.2	84
Children's illustrated books	1	11.4	3	200	28.7	50
Children's fiction (excluding picture books and illustrated books)	1	9.7	3	200	22.8	109
Young adult literature	1	4.1	2	34	5.1	105
New adult literature	1	2.0	1	10	2.2	20
Graphic novels and comics	1	4.4	1.5	34	8.1	16
Poetry	1	6.3	2	500	38.4	169
Short stories	1	5.4	2	100	10.1	183
Essays	1	10.5	2	400	45.9	80
Performance works (such as poetry, essays or storytelling)	1	4.7	2	30	7.1	22
Non-fiction: autobiography/biography	1	2.8	1	70	7.4	134
Non-fiction: history	1	4.8	2	40	7.6	32
Non-fiction: cooking	1	2.8	1.5	7	2.3	10
Non-fiction: sport	1	4.5	1	30	7.8	15
Non-fiction: travel	1	4.4	1.5	50	8.9	36
Non-fiction: true crime	1	1.6	1	4	1.1	8
Other narrative/creative non-fiction	1	9.9	2	700	62.5	125
Education: primary	1	25.3	5	550	69.9	103
Education: secondary	1	9.4	5	112	13.7	122
Education: tertiary	1	4.1	2	30	4.8	87
Professional education and instructional/technical writing	1	10.7	2	500	49.4	106
Scholarly (academic trade)	1	4.8	2	100	8.8	177
Other	1	29.5	2.5	500	95.5	34
Ghostwriting	1	6.5	2	40	9.1	23

Table 3.4 – Q4.5 – How many new books have you released in the last year in each of these categories? (Not including new editions of existing books)

	Min.	Mean	Median	Max.	Std. Dev.	<i>n</i>
Literary fiction	1	1.1	1	2	0.3	28
Fiction: crime/mystery/detective	1	1.2	1	3	0.5	34
Fiction: action/adventure	1	1.6	1	3	0.7	9
Fiction: fantasy	1	1.4	1	5	0.9	38
Fiction: historical	1	1.3	1	4	0.6	29
Fiction: horror	1	1.4	1	3	0.9	9
Fiction: thriller	1	1.2	1	3	0.7	9
Fiction: romance	1	2.0	1.5	11	1.5	86
Fiction: erotica	1	4.9	1	52	11.1	22
Fiction: science fiction	1	1.5	1	4	0.9	17
Fiction: urban fantasy	1	2.0	1	6	1.7	14
Fiction: other	1	1.7	1	5	1.1	18
Baby books and books for early readers (excluding picture books)	1	3.3	3	6	2.2	4
Children's picture books	1	1.5	1	6	1.2	28
Children's illustrated books	1	2.8	2	9	2.3	13
Children's fiction (excluding picture books and illustrated books)	1	1.7	1	10	1.9	31
Young adult literature	1	1.9	1	10	2.2	36
New adult literature	1	1.3	1	3	0.8	7
Graphic novels and comics	1	1.2	1	2	0.4	6
Poetry	1	1.2	1	3	0.4	50
Short stories	1	1.8	1	12	1.7	66
Essays	1	1.9	1	8	1.7	29
Performance works (such as poetry, essays or storytelling)	1	1.1	1	2	0.4	8
Non-fiction: autobiography/biography	1	1.1	1	2	0.3	41
Non-fiction: history	1	1.1	1	2	0.3	15
Non-fiction: cooking	1	1.7	1	3	1.2	3
Non-fiction: sport	1	2.0	1	4	1.7	3
Non-fiction: travel	1	1.3	1	2	0.5	9
Non-fiction: true crime	1	1.3	1	2	0.6	3
Other narrative/creative non-fiction	1	2.7	1	33	5.7	34
Education: primary	1	3.6	2.5	20	4.2	20
Education: secondary	1	2.6	2	12	2.3	31
Education: tertiary	1	1.1	1	2	0.3	11
Professional education and instructional/technical writing	1	2.5	1	20	3.9	24
Scholarly (academic trade)	1	1.4	1	7	0.9	62
Other	1	3.4	1	12	4.8	5
Ghostwriting	1	1.4	1	2	0.5	5

Table 3.5 – Q4.6 – During the last year, in which of the following formats have you had work published or released? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Print book by a traditional publisher	44.0
Ebook by a traditional publisher	34.3
Audio book by a traditional publisher	3.9
Self-published print book	11.9
Self-published ebook	14.7
Self-published audio book	.4
Self-published other form (e.g. poem, short story, essay, review)	3.0
Publication in a literary journal (print or online)	18.4
Publication in a magazine (print or online, genre or general)	19.3
A work in an anthology - print book or ebook	20.2
Blog or other social media	29.9
Website	28.4
Journalism/articles for print or online newspaper	15.2
Book reviews	19.0
Performance and/or live reading	8.7
Script for tv and/or movies	1.7
Script for radio	.6
Plays	1.4
Other (please specify)	9.5
<i>n</i>	993

Table 3.6 – Q4.7 – Which of the following statements best describe the motives that drove your decision to self-publish during your career? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
I thought of it as a strategy to bring backlisted works into publication	13.4
I was interested in performing an experiment to keep up with the technology	19.0
I thought of it as a strategy to increase my income	26.8
I thought of it as a strategy to attract new readerships	24.6
In the genre I write in it's common to self-publish	28.2
Self-publishing gives me creative and financial control of my work	59.2
I was unable to interest a traditional publisher in my work	35.9
Other (please specify)	16.9
<i>n</i>	142

Table 3.7 – Q4.8 – In the last year have you had self-published works available for sale in any of the following formats?

	%	<i>n</i>
Traditional print copy	52.3	111
Ebook	77.9	122
Audio book	6.3	63
Print on demand	62.4	101
Other (please specify)	5.6	36

Table 3.8 – Q4.9 – Have you ever had an agent or publisher acquire the rights to your work in a country other than Australia?

	%
Yes	44.5
No	50.0
Unsure	5.5
Total	100.0
<i>n</i>	992

Table 3.9 – Q4.10 – Have you ever written a book in any other languages?

	%
Yes	2.1
No	97.6
Unsure	0.3
Total	100.0
<i>n</i>	983

Table 3.10 – Q4.11 – Please indicate the languages used when writing these books. (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
An Aboriginal language	5.0
Chinese (Mandarin and/or Cantonese)	5.0
Italian	5.0
German	20.0
French	35.0
Greek	5.0
Spanish	5.0
Portugese	10.0
Swedish	5.0
Russian	5.0
Arabic	5.0
Persian	5.0
Japanese	10.0
Korean	5.0
Bahasa Indonesia	10.0
Other (please specify)	25.0
<i>n</i>	19

Table 3.11 – Q4.12 – Has your work been translated into any other languages?

	%
Yes	30.2
No	60.7
Unsure	9.1
Total	100
<i>n</i>	990

Table 3.12 – Q4.13 – Please indicate the languages that your work has been translated into. (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
An Aboriginal language	0.3
Chinese (Mandarin and/or Cantonese)	26.6
Italian	23.3
German	35.5
French	32.6
Greek	7.0
Spanish	25.9
Portugese	13.0
Dutch	15.3
Swedish	12.0
Finnish	6.0
Danish	10.3
Norwegian	9.3
Polish	12.0
Czech	11.0
Estonian	3.3
Russian	12.0
Arabic	4.0
Persian	1.7
Japanese	17.9
Korean	17.6
Vietnamese	3.0
Hindi	3.3
Tagalog	0.7
Bahasa Indonesian	7.3
Other (please specify)	28.9
<i>n</i>	299

Table 3.13 – Q4.14 – Have you shown drafts of your work in progress in online forums (closed or public) to gain feedback from other authors and/or readers?

	%
Yes	23.8
No	76.2
Total	100
<i>n</i>	986

Table 3.14 – Q4.15 – Have you composed, edited and published a substantial creative work without a printed version being part of the process?

	%
Yes	25.9
No	74.1
Total	100
<i>n</i>	991

Table 3.15 – Q4.16 – Have you co-created works with your readers?

	%
Yes	3.7
No	96.3
Total	100
<i>n</i>	989

Table 3.16 – Q4.17 – Have you designed a creative work as an author across a number of media platforms (not counting promotional add-ons and extras)?

	%
Yes	14.8
No	85.2
Total	100
<i>n</i>	988

Table 3.17 – Q4.18 – Has your work been published by a scholarly press (including all types of genres)?

	%
Yes	42.0
No	58.0
Total	100
<i>n</i>	991

Table 3.18 – Q4.19 – Was the scholarly press: (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Australian scholarly press	55.3
An Australian arm of an overseas scholarly press	24.0
An overseas-based scholarly press	43.2
Unsure	5.3
Other (please specify)	3.6
<i>n</i>	415

Table 3.19 – Q4.20 – Have you, your employer or another organisation paid a financial contribution or placed a substantial preorder to support and enable publication of your work by a scholarly press?

	%
Yes - my employer or another organisation paid the financial contribution	9.2
Yes - I have paid the financial contribution	3.1
Yes - both of the above are relevant	2.2
No	80.7
Unsure	3.9
Total	100
<i>n</i>	415

Section 4 – Your education, training and development as an author – Frequencies

Table 4.1 – Q5.2 – What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

	%
No schooling	.1
Completed Primary school	.4
Completed High school or equivalent	6.9
Completed Trade Certificate/Associate Diploma/Advanced Diploma	10.1
Completed Bachelor Degree	21.1
Completed Postgraduate Diploma	14.2
Completed a Postgraduate Degree - such as a Masters (but excluding a Doctorate)	19.8
Completed a Postgraduate Degree – Traditional Doctorate	22.0
Completed a Postgraduate Degree – Creative Doctorate	5.5
Total	100
<i>n</i>	992

Table 4.2 – Q5.3 – Thinking about your development as a writer, what training have you ever undertaken or are you currently undertaking? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	Have undertaken	Still undertaking
	%	%
Workshops and courses run by writers' centres	57.2	15.8
Workshops and courses run by other organisations	46.9	13.3
Specific training in IT software/digital media relevant to my work as an author	16.9	4.4
Non-award study at a university or TAFE	12.8	2.0
Undergraduate degrees or diplomas in creative writing or a related field	18.9	2.7
Postgraduate degrees or diplomas in creative writing or a related field	17.4	9.1
Mentorship with or feedback from a more experienced writer	42.1	12.3
Being part of an informal or formal writer's group for peer support and feedback	49.8	40.7
A writer's residency	24.5	3.0
Reading good quality writing by other authors and practicing the craft of writing on my own	81.0	86.4
Other	4.1	4.2
<i>n</i>	870	405

Table 4.3 – Q5.4 – Select the type of training that you believe was most important in improving your writing

	%
Workshops and courses run by writers' centres	7.6
Workshops and courses run by other organisations	5.0
Specific training in IT software/digital media relevant to my work as an author	0.8
Non-award study at a university or TAFE	1.4
Undergraduate degrees or diplomas in creative writing or a related field	3.7
Postgraduate degrees or diplomas in creative writing or a related field	5.0
Mentorship with or feedback from a more experienced writer	14.2
Being part of an informal or formal writer's group for peer support and feedback	11.0
A writer's residency	2.7
Reading good quality writing by other authors and practising the craft of writing on my own	47.2
Other	1.4
Total	100
<i>n</i>	897

Section 5 – Your time

Table 5.1 – Q6.2 – How have you spent your working time over the past year? What is the approximate percentage of your working time you have spent:

	Min.	Mean	Median	Max.	Std. Dev.	<i>n</i>
Working in your creative occupation as a writer (including writing, research, administration, promotion, networking, etc.)	0	40.2	35	100	30.5	993
Working at another occupation which uses your skills as a writer (including editing, teaching creative writing, proofreading, writing advertising copy, etc.)	0	18.5	2	100	26.6	993
Working on creative work in another field not related to your writing	0	4.7	0	100	13.7	993
Working at another occupation that is unrelated to your writing	0	18.9	0	100	29.1	993
Studying or undergoing training	0	3.3	0	100	11.6	993
Voluntary or unpaid work	0	7.6	0	100	16.6	993
Other (please specify)	0	6.8	0	100	19.6	993
Total	100	100	100	100	0	993

Table 5.2 – Q6.3 – What percentage of your working time would you have liked to spend on your creative work as an author?

Min.	Mean	Median	Max.	Std. Dev.	<i>n</i>
2.0	69.6	80.0	100.0	27.8	469

Table 5.3 – Q6.4 – These days, what prevents you from spending more time writing? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Insufficient income from creative work/need to earn more income elsewhere	52.4
Marketing and promotion activities	22.8
Other tasks associated with my writing such as administration, meetings, networking	27.7
Domestic responsibilities/household duties/childcare/care for other family member	54.4
Community or cultural responsibilities	14.5
Illness	10.3
Study	7.3
Demands of another job	37.0
Other (please specify)	14.2
<i>n</i>	986

Table 5.4 – Q6.5 – Thinking about your working time these days, in a typical week approximately how many hours do you spend:

	Min.	Mean	Median	Max.	Std. Dev.	<i>n</i>
Working in your creative occupation as a writer (including writing, research, administration, promotion, networking, etc.)	0	17.8	15	80	15.1	982
Working at another occupation which utilises your skills as a writer (including editing, teaching creative writing, proofreading, writing advertising copy, etc.)	0	7.4	0	80	12.7	982
Working on creative work in another field not related to your writing	0	1.9	0	50	5.7	982
Working at another occupation that is unrelated to your writing.	0	8.6	0	76	14.5	982
Studying or undergoing training	0	1.4	0	70	5.7	982
Voluntary or unpaid work	0	3.2	0	60	7.2	982
Total	0	40.2	41	96	19.6	982

Section 6 – Promotion

Table 6.1 – Q7.2 – Do you find you have to spend more time promoting your work these days than, say, five years ago?

	%
Yes	47.6
No	32.3
Unsure	20.2
<i>n</i>	993

Table 6.2 – Q7.3 – Thinking about the promotion of your work, how important are the following people in promoting your work?

	% Selected as Important
My agent or manager	10.9
My publisher	67.7
My readers	76.5
Me	82.2
Book sellers	55.5
Other	9.5
<i>n</i>	989

Table 6.3 – Q7.4 – Which one of these is the most important for promoting your work?

	%
My agent or manager	1.6
My publisher	34.8
My readers	14.1
Me	44.5
Book sellers	3.3
Other	1.7
Total	100
<i>n</i>	696

Table 6.4 – Q7.5 – During the last year how satisfied were you with the effort that was put in to promote your work?

	% Satisfied or Very Satisfied
My agent or manager	7.7
My publisher	33.7
My readers	39.8
Me	47.8
Book sellers	15.4
Other	5.8
<i>n</i>	977

Table 6.5 – Q7.6 – In your experience, how important are serious reviews for sales of your work? (Please consider such reviews as being in formats similar to print or online literary journals and weekend newspapers)

	%
Unimportant	4.2
Neither Important nor Unimportant	12.3
Important	66.8
Don't know / No opinion	9.8
Not Relevant / Not Applicable	6.9
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 6.6 – Q7.7 – In your experience, how important are general reader reviews for sales of your work? (Please consider online consumer reviews as being in formats similar to Goodreads, Amazon and other websites and blogs)

	%
Unimportant	4.1
Neither Important nor Unimportant	14.3
Important	63.6
Don't know / No opinion	11.9
Not Relevant / Not Applicable	6.0
Total	100.0
<i>n</i>	990

Table 6.7 – Q7.8 – In your experience, how important has winning a well-regarded prize relevant to your genre/s been for sales of your work?

	%
Unimportant	5.8
Neither Important nor Unimportant	11.4
Important	35.8
Don't know / No opinion	11.9
Not Relevant / Not Applicable	35.2
Total	100
<i>n</i>	990

Table 6.8 – Q7.9 – Please select the activities that you have found useful in promoting your work as an author during the last year (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
School visits and/or library visits	32.5
In-store events (including readings and book signings)	25.4
Promotion using social media and websites	60.2
Interviews for newspaper, radio and/or TV	40.8
Being an active participant in a readers' association	11.2
Sending a regular newsletter to readers	9.4
'Street teams' or other teams of readers	2.4
Paid PR/publicity service	5.2
Paid advertising	10.3
Providing a free sample of part of your work	24.8
Providing a free sample of a complete piece of work	18.7
Youtube clip as a promotional activity	9.3
Attending a writers' festival (as a speaker or attendee)	32.4
Presenting at writers' conferences	19.2
Attending a writers' centre (as a speaker or attendee)	16.3
Creating a teachers' resource	13.0
Creating additional content that extends my published work (other than a teachers' resource)	11.9
Creating an editorial, news article or online article	22.4
Other (please specify)	13.1
None of the above	13.5
<i>n</i>	980

Table 6.9 – Q7.10 – Approximately how often do you receive feedback from your readers?

%	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less often than monthly	Not Relevant / Not Applicable	<i>n</i>
Letters	0.3	0.6	3.6	48.4	47.1	858
Emails	2.0	10.1	19.0	53.1	15.7	940
Social media	9.7	17.0	17.8	32.8	22.8	878
Online reader reviews	2.1	8.9	16.4	44.3	28.3	858
In person	0.7	9.3	22.5	50.8	16.7	910
Other (please specify)	0.8	2.3	1.5	16.0	79.4	131

Section 7 – Your relationship with your publisher

Table 7.1 – Q8.2 – Which types of publishers have published your work? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Traditional publisher requiring no contribution from the author	79.9
Publisher requiring a financial contribution from or on behalf of the author	11.5
Small, non-traditional start-up publisher	14.5
Self publishing via a book production 'services' company that delivers print or digital file copies for a fee	7.9
Self publishing where the author organises and manages the whole process him/herself	23.1
<i>n</i>	993

Table 7.2 – Q8.3 – How many publishers (other than self-published) do you currently work with?

	%
0	24.6
1	42.3
2	18.7
3	8.9
4	3.1
5	1.6
6	0.4
7	0.1
8	0.1
11+	0.2
Total	100
<i>n</i>	980

Table 7.3 – Q8.4 – How satisfied are you with your current relationship with your main publisher?

	%
Very Satisfied	19.6
Satisfied	35.0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	30.1
Dissatisfied	9.8
Very Dissatisfied	5.5
Total	100
<i>n</i>	949

Section 8 – Funding

Table 8.1 – Q9.2 – In the past year have you received or applied for a grant or funding as an individual author from any organisation (not including crowd-funding)? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Yes, I applied for funding and I received it	11.7
Yes, I applied for funding and I didn't receive it	13.0
Yes, I applied for funding and the outcome is still unknown	2.1
No	75.6
<i>n</i>	991

Table 8.2 – Q9.3 – During the last year did you seek crowd funding (online or via other means)?

	%
Yes	1.2
No	98.8
Total	100
<i>n</i>	986

Table 8.3 – Q9.4 – How did you attempt to source crowd funding? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Through a dedicated crowd funding platform (such as Kickstarter, Indiegogo, Unbound, etc.)	83.3
Through a website or blog that is not specifically a crowd funding platform	8.3
Through a social media campaign	8.3
Other (please specify)	8.3
<i>n</i>	12

Table 8.4 – Q9.5 – How did you aim to use the crowd funding for your work as an author? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
To fund promotional activities	25.0
To fund the writing of a new work	58.3
To pay for self-publishing	33.3
To pay a publisher that requires a financial contribution from the author	16.7
Other	16.7
<i>n</i>	12

Table 8.5 – Q9.6 – How satisfied were you with your experience of crowd-funding in terms of:

	The time and effort needed	The amount of money raised
	%	%
Very Satisfied	8.3	20
Satisfied	50	40
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	16.7	20
Dissatisfied	16.7	10
Very Dissatisfied	8.3	10
Total	100	100
<i>n</i>	12	12

Section 9 – Income

**Table 9.1 – Q10.2 – In the 2013/2014 financial year did you receive income as a:
(If appropriate please choose more than one option)**

	Income related to acting as an author	Income unrelated to acting as an author
	%	%
Full-time employee	10.0	29.9
Part-time employee	6.9	21.1
Casual employee	8.2	18.8
Freelance/self-employed with ABN	70.3	28.7
Freelance/self-employed as a Pty/Ltd company	8.1	7.2
Other	7.4	12.3
Total	100	100
<i>n</i>	679	649

Table 9.2 – Q10.3 – Think of your total gross income for the 2013/14 financial year. Approximately what percentage of your income was derived from the following:

	Min.	Mean	Median	Max.	Std. Dev.	<i>n</i>
Income from your creative practice as an author (including from sales, royalties, advances, copyright payments, grants, prizes, etc.)	0	20.8	5	100	29.7	993
Income from other work that utilised your writing skills	0	19.5	0	100	32.4	993
Income from creative work in another field not related to your writing	0	5.9	0	100	20.1	993
Income from another occupation not related to your writing	0	29.4	0	100	39.9	993
Other income (dividends, social service payments, etc.)	0	24.5	0	100	37.7	993
Total	100	100	100	100	0	993

Table 9.3 – Q10.4 – In what ways did you receive income from your writing during the 2013/2014 financial year? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
An advance or multiple advances	21.4
Royalties	65.5
Income from self-publishing	20.7
Public Lending Right (PLR) and Educational Lending Right (ELR) payments	45.3
Copyright payments from Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) or other similar organisation	27.2
Income from a grant or commission to produce creative work related to your work as an author	8.7
Income from an educational institution (including academic positions, PhD scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships and other types of funding)	11.5
Appearances/Readings	28.3
Other publication payments and personal book sales	21.0
Income from blogging	1.8
Income from crowd funding	0.6
Salary or wages from working as an author	6.9
Other	12.9
<i>n</i>	936

Table 9.4 – Q10.5 – For the 2013/2014 financial year roughly what percentage of your income relating to your creative work as an author was derived from the following sources?

	Min.	Mean	Median	Max.	Std. Dev.	<i>n</i>
An advance or multiple advances	0.0	9.7	0	100	24.0	993
Royalties	0.0	25.8	5	100	35.8	993
Income from self-publishing	0.0	9.3	0	100	25.1	993
Public Lending Right (PLR) and Educational Lending Right (ELR) payments	0.0	9.6	0	100	22.0	993
Copyright payments from Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) or other similar organisation	0.0	3.5	0	100	12.2	993
Income from a grant or commission to produce creative work related to your work as an author	0.0	3.1	0	100	13.7	993
Income from an educational institution (including academic positions, PhD scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships and other types of funding)	0.0	6.8	0	100	22.3	993
Appearances/readings	0.0	5.0	0	100	14.3	993
Other publication payments and personal book sales	0.0	6.3	0	100	19.2	993
Income from blogging	0.0	0.2	0	100	4.1	993
Income from crowd funding	0.0	0.0	0	15	0.6	993
Salary or wages from working as an author	0.0	3.0	0	100	14.7	993
Other	0.0	11.9	0	100	30.0	993
Total	100	100	100	100	0	993

Table 9.5 – Q10.6 – For the 2013/2014 financial year what percentage of your income from royalty payments was derived from ebooks, not including self-publishing?

	%
90-100%	5.7
80-89%	1.3
70-79%	0.5
60-69%	0.7
50-59%	1.0
40-49%	0.9
30-39%	0.9
20-29%	2.0
10-19%	5.0
1-9%	14.3
Zero	53.1
Unsure	14.5
Total	100
<i>n</i>	985

Table 9.6 – Q10.7 – For the 2013/2014 financial year what percentage of your income from self-publishing was derived from ebooks?

	%
90-100%	7.3
80-89%	1.4
70-79%	0.0
60-69%	0.4
50-59%	0.4
40-49%	0.3
30-39%	0.6
20-29%	0.8
10-19%	1.4
1-9%	5.0
Zero	76.6
Unsure	5.8
Total	100
<i>n</i>	948

Table 9.7 – Q10.8 – During the 2013/2014 financial year did you rely on any of these sources of money to make ends meet? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
The income of your partner	36.9
Loans from a family member or friend	7.5
Short term loans from a financial institution	1.8
Small business loan from a financial institution	0.7
Credit card debt	14.8
A job that is unrelated to being an Author	47.1
A job that is related to being an Author but does not directly lead to the production of a creative work	25.2
Unemployment benefit/s or other govt. benefits	13.9
Other	20.8
<i>n</i>	869

Table 9.8 – Q10.9 – During your career as an author has your income changed due to any of the following factors?

	Large increase	Modest increase	Stayed the same	Modest decrease	Large decrease	Not relevant	Total	<i>n</i>
	%							
Publishing in multiple formats	1.7	15.6	21.9	2.5	1.4	56.9	100	929
Self-publishing	3.2	11.1	16.2	1.9	0.9	66.6	100	926
The release of your backlist publications as ebooks	1.2	10.0	14.4	1.1	.8	72.5	100	909

Table 9.9 – Q10.10 – What was your total gross income for the 2013/2014 financial year? (please include income that is both related and unrelated to acting as an author)

	%
Less than \$1,000	3.5
\$1-10,000	6.9
\$11-20,000	9.8
\$21-30,000	11.9
\$31-40,000	9.5
\$41-50,000	6.7
\$51-60,000	8.2
\$61-70,000	6.2
\$71-80,000	6.7
\$81-90,000	6.0
\$91-100,000	6.1
\$101-120,000	6.5
\$121-140,000	3.3
\$141-160,000	2.7
\$161-180,000	1.9
\$181-200,000	1.5
More than \$200,000	2.5
Total	100
<i>n</i>	981

Section 10 – Copyright issues

Table 10.1 – Q11.2 – As far as you are aware, has the copyright of your creative work ever been infringed, e.g. has your work been pirated?

	%
Yes	28.7
No	45.2
Unsure	26.1
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 10.1 – Q11.3 – Was a file-sharing website or social media used as part of the copyright infringement? (If appropriate please choose more than one option)

	%
Yes, my work has been pirated through file-sharing sites such as Rapidshare, BitTorrent or Usenet	49.8
Yes, my work has been pirated through social media	8.8
Other	22.6
No	16.3
Unsure	13.8
<i>n</i>	283

Section 11 – Socio-demographic details

Table 11.1 – Q12.2 – What is your gender?

	%	ABS %
Male	33.0	35
Female	67.0	65
Total	100	100
<i>n</i>	993	

Table 11.2 – Q12.3 – What is your age?

	%	ABS %
Under 20 years	.1	0.4
20-24 years	.1	3.1
25-29 years	1.4	7.9
30-34 years	4.4	10.4
35-39 years	6.2	12.3
40-44 years	8.9	11.9
45-49 years	11.8	12.4
50-54 years	14.1	11.8
55-59 years	14.3	9.8
60-64 years	11.6	8.9
65-69 years	13.4	5.8
70-74 years	7.0	2.9
75-79 years	4.1	1.3
80-84 years	1.8	0.9
85-89 years	.7	0.2
Total	100	100
<i>n</i>	993	

Table 11.3 – Q12.4 – Which category best applies to you?

	%
Single, no dependent children	14.6
Single, with dependent children	2.2
Married/living with partner, no dependent children	41.0
Married/living with partner, with dependent children	30.8
Widow/widower/divorced, no dependent children	9.9
Widow/widower/divorced, with dependent children	1.5
Total	100
<i>n</i>	993

Table 11.4 – Q12.5 – Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

	%
No	98.7
Yes, Aboriginal	0.3
Prefer not to say	1.0
Total	100
<i>n</i>	987

Table 11.5 – Q12.6 – In which country were you born?

	%
Australia	75.1
England	10.5
New Zealand	2.5
United States of America	2.9
South Africa	1.2
Ireland	1.0
Scotland	1.0
Other	5.7
Total	100
<i>n</i>	968

Table 11.6 – Q12.8 – Is English your first language?

	%
Yes	97.1
No	2.9
Total	100
<i>n</i>	990

Table 11.7 – Q12.10 – Being an author from a non-English language background, what was the overall effect of this in relation to your writing and career as an author?

	%
Positive	34.5
Neither positive nor negative	51.7
Negative	13.8
Total	100
<i>n</i>	29

Table 11.8 – Q12.11 – Do you suffer from a disability or chronic illness?

	%
Yes	14.5
No	85.5
Total	100
<i>n</i>	991

Table 11.9 – Q12.12 – Does disability or chronic illness adversely impact your practice as an author?

	%
Not at all	18.9
Sometimes	57.3
Most of the time	21.0
All of the time	2.1
Unsure	0.7
Total	100
<i>n</i>	143

Table 11.10 – Q12.13 – Where do you live?

	%
Urban - capital city	61.7
Urban - regional city or town	20.4
Semi-rural	9.9
Rural or remote	8.1
Total	100
<i>n</i>	992

Table 11.11 – Q12.14 – Has living outside of a capital city had an effect on your practice as an author?

	%
Yes	49.7
No	50.3
Total	100
<i>n</i>	380

Table 11.12 – Q12.15 – Has this effect been:

	%
Positive	29.9
Negative	54.0
Unsure	16.0
Total	100
<i>n</i>	187

Table 11.13 – Q12.16 – Where do you currently reside?

	%	ABS %
NSW	35.0	44.7
VIC	28.3	29.1
QLD	13.4	11.1
SA	7.5	4.1
WA	7.4	4.7
TAS	2.7	1.8
NT	0.7	0.5
ACT	5.0	3.9
Total	100	100
<i>n</i>	993	

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