



National Year of Reading 2012

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES \$1.3M FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2012

12.00pm, Friday 8 July, 2011: During the Prime Minister's Literary Awards event at the National Library of Australia, in Canberra today, Prime Minister Julia Gillard formally announced the Australian Government's support for the National Year of Reading 2012 and funding of \$1.3 million through the Office for the Arts and Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Minister for the Arts Simon Crean said the National Year of Reading is an excellent initiative to highlight the importance of reading as a life skill and as a source of enjoyment.

"I commend the libraries and library associations, including the Australian Library and Information Association, for working to inspire a love of reading in Australians. The benefits of improved literacy are significant for both the community and workplace productivity," Mr Crean said.

There are 15 organisations behind the National Year of Reading, including all the state libraries, territory libraries and public library associations across Australia. Although libraries are the driving force behind the campaign, partnerships are being forged with writers, publishers, booksellers, schools, government, media and the companies behind some of Australia's most famous household name brands.

The founders recognise the great work that Australian reading promotion and literacy organisations already do and hope that by attracting further attention to the issue for a 12-month period, there can be a step-change in people's awareness of the enormous value of books and the joy of reading.

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According to the 2006 *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey*¹, nearly half of all Australians (46%) don't have the literacy skills they need to cope with everyday life and work.

The Australian Government funding will support the One Country Reading and workplace literacy initiatives – two of the four key national programs for the National Year of Reading. Sponsorship is being sort for the two other programs – The Reading Hour and public library membership drive.

The official public launch of the National Year of Reading will be on 14 February 2012.

ENDS

Download images and logos from the website www.love2read.org.au.

More information about the National Year of Reading is available at www.love2read2012.wikispaces.com.

¹ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4228.0>

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