

StoryFACTORY

.....
five year strategy
2023-27



thank you

This strategy was developed with pro-bono support from James Argent from Boston Consulting Group. It builds on BCG's invaluable work with us over the past five years. We are very grateful for their insights, research and strategic thinking.

Story Factory acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the many lands on which we work and tell stories. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and to the future leaders we are privileged to work with.

READING IS
access
BUT WRITING IS
agency



about story factory

Story Factory is a not-for-profit that runs creative writing and storytelling programs for young people aged 7 to 17 in under-resourced communities. All our programs build young people's literacy and help them find their voice, so they can write themselves better futures.



OUR VISION

We want to see an Australia where all young people have a voice, and the skills and confidence to tell their stories.



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to enrich the lives of young people in under-resourced communities through creative writing and storytelling.



OUR VALUES

- » Young people come first
- » Writing is agency
- » Creativity unleashes potential
- » Diversity makes us better
- » We have high expectations of ourselves and the young people we work with
- » We have heart. Passion matters.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING ME UNLOCK MY WRITING ABILITIES AND GIVING ME THE CONFIDENCE TO SHARE MY WORK...THE FACILITATORS MAKE WRITING FUN AND THEY MAKE IT VERY EASY TO START WRITING. I ALSO LOVE THE FEEDBACK AND THE WAY YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENT WAYS OF WRITING EASY TO UNDERSTAND.

STUDENT
Open Program



foreword

When Michael Gonski and Cath Keenan asked me if I was interested in taking over the Chair role at Story Factory, my first response was trepidation. I was nervous about taking over from Mike, Story Factory's founding Chair, who had done such an amazing job over the past 10 years, and I was worried I didn't have enough time to do the job properly. I told them I would think about it, while I mulled over how I was going to say no. But then we had our board and staff strategic planning session, and I was so impressed with the vision, passion and dedication of the Story Factory team that I called Cath immediately and told her I was in.

This strategy is the culmination of that session. It is true to our mission of helping young people find their voices and tell their stories. It has been developed by our incredible team, staff and board, who all understand that by giving a young person the skills to tell their own story, in their own voice, you give them so much more. You validate their truth and they develop a confidence that helps with far more than literacy and creative writing: it helps them take their place in the world.

Our young writers constantly inspire us with their tenacity, their determination, their creativity and their stories. This 5-year plan is our pledge to them, to continue to develop the best programs to support their passion for learning and aspirations for education success.

We will continue to ignite the creative spark in our Western Sydney communities and amplify the voices of our writers by engaging deeply with relevant and innovative content. We will be able to support teachers and reach kids nationally by building on the innovative and engaging digital platform we created during the COVID pandemic. We are also building an evaluation framework that unpacks the magic our storytellers create in the classroom and will enable us to better tell our own story. Underpinning this work is our commitment to our people – our pledge to our staff to have the best structures in place to support them and the work they do, and our pledge to our partners that we will continue to honour their trust in us by changing lives.

I am incredibly grateful to be given the opportunity to chair Story Factory, and for the support of my fellow board members and incredible Story Factory staff. We thank all of our current partners for helping us to reach this milestone and look forward to working alongside new partners to provide young Australians with the opportunity to shape our collective story.

Gemma Salteri
Chair, Story Factory Board
August 2022



I LOVE BEING ABLE TO SHARE MY LOVE OF WRITING AND READING WITH OTHER PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND AND BEING ABLE TO WRITE IN A NON-JUDGEMENTAL SPACE WITH OTHER PEOPLE MY AGE.

STUDENT
Open Program

our strategic goals

FOR STORY FACTORY, SUCCESS IS AN AUSTRALIA WHERE ALL YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A VOICE.

The aim of our strategy to 2027 is to support young people in under-resourced communities in NSW to build their literacy and find their voice. Over the past couple of years, **COVID has caused unprecedented disruption** in the lives and learning of these young people, particularly those in Western Sydney. **We want to support them to overcome these setbacks and write brighter futures.**

Our focus initially is on consolidation: honing the impact of our programs, re-growing our volunteer base, and securing our financial stability. **As we move towards 2027, our priority is extending and measuring impact, and amplifying the voices of all the young people in our programs.** We want to align the goals of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) with our strategic goals, and increase the participation of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our programs. That is a particular focus in this strategy.

This strategy builds on what we have learnt over the past few years, particularly the expertise we have developed in digital programming. **Over the next five years, this will allow us to grow national reach.**

OUR KEY STRATEGIC PILLARS ARE

1

AMPLIFYING YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES AND GROWING IMPACT, PARTICULARLY IN WESTERN SYDNEY.

2

NATIONAL REACH THROUGH DIGITAL PROGRAMS.

3

DIVERSITY - STRONGER ENGAGEMENT WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES, AND ENSURING MORE DIVERSITY IN OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.

4

HAVING THE RIGHT PEOPLE AND STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT GROWTH AND RENEWAL.

5

ENSURING WE ALIGN HOW THE ORGANISATION MEASURES SUCCESS WITH WHERE WE'RE HEADED.

our strategic pillars

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, OUR AIMS ARE ...

Amplifying young people's voices and growing impact, particularly in Western Sydney.

- » **Develop a community hub model**, where we work deeply in selected communities in Western Sydney and/or around Redfern. The hubs will involve working across schools and community groups, in the long-term, to create lasting, meaningful change. Programs will draw on and celebrate the diverse knowledge and cultures of these communities, and may involve the creation of specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, if appropriate.
- » **Continue to grow our after-school programs, both in person and online.** These have been an area of growth during and after the pandemic, and we will run more after-school programs – online, and at our Parramatta and Redfern centres – stretching students from our school programs to reach the next stage in their writing development. **Through our national digital rollout, we will create pathways for young people from around the country to join these online programs**, building a writing community across Australia.
- » **We will continue to publish writing by young people, both on paper and in digital formats, amplifying their voices in as many different ways as possible.** This will support the creation of communities of writers both face-to-face and online.

National reach through digital programs.

- » **We will begin a national rollout of our live, interactive digital workshops** from January 2023. The rollout will start in regional NSW and the Northern Territory, and grow across the country by the end of 2024. By then, we aim to have reached approximately 18,000 additional young people in areas we couldn't visit in person.
- » **After the initial rollout, our digital programs will grow in reach and depth**, providing a range of offerings for diverse students across the country.
- » **We will employ an Innovation Manager to explore digital opportunities.** Digital opens up opportunities for asynchronous learning for students and teachers, and new possibilities for publishing and sharing student work. The Innovation Manager will investigate these, identifying areas for development and growth, and supporting and overseeing new initiatives as they arise.
- » **The Innovation Manager will also explore partnerships to support our digital rollout**, e.g. with larger organisations already operating in this space and online learning platforms.

Diversity - stronger engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and ensuring more diversity in our staff and volunteers.

- » We reiterate our commitment to Reconciliation through our Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs). The goals articulated in our RAPs are critical strategic goals for our organisation. In particular, we will establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.
- » We commit to better supporting the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people we work with - both by increasing participation and deepening the impact of our programs.
- » **Employ a second Indigenous storyteller** to support this growth, and ensure we make efforts to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for any role at Story Factory.
- » **Creation of more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programming** in collaboration with our Indigenous Storytellers and Aboriginal Engagement Manager.
- » **Build deeper connections with community leaders and other organisations working in our communities.** Alongside this, continue meaningful efforts to make our board, staff and volunteers more diverse and representative of these communities.
- » **Finalise our Reflect RAP** (on track for 2023) and move to an **Innovate RAP** by 2025.

Having the right people and structures to support growth and renewal.

- » **Maintaining a strong and supportive culture** driven by our shared values.
- » After a period of significant disruption, **rebuilding our volunteer corps** and offering a range of rewarding volunteer experiences.
- » We recognise that our people are our greatest asset, and **will invest in attracting and retaining the best people.** We will manage key person risk by ensuring continuity and key support for critical roles across the organisation.
- » Our alumni are a source of great insight and passion. We will support them, where possible, by **creating employment opportunities at Story Factory**, including utilising their skills to assist with workshop delivery and engagement.
- » **Invest in more Indigenous storytelling staff**, and more **staff with digital skills.**
- » **Diversify revenue** and continue to explore income streams that support long-term sustainability.

Ensuring we align how the organisation measures success with where we're headed.

- » Research by the NSW Department of Education says now is a time of need like no other in under-resourced communities in Western Sydney. Wellbeing is more important than ever. **We will build the evidence base for the wellbeing benefits of creative writing**, and seek to maximise these in our programs. Alongside this, we will **develop processes to more effectively measure changes in confidence, creativity and engagement.**
- » Our focus in coming years continues to be ensuring that young people in our programs build their literacy and find their voice, so they can recover from the disruptions of COVID and thrive. **We will measure success through our improved evaluation processes**, developed with Clear Horizon, and by **maintaining a constant feedback loop** in real time so programs are continuously refined.



by 2027, Story Factory aims to...

Be consistently improving the literacy and wellbeing of young people in under-resourced communities, particularly in Western Sydney, and amplifying their voices.

- » Programs consistently **improve the literacy of at least 75% of participants.**
- » Programs consistently **improve the wellbeing of at least 75% of participants.**
- » Programs **improve the practice of at least 90% of the teachers** we work with.
- » We **publish a wide range of writing by young people** that is distributed by various channels to audiences across Australia.
- » We **provide pathways for young people** to go on to additional writing and publishing opportunities and build communities of young writers across the country.

Have national reach through our digital programs.

- » **Reach an additional 50,000 young people right across Australia** through our digital programs, and provide options for them to continue in Story Factory programs.
- » Through our digital programs, **be supporting teachers across the country** to improve their practice of teaching writing.

Have deep engagement and impact with young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and young people who speak English as an additional language or dialect.

- » At least **22% of our students are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**, and **50% speak English as an additional language or dialect.**
- » **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded in programs**, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific content is delivered where appropriate.
- » We are delivering on the **commitments made in our Innovate RAP.**

Have the right people and structures to support growth and renewal, with diversity embedded across all levels of our organisation (board, staff, volunteers).

- » **Be financially stable with diversified revenue streams.**
- » **Diverse voices are engaged in decision-making** across the organisation.
- » **Former students are engaged at different levels of the organisation** to inform program delivery and develop their skills and experience.
- » **We have a large, diverse volunteer base** doing meaningful and impactful work.
- » **Innovative models of program delivery** (eg. community hubs) maximise the impact of our work.

Have rigorous evaluation data demonstrating the impact of our programs on literacy and wellbeing.



MY SON ENJOYED THE WORKSHOP AND ACTUALLY WROTE A POEM! THE WORKSHOP WAS INCREDIBLY WELL PREPARED AND THE STAFF VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE, IN TUNE WITH THE STUDENTS, WITH MANY TECHNIQUES TO ENGAGE AND RE-ENGAGE. I WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND STORY FACTORY TO ANYONE.

PARENT OF STUDENT
Workshops with Down Syndrome Australia

2023 → INNOVATE

In 2023, our focus is on continued innovation.

Building on our expanded capabilities to reach more students through digital programming, while reinvigorating our core in-person programs with young people in under-resourced communities in Western Sydney.

70% of students improve their literacy

90% of teachers improve their practice

17% of students are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

50% of students speak English as an additional language or dialect

6,300 students reached through digital programs



Amplifying young voices

- » Extend after-school programming, both in-person and online

National reach through digital

- » National Digital Rollout begins: target 6,300 students by the end of 2023
- » Innovation Manager employed to oversee rollout, explore partnerships and investigate tactical opportunities to amplify digital programs

Diversity

- » Finalise Reflect RAP
- » Build engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people: target 17% of students engaged in-person from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- » Develop and implement an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Relationship Plan to support engagement with a range of stakeholders
- » Annually reflect on activities with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and services involved in our work, and identify priority areas where additional efforts to support engagement are required
- » Explore opportunities to further support and engage alumni of our programs

Staff & structure

- » Revitalise our staff culture by connecting to our shared values, and rebuild our volunteer base after a period of significant disruption

Measuring success

- » Build the evidence base for the wellbeing benefits of our programs for young people

2024 → EXTEND

In 2024, our focus is on extending our reach through digital and in-person programs, and ensuring we deepen relationships within our core communities.

72% of students improve their literacy

90% of teachers improve their practice

18% of students are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

50% of students speak English as an additional language or dialect

11,700 students reached through digital programs



Amplifying young voices

- » Innovation in engagement, as we explore community hubs

National reach through digital

- » Grow digital reach, particularly through partnerships: target 11,000 students by the end of the year
- » Invest in staff with digital expertise

Diversity

- » Expand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programming as appropriate. Employ additional Indigenous Storyteller to assist with this
- » Increase engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: target 18% of students engaged in-person from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- » Continue steps towards diversification of board, staff and volunteers

Staff & structure

- » Identify and enable opportunities to support alumni, particularly in program delivery
- » Continue efforts to provide development pathways for staff within the organisation

Measuring success

- » Innovation in measurement, particularly around the wellbeing benefits of our programs

2025 → AMPLIFY

In 2025, our focus will be on amplifying our students' voices, piloting our first community hub and implementing a refreshed approach to publishing.

73% of students improve their literacy

90% of teachers improve their practice

20% of students are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

50% of students speak English as an additional language or dialect

12,000 students reached through digital programs



Amplifying young voices

- » Reach our "steady state" for after-school programs in Parramatta, and continue to grow after-school programs in Redfern
- » Implement clear approach to publishing as part of workshops and digital programs
- » Pilot first community hub and strengthen key community relationships

National reach through digital

- » Expansion of our digital programs with a wider range of offerings, enabling us to reach 12,000 students online by the end of the year
- » Employ storytelling staff with digital skills

Diversity

- » Finalise Innovate RAP
- » Increase engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: target 20% of students engaged in-person from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds

Staff & structure

- » Continue managing key-person risk, investing in people and actively promoting a strong, values-based culture

Measuring success

- » Refine approach to measurement of literacy and wellbeing benefits, and use results to continue to refine programs and amplify impact

2026 → DIVERSIFY

In 2026, our focus will be on diversification, ensuring we have meaningful diversity across our organisation, including in our volunteers, staff and board.

We will also look at diversifying how we engage with young people, including through digital programs and community hub programs.

74% of students improve their literacy

90% of teachers improve their practice

22% of students are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

50% of students speak English as an additional language or dialect

14,000 students reached through digital programs



Amplifying young voices

- » Community hub pilot continues: programs refined and improved, relationships in community deepened and strengthened
- » Identify opportunities to further develop and amplify the voices of young people in under-resourced communities

National reach through digital

- » Continue to expand our digital programs: target 14,000 students by the end of the year

Diversity

- » Increase our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: target 22% of students engaged in-person from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- » Deepen this engagement, particularly through the creation and delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-focussed content, possibly incorporating language

Staff & structure

- » Continue to diversify our board and staff to better reflect the communities we work with
- » Innovation Manager continues to explore opportunities for tactical growth of digital programs, and amplification of impact

Measuring success

- » Continue to refine programs and amplify impact through close analysis of evaluation data



2027 → DEEPEN

In 2027, our focus will be on further deepening our reach by refining program delivery and building our relationships with core communities in Western Sydney.

75% of students improve their literacy

90% of teachers improve their practice

22% of students are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

50% of students speak English as an additional language or dialect

16,000 students reached through digital programs



Amplifying young voices

- » Refinement of program mix across digital, Redfern and Parramatta to best meet the needs of the young people we work with, and maximise impact
- » Conclude community hub pilot, evaluate results, and explore opportunities to extend or deepen the model
- » Refine the range of writing and other opportunities offered to alumni

National reach through digital

- » Continue to expand our digital programs: target 16,000 students by the end of the year

Diversity

- » Continue to deepen engagement with young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and their communities: target 22% of students engaged in-person from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds

Staff & structure

- » Continue to manage key-person risk

Measuring success

- » Consolidate evaluation processes and share widely the impact of our programs, both on the literacy and wellbeing of the young people we work with

milestones



	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Amplifying young people's voices and growing impact					
Build the evidence base for the wellbeing benefits of our programs					
Continue to refine programs in line with evaluation data collected from students and teachers		Ongoing			
Grow after-school programming online and in person, at our Parramatta and Redfern centres		Ongoing			
Clear approach to publishing as part of online and in-person workshops					
Refine program mix across digital, Redfern and Parramatta to best meet needs of the young people we work with					
Identify opportunities to further develop and amplify the voices of young people in under-resourced communities					
National rollout of digital programs					
National rollout begins. Innovation Manager employed to oversee rollout and explore partnerships					
Grow digital reach, particularly through partnership opportunities					
Invest in additional staff with digital expertise					
Expansion of digital offering with wider range of programs					
Innovation Manager continues to explore tactical opportunities for growth of digital programs and amplification of impact					

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Diversity and strong engagement with Indigenous communities					
Finalise Reflect RAP					
Expand Indigenous programming as appropriate. Employ additional Indigenous Storyteller to assist with this.					
Annually reflect on activities with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and services involved in our work, and identify priority areas where additional efforts are required			Ongoing		
Continue to deepen engagement with young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and their communities			Ongoing		
Finalise Innovate RAP					
Explore community hubs model					
Pilot community hubs model in single community					
Evaluate community hub pilot and explore opportunities to extend/deepen the model					
Having the right people and structures to support growth and renewal					
Revitalise our staff culture, and rebuild our volunteer base, after a period of significant disruption					
Explore opportunities to further support and engage alumni of our programs					
Manage key person risk and succession planning					
Continue steps to diversify board, staff and volunteers			Ongoing		
Diversify revenue and grow income streams, including government funding			Ongoing		
Ensure we align how we measure success with where we're headed					
Refine approach to measurement of literacy and wellbeing benefits of programs, and use results to continually refine programs					
Consolidate evaluation processes and share widely the impact of our programs on literacy and wellbeing					

STORY FACTORY TAUGHT ME
CONFIDENCE IN MY WRITING, TAUGHT
ME THAT I HAD SOMETHING WORTH
SHARING, A STORY WORTH TELLING.

ALUMNI STUDENT
Year of Poetry Program

Being in the [Year of the Novella] workshops helped bolster my confidence in writing and developed, not only my literary skills, but also confidence within myself. Having a creative outlet that was facilitated by the wonderful people at Story Factory was incredible and helped me realise the value of both my ideas and my ability to communicate them.

Seeing a book that I wrote, completely and wholly my own, published and in the hands of myself and others was a surreal experience. Story Factory helped me understand and see myself as a real author. It wasn't just a distant idea of what I could become but a reality in my hands. It gave me a confidence I don't think I've ever had before.

ISAIAH TASI
Year of the Novella 2020 & 2021





StoryFACTORY

REDFERN

176 Redfern Street
Redfern NSW 2016
Gadigal Land
02 9699 6970

PARRAMATTA

90 George Street
Parramatta NSW 2150
Burramattagal Land
02 8859 0353

GET INVOLVED AT



STORYFACTORY.ORG.AU

Story Factory is a not-for-profit that runs creative writing and storytelling programs for young people aged 7 to 17 in under-resourced communities. Supported by our community of expert educators and volunteer tutors, young people are empowered to create stories of all kinds, which we share and celebrate. Young people develop the skills and confidence to find their voice and shape the future.

CONTACT

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