SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR LOCAL MP

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[*Date*]

*[Minister name]*

*[Office address or email address]*

*[copy to Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety, and the Arts]*

Dear Minister,

**Re: Expansion of Public and Educational Lending Rights Schemes**

I am an [*author / illustrator / editor* ] and, as such, am entitled to register my books with the Office for the Arts to be considered for eligibility for the lending rights scheme (PLR / ELR payments).

In Australia, PLR and ELR payments are intended to compensate creators for lost royalties when physical **print** books are borrowed from a library for free. The PLR / ELR scheme **does not include** ebooks or digital audiobooks.

I am a member of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and support its urgent call for the PLR / ELR schemes to be expanded to include digital formats.

I am writing to you to request your support.

At a time when borrowing of ebooks and audiobooks is rapidly increasing, it makes no sense for an author or illustrator to receive PLR payments for a physical book, but nothing if that same book is loaned in a digital format. This ignores the ways in which library users are increasingly accessing content. For reference, the [CIVICA 2020 Libraries Index](https://www.alia.org.au/news/21343/australian-novels-most-popular-choices-amongst-readers) reported a 56% increase in ebook loans, and a 50% increase in audiobook loans in one year.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 , the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) has observed a dramatic increase in the use of electronic resources, with libraries reporting the addition of new ebook and audiobook titles. With renewed lockdown in some states, social-distancing restrictions set to remain in place for the foreseeable future, increased investment in digital resources by libraries, and new borrowing patterns that may have a long term effect on the way patrons interact with libraries, the case for digital lending rights has never been more compelling.

The Office for the Arts has been researching and considering an expansion of the scheme; implementation should be made a top priority now.

I ask that you call for an appropriate updating of the *Public Lending Right Act 1985*.

Please contact the Australian Society of Authors at comms@asauthors.org if you would like further information or if you wish to discuss this campaign.

Yours sincerely

*[Your name]*