

Copyright Agency delivers more than \$124 million to members

The Copyright Agency has announced its end of year results at its AGM held today.

CEO Adam Suckling says 2017-18 was a solid to good year with \$124m in copyright royalty payments to members, a beneficial merger, important political advocacy for fair copyright settings and almost \$1.8m in grants in support of Australia's creative community.

The year also saw the agency stand up for its members' rights to fair remuneration through several actions in the Copyright Tribunal.

Copyright Agency CEO, Adam Suckling, says, "We had a very productive 2018 financial year, delivering revenue of \$152 million, distributing \$124 million in copyright royalties to authors, publishers, visual artists, journalists and surveyors, and keeping our costs slightly lower than last year at 13.9% of revenue."

The financial year saw the merger of Copyright Agency and Viscopy, to unify advocacy, deliver greater efficiencies and ensure lower administrative fees for visual artists, which means that visual artists will receive more money from our copyright payments.

"We extended our agreement with the school's sector, grew licensing of education colleges, and licensed more than 150 new Australian corporations and businesses. These licences generate royalties for our members and provide licensees with access to an enormous amount of copyright material," Mr Suckling says.

"Copyright Agency has continued to support the Australian creative community via our Cultural Fund, through which we distributed almost \$1.8m to a wide range of projects in publishing, writing, journalism and the visual arts. The Cultural Fund made grants to 88 organisations and 27 individuals and announced three new Fellowships – for Non-Fiction Writing (\$80k), for a Visual Artist (\$80k), and a Reading Australia Fellowship for an English Teacher (\$15k).

"Members strongly support our advocacy program for fair copyright policy settings, as they know that changes to the Copyright Act can fundamentally affect their rights and income. In Canada, changes to the approach on copyright saw some licensing revenue collapse by 80%.

"So, last year we continued to advocate for fair copyright settings in concert with the Australian Publishers Association, the Australian Society of Authors and other important stakeholders.

"It is our remit to stand up for creators and to that end, we are pursuing action in the Copyright Tribunal against the NSW Government for their failure to pay copyright royalties for six years. This is for the use of our members' content by hundreds of thousands of public servants.

"We have also had to defend our new media monitors licence model in the Copyright Tribunal. The aim of this model is to ensure that media monitoring companies pay a fair rate to media publishers and journalists. These fees play a part in sustaining journalism in Australia.

"In the new financial year, we also took Universities Australia (UA) to the Tribunal after a breakdown in commercial discussions for a new licensing agreement, beginning in 2019.

“This action provides the opportunity to assess the value of these licences in the digital age; the best method of pricing the licence, and to revisit the ways we monitor how much material is being accessed under the licence. It also means FY19 financial year will be much more challenging given these costly legal actions and the pressures on licence fees.”

Despite these challenges the agency is continuing to invest in new technology to better serve its members.

“We deployed the first new system last year – a cloud-based enterprise resource management system. This system provides a foundation stone for the necessary replacement of other systems and was delivered on time and on budget,” Mr Suckling says.

Finally, for the first time, the agency licensed the work of Emily Kame Kngwarreye’s *Yam Dreaming* for Qantas’ new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, demonstrating both Qantas’ and Copyright Agency’s role in supporting and respecting the work of Indigenous artists.

“The Copyright Agency is proud to support Australia’s hard-working publishers, writers and visual artists. We are committed to continuing to innovate, educate and advocate to ensure Australia’s talented and diverse literary and artistic community have the means and opportunity to generate creative work for the enjoyment and education of all Australians,” adds Mr Suckling.

Publisher Director Election Results

Publisher Jane Curry of Ventura Press was re-elected to the Copyright Agency’s [Board](#) for a three-year term.

For more information about the end of financial year results, [see our Year in Review 2017-18](#).

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About the Copyright Agency

The not-for-profit Copyright Agency connects users and creators of content, providing licences for the use of copyright material such as text, images, art and survey plans. We manage the educational and government licences for the use of text and images, as well as the resale royalty scheme for artists (by Government appointment). Our members include writers, artists, surveyors and publishers. Membership is free. www.copyright.com.au