

“Freedom of Expression is not a crime. It is a human right.”

To All WA Writers:

We are investigating the possibility of setting up a branch of Sydney PEN in Perth; doing so would require the interest and support of a reasonable number of West Australian (not necessarily Perth) writers. Sydney PEN is Australia’s Centre of International PEN. International PEN is a writers organisation whose central concern is freedom of expression; founded in 1921, its Head Office is in London but there are centres in more than 100 countries. International PEN is a non-political organisation which holds Special Consultative status at the UN and Associate status at UNESCO. Its website can be found at <http://www.pen-international.org>

The address of Sydney PEN is <https://www.pen.org.au> The current President is Zoe Rodriguez; writers who are involved with it include J M Coetzee, Tom Keneally, Mabel Lee, David Malouf and Frank Moorehouse. Perth used to have a very active PEN Centre; it worked on behalf of writers in prison in Asia and held a World Congress in Fremantle in 1995. Membership is open to writers of all kinds; PEN works on behalf of writers who are persecuted solely because of their writing or speech but is also concerned with linguistic rights and digital freedom. While Australia is a relatively free country PEN has been active in issues such as government policy towards SBS and the ABC, media ownership and defamation laws.

In order to gauge the level of interest in this idea we would like to invite you to an informal meeting at the Centre for Stories, 100 Aberdeen St, Northbridge from 5.30 – 6.30pm on Wednesday 2 August. If you cannot attend but are interested please email either of us. We are sending this invitation out through a number of agencies so we apologise if you receive it more than once.

Thanks,



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