

**PEN Perth**

100 Aberdeen Street Northbridge WA 6003

Perth chapter of PEN International

Email: Website:

perthpen@gmail.com www.penperth.com

Annual General Meeting 2025

Minutes of meeting held 3:30pm, 23 August 2025 at Centre for Stories, Northbridge.

1. Attendance:

Present: Krishna Sen (Chair), Dan Midalia, Robin Bower, Hélène Jaccomard, Christopher Macfarlane, Lakshmi Kanchi, Rashida Murphy, Vivienne Glance, David Hill, Dennis Haskell, John Ryan, Baden Offord, Rohit Kanchi, Thelma Blackford, Tirthankar Banerjee, Amin Banerjee, Katherine Ong, Franco Smargiassi.

Apologies: Luisa Mitchell, Tangea Tansley.

Krishna Sen acknowledged that we meet on the land of the Noongar nation.

- 2. Minutes** of 2024 AGM dated 27 July 2024 were tabled. Adoption of the minutes was moved, seconded and approved nem con.

3. Business arising

Christopher Macfarlane reported that all matters are included in reports to be tabled.

4. Reports for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024:

Chair's report: Krishna Sen presented the Chair's report.

Krishna Sen briefly summarised the important work of PEN International and the local branch and reminded members that the world remains a deeply unsafe place for journalists, writers and other communicators. She cited the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) report that 124 media workers were killed across 18 countries in 2024 – making it the deadliest year for journalists since CPJ and the 2025 showing little improvement, with 41 deaths across 8 countries recorded in the first eight months of 2025. From her report:

The broader category of “writers” is harder to quantify. However, PEN America's Freedom to Write Index reported that in 2024, 375 writers were imprisoned across 40 countries. In any case, statistics alone cannot capture the depth of loss.

PEN International's mission is to support writers in war zones, in prison, and at risk around the world. This vital work depends on funding provided through membership levies collected by PEN Centres such as ours. Every PEN Perth member is therefore contributing to the global work of PEN International. The stronger our membership base, the more we can do – at a time when the demands upon us are growing daily”.

Krishna noted that PEN Perth has been quite active this year. She spoke of the interconnectedness of PEN Perth with the international PEN movement; how, in a sense, PEN Perth members are contributing to the global work undertaken by PEN International.

Krishna thanked the outgoing Committee for its work. Membership, Krishna noted, had remained stable over the last year and the committee had been renewed after the 2024 AGM. There are also, other ways to contribute to the PEN Perth activities such as special projects, letter-writing and supporting a social media presence.

Krishna spoke about campaigns to support writers including Alaa Abd el-Fattah, Hany Babu, Narges Mohammadi, Amanda Echanis and Pham Doan Trang. She spoke of the partnerships that continue to develop with the other Australian PEN groups, with the WA State Library and the WA Universities. She listed and summarized the events which PEN Perth had organised or been involved with during the year.

In closing, Krishna thanked the Centre for Stories for their ongoing assistance. The report's acceptance was moved, seconded, and approved nem con.

- **Financial report:** The Treasurer, Dan Midalia presented the Financial Report. Dan stated that the 2024/25 had been a good year financially. PEN Perth's finances were in a healthy state and plans were in place to both raise funds next year and contribute significantly to international activities. The report showed a bank balance as of 30 June 2025 was \$6371.56, with expenses over the last FY at \$1864.80 and FY income at \$5700.01. The report's acceptance was moved, seconded, and approved nem con.
- **Writers in Prison report:** Robin Bower presented the Writers in Prison report. Campaigns remain active for: Yang Hengjun (China), Hany Babu (India), Alaa Abd el-Fattah (Egypt), Pham Doan Trang (Vietnam), Narges Mohammadi (Iran), and Amanda Echanis (Philippines). Next steps the report noted includes: PEN Perth will continue to raise awareness of these cases through public events, partnerships and digital campaigns; exploring collaboration with other Asia-Pacific PEN Centres to share advocacy workload and coordinate regional actions; and support for individual writers may include letter writing, appeals to embassies and governments, and amplifying global campaigns, including those led by PEN International. The Report's acceptance was moved, seconded and approved nem con.

5. **Appointment** of interim chair:

Dennis Haskell was appointed to conduct the Elections.

6. **Election of Office Bearers and Committee members:**

Christopher Macfarlane reported that the following nominations had been received:

Chair: Krishna Sen

Secretary: Christopher Macfarlane

Treasurer: open

Committee members: Robin Bower, Hélène Jaccopard, Lakshmi Kanchi, Vivienne Glance, and Luisa Mitchell.

There being no other nominations and no objections, these nominees were all declared elected.

7. **Other business**

There was no other business. The meeting closed at 4.10 pm.