

FACT SHEET NO. 4

Literary Agents

Beliefs regarding literary agents and their value are mixed. Some bestselling writers conduct the majority of their business through agents, but an equal percentage manage successfully without them. Some writers believe that the percentage of income their agents receive from their sold works (usually 10 - 20%) is relatively small, given the large amount of time and “hassle” the agent saves them by seeking markets for their work, negotiating with publishers and taking care of other organisational aspects of writing. Other writers, however, prefer to manage the business side of their careers by themselves.

Whether to work through a literary agent or not, then, is an individual decision. It is not simply a matter of choosing an agent, however - that agent will have to want to take you on. Stated bluntly, writers likely to be taken on by agents are those whose work has the potential to **sell** and thus make money for that agent. You should approach an agent in much the same way you would approach a publisher. If you are trying to interest him/her with an unpublished novel, for instance, you should send 2-3 sample chapters, a synopsis outlining the novel’s strengths and its marketing potential, and a CV which includes your writing credits, if any. Always include a SASE large enough for the return of your submission, and allow at least 8 weeks for a response.

While it is generally difficult for an unknown writer to “land” an agent, it is an unfortunate fact that publishers are more likely to read an MS sent by an agent rather than one sent by an unknown writer. In this situation, a literary agent can be a useful tool towards publication. The following list of Australian literary agents was compiled with the assistance of the Australian Society of Authors. It was correct at the time of printing, but may be subject to change. For details of British and American agents, contact the ASA on (02) 9318 0877.

Australian Literary Management - 2A Armstrong St, Middle Park, Vic. 3206. Tel (03) 9690 8173. Fax (03) 9690 2598. Contact Jenny Darling. Also - 2 Buckland St, Broadway, NSW, 2007. Tel (02) 9211 0252. Fax (02) 9212 2350. Contact Lyn Tranter. *A.L.M charges a reading fee.

Golvan Arts Management Pty Ltd - PO Box 766, Kew, Vic. 3101. Tel (03) 9853 5341. Fax (03) 9853 8555. Contact Colin Golvan/Debbie Golvan.

Barbara Mobbs - PO Box 126, Edgecliff, NSW, 2027. Tel (02) 9363 5323. Fax (02) 9328 1303.

Christine Nagel Literary Services - 7 Hartung St, Mundaring, WA, 6073. Tel (08) 9295 3364.

Curtis Brown (Aust.) Pty Ltd - PO Box 19, Paddington, NSW, 2021. Tel (02) 9331 5301. Fax (02) 9360 3935. Contact Tim Curnow/Fiona Inglis.

Hickson Associates Pty Ltd - PO Box 271, Woollahra, NSW, 2025. Tel (02) 9362 3303. Fax (02) 9362 3629. Contact Jill Hickson.

The Cameron Creswell Agency Pty Ltd - Suite 5 Edgecliff Crt, 2 New McLean St, Edgecliff, NSW, 2027. Tel (02) 9362 0600. Fax (02) 9363 3317. Contact Jane Cameron/Rosemary Creswell.

Rick Raftos Management - PO Box 445, Paddington, NSW, 2021. Tel (02) 9360 5311. Fax (02) 9360 5311. Contact Rachel L. Skinner. *Deal mostly with playwrights and screenwriters.*

Hilary Linstead & Associates - Level 18, Plaza 2, 500 Oxford St, Bondi Junction, NSW, 2022. Tel (02) 9389 6400. *Deal mostly with playwrights and screenwriters.*

A.M.C. - PO Box 1034, Carlton, Vic. 3053. Tel (03) 9347 1800. Fax (03) 9347 0235. Contact Fran Bryson.

The Literature Connection - PO Box 503, Leederville, WA, 6903. Tel/fax (08) 9443 8289. E-mail: litcon@space.net.au. Website is at <http://www.space.net.au/~litcon>

Jenny Darling & Associates - PO Box 235, Richmond, Vic. 3121

Detrusa Promotions - 44 George St, Fitzroy, Vic. 3065. Tel/fax: (03) 9416 1778. Specialises in a fee-paying manuscript assessment service.