

SCREEN AUSTRALIA GUIDELINES 2012

TALENT ESCALATOR

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The High Concept Movie Workshop with Michael Hauge

Issued 22 December 2011

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Screen Australia's
Terms of Trade.

TALENT ESCALATOR: TARGETED INITIATIVES

The High Concept Movie Workshop with Michael Hauge

Workshop: Monday 19 March to Wednesday 21 March 2012, Sydney

Diversity is key to building a sustainable film industry. With a view to strengthening and advancing Australian screenwriting culture and its practitioners, Screen Australia has designed a workshop with Michael Hauge to guide professionals in developing their high concept movie idea into a workable, well-structured treatment. Places will be limited to 10 selected writers

Michael Hauge is a highly regarded script consultant and the best-selling author of *Writing Screenplays That Sell* and *Selling Your Story in 60 Seconds*. He has consulted on projects starring Julia Roberts, Jennifer Lopez, Kirsten Dunst, Robert Downey Jr and Morgan Freeman, and is currently on retainer with Will Smith's company, Overbrook Entertainment, where he was involved in the development of *I Am Legend*, *Hancock* and *The Karate Kid*. Michael has presented seminars and lectures to more than 50,000 participants throughout the world.

According to Michael Hauge, **high concept movies:**

- are genre films (ie big action, horror, comedy or romantic comedy)
- have simple log lines with clearly defined and visible goals for the hero
- have some unique hook – a story element or combination of elements we've never seen before (or at least not in a long time)
- draw an audience into the cinema without reliance on reviews or awards.

Examples of high concept movies include:

JAWS: A small-town sheriff must stop a man-eating great white shark that is killing beachgoers at the height of the tourist season.

SPEED: A cop must stop a brilliant, psychopathic bomber, and rescue the passengers on a city bus in downtown LA that will explode if it drops below 50 mph.

What is it?

This initiative is aimed at professional screenwriters who have a specific interest in writing a high concept movie. The emphasis will be on the strength of the idea and its achievability in an Australian context. Throughout the workshop participants will be encouraged to be bold and original while staying mindful of genre principles. As part of the application participants will submit three high concept ideas, which should be conceived for films that can be made in Australia and achieved for a budget of \$10 million or less (a recent example is *District 9* [South Africa]).

Participants will attend a three-day workshop running Monday 19 March to Wednesday 21 March 2012 in Sydney.

Workshop preparation for successful applicants

- One-on-one phone consultations will take place between Michael Hauge and workshop participants to discuss the three high concept ideas submitted by participants in their application and narrow these down to two for the workshop.
- Prior to the workshop participants are required to view *The Hero's 2 Journeys* with Michael Hauge and Christopher Vogler and read *Writing Screenplays That Sell* by Michael Hauge. Copies will be made available on loan from Screen Australia. Workshop participants must also review the two clips from Michael Hauge's 2011 public lecture 'From High Concept to Pitch' available on the Screen Australia website: www.screenaustralia.gov.au/filmmaking/inspirations_highconcept

During the workshop

On day one, in consultation with Michael Hauge, participants will choose the high concept idea they wish to develop in the workshop. Within a group setting participants will develop their high concept idea into an outline and five script pages under the guidance of Michael Hauge.

Following the workshop

- From their workshop outline, writers will create an expanded treatment of no more than five pages within four weeks.
- Each treatment will be delivered to Michael Hauge and followed up with a telephone coaching consultation with him.
- Following the consultation, the treatment will be further developed by the writers and delivered to Screen Australia with revised script pages within four weeks.

Contribution to travel

Airfares and accommodation (max allocation \$190 per night) will be reimbursed for participants who live outside Sydney up to a maximum of \$1,000, on presentation of receipts and a tax invoice. Participants travelling from Western Australia are entitled to a reimbursement of \$1,200.

Eligibility

Please note, this program is aimed specifically at professional screenwriters with a commitment to working on high concept movie ideas.

Although not required, eligible writers already working with a producer may invite their producer to attend the workshop. Please note the producer will not engage in the writing exercises.

Applicants must fulfil at least one of the following eligibility criteria:

- Demonstrated experience as a feature film writer with at least one produced feature film credit and a genuine interest in writing a high concept movie.
- A television writer with at least one produced telemovie credit or four hours of TV drama series credits (not serials).
- A screenwriter who has been supported in the last three years for feature development through Screen Australia or its predecessor agencies or

through a state agency or who has been privately commissioned by a recognised production entity.

- Applicants must also meet the general eligibility requirements set out in Screen Australia's Terms of Trade.

Conditions

- Applicants must be available to attend the workshop.
- Applicants must undertake the required workshop preparation.
- Applicants must be able to complete post-workshop assignments.

Assessment process

Applications will be assessed by a combination of Michael Hauge, a Screen Australia Development Executive and industry specialists as required. Screen Australia will advise applicants of the success or otherwise of their application.

Assessment criteria

Screen Australia will take the following considerations into account when assessing applications for this program:

- The potential of the three ideas submitted to be developed into high concept scripts.
- The strength of the writing skills of the applicant, their experience and their track record.
- Clear indication of the applicant's intention and goals to develop a high concept feature film.

Application materials

Applications must be submitted using the relevant Screen Australia form, and include all supporting material listed in the checklist on that form.

Application timing

Applications must be submitted by close of business on **Monday 6 February 2012**.