

# SCREEN AUSTRALIA GUIDELINES 2009

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## TALENT ESCALATOR

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

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### Springboard: Short Film Initiative

Issued 1 September 2009

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

# Springboard: Short Film Initiative

Screen Australia is committed to galvanising the connection between short filmmaking and a feature film career. We recognise the importance of a team's short films to raise marketplace interest around a first feature film.

Screen Australia's Springboard provides a one-of-a-kind opportunity for creative filmmaking teams to create a short film that speaks directly to their feature film script, providing a strong showcase into the marketplace.

Springboard will target outstanding teams one step away from making their first professional feature film, and assist them with defining, writing and producing a short film that is a creatively and professionally relevant calling card to their feature project.

Springboard is about career building for the long term, providing an essential stepping-stone in a professional filmmaking career path.

## What is it?

A two-stage development and production process will take place periodically over the course of six months, between December 2009 and May 2010. The process is designed to enable a team to create a short film from scratch. Teams who apply must have a feature film project in, or close to, final draft, towards which a short film script will be focussed.

The first stage of the process will begin with a **script development workshop** to both conceive and plan a short film project that, while working as a stand-alone dramatic piece, speaks to the sensibility, creative ambitions and tone of the feature project. This will be followed by continued support and mentoring whilst the teams write and refine the short film script.

Short film scripts will not be required prior to the workshop, or as part of the submission process, as the short script will be created during the workshop.

Stage two of the development process is a hands-on **project development workshop** to road test the short film scripts. This workshop will include activities such as shooting sample scenes from the short, working with actors and director mentors, and getting advice from leading heads of department, to ensure a successful realisation. The workshop will also include marketing and career advice and assistance with strategies for taking the feature proposition to market.

Following the project development workshop, Screen Australia representatives will select the three most promising short film projects to go into production, with a budget of up to \$120,000 per film.

## Eligibility

Springboard is aimed at outstanding aspiring filmmakers with a demonstrable commitment to a professional feature film career.

Screen Australia will select six teams, comprising a producer in partnership with either a director and writer or a writer/director. The exact mix will be at our discretion.

Applicants must satisfy the general eligibility requirements for Screen Australia funding set out in the agency's Terms of Trade.

The following additional requirements also apply to this program:

- Only teams as described above can apply.
- The teams must have a feature film in development that is close to final draft.
- Directors are encouraged to work with writers, but writer/directors may also apply.
- Directors and producers must at least have one exceptional short film credit (including films made at film schools) in their respective roles.
- Directors with completed funded features or substantial television drama experience are not eligible. There is no upper limit on the experience of writers or producers, although applicants should be aware that the intention of the initiative is to develop emerging teams.
- Animation projects are not eligible for funding under this program. Short animation projects are funded under *Short Animation Production* (see [www.screenaustralia.gov.au/animation](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/animation))

### **Funding is for**

The six teams initially selected will:

- Attend both stage 1 and 2 workshops, to be held in either Sydney &/or Melbourne in December 2009 and late-January 2010 respectively. (Workshop costs are covered by Screen Australia. Travel and accommodation expenses will be reimbursed for participants who live outside the host city, up to a maximum of \$800 per person, on presentation of receipts.)

The three teams finally selected will:

- be supported for full production of their short films with a maximum budget of \$120,000 per film. Each film will be no more than 15 minutes in length, in line with major festival requirements.

### **Assessment criteria**

Selection of the six teams participating in the workshops will be based on assessment against the following criteria:

- The skills, experience and successful track record of each of the key principals and their ability to undertake the proposed project, as evidenced in previous work.
- The originality, strength and distinctiveness evident in the feature film script.
- The feature project's potential to reach its target audience.
- The professional development benefits for the key creative team.

From the teams participating in the workshop, selection of the three whose short film will be funded for production will be based on further assessment against the above criteria as well as:

- The team’s capacity to deliver the short film project.
- The likelihood that production of the short film will significantly enhance the viability of the feature project.

### **Assessment process**

Applications for this program, including the selection of teams whose short film will be funded for production, will be assessed by a combination of Screen Australia executives and industry specialists as required. Screen Australia will advise applicants of the success or otherwise of their application, providing a brief statement of reasons.

### **Application materials**

Applications must be made on the relevant application form, and include all supporting material listed in the checklist on that form.

### **Application timing**

Applications must be received by close of business Monday 28 September 2009.

### **Terms of funding**

Screen Australia requires a credit for its support if a short film developed during the workshop stages is subsequently produced, with or without Screen Australia funding.

Screen Australia funding for the short films selected for production will be in the form of a grant, and no copyright interest will be required. Details of the terms of funding will be set out in the grant agreement.

### **Funding recipients must deliver**

All six teams must deliver a completed short film script and a report on the workshop experience.

The three teams who go on to produce the short must deliver DVD and Betacam copies of the completed film, plus related paperwork including an audit report and press kit.

The Springboard workshops will be run by **Simon van der Borgh** and **Jonathan Rawlinson**, screenwriting teachers and script consultants with extensive international experience. Simon and Jonathan have previously designed and delivered film training programs for the UK Film Council, the European Union’s Media Programme, British Council, Fulbright Commission and screen agencies in the UK, Europe and Australia. They are delighted to be partnering with Screen Australia on Springboard