

triple j tv docs4

ABC TV Arts, Entertainment & Comedy
and
Screen Australia
proudly present
triple j tv docs4

Guidelines
February 2009



triple j tv docs is a joint initiative of ABC TV and Screen Australia that seeks fresh approaches to half-hour and one-hour documentaries that explore contemporary issues, ideas and culture through the eyes of generations X, Y and Z. It is a collection of documentaries that pushes the boundaries of visual program-making; fresh works with new perspectives on the world around us, be they historical, political, social or just plain personal.

The documentaries will screen on ABC1 and ABC2, and will have cross-platform potential via the triple j tv website. The initiative is designed to support one-off, stand-alone documentaries for production and post-production. The **triple j tv docs4** initiative will be promoted on triple j, ABC online and in all media, including trade publications.

triple j tv docs4 is for emerging filmmakers who are 35 years or under as at the closing date: Monday 6 April 2009. **triple j tv docs4** invites you to tell us your tales, from the country or the city, with respect or irreverence, authority and attitude.

Previous triple j tv docs

Ten documentaries have been commissioned so far through the **triple j tv docs** initiative, enabling emerging filmmakers from every state across Australia to explore themes such as celebrity, war, love, sexuality, loss and survival, and to make some of the strongest narrative based documentaries in recent years. Many of these films have gone on to win awards and appear in festivals in Australia and overseas.

Three long-form docs were funded under the first ABC/Australian Film Commission **triple j tv docs** initiative in 2006. *Searching 4 Sandeep*, a cyber lesbian love story, won a World Movies Channel Audience Award at the 2007 Sydney Film Festival, won the WOW Best Documentary and Audience Awards and was nominated for best Arts Documentary at Banff and at HotDocs 08 World showcase. The filmmaker, Poppy Stockell, was nominated for an IF Independent Spirit Award. Director Sascha Ettinger Epstein's *Playing in the Shadows*, an observational documentary on an inner-city basketball competition amongst Sydney youth, screened at Sydney Film Festival 2008 and was nominated for an IF Award. *Aussie Battlers*, Martin Taylor's account of the personal journeys of contestants in a nationwide MC battling competition, premiered at the Brisbane International Film Festival in a special jtvd doc event in 2007 and on ABC1 in 2008.

Three more docs were funded through **triple j tv docs2** in 2007. *Casualties of War*, a half hour film from South Australia's Jeni Lee screened on ABC1 on Anzac Day 2008 and won an ATOM Award. *Hair Tales* had its premiere at SPAA Fringe in 2008 and has just begun its festival journey. *Rock 'n' Roll Nerd*, Rhian Skirving's longitudinal study of the rise of comedian Tim Minchin, received additional funding from Melbourne International Film Festival Premiere Fund and premiered at MIFF 2008 where extra screenings had to be scheduled due to audience demand. It has had a theatrical release and the television version will screen in the run-up to the Melbourne International Comedy Festival 2009.

Four films were commissioned from **triple j tv docs3**: a one-hour film from Queensland on the legendary local band, 6 Foot Hick; a Western Australian

film exploring the origins of the remarkable music scene in Perth; a Tasmanian study of twin, lesbian, red-headed artists; and a Victorian film on the blighted yacht trip of five young people who wanted to sail to paradise and pretty much blew it.

See samples of previous triple j tv docs films at www.abc.net.au/triplej/tv/docs

Funding

Funding is for one-off documentaries for production and post-production. Documentary series proposals cannot be considered.

ABC TV and Screen Australia have committed a total of \$400,000 to this initiative.

Applicants can apply for:

- up to \$75,000 for a half-hour documentary
- up to \$150,000 for a one-hour documentary

This funding can be augmented by funding from third parties like state film agencies, distributors, film festivals etc.

Deadline

APPLICATIONS CLOSE: **5pm, Monday 6 April 2009**. Projects cannot be accepted after that time.

Final decisions will be made by mid-June 2009.

Please note: Posted applications will only be accepted if they are postmarked on or before the closing date. Applications lodged electronically will not be accepted.

Eligibility

- Teams of a director and producer are required. The team may also include a writer.
- The producer and director must each have at least one screen credit in his or her respective role. Films made at a film school qualify. Credits can be in documentary or drama production, and may include short films and television series.
- The director must be 35 years or under as at the closing date: Monday 6 April 2009.
- Producers who are 35 years or under are preferred, but DOB is not a critical factor.
- Projects will only be eligible if proof of access to key subjects is provided with the application. This can be a signed letter or an email originating from the subject.
- Applicants must Australian citizens or permanent residents.
- Applicants cannot be students at a film school or similar tertiary film, television or interactive digital media course (either full-time or part-time).

- Applicants must not be in breach of any obligation under any arrangement they have with Screen Australia or any of its predecessors (the Australian Film Commission, Film Finance Corporation Limited or Film Australia Limited).
- For all other general eligibility criteria for all Screen Australia programs, applicants should consult Screen Australia's Terms of Trade 2009, available at www.screenaustralia.gov.au

Your proposal

Your **triple j tv docs4** proposal should include a persuasive outline or treatment of the story you want to tell, including a clear and compelling account of the characters and issues you want to explore. If you have it, please include some footage of your characters or other key elements with your application.

Your outline or treatment should also tell us how you want to present your documentary:

- What kind of style and approach are you going for?
- Do you have access to the characters?
- What's the tone and feel of your film?
- How do you want your audience to respond?
- If you are using a lot of music have you factored in clearance costs for the rights?

Please include any information that you think is relevant and helpful.

We also value bold and imaginative cross-platform ideas and strategies for your project, so we would encourage you to provide these with your application.

Stages

triple j tv docs4 is a two-stage process.

STAGE 1: ABC TV DEADLINE – Monday 6 April 2009

All proposals must be sent in hard copy (including hard copy of the completed **triple j tv docs4 Application Form** and all required supporting materials) to the ABC in the first instance at the address listed at the end of these guidelines. The ABC will select a shortlist of projects and will notify the teams who are not successful by email or letter.

For all enquiries please call: ABC TV 02 8333 4355

STAGE 2: SCREEN AUSTRALIA – May 2009

Screen Australia will contact the teams who are on the shortlist, inviting them to send a **SECOND** copy of the complete proposal, including AV materials, to Screen Australia.

Screen Australia will assess the shortlist and, together with ABC TV, will select projects for interview.

The teams selected for interview will meet with the ABC and Screen Australia in early June 2009. Travel costs for the teams will be met by Screen Australia.

Assessment process overview

All applications will be read by the ABC TV Executive Producer who will shortlist the projects. A Screen Australia Investment Manager will read the short-listed projects. They will decide upon a further shortlist for interview and will meet with the selected filmmakers. The ABC TV EP will present the recommended projects to the ABC Content Commissioning Group.

The Screen Australia Investment Manager and the ABC TV EP will take their recommendations to a meeting with the Head of Production Investment at Screen Australia. Final decisions will be made at that meeting, a report will be prepared on the results and the short-listed filmmakers will be notified by telephone.

Criteria

The assessment criteria for this initiative are:

- the strength of idea
- the originality of approach
- the quality of the documentary story-telling
- the filmmaker's creative skills and distinctiveness of vision
- the relevance of the project for a prime-time audience
- the demonstrated professional development opportunities for the creative team involved.

Teams short-listed for interview will be asked to provide information and costings for the project's online components. This should include details about how the documentary will work in the online/interactive environment.

Projects may be required to go into a period of development prior to production

Budgeting advice to applicants

- Please see Screen Australia budget requirements for production investment in the Terms of Trade on the Screen Australia website.
- Please use the A–Z Documentary Budget Format (non-QAPE version) available from the Screen Australia website at: http://www.afc.gov.au/filminginaustralia/azbudget/docos/fiapage_72.aspx
- Where cast and crew are employed at least MEAA minimum rates must be paid.
- Production budgets should allow for appropriate production insurances, legals and, if the Screen Australia investment exceeds \$80,000, an audit at the end of production.

- A provision for marketing costs must be included in the budget (\$2,000 for half-hour and \$3,000 for one-hour documentaries).
- Please ensure that delivery items are costed including:
 - ABC: digibeta masters and publicity stills;
 - Screen Australia and National Film and Sound Archive: delivery items as specified in the Screen Australia Terms of Trade.
- Screen Australia funds will not be released until the full budget finance has been raised (where further finance is required).

Rights and legal advice to applicants

Please familiarise yourself with the Screen Australia Terms of Trade, as they apply to all Screen Australia documentary production investments.

You will need to obtain independent legal advice about all agreements you will be required to enter into if your project is supported.

Screen Australia's financial contribution is production investment and will be contracted with a standard Screen Australia Production Investment Agreement.

The ABC contribution is provided in exchange for a license agreement. The agreement will include the following minimum rights to be granted to the ABC:

- Australian free-to-air television rights for five free-to-air television runs on ABC1 and/or ABC2 over 5 years (note that an ABC2 television run should allow for four runs within a 24-hour period)
- website and online rights, including online streaming (ABC iView) and vodcast (download/storage) rights geoblocked to Australian users.
- first right to negotiate to acquire distribution rights throughout the world.

Additional rights to be granted to the ABC in consideration of its contribution will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

It is recommended that **triple j tv docs4** applicants prepare proposals and budget for the widest possible clearances throughout the world to allow for maximum financing opportunities. In assessing applications, consideration will be given to the extent to which clearances for television, video and online throughout the world are achievable.

What you need to supply with your application

ONE copy of the following to be sent to ABC TV (see address below):

- a completed **triple j tv docs4** *Application Form*, available from the Screen Australia website at www.screenaustralia.gov.au
- a one-line and half-page synopsis. See the Screen Australia publication *What is a Synopsis? An Outline? A Treatment?*, available at http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/filming_in_australia/GW_Filming-In-Australia.asp

- an outline or treatment of the one-hour or half-hour documentary that presents the story, characters, issues and themes of the film and articulates the stylistic and visual approach
- a description of any suggested cross-platform components and opportunities for your project
- CVs of the producer, writer and director, and any other confirmed key personnel (DOP, editor, etc)
- one example of the director's previous work (a complete film, not a showreel) on DVD
- if available, please include footage of characters or key elements, on DVD
- written confirmation of key subjects' willingness to participate
- where there is Indigenous community participation or content involved in the project, written confirmation of the willingness of both the subject(s) and the community to be involved in the project is essential. See http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/industry_support/Indigenous_Content.asp or the *Screen Australia Program Guidelines – Development Programs January 2009*.
- a budget in the Screen Australia A-Z Documentary format, available from the Screen Australia website at: http://www.afc.gov.au/filminginaustralia/azbudget/docos/fiapage_72.aspx including quotes (where available) for equipment, crew, facilities, insurance etc.

*Please note: there is no application fee for **triple j tv docs4**.*

Where to send your application

Please post **ONE** copy of your complete application to the ABC (not to Screen Australia) at:

triple j tv docs4
ABC TV Arts, Entertainment & Comedy
Attention: Richard Brunskill
700 Harris St
Ultimo NSW 2007

You will receive written acknowledgement of your application within two weeks.

Please note: Application materials will not be returned. All materials, including audiovisual items, are destroyed by secure document and media destruction. Please do not send any originals and ensure that you keep copies of your application and your AV materials.

Enquiries

ABC TV: 02 8333 4355