

**DRAFT FOR COMMENT**

# **SCREEN AUSTRALIA PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

January to June 2009

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## **INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS**

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## OVERVIEW

The Indigenous Branch's funding programs support creatively ambitious projects and people, and imaginative, resonant stories authored by Indigenous Australians.

We aim to assist the career development of talented writers, directors and producers who have the potential to make a significant contribution to screen culture and the national cultural life by actively engaging at all stages with key creatives in the development and production of their works.

The Branch proactively strives to support Indigenous projects and practitioners through:

- providing draft development investment in projects that have the potential to be realised.
- providing Development and/or Production Investment in targeted initiatives, one-off projects, or in collaboration with broadcasters or other funding entities.
- provide support for Indigenous practitioners to attend conferences, markets and festivals, nationally and internationally.
- provide support and facilitate internships and mentorship programs with more experienced practitioners.

Other key roles of the Indigenous Branch are:

- to work with the Indigenous filmmaking community in developing strategies for enhancing employment and professional development opportunities, and the creation of a vibrant screen sector for Indigenous filmmakers.
- to provide assessment and guidance to projects with Indigenous content that are submitted to other Screen Australia divisions.
- to contribute to Screen Australia and industry policy development.

This funding is to enable both development and production opportunities for projects that have been initiated by Indigenous Australian writers, directors and producers which display originality.

### Eligibility for Indigenous Branch Programs

To be eligible for assistance from Screen Australia's Indigenous Branch, applicants and their projects must meet the following Indigenous Branch and general Screen Australia funding criteria.

- Indigenous Australians must be in key creative roles on projects submitted for funding; a minimum of the writer and director must be Indigenous.
- Funding is not intended for projects by non-Indigenous filmmakers with Indigenous content.
- Indigenous filmmakers may apply to any Screen Australia program in addition to the funding programs of the Indigenous Branch.

## DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMS

### Documentary Development

This program seeks to provide emerging and experienced practitioners with the opportunity to create appropriate written and/or visual materials to ensure that projects are as strong as possible when competing for production finance. Funding is provided for script and project development, research, securing production financing and, in some instances, for preliminary shooting. Emerging Indigenous producers are encouraged to apply.

#### Funding is for

- the development of a more detailed outline, treatment and/or script for one-off documentaries or documentary series.

#### Eligibility

All applicants and projects must meet the general eligibility criteria, in addition to the following specific eligibility requirements:

- Individuals or teams may apply.
- The producer or director must have at least one documentary screen credit (broadcast and/or screened at a recognised film festival) in their respective role. Applicants with a substantial drama track record will be considered on a case-by- case basis.
- For applications for documentaries longer than 30 minutes in length, the director must have a produced documentary credit.
- Where the request includes shooting material, a director must be attached.
- For series development, a written expression of interest or commitment from a broadcaster or distributor is an essential requirement.

#### Funding recipients must deliver

A more detailed script or treatment, rushes (if funded for preliminary shooting).

Pitching materials for raising production finance such as a proposal document, and/or selected rushes assembly. Budget and Schedule.

#### Assessment criteria

When assessing applications for this program, Screen Australia uses the following criteria:

- The strength and distinctiveness of the idea and concept.
- The skills and capacity of the team to undertake the project as evidenced by previous work.
- The capacity of the project to attract further marketplace development or production finance after this stage of development.

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## **Assessment process**

Applications will be assessed by two assessors, according to the above criteria.

## **Application materials**

THREE paper copies of the following:

- An Indigenous Branch Documentary Development Application Form.
- A one-line AND one-paragraph Synopsis
- A documentary proposal or script outlining the filmmakers' intention with regard to content, theme and style, and the intended audience for the project.
- Detailed notes describing the intended materials to be developed, together with a rationale for these materials – particularly if preliminary shooting is intended.
- A proposed finance strategy and description of how the materials created in this development phase will be used to secure further development or production finance or support.
- Proposed target audience and indicative marketing plan. Applicants are encouraged to consider the potential for multi-platform delivery for their project at all stages of development.
- Written confirmation of the willingness of key subject(s) to participate in filming.
- Details of all approaches made to broadcasters and their responses. Where available, include written expressions of interest or commitment from broadcasters, distributors or other sources of finance. For series, this is an essential requirement.
- Examples of the director's previous work.
- If the project has previously been unsuccessful in applying for AFC funding, a summary of the changes made since the previous application.
- CVs for all applicants and other key team members.
- Any other documentation or supporting material that might assist consideration of the application.

## **Recoupment**

Where Screen Australia subsequently invests in the production, its investment in the development phase will be added to the production financing amount and the total investment recouped in accordance with the terms of trade for production financing.

## Documentary Production and Post-production

The Indigenous Branch typically provides documentary production investment in collaboration with broadcasters or other funding entities through joint initiatives. The following general guidelines only apply to the limited funding available outside these specific initiatives.

This program seeks to support strong and distinctive documentary projects primarily to assist in the professional development of directors who have showcased their skills in previous work, as well as to provide the other key creative members with relevant experience in the industry. Emerging Indigenous producers are encouraged to apply.

### Funding is for

- Production and/or post-production of one-off documentaries or documentary series.

This program is designed to complete the film, not to fund a stage of production.

### Eligibility

All applicants and projects must meet the general eligibility criteria, in addition to the following specific eligibility requirements:

- Only teams including a director may apply.
- Both the producer or director must have at least one documentary screen credit each (broadcast and/or screened at a recognised film festival) in their respective roles.
- For series production, commitment from a broadcaster or distributor, or at least a strong written expression of interest, is an essential requirement.

### Assessment criteria

When assessing applications for this program, Screen Australia uses the following criteria:

- the strength and distinctiveness of the idea and concept, the potential of the project to reach its target audience whether the project is ready to go into production.
- the career development benefits of this project for the principals, particularly the director.
- the experience, skills and ability of the director to undertake the proposed project as evidenced by previous work.
- the skills and ability of the producer(s) to undertake the proposed project and to raise finance at the proposed level, as evidenced by previous work.
- the ability of the team, as evidenced by the submission and the interview (if required), to achieve the stated goals and vision for the project.
- the viability of the proposed budget, particularly in terms of the story, and the skills and experience of the creative team. The assessment

undertaken by the outside budget consultant will inform the assessment of the project against this criterion.

### **Assessment process variation**

Applications are assessed according to the general process for Screen Australia funding applications. This program includes a budget/schedule assessment and may include an interview of project teams.

### **Application materials**

THREE paper copies of the following:

- An Indigenous Branch Documentary Production and Post-Production Application Form.
- A one-line AND one-paragraph AND one-page synopsis
- A detailed documentary proposal or script outlining the filmmakers' intention with regard to content, theme and style, and the intended audience for the project.
- A director's statement describing the directorial approach to the project in detail, and the expected professional benefits of completing the project.
- A statement from the producer describing the intended audience for the project, a proposed finance strategy if further funds are required and any proposed or anticipated marketing and distribution arrangements.
- If applying for post-production, a VHS/DVD of the rough cut or fine cut of the project, together with a statement describing in detail both the creative strategies and the post-production path to complete the project.
- Written confirmation of the willingness of key subject(s) to participate in filming is essential.
- A fully-itemised production and/or post-production budget using the industry standard A–Z Documentary Budget
- A detailed production or post-production schedule.
- Details of all approaches made to broadcasters and their responses. Where available, include written expressions of interest or commitment from broadcasters, distributors or other sources of finance. For series, this is an essential requirement.
- Examples of the director's previous work. Please submit complete films, not extracts, compiled on one reel if possible. Previous work is one of the key elements on which funding decisions are based.
- CVs for all applicants and other key team members.
- If the project has previously been unsuccessful in applying for AFC funding, a summary of the changes made since the previous application.
- Any other documentation or supporting material that might assist consideration of the application.

### **Budget allowances for marketing and cross-platform elements**

Screen Australia recognises the need for marketing and multi-platform digital program elements, and for these cross platform elements to be incorporated into a production budget from the outset. To this end Screen Australia will

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earmark an amount in each production budget of the Agency financing for marketing and cross platform elements.

### **Terms of trade**

For details of Screen Australia delivery items, recoupment and other requirements see Terms of Trade: Production Investment.

#### **National Indigenous Documentary Fund (NIDF)**

The NIDF provides production opportunities for both emerging and practising Indigenous documentary filmmakers. The Indigenous Branch has allocated specific development and production funds towards the NIDF. The NIDF is financed by a combination of production funds from Screen Australia, SBS, the ABC and state agencies. Loved Up 2 is the theme for the NIDF Series 11. Loved Up 2 is commissioned by SBS TV.

Guidelines and application forms can be found at [www.screenaustralia.gov.au](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au).

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## DRAMA PROGRAMS

This program funds the project-specific costs associated with individual features, short films and TV drama series – including animation projects – by emerging and experienced Indigenous practitioners. The Indigenous Branch is seeking to invest in the development and production of outstanding drama projects which are based on strong and original ideas, are well written, and can demonstrate the potential to reach an audience.

The Indigenous Branch invests in production primarily to assist in the professional development of Indigenous directors who have showcased their skills in previous work, and then for the producers and teams with whom they work. Emerging Indigenous producers are encouraged to apply.

Post-production investment is available to fund project-specific post-production costs associated with taking individual projects from the end of principal photography through to delivery.

### Drama Initiatives

The Indigenous Branch allocates specific drama development and production funding to initiatives that target specific areas of the industry in any given year.

In 2008/09 the **New Black drama initiative** is developing and producing seven 10-minute dramas with emerging directors and producers, financed by Screen Australia, ABC, NSWFTO and the Pacific Film and Television Commission.

**The Long Black Feature Program** aims to bring to the screen feature-length stories that are authored and crafted by Indigenous people. Three writers' labs and one directors' lab have been held since its inception in 2004. Currently, there are nine features in development. The next round for development will be early in 2009 with a Writers Lab planned for the second half of 2009.

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## Drama Development

### Funding is for

A single draft script of

- Short drama films (under 25 minutes)
- Feature films
- Animation drama projects.

Bible and/or series outline for

- TV drama series.

### Eligibility

All applicants and projects must meet the general eligibility criteria, in addition to the following specific eligibility requirements:

Shorts: Individuals or teams with demonstrated experience in the film industry in any role (NB: this is not an entry-level program). Writers from other media will be considered, but only if they are part of a team including an appropriately credited producer or director.

Features: Individuals (a writer or writer/director) or teams (a producer and a writer or writer/director). The writer or writer/director must have at least one produced short film or appropriate television drama credit as a writer.

TV drama series: Individuals (a writer or writer/director) or teams (a producer and a writer or writer/director). The writer or writer/director must have at least one produced short film or appropriate television drama credit as a writer.

### Funding recipients must deliver

- A revised one-line AND one-paragraph AND one-page synopsis.
- A revised script draft.
- A report on the progress achieved during this stage of development and future plans for the project.
- A reader's report (features only).

For TV drama series

- A completed series bible and or/series outline.
- A revised one-line AND one-paragraph AND one-page synopsis.
- A report on the progress achieved during this stage of development and future plans for the project.

### Assessment criteria

When assessing applications for this program, Screen Australia uses the following criteria:

- The strength and distinctiveness of the idea and story

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- The quality of the script and the writer's command of cinematic storytelling and screenplay craft as evidenced by the script and/or previous work
- The quality and rigour of the development notes, and whether they articulate the issues to be faced in the next stage of development, as well as outlining the strategies that should resolve these issues and advance the project.
- The skills and experience of the writer and, where appropriate, the team including script editors, producer(s) and
- director, and the likelihood that their experience/support will advance the project.
- The potential of the film to reach its target audience.
- The viability of the project with regard to the proposed total production budget amount, financing strategy, creative team and target audience.

### **Assessment process**

Applications will be assessed by two assessors, according to the above criteria.

### **Specific advice for drama development applicants**

Applications primarily for casting, financing, travel or budgeting and scheduling expenses will only be considered for projects where the script is regarded as being at an advanced stage of development (third draft or more).

### **Application materials**

THREE paper copies of the following:

- A completed Indigenous Branch Drama Development Application Form.
- A one-line AND one-paragraph AND one-page synopsis
- A three-page story outline providing a clear account of the story, characters and themes of the project, OR a full draft script presented according to industry standards.
- Script development notes from the writer providing a detailed critical analysis of the submitted project and a description of the film's target audience. The notes should identify current problems in the script, unresolved story issues, potential difficulties which may arise in the further development of the project, and the project's creative and conceptual strengths.
- Proposed target audience and indicative marketing plan. Applicants are encouraged to consider the potential for multi-platform delivery for their project at all stages of development.
- If a director is attached (or in the case of writer/directors), a director's statement describing in detail the directorial approach to the project.
- If a producer is attached, a producer's statement detailing their vision, development strategy, and marketplace strategy for the project.
- CVs for all applicants and other key team members.
- If the project has previously been unsuccessful in applying for AFC funding, a summary of the changes made since the previous application.

- Any other documentation or supporting material that might assist consideration of the application.

### **Recoupment**

Where Screen Australia subsequently invests in a production, its investment in the development phase will be added to the production financing amount and the total investment will be recouped in accordance with the terms of trade for production financing.

## **Drama Production and Post-production**

The Indigenous Branch invests in the production and post-production of distinctive and creatively ambitious films primarily to assist in the professional development of directors, as well as to provide other key creative members with relevant industry experience. These films are designed to showcase the director's talent at local and international film festivals. Emerging Indigenous producers are encouraged to apply.

The Indigenous Branch typically provides drama production investment in collaboration with broadcasters or other funding entities through joint initiatives. The following general guidelines only apply to the limited funding available outside these specific initiatives.

### **Funding is for**

- Short drama films (under 25 minutes)
- Production and/or post-production
- Animation projects
- Feature films.

NB: This program is designed to complete the film, not to fund a stage of production.

### **Eligibility**

All applicants and projects must meet the general eligibility criteria, in addition to the following specific eligibility requirements:

- Only teams may apply.
- The producer and director must each have at least one produced short drama credit (minimum length 10 minutes, may include films made at film schools), in their respective roles that has been broadcast or screened at a recognised film festival.
- Filmmakers may apply for post-production funding for films that have been shot on film or tape and that intend to finish on the format on which they were shot. Limited funding in this area and it is anticipated that Screen Australia funding would be used to augment existing funding from broadcasters and state agencies.

### **Assessment criteria**

When assessing applications for this program, Screen Australia uses the following criteria:

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- the strength and distinctiveness of the idea and the story, the quality of the script and the writer's command of cinematic storytelling and screenplay writing.
- the potential of the film to reach its target audience, whether the script is ready to go into production.
- the career development benefit of this project for the principals.
- the experience, skills and ability of the director and producer to undertake the proposed project as evidenced by previous work.
- the viability of the proposed production budget, particularly relative to the story and the skills and experience of the creative team. For short-listed projects, the assessment undertaken by the outside budget consultant will form the basis for judging the merits of the project against this criterion.

### **Application materials**

What you need to supply with your application

THREE paper copies of the following:

- A completed Indigenous Branch Drama Production and Post-Production Application Form.
- A one-line AND one-paragraph AND one-page synopsis.
- A full and complete script presented according to industry standards.
- A director's statement describing his or her directorial approach to the project and the expected professional benefits.
- A producer's statement describing the intended audience for the project, a proposed finance strategy if further funds are required and any proposed or anticipated marketing and distribution arrangements.
- If applying for post-production, 3 x VHS/DVD copies of a rough cut or fine cut of the film. The cut should be accompanied by post-production notes describing in detail both the creative and practical goals of the post-production process.
- A fully-itemised production/post-production budget using the industry standard A–Z Short Film Budget.
- A detailed production schedule and a shooting schedule.
- Where available, written expressions of interest or commitment from a state funding agency, a broadcaster, distributor or any other source of finance.
- Examples of the director's previous work.
- Full CVs for all applicants and other key team members.
- If the project has been previously unsuccessful but has been short-listed or invited to re-apply for Screen Australia funding, a summary of the changes since the previous application.

### **Budget allowances for marketing and cross-platform elements**

Screen Australia recognises the need for marketing and multi-platform digital program elements, and for these cross platform elements to be incorporated into a production budget from the outset. To this end Screen Australia will

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earmark an amount in each production budget of the Agency financing for marketing and cross platform elements.

### **Terms of trade**

For details of Screen Australia delivery items, recoupment and other requirements see Terms of Trade: Production Investment.

## **DIGITAL MEDIA PROGRAMS**

This strand seeks to provide experienced practitioners or filmmakers crossing over to the digital media area the opportunity to create written and/or visual pitching materials to ensure that digital media projects are as strong as possible when competing for production finance.

Funding is provided for pitching materials demonstrably appropriate to the project. The program aims to assist in the development of cross-platform, mobile phone or broadband content, or for the formulation of online rather than console games.

### **Funding is for**

Interactive digital media projects of any length, type or platform.

### **Eligibility**

All applicants and projects must meet the general eligibility criteria, in addition to the following specific eligibility requirements:

- Only teams may apply.
- At least one member of the team must have a key creative or production credit on at least one substantial and completed interactive digital media project.
- At least one member of the team must have a key creative or production credit on at least one produced and released theatrical/broadcast/festival) drama or documentary project.
- Development support of the making of an 'electronic proof of concept' (EPOC) is not eligible.

NB: Experimental or predominantly art-based projects are eligible to apply, but will need to demonstrate their potential for futures support. Educational projects must also demonstrate that they are innovative and provide professional development opportunities for the applicant(s).

### **Funding recipients must deliver**

Finalised pitching materials such as paper-based scripts, proposals or graphics in hard copy or via web-based presentations from an existing website.

A revised strategy detailing how the development materials will be used to secure further development or production finance, and what the next stage might be.

### **Assessment criteria**

When assessing applications for this program, Screen Australia uses the following criteria:

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- The strength and distinctiveness of the idea and the concept.
- The creative use of interactive elements and how the work intends to find an audience, engage the user and/or drive audiences across platforms.
- The skills and capacity of the team to undertake the project as evidenced in previous work.
- The likelihood of the project attracting further marketplace development or production finance after this stage of development.
- The viability of the proposed production budget amount and finance strategy in line with the concept, the creative team and the target audience.

### **Assessment process**

Application will be assessed by two assessors. A third assessment may be commissioned for any particular application that requires specific knowledge from an appropriately skilled practitioner.

### **Application materials**

- A completed Indigenous Branch Interactive Digital Media Development Application Form.
- A one-line AND one-paragraph AND one-page synopsis.
- A detailed proposal outlining the filmmakers' intention with regard to content, theme and style, and including:
  - notes on the intended audience for the project and the mechanisms for attracting audience to the project and/or driving audiences across platforms
  - a description of the creative use of interactive elements and how the work intends to engage the user.
- A statement from the producer describing the proposed finance strategy and detailing how the development materials will be used to secure further development or production finance, and what the next stage might be.
- CVs for all applicants and other key team members and examples of previous work (DVDs or URLs).
- Any other documentation or supporting material that might assist consideration of the application.

### **Recoupment**

Where Screen Australia subsequently invests in a production, its investment in the development phase will be added to the production financing amount and the total investment will be recouped in accordance with the terms of trade for production financing.

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## PRACTITIONER SUPPORT – INTERNSHIPS

Internships assist practitioners whose careers would benefit from an attachment to a person, production or organisation. This program is designed to assist the career development of talented filmmakers who have already showcased their skills in previous work. It is not an entry-level scheme.

### Funding is for

An internship may take many forms and involve features, documentaries, animation, interactive digital media, TV drama or comedy series. For example:

- a director might attach themselves to a more experienced director on a production
- a producer might spend time in a TV production house to observe the script development and creative management process, or they may wish to work with a more senior producer developing a financing plan for a project of their own
- an animation filmmaker may wish to enhance specific technical or creative skills
- a filmmaker may want to hire a more experienced producer or director as a consultant on their own funded production.

### Eligibility

The general Screen Australia and Indigenous Branch eligibility criteria apply to all Internship applications. Additionally:

- Only individuals may apply.
- The program is for producers, directors, script editors, animation filmmakers and interactive digital media producers who have at least one significant produced and released credit.
- Credits should be in the same field in which the applicant is seeking an internship (eg an applicant seeking an attachment with a director should have directorial credits).

### Funding recipients must deliver

A report after completing the internship, including an update on any career developments which have arisen as a result of the internship/fellowship.

A statement of expenditure. Internship reports may be published, with the permission of the intern, in part or in full on the Screen Australia website.

### Assessment criteria

When assessing applications for Internships, Screen Australia uses the following criteria:

- The potential of the application as evidenced by previous work.
- The quality of the mentor or mentor organisation and the level of access the applicant will have to them.

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- The quality of the proposed program the applicant and mentor have negotiated.
- The strategic benefit of the program to the applicant at this stage of their career.

### **Assessment process**

Applications will be assessed by two assessors according to the assessment criteria above.

### **Application materials**

- An Indigenous Branch Internship Application Form.
- A coherent and detailed outline of the intended work plan and, where the program involves a mentor, details of the mentor's intended collaboration with the applicant and the anticipated outcomes.
- Supporting documentation for the proposal, including a letter from the mentor indicating his/ her willingness to participate in and support the application. This letter should detail the mentor's intended collaboration with the applicant and the anticipated outcomes.
- Where a production company is also involved (such as on a feature film production), the company's written consent is also required.
- Examples of the applicant's previous work. Please submit complete films, not extracts, compiled on one reel if possible. Previous work is one of the key elements on which funding decisions are based.
- A statement of career benefit and a description of how the internship/fellowship might assist the proposed career path.
- CVs of all parties to the proposal and, where available, copies of press materials.

### **Recoupment**

Funding is in the form of a grant.

#### **Indigenous Producers Initiative**

The Indigenous Branch's Producers Initiative aims to bring new creative producers into the industry and provide professional development for less experienced producers working in this area.

The initiative involves an intensive development plan that covers all aspects of producing and will be tailored to suit the needs and skills of participants. This development plan will also involve workshops, internships with experienced producers, help with developing projects and participation in conferences and markets.

## TRAVEL GRANTS

Travel Grants assist filmmakers in meeting the costs associated with travel to attend overseas film festivals, market places, conferences, workshops, award ceremonies or other travel associated with either professional or industry development.

### Funding is for

Costs associated with attending:

- Recognised international film festivals
- International markets
- Australian film conferences ie AIDC, ASDA, SPAA
- Award ceremonies ie AFI Awards, IF Awards
- Workshops and conferences considered to provide significant professional or industry development.

### Eligibility

The general Screen Australia and Indigenous Branch eligibility criteria apply to all Travel Grant applications. Additionally:

- Indigenous directors and/or producers whose film has been selected to screen in a major international festival.
- Producers must have a project suitably developed to pitch at an international or Australian market.
- Directors and/or producers who wish to attend a relevant conference, workshop or awards ceremony with their project.

NB: Applicants can only receive one round of travel assistance in a 24 month period.

### Funding recipients must deliver

A report after completing the travel, including an update on any career developments which have arisen as a result of attending the relevant event.

A statement of expenditure.

### Assessment criteria

When assessing applications for Travel Grants, Screen Australia uses the criteria below.

For film festivals and award ceremonies:

- The professional development benefit to the applicant of attending the proposed festival.
- The international/national standing of the proposed festival/ceremony.
- The potential exposure for the film and practitioner.
- The strategic benefit to the applicant of attending the proposed festival/ceremony at this stage of their career.

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For markets:

- The professional development benefit to the applicant of attending the proposed market.
- The international standing of the proposed market.
- The suitability of the particular market to the project(s) being pitched.
- The readiness of the project(s) to be pitched.

For conferences and workshops:

- The professional development benefit to the applicant of attending.
- The applicant's previous filmmaking experience.
- The quality and rigour of the statement of benefit, and whether it articulates clearly the professional benefit of the practitioner attending.
- Demonstrated commitment to a career in the film industry as evidenced by the applicant's CV.

### **Assessment process**

Applications are assessed by two assessors according to the above criteria.

### **Application materials**

- An Indigenous Branch Travel Grant Application Form.
- A statement of career benefit and a description of how the travel grant might assist with the applicant's proposed career path.
- Supporting documentation for the proposal, including a letter of invitation from the proposed festival or letter of acceptance from the workshop.
- Examples of the applicant's previous work. Please submit complete films, not extracts, compiled on one reel if possible. Previous work is one of the key elements on which funding decisions are based.
- CV of the applicant.
- Any other documentation or supporting material that might assist consideration of the application.
- A proposed budget