



Australian Government



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# PROGRAM GUIDELINES: FAMILY FILMS INITIATIVE

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**ISSUED 3 OCTOBER 2015**

**Screen Australia reserves the right to change its program guidelines from time to time. Please ensure you check the website for the latest version.**

**These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#).**

We encourage you to contact the Program Operations team before you submit your application to discuss any eligibility questions and requirements for the application portal. The Program Operations team can be contacted on **1800 507 901**.

We receive many more applications than we can support. Inevitably, some applications will be unsuccessful and applicants will be disappointed by this result. However, our decision is final.

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# FAMILY FILMS INITIATIVE

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*Storm Boy...Babe... Paws...Red Dog...Paper Planes...Oddball...*

Australians make great family films that often find bigger theatrical audiences and have longer marketing tails than our other films.

In an effort to develop a new wave of Australian family films for local and international markets Screen Australia has developed the Family Films Forum and Initiative.

The Forum and Initiative will be executive produced by Joan Sauers. Joan is a screenwriter, script editor, producer and author who worked around the world as a script consultant and development executive in children's and adult drama across feature films and television.

The Forum is a two day industry event to be held in March 2016 focussing on the networks, skills and markets for this genre. The Forum is open to industry and a call for registrations will be made in January 2016.

The Initiative offers writers and/or writers with their teams the opportunity to secure support to develop a polished draft script under the guidance of industry experts. Up to ten teams will be shortlisted and up to three teams provided with funding to deliver a draft. Applications open October 3, 2015 and close November 30, 2015.

Only experienced writers may apply for the Initiative (see below).

Only one feature family film idea can be submitted per applicant. The film must be a live action family film (not animated) with an estimated budget of under \$7 million.

Adaptations can be submitted, but must be distilled into a viable feature family film idea.

## Who can apply?

To be eligible for the Family Films Initiative, applications must be from an **eligible writer** who has received a writing credit on **at least one** of the following (unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated):

- a feature drama film that has been released on a minimum of five commercial screens (excluding festival screens) in one major territory,
- two broadcast drama miniseries/telemovies (general or children's drama),
- two broadcast hours of a drama series (general or children's drama),
- a multiplatform drama project funded through Screen Australia

A producer and/or director can be attached but is not required at this stage. Please note though that the experience of the writer and/or the team will be considered at the assessment stage.

## **Rights and chain of title**

The applicant (or producer/director if attached) must hold sufficient rights in the project. If the rights remain with the attached producer or director, there must be an agreement in place between the writer and the producer or director at the time of submitting the application. If a project is based on an underlying work, the option agreement and length of option must be in place at the time of submitting the application.

## **What materials do you need to apply?**

Applications must be submitted by the published deadline through the online application portal and include the following mandatory requirements:

- Logline
- One page synopsis (up to 600 words)
- Writer's notes outlining the genre, audience and style (up to 700 words)
- Bios and credits of the writer and any other members of the team
- Confirmation of chain of title
- Details of the underlying option (if applicable)

## **What is the assessment process?**

### **Stage one:**

Applications must be submitted by Monday, November 30, 2015 at 11pm

Applications will be assessed by Executive Producer Joan Sauers and at least one Screen Australia executive.

When assessing applications for stage one, we will take the following criteria into account:

- The quality of the family film idea (50%)
- The experience of the writer or team (25%)
- The viability of the project under a \$7 million budget relative to its potential audience (25%)

Up to ten writers/teams will be shortlisted for this initiative.

We will advise applicants in writing of the shortlisted selections by Friday, January 29, 2016.

### **Stage two:**

The shortlisted writers will discuss with Joan (in collaboration with Screen Australia) the strengths and challenges of their proposed project ahead of the Family Films Forum. Writers will then be required to attend the forum in Sydney on Saturday, March 19 and Sunday, March 20, 2016. For interstate shortlisted practitioners, we will arrange flights and one night's accommodation for the writers only.

After the Forum, shortlisted writers will debrief with Joan (in collaboration with Screen Australia) before having the opportunity to revise and submit their final documents through the online portal by Friday, April 8, 2016 at 11pm.

When assessing applications for stage two, we will take the following criteria into account:

- The quality of the writing and cinematic storytelling (100%)

Decisions will be made by the Head of Production and up to three successful projects from the shortlisted applications will be announced by Friday, April 29, 2016. These projects will then be funded to develop a polished draft script in consultation with Joan and selected mentors.

Please note: if you are not shortlisted for the initiative, you are still able to register attendance for the forum. An interactive webinar will also be available to view online at the time of the event for all interstate registered practitioners.

**The deadline to submit your application is Monday November 30, 2015 at 11pm (AEST)**