



Australian Government



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# PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## SKIP AHEAD

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Refer to the Screen Australia website for:

- Important information about applying for Screen Australia funding
- Screen Australia's Terms of Trade
- The contracting process
- What to do if your project involves Indigenous content or community participation
- Information about how Screen Australia involves industry specialists in some of its programs
- Application form and supporting documents.

# Skip Ahead

Skip Ahead is a joint initiative of Screen Australia and Google to help a new generation of online storytellers to expand their vision and the ambition of the content they create for online audiences, and build sustainable screen careers.

The funding is for successful YouTubers to make the leap to a longer narrative-driven film of at least half an hour in length. It may be a one-off film or could also act as the pilot for a series or proof of concept for a feature, provided it can be viewed as a standalone piece of entertainment. The film can be any narrative-driven genre, but should play to the YouTubers strengths and their audience's expectations, and should represent a clear step up in terms of storytelling ambition and production values.

The program will provide project funding of up to \$250,000 for successful Australian YouTube content creators who have YouTube channels with a substantial existing subscriber base.

Previous recipients of Skip Ahead funding are eligible to apply.

The project will be expected to premiere on the filmmaker's YouTube Channel, but they will be able to explore other releases such as theatrical event screenings and top tier film festivals.

The program aims to cultivate original Australian narrative-based content made specifically for global online audiences.

## What funding is available?

Up to \$250,000 is available per project. Up to three projects will be funded.

As part of its support, Screen Australia may facilitate informal link-ups between creators and Australian production companies interested in skills exchange or creative collaboration.

## Who can apply?

An application must meet the following eligibility criteria in order to apply for funding through this program:

The **project that is the subject of the application** must:

- comprise narrative content intended for upload to YouTube (for example, factual stories and performance-driven narrative video blogging is eligible, whereas genres such as 'How to...' and lifestyle are not considered narrative-based and are not eligible)
- not be advertorial or intended primarily as advertising or marketing material.

The **creative team for the project** must:

- include a content creator or team of content creators responsible for:
  - a current YouTube channel of any genre with at least 50,000 subscribers, or
  - a maximum of two current YouTube channels of any genre, with a combined subscriber base of 70,000, or
  - a YouTube video which has achieved a minimum of 1 million views on a channel which has a subscriber base of at least 10,000, or

a YouTube team collaboration, where the combined subscriber base for

both channels is at least 20,000 and at least one of the videos on either channels has achieved a minimum of 1 million views Applicants must also meet the general eligibility requirements set out in Screen Australia's Terms of Trade, with the exception of the restriction on full-time students, which will be waived in this case.

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

Applications must be made through the Online Application Portal. This application form covers the following:

- a brief profile of your YouTube channel(s)
- a production budget that clearly describes the proposed use of funds
- a production schedule to delivery that includes all milestones
- a statement confirming your right to make the project, covering all copyright material to be used, such as music, artwork, stories, novels, etc.
- a talk-to-camera 'video pitch' (maximum of 3 minutes) that encapsulates how your application addresses each of the assessment criteria.

As part of your application, you must also attach and submit the following documentation:

- a two-page pitch document that describes the proposal, details the audience development and social media strategies to promote the series to a wider audience than the creator's existing subscribers (including plans, if any, for alternate releases beyond the Channel), and a plan for how the creator might continue to grow the channel following the release of the Skip Ahead film
- a script or partial script if available
- a one-page statement describing the YouTube track record and achievements of the Key Content Creators, with links to notable videos.

If your application includes content or underlying material that has not been originally created by the applicants, then we also require:

- any relevant chain of title documents, release or access agreements.

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

Eligible applications will be considered by Screen Australia executives and industry specialists as required.

Funding decisions will be made against the following criteria:

- the creative strength and distinctiveness of the proposal, including the concept and entertainment value (30%)
- the potential of the project to expand the subscriber base of the applicant's channel(s) and/or reach new audiences and opportunities for commercialisation (20%)
- the viability of the proposal with respect to the budget and scale of the project (20%)
- the track record of the key participants involved in the proposal and the likelihood that this program will demonstrably develop their skills in made- for-web content production (30%)

Genuine collaborations between a YouTube content creator(s) and established production companies and/or entertainment properties are encouraged and may strengthen an application.

A considered strategy for social media and audience development to promote and market the content wider than the applicant's current subscribers will be looked on favourably, as well as a plan for how to continue to build the channel following the release of the Skip Ahead episodes.

Other factors, including availability of funds and diversity of slate, may also influence Screen Australia's funding decisions. Shortlisted applicants may be interviewed.

Decisions on applications are final. Screen Australia will advise applicants in writing of the outcome of their application. Where an application is declined, the applicant will be advised of the reason.

### **Application timing**

Applications close on **20 May 2016**.

Successful applicants will be announced in June 2016.

### **Terms of funding**

Funding is in the form of a grant. Screen Australia will enter into a grant agreement with the successful applicants. Screen Australia will not require a copyright interest.

Successful applicants must make the production publicly available for the first time on YouTube from end of December 2016. They must maintain the content on YouTube for a minimum of 18 months.

The successful applicant and production must comply with YouTube's terms of service and community guidelines.

Other terms, including delivery requirements, marketing and credit requirements for Screen Australia and YouTube, will be detailed in the funding agreement.