



Australian Government



PROGRAM GUIDELINES: MULTIPLATFORM DRAMA

ISSUED 11 DECEMBER 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 ensure all the required supporting material is in place. This will mean we can process your application smoothly and efficiently. The Program Operations team can be contacted on **1800 507 901**.

Specific requirements apply where there is Indigenous community participation or content involved in a project. Please refer to www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding/business/Indigenous_Content.aspx

MULTIPLATFORM DRAMA

Through the Multiplatform Drama program Screen Australia invests in the production of narrative projects that take risks and push the envelope of fiction storytelling on traditional and non-traditional platforms.

This fund is aimed at lower-budget productions which may present talent development or project development opportunities.

Typical examples are risk-taking comedy or dramatic projects distributed on any platform (including traditional television, online web series, tablet, mobile and PC based distribution) or on multiple platforms.

The fund is well suited to projects that include strong and compelling social media components to engage audiences.

What funding is available?

Applications may be for any amount up to \$500,000 per project. For a project utilising multiple platforms, this includes all components.

The level of Screen Australia's funding commitment will be determined by the decision making process and the total demand on available funds.

Who can apply?

An application must first meet the following eligibility criteria in order to be competitively assessed for funding through this program.

The **applicant company** must:

- meet the General Eligibility requirements set out in Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#); in particular, it must be incorporated and carrying on business in Australia, and have its central management and control in Australia,

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

- be a fiction storytelling project intended for public access on a screen-based device (where content includes a television broadcast component, the content must also be distributed on at least one other digital media platform; this could include catch-up television services, other online release or mobile); and
- **not be:**
 - primarily a video game;
 - primarily an e-book or interactive book;
 - a digital/online extension to a film or TV program; or
 - content made for internal training purposes only.

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

- include a producer and director (or equivalent roles relevant to the type of project) with at least one credit in the same role on a comparable project which has been publicly released.

If a project has previously been assessed and declined for funding under this program, it is not eligible to apply again unless significant changes have been made, and a statement will need to be provided setting out the major

changes made since the previous submission. Screen Australia will consider this statement when deciding whether or not to accept the application and assess it again for funding. Note: after two unsuccessful submissions, no further applications for this project will be accepted.

Marketplace and other sources of funding: Projects which include a television broadcast component must have a current offer by a television broadcaster to licence the content. Otherwise, marketplace attachments are not required, although the involvement of a relevant marketplace entity may improve the competitiveness of the application.

Co-funding with state agencies, other government organisations, educational institutions, private investors or other partners is also encouraged. Where crowd-funding is proposed as a source of funds, a contingency plan must be provided in case this source does not eventuate.

Commissioning platform involvement: Screen Australia will not finance a production where the project has been developed by a commissioning platform and sub-contracted at a later stage to a producer, except where chain of title resides with the producer. In addition, Screen Australia expects that key creatives (producer, writer, director, director of photography, editor) are sourced from the freelance market and not from the staff of the commissioning platform.

Relationship with Screen Australia's General TV Drama program: The Multiplatform Drama program focuses on smaller scale, lower-budget projects. Screen Australia reserves the right to require larger-scale projects to apply to the [General TV Drama](#) program.

Relationship with Screen Australia's Feature Film Production program: The Multiplatform Drama program will only support feature-length projects from applicants with access to a significant existing social media audience (a channel with more than 100,000 subscribers or followers, or a video with more than 1 million views and at least 25,000 subscribers or followers). An online platform must form a central element of the project's distribution plan. Screen Australia reserves the right to require larger-scale projects to apply to the [Feature Film Production](#) program.

Relationship with Screen Australia's Story Development program: Funding for the development of online and interactive series is available through our Story Development program. Teams who have been successful through the Multiplatform Drama program are also eligible to apply for feature film development and high-end television development. See [Story Development](#) guidelines for details.

What materials do you need to apply?

You must apply using the application form available on the Screen Australia website. As part of your application, you will need to submit:

- an Electronic Proof of Concept (EPOC) relevant to the type of project proposed, for example, linear fiction would require a sizzle reel, filmed sample scenes or a pilot, while a project that relied heavily on user/social interaction may require a prototype or video 'walk-through'.
- a project proposal, scripts and/or a design document that demonstrate the project is production ready

- a simple talk-to-camera 'video pitch' of no more than three minutes, where key principals present their vision for the project – particularly what's distinctive or innovative about the storytelling
- a project plan, including production schedule, with appropriate milestones
- a marketing and release plan, including, where relevant, post-release plans for the intended life of the project such as any projected growth in storage requirements and any future requirements for resources and maintenance
- a statement setting out how success will be measurable on your specific project, and how you will achieve these targets
- a business impact statement setting out how this project will contribute to and/or help you build your business, and any plans to exploit IP such as franchises, spinoffs, merchandising.
- 200 word bios and CVs (with LinkedIn reference) for the key creative team
- a full budget to completion (and release) using the relevant standard [Screen Australia budget template](#). Fees should at least comply with industry standards. They will be considered in the context of the budget and track record of the personnel; and
- a finance plan in a standard format available from the Screen Australia website.

No legal or administration fees are charged for applications to this program.

What are the assessment process & criteria?

Eligible applications will be considered by Screen Australia executives. Industry specialists may be consulted as required. Funding decisions will be made against the following criteria:

- Creative strength of the project (30%), including:
 - the concept/idea: its distinctiveness, clarity of objectives (preference will be given to original formats over content based on foreign formats);
 - the proposed execution: level of distinctiveness or innovation in storytelling, entertainment value; and
 - quality of submitted production materials (script, design document etc as relevant).
- The existing experience, expertise and talents of the production company and the key principals and/or the potential for further talent escalation (30%), including:
 - the relevance and quality of their track record;
 - their demonstrated capacity to deliver the project;
 - their creative and business networks; and
 - the proposed career development outcomes.
- Viability of the project (25%), including
 - release plan: appropriateness and viability of marketing strategies; potential to deliver what the project sets out to achieve (eg, audience engagement, commercial success, market penetration, cultural impact), based on appropriate measurable indicators
 - appropriateness of the budget relative to the scale of the project and the intent of the Multiplatform Drama program.

- Strength of the marketplace (15%), including
 - financing plan, and proportion of overall budget provided through other/third party sources

Other factors, including availability of funds,,diversity of projects and the gender and cultural diversity of the team, may also influence Screen Australia's 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.

What is the application timing?

Applications can be received at any time. The turnaround time for application decisions is approximately seven weeks.

Terms of funding

Funding will be provided as a grant, with the amount agreed upfront and not varied other than in exceptional circumstances. Screen Australia does not take a share of receipts from projects funded under a grant, which means the funds do not have to be repaid other than in circumstances set out in the [Terms of Trade](#).

Screen Australia does not take a copyright interest in projects for which it provides grant funding.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Screen Australia can allocate Multiplatform Drama funds to special initiatives.

These initiatives leverage finance from third parties in order to increase the available funding pool, or to otherwise advance digital storytelling activities and talent escalation.

Past examples include the *Skip Ahead* joint initiative with Google and the *Fresh Blood* joint initiative with the ABC.

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UPDATE LOG

11 December 2015

- Gender and cultural diversity of the team considered in addition to the assessment criteria

1 July 2015

- **Overview:** clarified that the program is 'aimed at lower-budget productions which may present talent development or project development opportunities'.
- **What funding is available?:** clarified the decision making process regarding the level of Screen Australia's funding commitment.
- **Who can apply?:** clarified 'television broadcaster' in 'Marketplace and other sources of funding'; added information regarding 'Commissioning platform involvement', 'Relationship with Screen Australia's General TV Drama Production program', 'Relationship with Screen Australia's Feature Film Production program' and 'Relationship with Screen Australia's Story Development program'.
- **What are the assessment process & criteria?:** clarified assessment criteria.
- Removed 'Multiplatform Thinking' box.

21 May 2015

- **Funding decisions:** added assessment criteria weightings.

14 May 2015

- **Application process and materials:** clarified that legal and administration fees are no longer charged.

24 July 2014

- **Application timing:** Applications accepted at any time.
- **Eligibility:** Ineligible projects include e-books or interactive books; and digital/online extensions to a film or TV program.
- **Application process:** Clarification of definition of EPOC.
- **Terms of funding:** All funding to be provided as a grant, with Screen Australia taking no copyright interest.

3 September 2013

- **Eligibility:** clarification of 'extension to a film or TV program'
- **Marketplace and other sources of funding:** addition of reference to crowd-funding
- **Funding decisions:** re-ordering of criteria, addition of reference to appropriateness of budget, and splitting financing considerations into a separate criterion from 'viability'.