Online Production Fund FAQs

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Can I apply as an individual?

No. Applications need to be from teams of at least two key creatives, who encompass the roles of Producer, Director and Writer as a minimum.

How much can I apply for?

You can apply for up to $500,000 per project through the Online Production fund. Please note that in the past the majority of approved applications have been in the range of $100,000 - $300,000. For requests over $300,000 Screen Australia would expect to see significant financing from other sources.

For Post Production applications, approved amounts have generally been between $20,000 and $80,000.

Can I apply for 100% of my budget?

There are no limits on the percentage of the budget Screen Australia can fund through the Online Production fund. However, it makes an application more competitive if other sources of funding are included.

Will my application have a better chance of being approved if I ask for less money?

You should apply for the amount of funding you need in order to complete your project. We recommend you speak to an Investment and Development Manager in the Online Unit before applying for more information on typical funding ranges.

What can't I use the funds for?

Your budget will need to be approved by Screen Australia before contracting. Screen Australia's funding cannot be retrospective. You cannot apply solely for marketing costs.

When is the best time to apply?

There is no deadline for this fund, and applications can be made all year round. Applicants are encouraged to apply when their project is ready and they have all submission materials in place.

What stage should the project be at when submitting?

Your project should be ready to move into production. Scripted projects should have at least half the scripts written, while documentary projects should have a strong creative vision and the story outlined. The budget and finance plan should be secured and your marketing and release plan should be detailed and clear.

What do you look for in a pitch video?

Competitive pitch videos do not necessarily need high production values. Instead, they should be clear, concise and do a fantastic job of communicating your enthusiasm for this project. A competitive pitch video should answer these key questions:

- What is the vision for the project?
- Who is the intended audience for the project?
- Why and how will this project hook that audience?
- What impact will a successful application have on the applicant?
- Why you, why now, why this story?

What format can I submit the video pitch in?

Online links must be download enabled for Screen Australia record keeping purposes. The video file must fit these specifications:

- MP4 or WMV file
- H.264 coding format
- 720p resolution
- files must be less than 200MB.
- 3 minutes maximum length If you need assistance in reducing file size, we recommend searching online for video compression guides.

Do you provide templates for Marketing and Release Plans, Project Bible and/or Finance Plan and Budget documents?

We provide templates for Finance Plans and Budgets, and require you to use these templates in your application.

We do not provide templates for other documents as we recognise that every project is different, and the creative materials and marketing and release strategies will differ from project to project.

There are some items I'd like to include in my Finance Plan but they are 'pending'. Should I include them?

Screen Australia expects finance plans to be as finalised as possible. If elements are pending, please note this. You can still apply in this case, but your application will be more competitive if all funding is confirmed.

What do you need to see in the Marketing and Release Plan?

This document should include detailed information on the intended audience for your project, demonstrating who they are, what content they are consuming and where, and how you will reach them. Applicants should also outline the intended release platform, release schedule, the timing of episodes and any secondary release strategies.

It is not necessary to engage a Digital Strategist or Marketing Company to create these plans.

Do I need a more experienced Producer or Executive Producer attached to be eligible?

No. As long as you meet the eligibility criteria, your project can be assessed. However, Screen Australia will assess based on the experience of the key creative team, and how appropriate that experience is compared to the scale and scope of the project.

Do I need to film part of my project as a proof of concept?

You do not need to film part of your project as a proof of concept. While this can be helpful, you only need to provide proof of prior work of one or more of the key creatives in your application. It is helpful if this prior work is a similar style or tone of the series you're applying to make.

Can I have volunteers/students/unpaid cast and crew as part of the project?

No. Under Screen Australia's Terms of Trade, the following applies:

Screen Australia expects all recipients of funding to pay at least award minimum rates or, where applicable, any minimum agreed between the relevant guilds, for all work performed by third parties on their project, including key creatives, cast and crew.

How important is inclusivity and diversity in my creative team?

Screen Australia values authentic storytelling, and Culture and Diversity is one of the assessment criteria for Online Production. For more information we recommend you speak to an Investment and Development Manager in the Online Unit.

Do I need an Inclusive Attachment confirmed at time of applying?

You only require an Inclusive Attachment if your Online Production project is funded for more than $300,000 by Screen Australia. The candidate does not need to be identified at time of applying, however you will need an amount in your budget for this role. Inclusive Attachments are required for a minimum of 4 weeks at award minimum rates, however the Inclusive Attachment can move departments and roles to fulfil this requirement.

I've never made a web series before. Am I eligible?

You do not need to have created a web series in order to be eligible, as long as you meet the minimum eligibility criteria. However, a strong understanding of the online space and creating for online audiences makes an application more competitive.

I don't have an online following. Can I still apply?

Yes. While having a strong online following can be beneficial to your application, it is not a requirement of this fund. However, applicants without an established following should have a detailed plan of how their series will be seen by their intended audience. We are interested in projects where the applicants know who their target audience is, how to reach them online and why this audience will continue watching their series.

Can I apply with a VR/AR/XR/interactive project?

Narrative XR (Extended Reality) projects are eligible to apply. For interactive projects we recommend reviewing the Screen Australia Games funding, and speaking to an Investment and Development Manager in the Online and Games Unit for more information.

Can I apply with more than one project at the same time?

There are no limits on the number of projects you apply for. However, we expect applicants to be strategic about when they apply. Projects should be rigorously thought through and strong against all the assessment criteria.

Can I apply to the Online Development Fund and then the Online Production Fund?

Yes, however we require the development of the project to be completed and materials delivered to Screen Australia before an application to the Online Production fund is submitted. Any

development funds previously paid by Screen Australia will need to be repaid if your project receives Production Funding.

Does Online Development Funding guarantee a project will receive Online Production Funding?

Not necessarily. The creative materials are one part of the assessment process for Online Production Funding. We strongly recommend you speak to an Investment and Development Manager in the Online Team before submitting for Online Production Funding.

Do I need to have received Online Development funding in order to apply for Online Production funding?

No, you can apply for Online Production funding having developed your project independently of Screen Australia.

I want to release my project on a streaming platform, can I apply to this fund?

Scripted projects aimed at release on a streaming platform or broadcaster should apply to the General Drama Production or Children's Drama Production funds, or the Documentary Commissioned, Producer or Producer Equity Programs.

Can I apply with my panel/reality/game show/variety show/light entertainment project?

No, Screen Australia does not fund these genres. For more information, please see our [Terms of Trade](#).

How long will I have to wait for a result?

You will receive an email once your project is made eligible. From this point onwards please allow up to seven weeks for a decision.

How will my project be assessed?

Your project will be assessed by members of Screen Australia's Online and Games Unit. Screen Australia may engage external assessors to assist with some applications. We assess based on the five assessment criteria detailed in the guidelines.

What happens if I'm successful?

You will receive a phone call from a Screen Australia Investment Manager to relay the news, followed by an official Approval Email confirming the approved amount, key creatives, and contracting entity.

Your project will then move into contracting. Please allow at least a month for the contract to be executed and the first payment to be made. Contracting can often take longer than a month depending on various factors, including how many other financing parties are involved and how quickly the team responds to Screen Australia communication.

You will also be contacted by a member of the Screen Australia Communications team to discuss how your funding will be announced. All funding decisions are embargoed until an announcement strategy is confirmed.

Do I need to repay the funding?

In most cases Online Production funding is provided in the form of a grant, which is not repayable to Screen Australia.

What happens if I'm unsuccessful?

You will receive a phone call from a Screen Australia Investment Manager to discuss the outcome and provide feedback. You are able to re-apply but need to provide a Statement of Changes outlining how the feedback has been implemented.

Once a project has been declined twice through the Online Production fund it is unable to apply again.

I don't know if I'm ready to apply, can I speak to someone?

Yes, you can chat to a member of the Program Operations Team to discuss eligibility criteria and application process, or a member of the Online Team to discuss where your project is at. Please email online@screenaustralia.gov.au and someone will be in touch. We recommend you read the guidelines and listen to our podcast which may answer many of your initial questions. We are happy to speak to you more specifically about your project after that.