

Screen Australia and YouTube Australia announce Skip Ahead recipients

Tuesday 21 February 2023: Screen Australia and YouTube Australia have announced the six YouTube projects funded through the latest instalment of the Skip Ahead initiative who will share in \$900,000 of production funding: [Lyanna Kea](#), [Ella Watkins](#), [Julian O'Shea](#), Lachlan and Jaxon Fairbairn ([Fairbairn Films](#)), Rita Artmann and Joe Bauer ([Artspear Entertainment](#)) and Jade Schmutter, Rob Aspinall and Ryan Telfer ([Project One](#)).

The Skip Ahead recipients are attending a workshop this week and learning from industry experts including producer Julie Kalceff, Jasmine Yang from Glitch Productions, writer Melissa Lee Speyer, digital video strategists Changer Studios and past Skip Ahead recipients Danny and Michael Philippou of RackaRacka, the team from Never Too Small and comedian Jordan Raskopoulos.

First established in 2014, the Skip Ahead initiative aims to help online storytellers with an existing audience on YouTube expand their creative ambitions and production values, and 'skip ahead' their careers. Since its inception, it has supported 33 teams with over \$4.2 million to develop their skills and build their careers, with alumni including Superwog, Aunty Donna, Skitbox, Wengie, Michael Shanks, Chloe Morello and more.

Screen Australia's Head of Online **Lee Naimo** said, "As the online landscape continues to evolve, the importance of Skip Ahead only increases to help support talented and exciting creators connecting with significant audiences on YouTube. It's exciting to see how different these projects are, with these six teams representing a range of genres from musical to comedy, crime to documentary. Past Skip Ahead projects continue to accumulate millions of views and lead to some alumni such as Adele Vuko, Christiaan van Vuuren and Danny and Michael Philippou directing feature films. I'm sure there's many exciting opportunities ahead for this latest cohort."

Alex West, Screen Australia's Head of Documentary said, "It's fantastic to see two documentary series' as part of the latest line-up of Skip Ahead recipients - solidifying how Online platforms such as YouTube are such an effective space for documentaries to reach widespread audiences. I am confident these unique and powerful stories like *Design Revolution* and *Uncovering Street Dance: Australia*, along with the other Skip Ahead projects, will delight and inspire viewers around the world."

Ed Miles, Director, YouTube Australia & New Zealand, said, "YouTube is home to incredible Australian storytellers, and over the last seven years, we've seen the impact Skip Ahead can have on their careers and the global recognition these projects can achieve. We have six formidable creative teams for Skip Ahead 8 - and this week we are thrilled to begin working with them and to see their concepts start to become a reality!"

The funded projects are:

- **Life of Kea:** From writer/director/producer Lyanna Kea comes *Life of Kea*, a 5 x 6-minute comedy series about Aunty Kea - the quintessential Chinese-Malaysian middle-aged woman. While supporting her friend through family drama, Aunty Kea battles with the internal conflict that perhaps she misses having a partner of her own. Brought on by this rare feeling of vulnerability, Aunty Kea, like a force of nature, bravely puts herself back into the dating game. Taysha McFarland and Tristan Braines behind [A Song For You](#) are also writing and producing, with Sasha Leong (*Eating the Other*) attached as producer. The series will release on Lyanna Kea's [YouTube channel](#).
- **You May Think I'm Joking:** A 5 x 5-minute comedy/musical series about Ella, an autistic influencer who is trying to find her voice in an online world that enshrines curated 'perfect' personalities with perfect bodies. While Ella struggles to suppress who she really is to fit the mould of who she thinks she should be, her true self begins bursting through in blunt, honest and unfiltered musical numbers that take place through a series of video calls with her manager, all from the isolation of her bedroom. The series is from writer/director Ella Watkins, whose series *Bad Locals* was supported through the Every Voice initiative. Gabrielle McLeod is also attached as producer. *You May Think I'm*



Joking explores Ella's personal experiences of autism, queerness and body image struggles relating to being a woman, and will release on Watkins' [YouTube channel](#).

- **Fairbairn in the City:** This 6 x 5-minute comedy is about simple farm boys Lachlan and Jaxon who make the move to the big city from their rural home - realising they know nearly nothing about the modern world. When it comes to understanding dating, managing relationships and living with a female roommate, Lachlan and Jaxon must figure out how to conquer the big city and everything that comes with it, before it conquers them. From creators of the popular YouTube channel [Fairbairn Films](#) and brothers in real life, *Fairbairn in the City* is written and directed by Lachlan Fairbairn and stars Lachlan and Jaxon Fairbairn. Also attached is Georgia Mappin ([Aunty Donna's Coffee Café](#)) as executive producer and Monique Mulcahy as producer. The series will be produced by Haven't You Done Well Productions and will release on the [Fairbairn Films](#) YouTube channel.
- **UnTrue Crime:** A 6 x 8-minute true crime parody which follows woefully incompetent Detectives Spink and Hoggman who re-tread their stumbling footsteps through their recent investigation into a classic murder scenario. With no shortage of twists and a primary suspect that changes every episode, it becomes a question of how many times they can get it wrong... before they accidentally get it right. The series is from writer/director Joe Bauer and writer/producer Rita Artmann whose credits include [The Killage](#) and *Australiens*. It will release on their YouTube channel [ArtSpear Entertainment](#), which has amassed over 500 million views.
- **Design Revolution:** A 6 x 6-minute and 12 x 1-minute educational documentary series that explores how design decisions shape the modern world by solving real-world problems, from glacial internet speeds, to the sky high cost of city rent - in a quirky and interesting way. Each episode covers some sort of zany build or experiment to explain the topic further and put forward a solution. The series is from writer/director/producer and engineer Julian O'Shea (*Unknown Melbourne*), joined by writers and scientists Toby Hendy (*Finding X*) and Kirsten Banks. Alex Gabbott is also attached as director. *Design Revolution* will be released on Julian O'Shea's [YouTube channel](#), which in 2021 was named by Google Australia / YouTube as the 'Australian Breakout Creator of the Year'.
- **Uncovering Street Dance: Australia:** This 6 x 20-minute documentary series will follow eight street dancers as they travel around Australia, exploring underground street dance scenes through interviewing influential dance artists, attending events, and visiting iconic Australian landmarks. This docuseries is written, directed and produced by Jade Schmutter, Rob Aspinall and Ryan Telfer whose credits include *Streetlight* and *Silk Sonic*. It is due to be released on the [Project One](#) YouTube channel, which has built a fanbase around Australian street dance culture.

SKIP AHEAD ALUMNI

Channel	Title	Funded
Grouse House	Hot Department: Dark Web	2021
Looking Glass Universe	Quantum Experiments At Home	2021
Goodall & Gallagher	<i>The Followers</i> (to be released)	2021
Saksham Magic	Unknown Filter	2021
Jenny Zhou	Celebration Nation	2020
Tibeas	Finding X	2020
Bush Tucker Bunjie	Long Black	2020
Beau Miles	Bad River: Adventure on Australia's Sickest Water	2020
Fishing the Wild	<i>Lord of the Macks</i> (to be released)	2020





Australian Government



MEDIA RELEASE

Never Too Small	<u>Small Footprint</u>	2020
Neel Kolhatkar	<u>Crossing the Line</u>	2018
Fury Fingers	<u>Love, Guns and Level Ups</u>	2018
Piéra Forde	<u>Nevernight</u>	2018
Chloe Morello	<u>YouTube Famous</u>	2018
Van Vuuren Bros	<u>Over and Out</u>	2017
Study with Jess	<u>Life of Jess</u>	2017
Timtimfed	<u>Rebooted</u>	2017
Wengie	<u>Parked</u>	2017
Skit Box	<u>Skit Box</u>	2017
Superwog	<u>The Superwog Show</u>	2016
Charli's Crafty Kitchen	<u>Crafty Kingdom</u>	2016
RackaRacka	<u>Stunt Gone Wrong (Live)</u>	2016
BrainCraft	<u>Mutant Menu</u>	2016
The Roundabout Crew and Frenchy SungaAttack	<u>The Australiana Hostel</u>	2015
Aunty Donna	<u>1999</u>	2015
SketchShe	<u>Traffic Jam - The Musical</u>	2015
Draw with Jazza	<u>The Tale Teller</u>	2015
How to Cook That	<u>The Sweetest Thing</u>	2015
Axis of Awesome	<u>Axis All Areas</u>	2014
Mighty Car Mods	<u>Lend Us A Ride: Australia</u>	2014
Sexual Lobster	<u>Fernando's Legitimate Business Enterprise</u>	2014
Veritasium	<u>This Will Revolutionise Education</u>	2014
Neighbours	<u>Neighbours vs Zombies</u>	2014

ENDS

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