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MEDIA RELEASE

Screen Australia announces \$1.3 million for 5 online originals

Wednesday 12 May 2021: Screen Australia has announced \$1.3 million of online production funding for five projects. Award-winning children's series *First Day* will return for season 2, along with *ReCancelled* which follows on from director Luke Eve's 2020 lockdown drama [Cancelled](#).

The projects also include *Sunset Paradise*, a new series from the creators of YouTube hit [Meta Runner](#); as well as animated children's series *Ginger & the Vegesaur*s and comedy series *The Emu War*.

Screen Australia's Senior Online Investment Manager **Lee Naimo** said, "We're excited to support these projects which showcase engaging storytelling across a mix of genres including children's, comedy, animation and a relationship drama. We are always looking for projects that have solid pathways to audience and we are very impressed by the range shown in this slate, whether it's via platforms such as ABC iview or targeting significant existing fan bases like Glitch Productions' *Sunset Paradise* on YouTube and Luke Eve's *ReCancelled* on Facebook."

The second iteration of Screen Australia and SBS's [Digital Originals initiative](#) is also underway with 12 teams selected to participate in the development workshops. Further details are included below.

Naimo said, "It's also great to be working with the next group of Digital Originals creators, who participated in workshops last week. The teams spent time developing their projects as well as hearing from workshop guests including Nisha Ganatra (*Late Night*), Warwick Thornton ([Sweet Country](#)), Ryan O'Connell (*Special*), Anna Dokoza (*Lady Dynamite*), Corrie Chen ([Homecoming Queens](#)), Richie Mehta (*Delhi Crime*), Vanessa Gazy ([Eden](#)) and Ronny Chieng ([Ronny Chieng: International Student](#)). The 12 projects are all so different - from dramas to thrillers, comedies to horror - it's an incredibly strong group and we look forward to selected teams entering further development on their projects for SBS OnDemand."

The projects receiving online production funding are:

- **First Day series 2:** A four-part second series of the [award-winning children's drama](#) for ABC iview, centred on transgender student Hannah Bradford (played by Evie Macdonald). This series follows Hannah in her second year at Hillview High as she sets out to change the culture at the school, and finds it's only through working together that meaningful change can be achieved. Returning for series 2 are writer/director Julie Kalceff and producers Kirsty Stark and Kate Butler. They are joined by writers Eloise Brook and Martine Delaney ([The Village](#)). This project is financed with support from the South Australian Film Corporation.
- **Ginger & the Vegesaurs: A 20-part children's animated series for ABC iview and YouTube set in a world dominated by Vegesaurs, the freshest and most delicious creatures ever to rule the planet. Ginger, a young plucky Tricarrotops, and her three baby Pea-Rex pals share adventures in a valley populated by a host of other Vegesaurs - some friendly, some not so much. Created by Gary Eck and Nick O'Sullivan whose credits include [Happy Feet 2](#), the series was developed and will be produced by Cheeky Little Media. Eck and Sam Carroll ([Grace Beside Me](#)) lead the writing team and the series will be produced by Celine Goetz and executive produced by Patrick Egerton and David Webster who previously collaborated on [Kangaroo Beach](#).**
- **ReCancelled:** A six-part second series following on from COVID-inspired drama [Cancelled](#), which has garnered over 2.5 million views on Facebook to date. Inspired by true events, the new series follows creators and stars Luke Eve and Maria Albiñana one year on from the start of the pandemic as they continue to navigate life in lockdown in Spain. Realising they still won't be able to get married, life then throws them another curveball and the couple embark on this new challenge together in a life full of restrictions. *ReCancelled* is directed by Eve and written and produced by Eve and Albiñana. It is financed with support from Tourism Valencia and the Spanish Embassy Australia.

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- **Sunset Paradise:** A 10-part animated series for YouTube from Glitch Productions, the team behind hit series [Meta Runner](#). This comedy adventure series follows a young woman Meggy, who arrives on a tropical island for a holiday only to find a criminal conspiracy threatening the safety of the island. It's up to Meggy to save the island from danger - and rescue her holiday plans. The [pilot episode which launched in March](#) has already amassed over 1 million views. *Sunset Paradise* is written by Jasmine Yang and Jasper Marlow, directed by Luke Lerdwischagul and produced by Kevin Lerdwischagul.
- **The Emu War:** A seven-part YouTube series inspired by the unbelievable true story of when Australia declared war on the emu population in 1932. This absurd comedy follows the platoon of soldiers who were sent to kill the emus but who were eventually defeated by the birds. The creative team features writer, director and producer Lisa Fineberg and writer/directors John Campbell and Jay Morrissey who previously collaborated on [Gocsy's Classics](#), as well as writers and comedians Jonathan Schuster ([Fancy Boy](#)), Dane Simpson and Urvi Majumdar.

The blocklines for online production funding are available [here](#).

DIGITAL ORIGINALS

Screen Australia and SBS have selected 12 projects to participate in this year's Digital Originals initiative. The teams, which are based around Australia, took part in development workshops last week and from this group up to four projects will be chosen for further development.

The projects are:

- *Appetite* - Mohini Herse (Writer/Director/Producer), Neilesh Verma (Writer), Neil Sharma (Director), Sleena Wilson (Executive Producer)
- *CEEBS* - Betiel Beyin (Writer/Performer), Leigh Lule (Writer/Performer), Amie Batalibasi (Producer), Nikki Tran (Producer)
- *Deity* - Taofia Pelesasa (Writer/Director), Elinorah Malifa (Producer), Nicole Coventry (Producer)
- *Garbage* - Hunter Page-Lochard (Writer/Director/Producer), Luke Bouchier (Writer/Director/Producer), Kobie Duncan (Writer)
- *Let Me Help* - Emma Myers (Writer/Producer), Angus Thompson (Writer/Producer), Nina Oyama (Writer/Director)
- *Mother Tongue* - Katrina Irawati Graham (Writer/Director), Ljudan Michaelis-Thorpe (Writer), Ana Tiwary (Producer)
- *Night Bloomers* - Andrew Lee (Writer/Director/Producer), Ashlea Ritchie (Producer), Michael McMahon (Executive Producer), Barry Gamba (Executive Producer)
- *SHADE* - Enoch Mailangi (Writer), Wendy Mocke (Writer), Alana Hicks (Director)
- *Sonny* - Danny Aumua (Writer/Director), Jason Dewhurst (Writer), Jessica Magro (Producer)
- *The Matriarch* - Ivy Mak (Writer/Producer), Jayden Rathsam Hua (Writer/Director)
- *Transferred* - Chloe Black (Writer), Paul Moran (Producer), Adele Vuko (Director)
- *Unicorn Hunters* - Rachel Perks (Writer), Jean Tong (Writer), Tessa Mansfield-Hung (Producer)

An evolution of SBS's Short-Form Content Initiative, the [Digital Originals initiative](#) aims to support practitioners and projects that reflect gender equity and/or the diversity of people and experiences from around Australia. This includes those who identify as First Nations Australians; are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds; those who are living with a disability; are female or trans/gender diverse; identify as LGBTQIA+; and those who are located in regional and remote areas.

Dramedy series *Iggy & Ace* which came through the first iteration of Digital Originals in 2019 and [was selected for production funding](#), will premiere on SBS On Demand later this year.

ENDS

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