

## **Submission to Screen Australia Documentary Revision 2019**

**Name:** Sally Ingleton

**Job Title:** Producer

**Company:** 360 Degree Films

**IMDB/Screen Guide Link:**

**File Attached:**

### **What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the proposed changes to the Development Program?**

I support the changes to the development program.

I think the 3 tiers of support are good and in general having open rounds provides the industry with more flexibility.

One side effect of open rounds can be that the funds run out before the end of the financial year. It is vital that Screen Australia manages the cash-flow of the Development funding to ensure that does not occur.

I also think Time Critical funding for filming is often a necessity with documentary and development support is one way to ensure this occurs.

### **What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the proposed changes to the Producer Program?**

The Producer Fund is the one area of production support that enables documentary filmmakers to get much needed production grants for single one hour or feature social issue documentaries without a TV sale.

It is always highly competitive and in my view is trying to serve too many masters.

I recommend that the old 'international door' projects be shifted out of the Producer Fund and move into the Broadcast Fund which could be rebranded as a marketplace Fund. This would mean that any project with 10% of its finale in place from the international market (distributor advance or international commission) is eligible to apply for the Broadcast/Marketplace Fund. Series with broadcast attachments from the international marketplace should also be assessed via the Commissioned Door.

I also recommend that any feature documentary project with an ask of over \$500k and a budget of more than \$1.5million should be assessed via the Features Door (Drama).

These changes will relieve some pressure on the Producer Fund and perhaps enable a project to be funded first time around rather than producers having to apply two or three times before they are successful, thus holding up the projects and the opportunity for additional support from State agencies who usually will not support a project until Screen Australia has confirmed.

I am suggesting these changes in order to free up some funds in the Producer Fund so that it can support more independent documentaries which is the one area of the Australian industry that has successfully found new pathways to audience.

### **What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the proposed changes to the Commissioned Program?**

As above I believe projects with international market place attachments should be assessed via the Commissioned Fund.

I recommend that at least 20% of the funding should support the commissioning of single one hour or feature length documentaries. This will encourage broadcasters to find ways to create new strands to support these stories to be told. This recommendation will particularly assist new filmmakers to get a

foot in the door as well as smaller boutique companies who are more committed to producing independent content rather than pursuing content which supports a screen business model necessary for large companies with high turnovers.

**What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the introduction of the Completion Fund?**

I support the new proposal for a completion Fund to replace the old PEP program.

I would add that Producers who have received a Grant through the Producer Fund should also be able to apply to the Completion Fund if necessary once the project is in post production and funds have not been secured by other sources (ie philanthropy).

**Do you have any further feedback?**

**MATCHED IMPACT FUND**

I wish to comment that many social issue documentaries are finding support through the private sector – particularly philanthropy and crowd funding. The Documentary Australia Foundation has been particularly successful with building momentum.

Many of these stories have the capacity to create social change if they have a Social Impact Budget to work with.

Many private donors are only interested in supporting the Impact Strategy not the production.

Can Screen Australia consider creating a Matched Impact Fund where Screen Australia would match up to say \$50,000 from private donors to support more of these projects.

This funding could come from a small percentage being carved off each of the program areas to create a fund of say \$500-750k which could support up to 10-20 projects.

**CINEMA ON DEMAND**

It is vital that Cinema On Demand be seen as a valid theatrical platform for the 40% offset. The current guidelines say they will be assessed on a 'case by case basis' but this provides no certainty or clarity to a producer.

Cinema On Demand is one area where operators are forging ahead and finding new pathways to audiences but they need strong projects to ensure it works rather than just numerous low budget documentaries.

The model should be encouraging Cinema On Demand as it helps provide better revenue models direct to filmmakers.