

Games Production Fund

Frequently Asked Questions - applying for funding

Who can apply?

Small to medium Australian independent game developers operating as a private company. A private company, or proprietary company, is an entity with private ownership (i.e. not listed on the ASX). A game studio is considered to be independent by Screen Australia if it is not majority owned or controlled by an overseas company.

Developers working for the company must be Australian or Australian residents who intend to predominantly develop the game in Australia.

Student teams are not eligible. Sole traders are not eligible (however sole traders are eligible to apply to the [Emerging Gamemakers Fund](#)).

Please see Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#) for further information on eligibility criteria for an applicant that is a company (clause 1.1.1 "An applicant that is a company").

How many people can I include in my application/team?

Given the scale of funding available and the obligation for teams to compensate themselves fairly under Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade \(clause 1.2\)](#), this fund is aimed at smaller teams of between 1 and 3 members, although this is not a prescriptive limit (for example, a bigger team of part-timers could apply).

How much can I apply for?

Up to \$100,000 AUD.

What costs can I include in my application?

We would expect developer wages to represent a large portion of the funding requested from Screen Australia. However, we are open to other costs in your budget as long as they are justified in your application.

Can I spend part of my budget on marketing expenses?

Yes, and if marketing is a key part of your proposed milestone then we would expect to see a portion of your budget allocated towards marketing expenses.

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

Competitiveness is assessed based on the four assessment criteria detailed in the guidelines. We do not favour projects that ask for a smaller sum of money. We encourage applicants to ensure the money requested in the application is in line with the scope of their proposed project.

Can I apply for state screen agency funding and the Games Production Fund?

Yes. As long as you meet the eligibility requirements for both, you are welcome to apply for both. You must ensure that you allocate each successful grant to distinct budget expenses and avoid expenditure overlap.

Do I need to bring in matched funding to be eligible?

No, however other sources of funding in your finance plan are considered to be competitive.

What are some examples of an accolade signifying cultural milestone?

This could include awards such as AGDAs, Freeplay Awards, IGFs, A MAZE. Awards, IndieCade Awards, BAFTA Game Awards or other awards of similar scale, or entry to festivals such as Freeplay, IndieCade, A MAZE., BitSummit, and others.

Why is the pitch video important?

Think of the pitch video as our first impression of your team and project. It is often the first thing assessors look at when viewing an application, so we encourage you to treat it with the same level of professionalism you would use if you were pitching in-person for funding.

What do you look for in a great 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 your project. There are a few, key points that competitive pitch videos cover:

- What the vision for the project is
- What significant milestone you are working towards

- Why you are working towards that milestone
- The impact a successful application would have in achieving your milestone

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 submission materials?

We provide a template for the Finance Plan and Budget, Strategic Outcomes Document and Project Plan. For all other documents, there is no template. Please provide the information in a format that best suits your project and communicates why it is competitive.

What happens if my release platform plans change after submitting my application?

We encourage you to only select release platforms you are confident that you will release on in a timely manner, as any platform you tick will become a contractual obligation and delays in fulfilling these release obligations will delay your final delivery payment. This does not limit the platforms you are allowed to deliver on.

How will my application be assessed?

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

What happens if my application is successful?

You can expect an outcome from around 12 weeks after the published round deadline. Successful applicants will receive a phone call from Screen Australia's Online and Games Unit notifying them of the outcome. We will contact you using the phone number supplied in your application.

What happens if my application is unsuccessful?

You can expect an outcome from around 12 weeks after the published round deadline. Unsuccessful applicants will receive an email notification advising of the outcome. Due to the anticipated volume of applications, we are unable to provide

feedback on individual applications. However, if you intend to re-apply for future rounds of the Games Production Fund, we can schedule a 15 minute call when that round is open to discuss areas to address.

Can I reapply with the same project?

Yes, we have a ‘two strike’ policy. That is, applications that were unsuccessful from round one of Games Production Fund may apply once more with the same project. Projects that are unsuccessful in the current round may also reapply during the same round. After two unsuccessful applications, a project is no longer eligible to apply for the fund.

Can I apply with two projects in the same round?

No, applicants can only be attached to one application per round for this fund. However, the same creative can be attached to an application for the Emerging Gamemakers Fund and a separate application for the Games Production Fund in the same round.

Are Serious Games, VR/AR Games, LiveOps or Games-as-a-Service projects eligible?

Yes.

Are physical escape rooms eligible to apply?

No.

Are work-for-hire projects eligible?

No, unless you own a significant stake in the IP.

I want to build a game as a B2B product where the audience will be other businesses. Is this eligible?

No.

Is a port of an existing game to a new platform eligible?

Yes, a porting application is eligible but we advise you to think carefully about how to make it competitive. Ports are, by their nature, completed games, meaning the ‘level of creative merit is known. Consider how to use this to your advantage by providing us with information about the success of the game and why and how releasing it on further platforms would be in line with the assessment criteria.

Does the fund exclude projects with overseas expenditure?

Broadly speaking we need to form an opinion that a project is sufficiently 'Australian' in order to fund it as Screen Australia. This means that the game must be predominantly developed in Australia. If you have tricky questions, please contact us.

If our game is funded through Screen Australia, will I have to relinquish intellectual property (IP) ownership or creative control?

No, the game remains creatively in your control and ownership. The only intervention we take would be if the game changes to feature content that would make it ineligible. That is, if it changed to include content that, in Screen Australia's opinion, would make it difficult for the game to receive a classification in Australia.

While we do not take any stake in IP ownership, we do encourage successful applicants to retain their ownership of their IP in publisher deals moving forwards. As such, we require sign-off on projects that wish to assign their IP to a third party. This is to help ensure projects are being fairly valued when engaging in such deals.

We are big enough as a studio to be eligible for the DGTO but we have a smaller (budget totalling less than \$500K) project as well, can we apply for funding for that project?

Yes.

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

Please only include 'pending' items if you believe they will be confirmed within the next 1-2 months. If something is still 'pending' and your application is successful, it would need to be confirmed by the time we enter contracting.

I have more questions. Who can I contact?

For any enquiries, please contact the Screen Australia Program Operations team on 1800 507 901 or email [Games](#).

Frequently Asked Questions - Contracting

What happens after my project is approved?

Screen Australia will enter into a Production Grant Agreement (PGA) with you. Our Contracts team will send you a draft PGA for review, along with an explanatory email. A DocuSign PDF version of the PGA will be emailed for you to sign once both parties are satisfied with the draft.

Can I negotiate the terms of the PGA?

Under Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#), Screen Australia doesn't enter into negotiations with grant recipients in respect of the General Terms of the PGA other than in exceptional circumstances.

This ensures fairness and conformity across Programs plus allows Screen Australia to contract a very high volume of agreements in a timely manner.

If your project has special conditions, recipients may include these under Special Conditions to be reviewed and approved by Screen Australia.

Please note, the definitions '*General Terms*' (in PGA) and '*Core Conditions*' (in *Terms of Trade*) are interchangeable.

When will I be paid?

Once the PGA is fully signed and any conditions to payments are satisfied, Screen Australia will pay you within 10 days of receipt of a correct invoice.

How will I be paid?

Screen Australia will pay your funding in 2 instalments:

1. 80% on signing the PGA;
2. 20% on Screen Australia's approval of your Final Cost Report (Milestone 2) and receipt of the Delivery Materials set out in the PGA.

What are the conditions to payment?

Instalment 1 - will be paid on Screen Australia's receipt of:

- an opinion from a suitably qualified solicitor - this will be a brief letter confirming they act for you in connection with your project and have provided you with advice about appropriate clearance procedures to enable you to obtain all necessary rights to make the game; and
- written confirmation from the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) that you have sent the signed NFSA Deed for your project to the NFSA.

Instalment 2 - will be paid on Screen Australia's receipt and approval of:

- a second opinion from a suitably qualified solicitor - confirming you hold all necessary rights to deliver and exploit the game; and
- Screen Australia's approval of the Delivery Materials set out in the PGA.

Note:

- templates for the NFSA Deed and opinion letters will be sent to you at the same time as the draft PGA.
- the cost report template is available via a link in the PGA.

Why am I delivering materials to the NFSA twice?

The NFSA is a government agency entrusted to collect, preserve and share Australia's audiovisual culture. It holds more than 3 million works.

Several years ago, Screen Australia transferred its library function to the NFSA.

Under the PGA, you must deliver the following to the NFSA:

1. the NFSA Deed; and
2. Your completed game

In both cases, once you deliver the above items to the NFSA, the NFSA will acknowledge receipt (by email) and copy Screen Australia.

Additional explanations for some terms and clauses in the PGA

Screen Australia's acknowledgement

You must acknowledge Screen Australia's support of your project. The form of acknowledgement is set out in the PGA. Screen Australia also understands there may be circumstances where the acknowledgement may not align with your project. You can discuss this directly with your Funding Manager. Any changes agreed to by your Funding Manager, in writing, will override the acknowledgement in the PGA.

Definitions

'Budgeted Cost' refers to the total "Budgeted Cost" set out in your Budget and Finance Plan. This amount is the sum of all financial contributions received by you, and is the total cost of making your game.

'Milestone 2 Cost Report' means the Final Cost Report, due within 2 months of the Delivery Date.