

# THE SCREEN FUND

## SUPPORTING CINEMAS' RETENTION ENDURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Supporting Cinemas' Retention Endurance and Enhancement of Neighbourhoods (SCREEN) Fund was announced on 26 March 2021 by the Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts. The aim of the SCREEN Fund is to support independent cinema operators who have experienced significant declines in revenue due to COVID-19.

### WHAT IS THE SCREEN FUND?

The SCREEN Fund is a \$20 million fund made available by the Australian Government and administered by Screen Australia.

It supports the viability and recovery of independent cinema businesses in an environment where they are still returning to normality as the vaccine rollout progresses and Australia moves towards higher audience capacities.

### WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Funding is available as a one-off grant. The amount of the grant is dependent on reported box office revenue for that cinema location during the pre-COVID period 1 March 2019 – 29 February 2020 as follows:

- \$35,000 per location reporting below \$1 million box office;
- \$60,000 per location reporting between \$1 million and \$3 million box office; or
- \$85,000 per location reporting over \$3 million box office.

The claimed annual box office must be supported with evidence from an industry accepted third party box office reporting service (Numero or Comscore box office reporting, at the applicant's election). Screen Australia cannot accept claimed box office reported outside of these industry accepted services.

If a cinema business was interrupted during the period by a natural disaster such as bushfires, the claimed box office can be calculated as a three year average box office from 1 March 2017 to 29 February 2020.

An applicant that operates multiple locations can apply for multiple grants, provided that each location meets the guidelines. A new application will be required for each location. Only one entity is entitled to receive a grant for each location. Locations can include single screen venues, multiple screen venues, drive-ins and other outdoor venues.

## **ELIGIBILITY: WHO CAN APPLY?**

The SCREEN Fund is aimed at Australian independent cinema operators. An eligible applicant must:

- be the Australian entity that manages and controls the independent cinema business at the location(s);
- have an ABN;
- not be owned or controlled by a listed entity, foreign entity or a government entity (including a State or local government entity);  
Applicants must:
- confirm that the film exhibition business is the primary business at the location;
- normally provide film exhibition at the location all year round (i.e. at least operating during all school holiday periods throughout the year);
- have suffered a 30% or more decline in box office at the location between the periods 1 March 2019 to 29 February 2020 and 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2021. Locations affected by natural disasters during this period such as bushfires can apply a three year average from 1 March 2017 to 29 February 2020. The claimed box office must be supported with evidence from an industry accepted third party box office reporting service (Numero or Comscore box office reporting, at the applicant's election). Screen Australia cannot accept claimed box office reported outside of these industry accepted services; and
- establish that the cinema location was financially viable before the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing a representation to that effect from the applicant's accountant. Applicants will be expected to provide a short commentary as to how they intend to use the funds to assist the businesses to recover in the post-pandemic environment.

## **WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE?**

The SCREEN Fund does not provide support to the major Australian theatre chains Event Cinemas, Hoyts Cinemas, Village Cinemas and Reading Cinemas including their alternate brands.

It does not provide support to film festivals, film clubs and touring film programmes, screens located in or at educational institutions, clubs and libraries and locations where exhibition is not the primary business such as mixed arts venues and performing arts centres.

# EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Screen Australia has the right to make an exception to the above eligibility criteria where there are compelling factors relating to the impact of the cinema location on communities and regional areas. Any such decision is completely at the discretion of Screen Australia and its decision will be final.

# HOW AND WHEN CAN I APPLY?

The SCREEN Fund is capped at \$20 million. Applications for the SCREEN Fund are open from 14 April 2021 until 24 December 2021 or until total funds are committed and can be made through the [application portal](#). From 14 April 2021 you will be able to preview the application form, and the attachments required, at the portal.

# HOW ARE APPLICATIONS ASSESSED?

The funds are limited and approval of an application is not automatic.

Applications will be assessed by Screen Australia staff against the eligibility criteria set out above.

Screen Australia aims to turn decisions around as soon as practicable from receipt of a complete application. An incomplete application will delay consideration of the application. Applicants will be advised of the outcome in writing, and successful applicants will move immediately to contracting.

# TERMS OF FUNDING

Funding is completely subject to approved applicants entering into a grant agreement with Screen Australia on standard terms. Under the grant agreement, applicants must:

- display an acknowledgement of the support of the Commonwealth Government through the SCREEN Fund; and
- engage with Screen Australia generally on strategies to promote Australian films. More detail of these requirements is set out in the grant agreement.

A list of successful applicants and the funding amount will be publically available in the Screen Australia annual report and may be published from time to time on the Screen Australia website.

# LIMITED FUND

The SCREEN Fund is a capped \$20 million fund. If the funds are exhausted, no further support can be provided to cinema operators.

# FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have any further questions, please email us at [ScreenCinemasFund](#) or call Program Operations on 1800 507 901.