

My name is Madeleine Parry and I am a documentary director from South Australia. I first began volunteering in the industry in 2007 and have been directing documentaries since 2010 (Murder Mouth (2011), Meatwork (2012), broadcast on ABC2 as part of the first round of Opening Shot). I am writing in response to one of the questions posed for submission:

**How can Screen Australia best support low-budget documentary making?**

I am interested in professional development as a practicing documentary director. There are opportunities for education within educational institutions, but I have learnt most of what I know on the job, and hope to continue to learn within the industry.

Over this period of direction (2010-2014), I have often looked to the industry for support in furthering my knowledge and skills. Producers and directors when approached have been friendly and supportive, but the demands on their time and resources that running a production company and making documentary films/series entail mean that them assisting me to gain professional development has been very hard and largely fallen through.

I have contacted both the SAFC and Screen Australia about financial or logistical support in relationships that would guide me to develop my career both creatively and as a industry professional. Neither body had an initiative or program I could access – as a documentary director – that would allow me to pursue various opportunities for professional and creative development I had sought out. Screen Australia has support for producer attachments and drama director attachments. But I found no such program available for documentary filmmakers.

As the film industry bodies (SAFC and Screen Aust.) in Australia did not have money allocated to support documentary director development through attachments, I looked elsewhere. I was lucky that in South Australia a youth arts body called Carclew was founded a while back. It's my understanding that Carclew primarily supports the variety of 'arts' captured under the umbrella of the Australia Council (dance, theatre, writing, ceramics, painting, music). But they recently created a scholarship for Film and New Media which has supported four young South Australian practitioners to undertake a variety of professional development opportunities and they also allow film directors and practitioners to apply for support under their broad Project and Development Grant Program:

“The Carclew Film and New Media Scholarship was created in direct response to an identified gap for young filmmakers, who have few available avenues when seeking support for professional development in the critical early years of their career.”

- Film and New Media Schol Notes 010414

I have received support from Carclew to undertake attachments interstate and overseas (New York) that I believe will be valuable and instrumental in

progressing my voice and skill as a director and, through networking, will contribute to a greater exposure for my work – Australian documentary. However, without Carclew's recognition of this gap I would not be able to self-fund myself going to New York or interstate, to learn from the wider documentary industry and observe the practices of some of the masters. Documentary directors in states other than South Australia do not have access to this funding.

I am eager to learn how to create quality documentary in the current and changing media environment – and this awareness of the need for constant professional growth in both the classic craft of storytelling and the contemporary relationship between documentary film-maker, documentary subject and audience, has driven my desire to undertake professional development opportunities. I appreciate the purpose of this Discussion Paper in endeavoring to make the industry environment in Australia friendlier to documentary.

I feel that an allocation of resources to support the professional development of documentary directors would mean an opportunity for young directors to hone their craft, learn from those who have gone before, produce more films and films of a higher quality and, through networking, lead to greater exposure for Australian documentaries.