



Australian Government



PROGRAM GUIDELINES: TALENT DEVELOPMENT – HOT SHOTS SHORT FILM FUND

ISSUED 1 JULY 2015

UPDATED 11 DECEMBER 2015

Screen Australia reserves the right to change its program guidelines from time to time. Please ensure you check the website for the latest version.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#).

We encourage you to contact the Program Operations team before you submit your application to discuss any eligibility questions and ensure all the required supporting material is in place. This will mean we can process your application smoothly and efficiently. The Program Operations team can be contacted on **1800 507 901**.

We receive many more applications than we can support. Inevitably, some applications will be unsuccessful and applicants will be disappointed by this result. However, our decision is final.

Specific requirements apply where there is Indigenous community participation or content involved in a project. Please refer to www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding/business/Indigenous_Content.aspx

Hot Shots Short Film Fund

Short drama films are an important step in the professional development of directors, writers and producers. They play a crucial role in developing and establishing strong and distinctive creative voices within the industry while fostering long-term professional relationships.

Short drama films also help to hone craft skills and provide a platform for showcasing talent at local and international film festivals. They can act as a 'calling card' to promote longer-form opportunities for the creative team and can serve as a proof of concept for feature films or other story forms (online and interactive drama, virtual reality projects, television series etc).

Hot Shots funds the production and post-production of short fiction films and aims to:

- generate short narrative fiction films that will entertain, surprise and emotionally engage audiences;
- identify and progress the skills and careers of emerging Australian talent;
- stimulate inventive and creative approaches to storytelling and production that embrace the budget parameters of the fund; and
- build networks and relationships between experienced professionals and emerging talent.

Proposed films will show a creative, pragmatic and professional approach to production. Innovation and experimentation are encouraged, with an emphasis on strong and distinctive storytelling.

Applications will need to demonstrate that the short film can be achieved within the parameters of the submitted budget – without additional finance – while adhering to Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#). Each film must be shot and completed on a digital format.

What funding is available?

Funds are available for live action or animated films, and for production as well as post-production. In exceptional circumstances, we may accept applications with budgets that exceed the amounts below, in recognition of the regional nature of certain productions.

- **up to \$70,000 for live action production** (maximum eight minutes including credits).
- **up to \$100,000 for animation production** (maximum eight minutes including credits).
- **up to \$40,000 for post-production to completion funds** for one-off live action and animated short fiction films (maximum of 15 minutes including credits).

Who can apply?

- The application must come from the producer on behalf of a team including either a writer and director, or a writer/director.
- The producer must hold the rights to the script and all other underlying rights to make the short fiction film (at application, a deal memo or letter from the rights holder will be sufficient).

- The producer must have at least one of the following:
 - an 'eligible fiction credit' (see box 'What is an eligible fiction credit?' page 4) as a producer, OR
 - a credit as a producer on a short fiction project which has received production funding through Screen Australia's Hot Shots, Short Animation, Shorts Completion, Springboard, Multiplatform Drama or Indigenous Department fiction programs.
- The director must have at least one of the following:
 - an 'eligible fiction credit' (see box 'What is an eligible fiction credit?' page 4) as a director, OR
 - a credit as a director on a short fiction project which has received production funding through Screen Australia's Short Animation, Shorts Completion, Springboard, Multiplatform Drama or Indigenous Department fiction programs, OR
 - a high level of critical acclaim as a director in a related field such as theatre, TV fiction, TV commercials or documentary (ie awards, critical reviews, broadcasts, box office, international sales).
- There is no upper limit on the experience of the teams, although applicants should be aware that the intention of the initiative is to develop emerging creative teams.
- Funding is for films shot in a digital format, unless applying for animation or completion funds, or in extraordinary circumstances.
- There is no minimum duration, but the films must be no longer than eight minutes including credits (15 minutes for completion funding) unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Documentary projects are not eligible. See [Documentary Development](#) for more information.
- Applicants may submit projects that have unsuccessfully applied for funding through other Screen Australia programs but they must provide evidence of significant changes since the previous application. Any project that has been unsuccessful twice to any of Screen Australia's short film programs is not eligible to apply.
- Funding cannot be retrospective.
- Applicants must also meet the general eligibility requirements set out in Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#).

What is an ‘eligible fiction credit’?

An ‘eligible fiction credit’ under this program is a **short fiction film** that has been selected to screen at one of the following film festivals:

- Berlin International Film Festival
- Cannes Film Festival (excluding Shorts Corner)
- Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival
- Melbourne International Film Festival
- South by Southwest (SXSW) Film Festival
- Sydney Film Festival
- Telluride Film Festival
- Tribeca Film Festival
- Sundance Film Festival
- Venice International Film Festival
- BFI London Film Festival
- Annecy Animation Festival
- Stuttgart Festival of Animation
- Ottawa Animation Festival
- Fantastic Fest (Austin, TX)
- Busan International Film Festival
- Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival
- International Film Festival Rotterdam

OR, won or been nominated for one of the following awards:

- Academy Award® for Best Short Film (Live Action or Animated)
- AACTA/AFI Award for Best Short Fiction Film or Best Animation.

OR, won one of the following awards:

- Flickerfest Best Short Film or Best Animation
- St Kilda Film Festival Best Short Film or Animation.

What is the application timing?

Funding will be available in two rounds each calendar year. Deadlines will be posted on Screen Australia’s website, and the online portal through which applications will be submitted and will open in advance of these deadlines.

What is the assessment process?

Applications will be assessed by a combination of Screen Australia executives and industry specialists as required. Shortlisted teams may be interviewed as part of the assessment process.

Decisions will be made and applicants will be notified within 10 weeks of the closing date. Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.

Assessment criteria

When assessing applications for this program, we will take the following criteria into account:

- The originality, strength and distinctiveness of the script or rough cut and where applicable, the suitability of the animation style.
- Evidence of a distinctive directorial voice and compelling storytelling style in the script or rough cut and previous work.
- The skills, experience and track record of each of the key principals and how this short will extend them.
- The viability of the budget and schedule in relation to the script, and a production approach that embraces the budget parameters of the fund.

The criteria above are equally weighted.

Other factors including availability of funds, diversity of slate and the gender and cultural diversity of the team may also influence Screen Australia's funding decisions.

Important budget notes

For all Hot Shots productions, you must use Screen Australia's annotated A-Z Hot Shots budget template. Available on the [Screen Australia website](#), this template has been devised specifically for this program, and highlights mandatory areas you will need to budget for. Supporting quotes will need to be provided with your application.

As per its [Terms of Trade](#), Screen Australia expects all recipients of funding to act fairly and reasonably in relation to third parties involved in the funded project.

Fairness and reasonableness include:

- paying at least award minimum rates or, where applicable, any minimum agreed between the relevant guilds, for all work performed by third parties on their project, including key creatives, cast and crew;
- respecting the rights of all relevant persons, whether those rights be copyright or other intellectual property rights, moral rights or Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property rights.

Producers should be aware that Screen Australia has a special agreement with the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance ([MEAA](#)) for short film production whereby cast are contracted on the Actors Feature Film Agreement (AFFA).

Cast must be paid at least the basic negotiated fee (BNF) plus 40% reduced buyout to cover Australian TV rights (20%) and Australian ancillary rights (20%) inclusive of worldwide festival rights.

Producers should endeavour to acquire these rights prior to submitting their application. Any additional rights acquired after the delivery of all materials to Screen Australia will not be penalised under this agreement.

A fee of \$1000 can be included in your budget for a mentor to be attached to the producer and/or director. Should you be successful, we can discuss these potential mentors with you at the shortlist stage.

Note: If you are successful in your application for completion funds, you must supply industry standard agreements for all cast and crew for the money provided by Screen Australia in order to complete the short. On a case-by-case basis and where appropriate, Screen Australia may allow producers to include cast costs in their budget for completion funds (ie pickups/ADR).

Terms of funding

Funding is in the form of a grant. Screen Australia will not require a copyright interest.

Funding recipients must deliver all delivery items listed in the PGA (Production Grant Agreement), including three DVD copies of the completed film, plus related paperwork including an expenditure report and production stills.

Successful recipients will be expected to deliver their completed films as per the agreement (usually within 12 months for live action and animation; and within four months for completion funding).

Further funding and marketing information

From time to time, Screen Australia may identify Hot Shots teams that would benefit from Story Development funding and may be offered an opportunity to apply.

Acceptance into some of the top-tier international film festivals may require additional marketing, travel and screening materials. Applications for funding to cover such materials can only be accepted under Screen Australia's International Marketing Support program, and only then if the guideline conditions are met.

For information about International Marketing Support funding go to:

www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding/international_marketing/default.aspx

A guide to marketing short films is available at:

www.screenaustralia.gov.au/marketing/guides.aspx

Hot Shops

Successful recipients of Hot Shots funding will be invited to and are expected to attend a Hot Shops workshop led by industry specialists to help directors, writers and producers hone their skills on all aspects of the filmmaking and storytelling process.

Update log

11 December 2015

- As part of the assessment criteria, added: Other factors including availability of funds, diversity of slate and the gender and cultural diversity of the team may also influence Screen Australia's funding decisions.