



Emerging Writers' Incubator

Host Company: Guidelines

Issued 6 February 2023

The Emerging Writers' Incubator (the Incubator) is a nationwide initiative to develop historically excluded and underrepresented scripted writing talent in the Australian screen sector. The third year of the Incubator is presented by SBS, in partnership with Screen Australia, Screen NSW, Screen Queensland, Screenwest, Screen Tasmania, VicScreen and the South Australian Film Corporation, and with the assistance of the Australian Writers' Guild.

Working with some of Australia's leading production companies, the Incubator aims to promote inclusion among Australian screenwriting talent and to provide significant work experience in drama production to writers with lived experiences that have been historically excluded from the sector.

For the purposes of this initiative, historically excluded means those who:

- identify as First Nations Australians;
- are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds;
- are Deaf or hard of hearing or People with a disability;
- are Female or Trans/Gender diverse;
- identify as LGBTQIA+; and/or
- are located in regional and/or remote areas.

Six successful candidates (Selected Writers), one from each of the participating States will be employed for 12 months in production companies (Host Companies) acclaimed for their delivery of Australian drama. Placements will commence from approximately November 2023. The intention is that Selected Writers will work across the production company's entire drama slate (irrespective of commissioning network / platform).

WHAT

The Incubator invites production companies to apply as Host Companies in the third year of the initiative.

It is expected that each Host Company will facilitate opportunities and support their Selected Writer to perform and develop their skills in accordance with the following indicative role description:

- Attend writers' rooms (as deemed appropriate by the production company - as participant, note taker, or observer); and
- Participate in the production company's development slate meetings; and
- Shadow the production company's development producers and/or producers (as appropriate), building capacity, knowledge and honing industry / craft skills; and
- Assist with devising and writing pitches; and
- Assist with assessing creative material (e.g.: pitches); and
- Assist with creative feedback (e.g.: script notes, script feedback meetings); and
- Attend pitch meetings (as appropriate); and
- Draft funding applications for script development.

Each production company will be provided with funding of up to \$80,000 in total as the salary for the writer (inclusive of superannuation, payroll tax, insurance, workcover). The production company will be ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Selected Writer is paid according to all applicable legislation and industrial awards including the superannuation guarantee and workplace insurance. The successful applicant will also enter into a standard employee or contractor agreement with the Host Production Company before commencing the placement.

All intellectual property generated by the Selected Writer in the course of their employment with the Host Company will be the property of the production company, but each writer's credit, where applicable, and associated benefits will be determined by AWG standard agreements. To the extent that a writer may subsequently be engaged as a writer of an episode of television, that work will fall outside of the scope of their duties under the Initiative and will not be funded under the Initiative. Any fees due to the writer will be met by the production company separately in respect of such work in keeping with the Miniseries and Telemovie Agreement 2010 (MATA) (2023 rates) or Series and Serials Agreement 2008 (SASA) (2023 rates) as negotiated between the writer and the production company but at all times in accordance with the relevant industrial agreements.

Successful production companies will be expected to outline a plan for managing the Selected Writer in accordance with the above, including setting KPIs and committing to periodic performance reviews.

WHO

Eligible Host Companies will:

- Have a drama slate of sufficient size, scale and diversity to be of benefit to the Selected Writer over the course of their one-year full-time placement;
- Have sufficient staff to guide the Selected Writers over the course of their placement (ideally this would be the company's head of development/development producer); and
- Comply with Screen Australia's Terms of Trade.

HOW

Applications close **5pm AEDT Thursday 2 March 2023** and can be made through the Screen Australia [application portal](#).

Host company applications consist of:

- A brief company bio with credits;
- A brief description of the production company's anticipated projects/workload over approx. November 2023 - November 2024 (NB: This is to assess that the production company has sufficient activity over this period to be of benefit to the Selected Writer. We do not need the specifics of projects if this is confidential information, simply list the broad details of a project, e.g.: 4 x 1-hour drama in late development with a confirmed broadcaster, 6 x 1/2-hour comedy in early development);
- A 1-page proposed position description for the Selected Writer, including their title, Essential and Desirable skills and experience for the role, and an indicative career development plan that includes timelines and KPIs;
- A proposed budget breakdown for the \$80,000 financial contribution indicating salary, superannuation, insurances and any other benefits (noting that the Selected Writer must be the ultimate beneficiary of the \$80,000 financial commitment);
- Nomination of the production company staff member who will supervise the Selected Writer (ideally this would be the company's head of development/development producer)
- A list of key staff, reflecting the direct team that the Selected Writer will work with, who will undertake mandatory cultural safety training (which will be jointly paid for by SBS and Screen Australia and delivered via Zoom);
- A brief description of any other placements that the production company has supervised;
- Any pre-existing or planned commitments with regards to placements/trainees/interns who may also be present/engaged in the company during the period; and

- A statement confirming the company's accessibility arrangements (e.g.: accessible parking; accessible entry/exit; lifts or ramp to office floor; accessible toilet etc.) and/or flexible work arrangements for people with a disability.

Assessment criteria

Host Company Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The size, depth and breadth of the company's drama slate;
- The production company's track record and experience as a production company;
- The production company's ability to supervise and support the development of the Selected Writer over a 12-month period, having regard to the position description and career development plan supplied for the Selected Writer; and
- History with supporting similar placements or, (where this is the company's first placement) the company's commitment and willingness to support a placement of this nature.

Applications will be assessed by Screen Australia, SBS and the relevant State with companies notified of the outcome of their application by Thursday 6 April 2023.

MATCHING WRITERS WITH SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTION COMPANIES:

1. Writer Applications and Assessment

Each of the six Host Companies will be allocated a different State. Writer applications will open Monday 1 May 2023 and will close Friday 2 June 2023. The partners to this initiative (SBS, Screen Australia and the relevant State Agency) will receive and assess all writer applications for eligibility in the first instance and produce a shortlist of applicants for the Host Company to assess alongside SBS and Screen Australia by Friday 4 August 2023.

SBS, Screen Australia and the relevant State Agency will work with the Host Company to select a shortlist of writers from that State. Representatives from the Host Company will read application materials (including writing samples and career statements) from the writers and select the four (4) candidates that they wish to interview by Friday 18 August 2023.

2. Interviews

The Host Company will select a narrative screen project from their slate and set a script assessment task for the three shortlisted writers. This can be an oral or written script assessment. Interviews and tasks will be coordinated by Screen Australia. The interview panel will include representatives from the Host Company and the relevant State Agency as well as SBS and/or Screen Australia. Interviews are estimated to take place between Monday 4 September and Friday 29 September 2023. Interviews will be grouped by State and each State's interviews will take place within 3 days during this period.

3. Selection

Once all interviews have been completed, the Host Company, SBS, Screen Australia and relevant State Agency will discuss the shortlisted candidates and mutually agree on the Selected Writer, having regard to the most suitable and appropriate match between Host Company and Selected Writer. Decisions will be made within 3 days of the final interview for the relevant State and will be communicated to the Selected Writers following final consultation and confirmation with the host companies.

Screen Australia, SBS and participating agencies acknowledge and appreciate the efforts that go into all applications.

For any enquiries, please contact the Screen Australia Program Operations team on 1800 507 901 or development@screenaustralia.gov.au.