



The Hon Paul Fletcher MP  
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

28 September 2021

### Screen Australia Statement of Intent 2021-22

Dear Minister

Thank you for your letter of 23 July 2021, which included your Statement of Expectations for Screen Australia for the financial year 2021-22.

I have attached to this reply a Statement of Intent addressing the strategic priorities outlined in your Statement of Expectations.

The Board looks forward to progressing the priorities articulated in the Statement of Intent to inspire, inform, and connect audiences with compelling Australian screen stories. The Board is committed to working with Government and industry in meeting the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fast changing dynamics of the screen industry and building on the recently announced reforms.

Screen Australia CEO Graeme Mason and I are available to meet at your convenience to discuss Screen Australia's plans as well as broader Government priorities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicholas Moore'.

Nicholas Moore  
**Chair**

Cc: Caroline Fulton, Assistant Secretary, Creative Industries, Office for the Arts,  
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications  
Graeme Mason, Chief Executive Officer, Screen Australia

Encl: Screen Australia Statement of Intent 2021-22

## Screen Australia 2021/22 Statement of Intent

This Statement of Intent outlines Screen Australia's response to the Australian Government's *Screen Australia – Statement of Expectations* as set out in the Minister's letter to the Screen Australia Board of 23 July 2021.

Screen Australia welcomes the Minister's Statement of Expectations and its focus on particular Government policies, objectives, and strategic priorities for 2021/22. Screen Australia's response to these expectations is outlined below, following a description of Screen Australia's role and governance arrangements.

### Agency role

Australian screen content provides local and global audiences with significant cultural value; it informs our sense of who we are, offers unique forms of cultural expression, and reflects culturally relevant and diverse experiences shared by millions of Australians. The screen industry also delivers notable economic benefits and drives technological innovation.

Screen Australia's *Corporate Plan 2021-2025* (Corporate Plan) outlines Screen Australia's vision to inspire, inform and connect audiences with compelling Australian stories. This vision aligns with the relevant outcome, priorities and performance indicators set out within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications' Portfolio Budget Statement, specifically: *To support bold, enduring and culturally significant Australian storytelling that resonates with local audiences and succeeds in a global marketplace, created by a skilled and entrepreneurial screen industry.*

Screen Australia's core functions are set out within the *Screen Australia Act 2008*:

- *support and promote the development of a highly creative, innovative and commercially sustainable Australian screen production industry;*
- *support or engage in:*
  - *the development, production, promotion and distribution of Australian programs; and*
  - *the provision of access to Australian programs and other programs; and*
- *support and promote the development of screen culture in Australia.*

### Governance statement

Screen Australia is a corporate Commonwealth Entity, with its financial management regulated by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. Screen Australia is governed by a Board appointed by the Minister. In carrying out its functions Screen Australia will:

- inform the Minister and Department of matters affecting the agency and industry
- take into account the Government's broad policy framework
- work cooperatively with the Department and portfolio agencies, in particular the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS) and National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA)
- provide Performance Reports, Compliance Reports, an Annual Report and a Corporate Plan
- attend Senate Estimates hearings
- provide a Statement of Intent in response to the Minister's Statement of Expectations.

### Inspiring, informing and connecting audiences with compelling Australian stories

Screen Australia will continue to support high-quality, innovative content that has cultural impact, and provide other support as set out in Screen Australia's Corporate Plan. Screen Australia will fund the development, production and distribution of Australian stories, support industry via talent and business development programs, explore and promote international partnerships, and support Australian screen culture. Screen Australia looks forward to continued engagement with the Department, other portfolio agencies and other Government partners through a range of opportunities. Screen Australia will notify the Government of significant industry events, opportunities to engage with and promote local productions, and progress regarding the Government's priorities.

In light of reforms announced by the Government, Screen Australia will evolve its funding programs to assist the industry to adapt to the changing environment. Screen Australia thanks the Government for the additional funding provided to support the screen industry as it adapts to changes to the Australian Screen Production Incentive (ASPI) and other policy settings. This support will better enable the Australian screen sector to take advantage of important opportunities, and Screen Australia looks forward to continuing this important work.

Screen Australia was pleased to contribute to the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including through administering the Temporary Interruption Fund (TIF) and the Supporting Cinemas' Retention Endurance and Enhancement of Neighbourhoods (SCREEN) fund. These programs assisted the sector to become a world-leading hub for screen content in 2020/21, leading to a high number of domestic and international productions and creating jobs and flow-on benefits.

### Key strategic priorities for Screen Australia

The Minister's Statement of Expectations sets out the following strategic priorities:

#### Support changes to the ASPI, including focusing support on children's content and documentary production

Screen Australia looks forward to supporting the sector as it adjusts to changes to the ASPI, and broader regulatory settings. With regard to its new funding allocations, Screen Australia will have particular regard to the impacts of the proposed changes to the Producer Offset on individual projects. Screen Australia will continue to focus on productions of high-quality and cultural impact, with strong pathways to audience. Screen Australia will have specific regard for documentary and children's content, recognising the cultural importance of these stories for Australian and international audiences.

#### Support productions to secure the strongest pathway to audiences

The pathways to audiences for screen content continue to evolve. Screen Australia will prioritise productions with strong pathways to their audience through our program guidelines and assessment protocols across content created for cinemas, television and online. Screen Australia, seeks to support a wide range of content that reflects the diversity of Australian experience. This includes both innovative and experimental content which may only resonate with a specific audience, and broadly popular productions that have a global reach. All productions that apply for funding will have to demonstrate a compelling pathway to their audience. Screen Australia will continue to provide distribution funding for competitive applications to support producers to access international markets and negotiate appropriate deals.

Screen Australia welcomes the additional funding that the Government has provided for a competitive script writing program. Screen Australia will continue working with local and global industry and sector partners to develop projects and talent, to ensure high-quality content can connect with local audiences and travel around the world.

#### [Administer the extended TIF to support local film and television producers to secure finance and keep filming, and continue to liaise with the insurance sector on potential market-based solutions](#)

Since its announcement in June 2020, the TIF has been met with strong industry demand, and successfully provided financiers and commissioners of content with assurance to continue production in uncertain times. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to present significant challenges for production and the wider sector both in Australia and internationally. Screen Australia will continue to liaise with the insurance sector on potential market-based solutions, and inform the Government of important developments in this area.

#### [Administer the SCREEN Fund](#)

The SCREEN fund provides vital support to independent cinemas as they adapt to challenges imposed by the pandemic. Screen Australia acted swiftly to allocate significant funding via the SCREEN fund in late 2020/21, and will continue to operate and monitor the program as the nation's response to COVID-19 evolves.

#### [Continue to undertake data collection and research to strengthen understanding of the challenges and opportunities for the sector, including the economic value of the sector](#)

Screen Australia regularly contributes to industry and national research. Screen Australia will produce regular analysis on key areas of focus, distributing information via articles, video and podcasts. Screen Australia will continue to produce major reports on drama and documentary production, and support producers and distributors with international marketplace insights. Screen Australia will publish a follow-up to the 2016 report *Seeing ourselves: Reflections on diversity in Australian TV drama*, which will measure five years of content across television and online platforms, and explore barriers and opportunities across diversity, inclusivity and representation.

Screen Australia will work with the Australian Bureau of Statistics on the next survey of the Film, Television and Digital Games industry, which will measure the 2021/22 financial year.

#### [Consider opportunities to recognise the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture to Australian society](#)

The representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories, issues and culture on screen is critical to Australian society. Australian First Nations screen stories are popular with First Nations communities, broader Australian audiences, and international markets. Established in 1993, Screen Australia's First Nations Department has become a world-leading support for First Nations screen storytellers and representation, funding content authored by and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The Department is implementing the first steps of its long-term strategy, while adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic and funding a range of content for big and small screens. The Department funds a range of initiatives in partnership with important sector stakeholders, including broadcasters, online platforms, and state and territory agencies, and will continue to promote broad and diverse representation of vital First Nations screen stories.

### Harness the sector's contribution to innovation and the economy

Through its use of various artistic forms and crafts, and employment of rapidly evolving technology, the screen industry provides unique cultural and economic contributions to the Australian economy.

Screen Australia will continue to fund innovative projects such as experimental content for online platforms, and virtual and augmented reality. Various funding programs and initiatives will support and help the growth of industry and businesses that adjust their strategies in order to capture new opportunities. Screen Australia will work with key government and industry stakeholders on further opportunities to build the capacity of the sector now, and into the future.

The screen sector makes important contributions to the broader economy through direct and indirect employment opportunities in a range of fields and specialties. Screen Australia investments in screen content leverage investment from the private sector, including from foreign sources. Australian screen content showcases Australia to the world and is a strong driver of cultural diplomacy, tourism and global profile. Screen Australia will continue to work with industry and the Government to measure and strengthen these contributions.

### Conclusion

In 2021/22 Screen Australia will continue to encourage projects of quality, innovation and cultural value through supporting programs that increase the ambitions, risk tolerance and diversity of Australian storytelling. Screen Australia will continue to evolve its practices to fulfil this mission in an ever-changing screen industry environment, and uphold its vision to inspire, inform and connect audiences with compelling Australian stories.