



MEDIA RELEASE

New initiatives announced to inspire inclusivity in the screen industry

Monday 8 March 2021: The Gender Matters Taskforce and Screen Australia today announced two key initiatives for 2021 aimed at supporting women and gender diverse practitioners in the screen industry. The first initiative is [Gender Matters Webinars](#), an exciting series of webinars hosted by Screenworks, and presented by a range of successful women working in key creative roles across the Australian screen sector. The second is [Gender Matters Connect](#), a mentoring program that will connect women and gender diverse screen practitioners with industry mentors, delivered by Women in Film and Television Australia (WIFT Australia) and Screen Australia.

Screen Australia's Head of Content, **Sally Caplan** said, "Screen Australia champions gender equity, inclusion and diversity throughout the screen sector, and these initiatives have been developed to deliver real and tangible outcomes for those beginning to work within the industry or taking the next steps in their career.

"Gender Matters was created to address the underutilisation of female talent in key creative roles in the Australian screen industry, and we hope these initiatives will work towards greater gender parity by connecting with, supporting and empowering people currently underrepresented within the industry. We thank the speakers at the Gender Matters Webinars and mentors participating in Gender Matters Connect for leading by example and sharing their experiences and expertise with participants. It is important that practitioners feel empowered and can see a pathway to achieving their goals within the sector, and we hope these initiatives will assist participants in their chosen career."

Gender Matters Taskforce Chair, **Joanna Werner** said, "The Gender Matters Taskforce is proudly committed to supporting systemic change within the industry. The heart of our mission is to see the inclusion and representation of women significantly rise, ensuring gender parity is widely achieved. We are passionate about assisting individual practitioners within the industry, with the ultimate goal of enacting an overdue widespread cultural change, by empowering and supporting more women and bringing opportunities for greater representation to the screen sector."

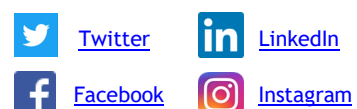
Gender Matters Webinars

Screenworks, in collaboration with the Gender Matters Taskforce and Screen Australia, will host Gender Matters Webinars, a series of webinars over five weeks from the end of April. The webinars will cover a cross-section of the screen sector, with individual sessions focusing on screenwriting, directing, producing, documentary filmmaking and Heads of Departments/crew roles, and will be presented by women working across the Australian screen sector.

Each webinar will engage with representatives from the Gender Matters Taskforce and the wider industry, leveraging their expertise and connections to advocate for change in each of their individual areas of speciality. Speakers include Gender Matters Taskforce Chair and producer Joanna Werner, director Corrie Chen, documentary filmmakers Jen Peedom and Yaara Bou Melhem, and screenwriter and Gender Matters Taskforce member Sarah Bassiuni, with the documentary webinar moderated by Gender Matters Taskforce member and Dean of RMIT University's School of Media and Communication Lisa French. Registrations to attend these webinars are now open, with more information on the series, including a list of speakers, available [here](#).

Screenworks Industry Development Manager **Jeanie Davison** said, "We're very excited to be collaborating with Screen Australia and the Gender Matters Taskforce on this initiative. Encouraging diversity of voices in the screen industry is really important to us at Screenworks, and these webinars are also designed to help connect practitioners in regional, remote and rural parts of

Media enquiries: Amy Burgess
+61 2 8113 5886 | +61 413 190 195 | amy.burgess@screenaustralia.gov.au
www.screenaustralia.gov.au





MEDIA RELEASE

Australia to the wider industry. It will be a great opportunity to interact with some of the country's most accomplished filmmakers across a range of disciplines and genres, and to feel a sense of community, wherever in Australia participants are based.”

Gender Matters Connect

Gender Matters Connect will facilitate mentorships between emerging to mid-career professionals, with experienced practitioners from the Gender Matters Taskforce, Screen Australia and the wider screen industry. The program will include 3 x 1 hour one-on-one mentorships, group workshops, access to an exclusive online Facebook group to facilitate networking, as well as introductions to screen funding bodies.

Mentors will have experience and expertise in different areas within the industry and will include Gender Matters Taskforce members Deputy Chair, investor and company director Deanne Weir; writer and producer Liz Doran; cinematographer Bonnie Elliott; writer and producer Monique Keller; content creator and actor Rosie Lourde; producer Meg O’Connell and filmmaker Fiona Tuomy. Wider industry mentors include producers Lisa Shaunessy and Belinda Dean, Screen Australia’s Head of Development Nerida Moore and Screen Australia’s Head of Content Sally Caplan, to name a few. WIFT Australia will facilitate the mentor program and registrations are now open. While the program aims to help as many mentees as possible, spaces are limited. For more information, full list of mentors and to apply visit [here](#).

WIFT Australia Chair **Katrina Irawati Graham** said, “WIFT Australia know the systemic issues in the screen industry can lock out female and gender diverse voices. This especially impacts people who are also from historically marginalised communities. Key relationships created by mentorship programs can unlock new and reciprocal pathways for participants. This makes them a powerful tool in the fight for gender equality, equity and parity. We welcome the collaboration with the Gender Matters Taskforce in creating support and access via the Gender Matters Connect mentorship program.”

ABOUT GENDER MATTERS TASKFORCE

The Gender Matters Taskforce is a volunteer-based advisory body for Screen Australia made up of women working across the Australian screen sector. The [current iteration of the Taskforce was announced in 2020](#) and is chaired by acclaimed producer Joanna Werner, with industry veteran and powerbroker Deanne Weir serving as Deputy Chair. The Taskforce provides independent advice to the agency to deliver outcomes for female creatives and assist in the broader industry efforts to achieve gender parity.

ABOUT SCREENWORKS

Screenworks is a registered charity that provides support, leadership and vision for the regional screen industries in Australia. The principal objective of Screenworks is to promote and advance the screen industry in regional, rural and remote Australia, with a focus on the industry cluster in the Northern Rivers region of NSW.

Screenworks is a home-grown not-for-profit, membership-based association managed by a board of volunteer directors that provide industry, management and screen industry knowledge and experience.

ABOUT WIFT Australia

Media enquiries: Amy Burgess
+61 2 8113 5886 | +61 413 190 195 | amy.burgess@screenaustralia.gov.au
www.screenaustralia.gov.au



Twitter



LinkedIn



Facebook



Instagram



MEDIA RELEASE

Women in Film & Television Australia (WIFT Australia) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to achieving gender equality in the Australian screen industry through advocacy, education and support for ALL women and non-binary screen industry practitioners. Our feminism is intersectional. Our vision is for a powerful, joyful, well-resourced, and safe screen community where ALL women and gender diverse people are equally free to thrive, lead and create.

Screenworks Contact

Jeanie Davison
Industry Development Manager
02 6681 1188 | jeanie@screenworks.com.au

WIFT Australia Contact

Katrina Irawati Graham
WIFT Australia, Chair
0432 493 304 | qldboardmember@wiftaustralia.org.au

Media enquiries: Amy Burgess
+61 2 8113 5886 | +61 413 190 195 | amy.burgess@screenaustralia.gov.au
www.screenaustralia.gov.au

