

To whom it may concern,

I commend Screen Australia's proposal to support 'innovation throughout the industry'. However, I am deeply concerned that the current guidelines do not wholly reflect this goal through strategies that embrace the next generation of filmmakers.

For me, the key areas of concern are:

Short drama and documentary funding

Successfully directing short form productions is a vital stepping-stone for most directors and producers before they are considered for longer form broadcast work. It is rare that successful high-quality shorts are the result of amateur, no-budget filmmaking and denying emerging practitioners access to this kind of funding will make it extremely difficult for many to make the transition to longer form projects. Proper budgets not only increase production values, they allow production teams an opportunity to work in a professional and accountable capacity before moving onto higher-scaled projects with bigger budgets and more investors.

Currently, 'shorts funding' at a state level is limited. In WA short documentary and drama funding is capped at 20K and 70K respectively. With these budgets it is extremely difficult to pay crew award wages and more often than not favours need to be negotiated with local services and facilities. If Screen Australia does not have the scope to significantly fund short productions it should at the very least work closely with the state agencies to *ensure* there isn't a gap in funding in this part of the industry.

Internships

Mentorships and internships are crucial to fostering relationships between generations of 'emerging' and 'experienced' practitioners. As the recipient of an AFC funded internship I lament the absence of this funding in the new guidelines. Given that the national broadcasters no longer provide the training grounds that they used to, I think it is vital that our national funding body consider the ways that it is supporting practitioner development. Fellowships certainly have their benefits, but nothing can replace hands-on production experience in the form of an internship under the guidance of a mentor.

Eligibility of Producers

I encourage Screen Australia to re-assess its criteria regarding 'Experienced Producers' and 'Experienced Executive Producers' and would like to see teams being assessed on their merits. Teaming producers with experienced EP's can certainly be beneficial, but making it mandatory not only inflates budgets, it has the

potential to force teams into relationships that may not necessarily be creatively beneficial for the project or the industry.

As a mid-career documentary filmmaker, I recognise that I am writing from a particular perspective, and trust the new guidelines will reflect the need for support and growth across skill levels, genres and platforms. The direction of the new charter symbolises what could be a watershed moment for the Australian film industry. As we move into the new era I encourage Screen Australia focus on strategies that will promote a healthy industry that ensures a strong voice for innovative programme makers, from all backgrounds, generations and levels of experience.

With thanks for your time and consideration,

Britt Arthur