

## GENDER MATTERS: BRILLIANT STORIES AND BRILLIANT CAREERS

In December 2015, Screen Australia announced **Gender Matters**, a new \$5 million initiative that aims to ensure that Screen Australia production funding is targeted to creative teams and stories (writer, producer, director and protagonist) that are at least 50% female by the end of 2018.

Gender Matters comprises five distinct programs to address the gender imbalance within the Australian film industry. These programs both incentivise the industry and provide new opportunities for women.

Screen Australia received a record-breaking 452 applications for **Brilliant Stories** (333) and **Brilliant Careers** (119), the first two programs under this initiative. **This is the most applications ever received for any funding program in Screen Australia's history.** Successful applicants for these funds were announced on 12 July 2016 and will share in more than \$3 million of funding.

The first step of the Gender Matters program was to change Screen Australia's **Assessment Criteria** to encourage projects that promote gender and cultural diversity. These changes were implemented in December 2015 and were complemented by the announcement of **Brilliant Stories** and **Brilliant Careers**.

- **Brilliant Stories** is a targeted initiative to increase storytelling by women, focusing on bold, original and compelling story concepts. Successful applicants for Brilliant Stories will receive up to \$100,000 for feature films; up to \$50,000 to develop an inventive concept into a scripted television series of any genre or budget size; and up to \$50,000 for scripted online and interactive projects. These projects must satisfy the 'Three Tick Test', in which three out of four creative positions (producer, writer, director and protagonist) are female.
- **Brilliant Careers** will create business and industry infrastructure around women, encouraging mentorship schemes, placements, slate development, workshops, events and proposals for strategy and business development. The program recognises the importance and value of women in the screen industry, both in business and as storytellers. The fund is for companies, industry organisations and guilds for proposals of up to \$250,000 that: generate sustainable careers in the screen industry for women; identify gaps in career development pathways for female creatives; and support projects and businesses that connect content to audiences.

All applications were assessed by Screen Australia and a longlist for both funds was then submitted to external industry assessors. The industry assessors for **Brilliant Stories** were: writer/director/producer **Sally Cheshier**; Head of Australia & NZ Acquisitions at Transmission Films **Megan Young**; screenwriter **John Collee**; producer **Mimi Butler**; CEO and Festival Director of the Adelaide Film Festival **Amanda Duthie**; Head of Australian Production at Roadshow Films **Seph McKenna**; producer **Pauline Clague** and actor **Sacha Horler**.

The industry assessors for **Brilliant Careers** were: CEO of the First Australian Completion Bond Company **Corrie Soeterboek**; Head of Arts at the ABC **Mandy Chang** and Head of Australian Production at Roadshow Films **Seph McKenna**.

### NEXT STEPS

Further details about the final two stages of Gender Matters - **Better Deals** (a pilot program to enhance the distribution and marketing of Australian films with significant female content) and **Attachments for Women** (a program that requires female attachments to projects when Screen Australia invests more than \$500,000) - will be announced later this year.

### BEYOND GENDER

Gender Matters is a direct response to the status of women in the screen industry, but Screen Australia recognises that there are other groups that are under-represented. In conjunction with organisations including SBS, ABC, MEAA and the Australian Human Rights Commission, Screen Australia has undertaken a new research project about **diversity in Australian television drama**. The most comprehensive of its kind, the [project](#) will provide insight into the levels of representation of cultural diversity, disability and LGBTIQI in Australian television drama broadcast over the last five years. The findings from this research will be announced in August 2016.

[Click here](#) for the Gender Matters National Hub including:

- [Information](#) about Brilliant Stories and Brilliant Careers
- [A video series](#) looking at marketplace, audience, stories and characters
- The [Gender Matters: Women in the Australian Screen Industry](#) report

Follow the conversation on Twitter: [@ScreenAustralia](#) and [#GenderMatters](#)

### Media enquiries

Tel 02 8113 5800 | 0405 185 699 | [tamara.zimet@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:tamara.zimet@screenaustralia.gov.au)  
[www.screenaustralia.gov.au](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au)

