



AUSTRALIAN
INTERNATIONAL
DOCUMENTARY
CONFERENCE

MEDIA RELEASE

Screen Australia and Al Jazeera announce Witness pitching comp for AIDC

Wednesday 18 September 2019: Screen Australia and Al Jazeera English's flagship documentary strand Witness, have today announced a new pitching competition for early career documentary filmmakers to take place at [AIDC](#). The initiative offers applicants the chance to receive a \$100,000 commission, with 50/50 funding from Screen Australia and Al Jazeera, for a 25 minute documentary to be released on AJE Witness across Al Jazeera platforms including television, online and apps.

Applications open today and up to six projects will be selected to take part in the pitching forum held at AIDC in Melbourne from 1-4 March 2020. Applicants will need to be able to present an engaging pitch that demonstrates bold storytelling, includes a strong central character driving the narrative arc, and can make a global impact with a topical global theme as a backdrop. Up to three projects will be commissioned.

Head of Documentary **Bernadine Lim** said, "We want to inspire and support early career documentary filmmakers to discover and embrace international opportunities in this rapidly changing media landscape. This collaboration with AJE Witness and AIDC offers an incredible opportunity for practitioners to make a documentary for a highly acclaimed platform with access to a global audience. For the three winning projects \$100,000 is a significant amount of money, and I can't wait to see the caliber of projects and ideas that come in."

Executive Producer of AJE Witness, **Fiona Lawson-Baker** said, "We are delighted to partner with Screen Australia and the AIDC on this exciting documentary initiative. We very much look forward to collaborating with independent Australian filmmakers on observational documentaries that place human experience at the heart of the story, with unique and empowering perspectives that inform and connect with our global audiences."

AIDC Conference Director **Alice Burgin** said, "Al Jazeera's Witness strand is an unparalleled go-to for powerful documentary storytelling that reaches huge international audiences. This initiative driven by Screen Australia and Al Jazeera demonstrates a strong vision for new Australian stories, and we cannot wait to showcase these at AIDC."

Applicant teams must consist of at least a director or producer, one of whom has at least one screen credit in their respective role on a project that is no less than 15 minutes in duration and has been broadcast and/or screened at a recognised film festival, or distributed on a significant curated online platform. All key creatives must be Australian citizens or residents.

To apply, teams need to submit synopsis information, a detailed treatment, a director's statement, an outline of what kind of impact you expect your project to have, and up to up to three minutes of footage or a proof of concept video that demonstrates character and storyline.

Selected finalists must be available to attend AIDC 2020 on Monday 2 March in Melbourne. Al Jazeera will provide the six finalists with a complimentary day-pass to attend AIDC to pitch. Interstate finalists are also eligible for an additional contribution from Screen Australia to assist in travel costs in getting to Melbourne.

For more information on eligibility and application guidelines click [here](#).

Applications close **Friday 1 November**.

Media enquiries: Jessica Parry
+61 2 8113 5833 | +61 428 767 836 | jessica.parry@screenaustralia.gov.au
www.screenaustralia.gov.au



Twitter



LinkedIn



Facebook



Instagram