

Screen Australia, SBS and NITV call for applications to Digital Originals 2023

Monday 29 May 2023: Screen Australia, SBS and National Indigenous Television (NITV) have announced that applications are now open for the fourth year of the highly successful Digital Originals initiative.

Digital Originals aims to develop exciting and innovative short-form drama projects to premiere as a single hour-long episode program on SBS On Demand and NITV, from screen creatives historically under-represented in the sector. This includes people who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, First Nations Australians, people with disability, female and gender diverse, LGBTQIA+ and those who are located in regional and remote areas.

Recent recipients include [Appetite](#), which was selected as one of 10 series in the Short Form Competition at Canneseries 2023 and [Latecomers](#), which was among six series featured in the Short Forms Competition at Series Mania in Lille, France - with both series the only Australian productions selected for each of the prestigious festivals. Three more projects from the 2022 cohort, *Warm Props*, *Moni* and *Moonbird*, are currently in development, with up to three progressing to production.

Screen Australia's Head of Online and Games **Lee Naimo** said, "It's amazing how quickly Digital Originals has established itself as a meaningful pathway for emerging creators to advance their careers, and I am sure this announcement is a welcome one for many talented creators in the industry wanting to follow in the footsteps of past recipients.

"Whether it's previous recipients stepping up their careers on bigger projects, or series like *Latecomers* and *Appetite* receiving local and international acclaim, this initiative is a proven talent escalator with a deserved place in the careers of so many exciting writers, directors and producers."

SBS Scripted Commissioning Editor, Donna Chang, said, "Digital Originals continue to break new ground in storytelling and showcase the tidal wave of talent we have here in Australia reflecting the cultures and lived experiences of people who have historically been under-represented in our sector. It's exciting to be a part of an initiative that is making an impact in our industry as a career pathway - at SBS, we're thrilled to have had Digital Originals alum like Corrie Chen (*Homecoming Queens*, *New Gold Mountain*), Stevie Cruz-Martin (*The Tailings*, *Safe Home*), Liam Heyen (*Latecomers*, *Erotic Stories*) and others, go on to work across our flagship network dramas. I can't wait to see the projects and talent this initiative elevates next."

NITV's Head of Commissions, **Marissa McDowell** added, "Through Digital Originals, we want to put the spotlight on emerging First Nations storytellers and provide a platform for a new generation of fresh voices. Each year we continue to be impressed by the calibre of projects, innovative approaches, and inspiring stories that Digital Originals delivers, testament to the incredible emerging creative talent that we have in this country. It's a wonderful and meaningful opportunity, and I encourage creatives to submit their ideas and get involved."

Teams will be selected to attend an exclusive workshop in October 2023, run by Screen Australia, SBS and NITV. The workshop will focus on narrative writing skills, as well as developing the projects to align with the SBS Charter and SBS On Demand platform, culminating in a pitch to Screen Australia, SBS and NITV. Teams outside of Sydney will receive flights and accommodation for up to three team members to attend the workshop. Teams of either two or three members are eligible to apply and must include one writer.

From these teams, up to six will be chosen to take their projects into further development, and from these up to three will be chosen for production funding and commissioning with SBS, NITV and Screen Australia.

Submissions should include an up to three-page pitch document outlining the details of the series and more information on the creative team; an up to three-minute pitch video outlining the creators' personal connection to and reason for wanting to develop the project; and an up to 10-page script sample of previous work. For more information on eligibility and application guidelines [click here](#).

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