

SBS and Screen Australia announce *Digital Originals* short-form content projects

SBS and Screen Australia have selected ten projects for development as part of the *Digital Originals* initiative, aimed at providing tangible opportunities for writers from backgrounds underrepresented in the Australian screen sector.

The teams, which hail from across Australia and shine a light on often untold stories, are being developed as part of a workshop under the mentorship of Australian television director and producer, Anna Dokoza (*Flight Of The Conchords*, *Lady Dynamite*, *Special*) and Ryan O'Connell, writer, producer and star of the Emmy-nominated Netflix short-form series, *Special*. The initiative will continue with a second workshop in February, and up to three projects will be selected for further development, and potentially production for SBS On Demand with Screen Australia funding.

SBS Director of TV and Online Content, Marshall Heald, says: "With more than 220 submissions to the *Digital Originals* initiative, there is a clearly an appetite to share diverse experiences through short-form storytelling.

"Exploring themes that resonate with all Australians, including culture, sexuality, disability and grief, we're excited to see the outcomes of these workshops, and the unique stories that this next generation of Australian talent can bring to audiences."

The *Digital Originals* initiative represents an expansion of Screen Australia's existing Story Development and Online Production funds. Investment Manager for Online, Lee Naimo, said: "We were delighted to receive such an incredibly strong pool of applications for this SBS initiative, and the selected projects show real promise of being able to make the journey from development to production."

The selected projects include:

- *A Beginner's Guide to Grief* - Anna Lindner (Writer)
- *Breeders* - Holly Zwalf (Writer), Erin McBean (Producer) and Dallas Webster (Writer)
- *The Dissolution Loops* - Grant Scicluna (Writer / Producer)



- *50 Shades of Black (Girl)* - Gemma Bird Matheson (Writer) Lizzie Cater (Producer) and Ratidzo Mambo (Producer)
- *fine.* - Kathryn Darrigan (Writer) and Logan Mucha (Director)
- *Iggy & Ace 5eva*- AB Morrison (Writer) and Hannah Ngo (Producer)
- *Milk & Honey* - Melissa Anastasi (Writer and Director)
- *Odd Bods* - Belinda Dean (Producer) and Emily Dash (Writer)
- *Summer of Evil* - Michael Hudson (Writer/Director) and Gillian Moody (Producer)
- *Surprise Party* - Imogen McCluskey (Writer/Director), Hannah Lehmann (Director) and China White (Producer)

The *Digital Originals* initiative is an evolution of SBS's *Short-Form Content Initiative*, which aims to provide opportunities and support for writers from diverse backgrounds currently underrepresented in the sector. These include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people living with a disability, females, those who identify as LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse, and people living in rural and remote areas.

Ends

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