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## Talent USA recipients announced

**Embargoed until 8AM Monday 6 August 2018:** Sixteen Australians will travel to Los Angeles for high level meetings and workshops as part of Screen Australia's third Talent USA contingent. The successful applicants include Ryan Griffen (*Cleverman*), Sarah Lambert (*Love Child*), Yolanda Ramke (*Cargo*) and three creative teams.

To be held 16-21 September 2018 in partnership with the Australian Writers' Guild, the focus of this delegation is on making business connections with the US television industry, and learning from established LA-based creators and decisions makers.

Participants were selected due to either having had considerable international success, or having already established interest in the US. All recipients are also the key creators of a market-ready TV series which is suitable for an international partnership.

"International perceptions of the kinds of stories Australians can tell has changed dramatically over the past five years," said **Graeme Mason**, CEO Screen Australia. "Being an English-speaking country, major markets like the UK and US are looking to our screen industry for ideas, talent, producing partners and locations. Our Australian stories can absolutely travel beyond our shores, and that's why Screen Australia enables our creators to physically travel abroad to make international business connections."

AWG CEO **Jacqueline Elaine** said opportunities such as Talent USA were vital for building connections between Australian screenwriting talent and the industry internationally.

"There's a hunger for unique voices, and Australian creators can offer the global industry top quality scripts that find the balance between the unique and the universal. Australian screenwriters can compete with the best in the world, and there's never been a better time to grasp the opportunity to do so."

### TALENT USA SEPTEMBER 2018 CONTINGENT:

Abridged biographies are listed below. For US industry representatives wishing to access full creator biographies please [email Harry Avramidis](mailto:email@harryavramidis.com).

**Ryan Griffen:** Within a year of his debut short film [You Turn](#) premiering at the Sydney Film Festival in 2015, Griffen had quickly made a name for himself in television as the creator of ABC's [Cleverman](#). Now in its second season, the genre series which draws heavily on Indigenous creation stories, can now be seen on Sundance TV, Netflix and BBC3. Griffen also has two graphic novels in the works with Gestalt Publishing.

**Spencer and Lloyd Harvey:** Siblings and creative partners, the Harvey's are established short filmmakers with appearances at the Melbourne International Film Festival ([The Gift](#)), Austin Film Festival ([Jack & Jill](#)) and Tropfest ([Sorry Baby](#)). The duo have already attracted US interest, having been awarded an Academy Nicholl Fellowship by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science as [one of five screenwriting award recipients](#) for their work [Photo Booth](#). [www.spencerandlloydharvey.com](http://www.spencerandlloydharvey.com)

**Sarah Lambert:** As the creator, writer and a producer of the Nine Network's hit television show [Love Child](#), Sarah's creative reputation is already firmly established. Lambert has also written for [Love My Way](#), [Dance Academy](#), [A Place to Call Home](#) and [The Doctor Blake Mysteries](#). She is currently the writer/showrunner on the highly anticipated new Foxtel drama [Lambs of God](#) (2019 premiere), a twisted gothic fairy tale starring Ann Dowd ([Handmaid's Tale](#)), Jessica Barden ([End of the F\\*\\*\\*World](#)) and Essie Davis ([Game of Thrones](#)).

**Samantha Lang:** With her debut feature [The Well](#) nominated for a Cannes Palme d'Or, and an incredible 11 AFI Awards back home, Lang's directing career had a flying start. Remaining on the international stage with [The Monkey's Mask](#) (Toronto International Film Festival premiere) and French-language film [L'Idole](#) (Toronto and Locarno Festival), Lang was tempted home to take the position of Head of Directing at AFTRS (2010-2016). Lang is currently the President of the Australian Directors Guild. [www.samanthalang.com](http://www.samanthalang.com)

Media enquiries: **Scott Dawkins**  
+61 2 8113 5886 | +61 403 937 074 | [scott.dawkins@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:scott.dawkins@screenaustralia.gov.au)  
[www.screenaustralia.gov.au](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au)



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**Sam Meikle:** As one of Australia's most experienced television writers, Meikle boasts an astounding resume including [All Saints](#), [House Husbands](#), [The Secret Daughter](#), [Here Come The Habibs](#), [Crownies](#) and iconic soaps [Home and Away](#) and [Neighbours](#). Meikle has also worked internationally, including script producing the BBC's [Out of the Blue](#) and as a writer on History's [Vikings: Athelstan's Journal](#).

**Yolanda Ramke:** With the distinction of being the writer and co-director of Australia's first Netflix Original film ([Cargo](#)), Ramke's work is already known the world over. Even more impressive is that the film was Ramke's feature debut and born out of the 2013 Tropfest short by the same name (which was a Finalist and has [over 15 million views on YouTube](#)). Prior to [Cargo](#), Ramke had also been co-nominated for Australian Directors Guild and Australian Writers' Guild awards for the short film [Cold Hearts](#).

**Hannah and Eliza Reilly:** Starting their careers in radio, the Reilly siblings have gone on to become factual, comedy and musical creators. Their debut series [Growing Up Gracefully](#) aired on the ABC in 2017 with a tongue-in-cheek look at life as an Australian woman (which featured viral musical hit [3.43](#)). The sisters then became the first online comedy creators funded by Screen Australia's Gender Matters initiative to go into production, with their four-part comedy series [Sheilas](#) launching on 21 August 2018.  
<http://sheilas.tv/> <fb.com/iconicduo>

**Giula Sandler:** With over 20 years of experience, including as the writer and script producer of the Emmy-award winning [Nowhere Boys](#) (season two), Sandler is one of Australia's most in-demand writers. Having worked on some of the nation's biggest TV exports including [Glitch](#), [A Place to Call Home](#), [Wentworth](#) and [McLeod's Daughters](#), Sandler's work is seen internationally. Sandler is currently a writer on a yet-to-be-announced ITV true crime drama.

**Keith Thompson:** Best known for his movie adaptation of Tony Brigg's play [The Sapphires](#) which went on to become a global hit at the cinema, Thompson is a three-time winner of the Australian Writers' Guild 'Best Script of the Year.' A master of adaptation, he works extensively in Australia and UK developing novels for the screen. In addition to his Sundance-selected feature film [Clubland](#), Thompson's television works include BAFTA nominated children's series [Lockie Leonard](#), and mini-series bio-pics of Paul Hogan and Olivia Newton John.

**Christiaan and Connor Van Vuuren:** Among Australia's first wave of YouTube stars, the Van Vuuren brothers are the writer/directors behind some of the internet's most beloved characters including The Bondi Hipsters. The pair made the jump to TV first with MTV ([SICK!](#)) in 2012 and then with the ABC ([Soul Mates](#)) in 2014. [Soul Mates](#) returned in 2016, with both Van Vuurens soon also finding themselves in demand as TV directors, working on [Sando](#), [Squinters](#) and [The Elegant Gentlemen's Guide to Knife Fighting](#). [www.vanvuurenbro.com](http://www.vanvuurenbro.com)

**Adele Vuko:** As one third of comedy troupe Skit Box, Vuko was propelled into people's news feeds in 2015 courtesy of viral musical hit [Activewear](#). Picked up for a full comedy series ([Wham Bam Thank You Ma'am](#)), Vuko was soon on television in Australia (ABC) and the US (SEESO) as co-star, co-writer and co-director. Further television appearances followed, including on Foxtel's sketch comedy show [The Slot](#), with a [Google/Screen Australia funded online pilot](#) being released later this year. [www.skitbox.tv](http://www.skitbox.tv)

**Greg Waters:** As a writer and producer, Waters' resume spans over 15 years, including as the writer of the ABC's recent telemovie [Riot](#), and script producer on dark comedy [The Letdown](#) (ABC), [The Other Guy](#) (Stan, Hulu) and political drama [Secret City](#) (Foxtel, Netflix). With an extended tenure as the Development Manager for Drama at ABC TV, Waters executive produced hits including [Rake](#), plus was a script executive on some of Australia's most beloved titles such as [Janet King](#) and [Secret River](#).

**Charles Williams:** Williams has written, produced and directed five shorts to date that that have screened at over 100 festivals and twice been nominated for Best Short Fiction Film at the AACTA Awards. This year he was awarded the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival for his short [All These Creatures](#).



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## ABOUT TALENT USA

Talent USA was piloted with [27 creators in 2017](#) travelling to California. The initiative proved so successful it repeated in March 2018 with [13 creators](#) traveling to New York.

In addition to the professional and creative development outcomes, the tours are particularly beneficial in helping creators attract US representation, foreign finance as well as production, broadcast and distribution partners.

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Media enquiries: Scott Dawkins  
+61 2 8113 5886 | +61 403 937 074 | [scott.dawkins@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:scott.dawkins@screenaustralia.gov.au)  
[www.screenaustralia.gov.au](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au)



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