

Submission to Screen Australia Documentary Revision 2019

Name: Penelope McDonald

Job Title: Principal

Company: Chili Films

IMDB/Screen Guide Link: <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0567944/>

File Attached:

What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the proposed changes to the Development Program?

Increase in development funds is good, as well as the addition of different levels of funding.

The addition of seed funding will provide support particularly to new voices, as well as concepts that are not fully developed. However there should be clarity around credits requirement for this funding, even if less than the broadcast credits required for other funding, to enable some filtering process.

Advanced development could be increased to \$30K, to allow for preparation of more materials.

Concerned about not having rounds, as this could impact cashflow and challenge the agency's efficiency.

What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the proposed changes to the Producer Program?

Support the increase as this is how many documentaries are being made in the current climate, given limited broadcast opportunities, and support the cap of \$500 000.

What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the proposed changes to the Commissioned Program?

Support the lowering of the cap and the opening up of platforms.

Formats that are supported through the commissioned program should have a significant percentage of Australian ownership, as this will encourage the development of Australian formats.

What feedback, if any, do you have regarding the introduction of the Completion Fund?

Needs clarity about whether and when this fund can be used for filming, and whether other production funds can be applied for as well as the completion fund.

Do you have any further feedback?

Impact marketing strand would be beneficial. Many documentaries in recent times that have had great success in raising debate and discussion in Australia have been able to cut through and get attention often due to marketing support from non-government sources that are not necessarily available to all projects that would benefit, and that the Australian public would benefit from knowing about.

The smarty grants system should have capacity for a previous application to be copied across, particularly in relation to credits, to make the process more time efficient for the applicant.

Cinema on demand should be considered a legitimate pathway in terms of the offset, if a strong business case in terms of audience is put forward.

Hybrid documentaries with higher budgets and significant scripted/enacted content should be able to apply, or be bumped over to the feature fund.