



## IMPACT AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES RETURN TO MELBOURNE, ELEVATING LOCAL WRITERS TO THE GLOBAL STAGE

**MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA – 9am, 9 June 2021 (AEST)** — Building upon the success of last year’s inaugural program, Impact and Gentle Giant Media Group are launching Impact Australia 2, the follow up to the highly coveted screenwriter accelerator program, which will be held this year in Melbourne, with principal funding from Screen Australia and Film Victoria.

Supported by Learning Partner the University of Melbourne and state and territory screen agencies across Australia, the program aims to discover, cultivate, and empower Australian screenwriters. Applications will be open from 9 – 20 June, with the eight-week mentorship program beginning on 13 September 2021.

“Impact Australia far exceeded our expectations in terms of the number and quality of applications. The attendance at our Pitch Day and interest in the projects from global buyers and producers attest to the level of talent of the writers, and the quality of their projects,” said Impact CEO **Tyler Mitchell**. “It confirmed what we have long suspected and are excited to continue fostering – that Australia is full of talented screenwriters with stories that resonate with audiences everywhere.”

“I am thrilled that we are once again bringing the groundbreaking Impact program to Australia for its second season,” said Gentle Giant Chairman and CEO **Greg Bassler**. “Melbourne and Australia continue to show the great creativity and imagination of Australian filmmakers, bringing a global focus to our home-grown compelling original IP.”

During the program, local Creators will be paired with a world-class screen and television writer, or Shaper, to help craft their project and prepare them for Pitch Day with the goal of selling their project. Impact Australia supports participating Creators with all they need to succeed, including a stipend to allow them to relocate to Melbourne and focus on their projects during the eight-week intensive program.

While the program took place virtually last year due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, this year the program intends to be in-person on the Victorian College of the Arts’ Southbank campus at the University of Melbourne.

“Following on from the success of last year’s program, we look forward to partnering with Impact again to discover fresh Australian creatives and provide them with a new pathway to global audiences,” said Screen Australia CEO **Graeme Mason**. “Australian creators have exciting stories to tell and by connecting them with

world-class shapers and key decision makers in the global marketplace through Impact Australia, we look forward to more Australian voices on the global stage.”

“With so many world-class writers who call Victoria home, Melbourne is the perfect city to host Impact Australia,” said Minister for Creative Industries **Danny Pearson**. “The Victorian Government is proud to partner with Impact, Gentle Giant Media and Screen Australia on this initiative that allows local talent to develop fruitful partnerships with established screen professionals, and creates a springboard for their work to receive global attention.”

Named by FastCompany as the world’s second most innovative film and TV company in 2021 – behind only Netflix – Impact is exploding the typical Hollywood development system to elevate fresh voices.

The inaugural Impact Australia program featured fourteen Australian writers who were mentored by Stuart Beattie (*Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl, Collateral*), Shaun Grant (*True History of the Kelly Gang, Berlin Syndrome*), Sarah Heyward (*Girls, Modern Love*), Jason Smilovic (*Condor, My Own Worst Enemy*), and Kai Wu (*Paper Girls, Carnival Row*).

Eight of the 10 projects have been set up with attachments in Australia or the United States and three of the unrepresented writers found American representation. Alumni of the program have since been hired in writing rooms for Netflix and AMC, and hired on assignments by companies such as LuckyChap and Hoodlum.

Applications are open from 9 – 20 June. For more information and to apply, visit [apply.impact.net](https://apply.impact.net).

Impact Australia is financed by Screen Australia, along with principal partner, Film Victoria.

The program is also supported by learning partner the University of Melbourne, Screen NSW, Screen Queensland and Screen Territory.

For more information about Impact and Impact Australia, visit <https://impact.net/australia>

## **ABOUT IMPACT**

Founded by Brian Grazer and Ron Howard and led by CEO Tyler Mitchell, Impact discovers, cultivates and empowers creative storytellers around the world through its innovative talent discovery and development accelerator, which enables promising writers to create their best work and break into the industry in a matter of months. Impact recently launched *The Impact Network*, a market-network designed for entertainment industry professionals. Impact’s talent identification system is able to rapidly evaluate thousands of submissions and ensures that all creators are given equal access, opportunity, and transparency, while removing any barriers to entry. Since 2018, Impact has built a robust network of more than 60,000 writers across over 125 countries and developed 71 projects – (a rate of three, high-quality pieces of original IP per month). 35 of the projects have been set up at major studios throughout the industry, including but not limited to: Netflix, Sony, FX, Amblin, Legendary, Village Roadshow, Quibi, Di Boneventura Pictures, Scott Free, Imagine Entertainment. 36 Impact writers who came into Impact without representation were signed by major agencies and management companies, including but not limited to: Verve, CAA, WME, UTA, Management 360, Lit, 3Arts, Anonymous, Grandview, Circle of Confusion and Writ Large. Impact’s content accelerators have featured 86 diverse writers: 44 men and 42 women, 33 BIPOC, 10 LGBTQIA+-identifying individuals, and 14 writers over 40. Impact also announced in October that the organization was a majority BIPOC company, further demonstrating its commitment to diversity and inclusion. The Impact Network is used by industry producers and executives from over 350 companies, including ABC, Amazon, CBS, Disney, HBO, Netflix, NBC, Paramount, Universal, Amazon, and Warner Brothers.

In addition, Impact is working with Netflix to source and develop original feature film content and Skydance Television to source TV pitches from the next generation of screenwriters. In 2021, Impact also partnered with Imagine Entertainment to source an emerging writer to pen an original family basketball film and worked with Screen Queensland to source crew attachments for Ron Howard's in-production feature *Thirteen Lives*. They also launched their first international accelerator program in Australia in association with Gentle Giant Media Group and Screen Australia. Impact also recently launched a podcast, which is an outgrowth of its speaker series that accompanies the accelerator. "IMPACT: The Podcast" features conversations with world renowned artists such as: Peter Berg (*Friday Night Lights, Lone Survivor*); Issa Rae (*Insecure*); Judd Apatow (*40 Year Old Virgin, Trainwreck*); The RZA (*Wu-Tang: An American Saga*); Dave Burd aka Lil Dicky (*Dave*); Jeff Schaffer (*Curb Your Enthusiasm*); Saladin Patterson (*The Last O.G.*); Academy Award winners Frances McDormand (*Three Billboards, Fargo*), Damien Chazelle (*La La Land, Whiplash*) and Akiva Goldsman (*A Beautiful Mind, Cinderella Man*), and many more.

For more information, visit [impact.net](http://impact.net), subscribe to the Impact newsletter, and/or follow on Instagram @impact.development, Twitter @TweetsByImpact, and Facebook @impact.developmentFB.

#### **ABOUT GENTLE GIANT MEDIA GROUP**

Gentle Giant Media Group is an independent producer of Hollywood film and television and Australian treaty co-productions, which promotes the film and television production in Australia. Gentle Giant partners with major studios and independent producers, matching projects with creative and technical talent in Australia and co-producing both film and TV. Leveraging its extensive networks and contacts across Hollywood, Australia and China, Gentle Media Group also acts as a financial mediator for creative visionaries and specifically seeks out projects best suited for production in Australia. Chairman and CEO,

Chairman and CEO, Greg Basser, co-founded and led Village Roadshow Entertainment Group for over 18 years, producing 126 films with global box office exceeding U.S. \$19.5 billion. [gentlegiantmedia.com](http://gentlegiantmedia.com).

#### **ABOUT SCREEN AUSTRALIA**

Screen Australia is the Australian Federal Government agency charged with supporting the development, production and promotion of Australian scripted and documentary content. The agency funds productions for television, film and online. Screen Australia also administers Australia's Official Co-production program, in addition to the Producer Offset tax rebate which assists eligible Australian and Official Co-productions to be made. The agency provides a range of resources and opportunities to the industry including access to research, market intelligence and special initiatives. For more information visit [screenaustralia.gov.au](http://screenaustralia.gov.au).

#### **ABOUT FILM VICTORIA**

Based in Melbourne, Australia, Film Victoria is the Victorian State Government agency that provides strategic leadership and assistance to the film, television and digital media sectors of the state of Victoria.

Film Victoria's role is to ensure Victoria is a global powerhouse for screen that enriches the lives of all Victorians. The agency does this in a range of ways: through funding the production and development of screen content, supporting skills development opportunities including industry placements, attracting production to the state, location assistance, industry events and partnership activities, all which help develop and strengthen the Victorian screen industry. For more information visit [film.vic.gov.au](http://film.vic.gov.au).

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