

Screen Australia and Australians in Film announce recipients of inaugural Talent Gateway and Global Producers Exchange initiatives

Wednesday 22 September 2021: Screen Australia and Australians in Film (AiF) today announced the recipients for **Talent Gateway** and the **Global Producers Exchange**, two joint initiatives to support established Australian creatives in an increasingly global market by connecting them with key US decision makers and expanding their skills.

Supporting Partners for these industry development programs are Screen NSW, Film Victoria, South Australian Film Corporation and Scripted Ink. Industry Partners are Australian Directors' Guild, Australian Writers' Guild, Screen Producers Australia, Screen Canberra, Screen Queensland, Screen Tasmania, Screen Territory, Screenwest and Screenworks.

Screen Australia Chief Executive Officer **Graeme Mason** said, "We congratulate the successful applicants for both programs, and we look forward to supporting them as they continue to build on their already impressive careers. We received a high volume of applications and this reflects both the breadth of talent we have in Australia and the appetite from Australian screenwriters, directors and producers to connect with the epicenter of the global screen market - Hollywood - and build their reputations internationally.

"With the support of additional Federal Government funding, these programs, [along with UNTAPPED](#), allow us to offer invaluable professional and business development opportunities to these participants, connecting them with influential decision makers via roundtables, individualised mentorships and masterclasses, and ensure our projects are globally competitive.

"Our continued partnership with AiF will ensure Australian screen talent and culture is championed in the US and creates a trusted pipeline for world-class projects and collaboration between Australian creatives and Hollywood decision makers, creatives and executives."

Australians in Film Executive Director **Peter Ritchie** said, "The thirst for entertaining and quality content continues unabated internationally. The excitement of finding a new voice, series or film is what motivates us all at AiF, and we are thrilled to be working with Screen Australia, and all our national, state and territory partners, in delivering these programs to connect leading Australian screen creatives and the US industry."

Talent Gateway provides Australian screenwriters and directors, who have had some success either internationally or in Australia, with the skills, knowledge, access, and relationships necessary to succeed further in the global market. The program aims to attract US support, investment and partnerships for Australian content and careers. The Talent Gateway recipients are:

- **Vanessa Alexander:** Vanessa Alexander is an award-winning writer and producer who works between Australia, the US and the UK. Internationally, she has written for the Emmy-nominated series *The Great*, *Vikings* and *Tin Star*. She has also written for the Australian series [Love Child](#) and [The Wrong Girl](#), the latter garnering her an AWGIE nomination in 2018. Vanessa has worked extensively in both comedy and drama writers rooms where she is a sought-after storyliner with a great flair for poorly-behaved but endearing female protagonists. Vanessa currently has two series in development with CBS-Viacom.
- **Jon Bell:** Jon Bell is one of the most experienced Indigenous screenwriters in Australia. His TV credits include [Cleverman](#), which was picked up by AMC and [Ready For This](#), which earned an International Emmy Kids award nomination. His short film [The Moogai](#), won the Midnight Shorts category at SXSW 2021, Best Horror Short at the LA International Shorts

Festival 2021 and the Erwin Rado Award for Best Australian Short Film at Melbourne International Film Festival 2020. He is currently writing the feature script for *The Moogai*, produced by Causeway Films and No Coincidence Media and supported with development funding from Screen Australia.

- **Alice Foulcher and Gregory Erdstein:** Alice Foulcher and Gregory Erdstein are award-winning filmmakers from Naarm/Melbourne. Their debut feature film [That's Not Me](#) received widespread critical acclaim, ranking #5 in the Guardian's Top 10 Australian films of 2017 and earning Foulcher a Best Actress nomination from the Australian Film Critics Association. In 2020 *That's Not Me* was shortlisted by AACTA for the Byron Kennedy Award as one of the Top 12 Australian Indie Features of the decade. Their second feature *One More Shot* (Good Thing Productions/Truce Films) has received development funding from Screen Australia and Film Victoria.
- **Naomi Higgins and Humyara Mahbub:** Naomi Higgins and Humyara Mahbub are two of the writers/creators of the Netflix/ABC comedy series [Why Are You Like This](#) ("excellent and edgy" - The Guardian, "Australian comedy that's actually funny" - [news.com.au](#)). Naomi also starred in the series as Penny, and has a background in stand-up comedy, podcasting and presenting. Humyara is also an illustrator, who has been published on the ABC and Liminal among others. Between them, they have an engineering degree, a law degree, a science degree, a philosophy degree and the ability to turn any conversation into a screaming match.
- **Elise McCredie:** Elise McCredie is a director, screenwriter and showrunner. Her TV credits include the Emmy winning series, *Nowhere Boys*, the AACTA winning mini-series [Sunshine](#), [Secret City](#) and [Jack Irish](#). Her feature credits are [Strange Fits of Passion](#) (writer/director) selected for the Cannes Film Festival and nominated for three AFI awards and an AWGIE, and [Ride Like a Girl](#) nominated for an AWGIE and an AACTA. Elise is the writer, co-creator and show runner of [Stateless](#) (Netflix/ABC) which she executive produced with Cate Blanchett and Tony Ayres. *Stateless* was awarded a record 13 AACTAs, including Best Screenplay and Best Limited Series. She has been nominated for 5 Australian Writers' Guild Awards (winning twice). Elise is currently working on new film and TV projects for Big Talk, Lucky Chap, Star Disney, CBS, Netflix, Aquarius, Wooden Horse and Merman.
- **Samuel Van Grinsven:** Samuel Van Grinsven is a writer and director whose debut feature film [Sequin in a Blue Room](#) won the Audience Award at the 2019 Sydney Film Festival. It soon became a festival hit screening globally at festivals including Palm Springs International Film Festival, TIFF Next Wave, BFI Flare and MIFF. Nominations for AACTA and ADG Awards followed, as well as domestic and international theatrical releases. He is currently in development on his second feature *Went Up The Hill*, an Australia/New Zealand co-production with Causeway Films (*The Babadook*) and POP Film (*Savage*), as well as his first TV series with an Australian broadcaster.

Global Producers Exchange provides Australia's leading scripted producers the skills, knowledge, access and relationships necessary to succeed in the global market and to attract foreign investment and marketplace partnerships for Australian scripted content. The exchange aims to give Australian IP and cultural stories the opportunity to be developed with internationally based collaborators who possess a global outlook and a proven track record of success with international audiences, and to help position projects for success in the global market. The Global Producers Exchange recipients are:

- **Blackfella Films - Darren Dale and Erin Bretherton:** Blackfella Films is one of Australia's leading production companies. For over 20 years it has produced innovative, compelling and award-winning drama and factual projects which have distinguished its team, led by producer Darren Dale and director/writer Rachel Perkins, as creators of distinctive Australian content for global audiences. The company's scripted credits include the AACTA Award-winning [Total Control](#) (ABC), which premiered in the Primetime program at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2019 and was recognised with the 2020 MIPCOM Diversify TV Excellence Award for Representation of Race and Ethnicity. Previous credits also include true crime series [Deep Water](#) (SBS) which sold to the BBC, Netflix, Sundance TV/AMC and Acorn, the ground-breaking and AACTA award-winning series and telemovie [Redfern Now](#) (ABC), and the telemovie [Mabo](#) (ABC).
- **Causeway Films - Kristina Ceyton and Samantha Jennings:** Founded by Kristina Ceyton and Samantha Jennings, Causeway Films launched in 2014 with globally acclaimed [The Babadook](#) which premiered at Sundance. In 2018, Causeway delivered [The Nightingale](#), winning the Special Jury Prize at Venice Film Festival, and Australia's first Netflix Original [Cargo](#) which premiered at Tribeca. In 2019, [Buoyancy](#) premiered at the Berlinale and was Australia's submission for Best International Feature Film at the 2020 Academy Awards®. Causeway's features have won awards at Venice, Berlinale, New York Film Critics Circle, to name a few, and numerous AACTAs. In 2020 Causeway completed principal photography on three new features.
- **Closer Productions - Bec Summerton and Sophie Hyde:** Closer Productions is an Australian production company working across film and television on Kurna Land in South Australia. Their feature dramas include [52 Tuesdays](#) which won the Directing Award at Sundance (2014) and the Crystal Bear at the Berlin Film Festival (2015), and [Animals](#) (2019) based on the acclaimed novel by Emma Jane Unsworth. Their feature documentaries include Sundance favourites [Shut up Little Man!](#) (2011) and [Sam Klemke's Time Machine](#) (2015), Australian Documentary Prize Winner [Life In Movement](#) (2011) and the AACTA nominated [In My Blood It Runs](#) (2019). Closer's television work includes [F####king Adelaide](#) for ABC, [The Hunting](#) for SBS which became the network's most successful commissioned drama and won two AACTA awards, and [Aftertaste](#) for ABC, which is currently in development for its second season.
- **GoodThing - Nick Batzias and Virginia Whitwell:** GoodThing are passionate about stories with big ideas at their heart that speak to a global audience. Formed in 2018 by Nick Batzias and Virginia Whitwell, GoodThing produces both scripted and factual work for TV and cinema. Recent credits include dramatic projects such as Justin Kurzel feature film [Nitram](#) (Cannes Competition 2021, Best Actor Award, CinefestOz Best Film 2021) and absurdist comedy feature, [Nude Tuesday](#) (Director Armagan Ballantyne, International Sales Cornerstone). Feature documentaries include [2040](#) (Director Damon Gameau, Berlinale 2019), AACTA award winning [The Australian Dream](#) (Director Dan Gordon; Telluride, TIFF 2019) and [Off Country](#) (Directors John Harvey, Rhian Skirving MIFF 2021).
- **Jungle Entertainment - Jason Burrows and Chloe Rickard:** Jungle Entertainment produces premium drama and comedy, collaborating with the very best creators, and working tirelessly to champion their unique vision. Jungle Entertainment produce work that is unique on the international market and are known for a signature comedic tone, through which they explore the light and the dark in every story. 2021 will see four Jungle productions on air in the US, including [Wakefield](#) (Showtime/ ABC Australia/ BBC Studios), the fourth season of [No Activity](#) (Paramount Plus), the third season of [Mr Inbetween](#) (FX)

and the second season of [A Moody Christmas](#) (Fox). *No Activity* is also one of the highest selling formats around the world, having now been produced in several different languages.

- **Wooden Horse - Jude Troy and Matt Okine:** Wooden Horse is a dynamic new partnership between Jude Troy and Richard Finlayson and has produced two seasons of [The Other Guy](#) (Stan, Hulu & Super Channel); factual series [Waltzing the Dragon with Benjamin Law](#) (ABC); and award winning documentary [All this Mayhem](#) from the team behind *Amy*, (James Gay Rees / Chris King). Alongside executive producer, Matt Okine (*The Other Guy*) and development and production manager, Alexandra Cameron, Wooden Horse is working across a diverse slate with Australia's finest creatives including Elise McCredie, Matt Cameron, Beatrix Christian, Giulia Sandler, Michael Ware, Ben Chessell, and Gracie Otto amongst others.

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Supporting Partners



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