

---

Screen Australia's Indigenous Department presents

# STATE OF ALARM

Where does hope lie?

Indigenous People combatting Climate Change

---

A Special Factual Initiative

Issued September 2017

The Indigenous Department of Screen Australia is calling for proposals from the next generation of Indigenous screen content makers nationwide. This special factual initiative aims to advance the careers of a new generation of screen makers who have a love of factual content and feel passionately about environmental issues. If you love documentaries like *Home*, *Before the Flood*, *Cowspiracy*, *Gasland*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Rise & War on Waste* - THIS IS THE INITIATIVE FOR YOU!

STATE OF ALARM invites Indigenous screen practitioners to develop screen content aimed at global audiences. These stories will look at traditional practices of Indigenous People and how they can combat climate change with an aim to not only challenge the status quo, but provide insights and provoke thought about Indigenous solutions to the global issue of climate change.

We need projects that grapple with old knowledge in a new way, that rouse the eco-warrior in us, that make us understand and want to do our bit, that provoke us all into making a difference, that help us find hope and help us turn failure around.

These projects will have a multi-disciplinary approach and like climate change itself, will cross borders and boundaries and speak across many audience groups, but the primary audience will be the 18 – 35 year old demographic.

The stories and treatments will be compelling and persuasive and will use a range of storytelling devices to get your message out there.

What compelling story would you tell an audience if you had the chance? How can we make a difference? Are there any “save the world” lessons? Why does the story matter and why does an audience need to hear it now?

Screen Australia will develop **up to 8 projects** and from a shortlist fund the strongest projects for production funding. We want to develop either:

- **standalone documentaries at least 25 minutes each; or**
- **series proposals of around 5 to 7 minutes per episode with a minimum duration totaling 25 minutes.**

In exceptional cases we may fund longer durations if the proposal after the development phase is outstanding.

Successful projects funded for production may be augmented by funding from third parties like state film agencies, distributors, philanthropic funding, film festivals etc, and by a [Producer Equity](#) grant if eligible.

All production funded programs will work closely with an impact producer throughout the production and release phases.

## **What funding is available?**

Screen Australia has committed a notional allocation up to \$64,000 for development across all projects.

## **Who can apply?**

- All applicants and projects must meet the general criteria in our [Terms of Trade](#)
- At least a writer and director or sole writer/director may apply however if the project is successful for production funding, a producer will be required.
- The writer, director and any co-directors must be Australian Indigenous and the original concept must come from an Australian Indigenous creative
- The team must comprise predominantly Australian Indigenous key creatives
- Projects that contain key subjects will only be eligible if the application includes written confirmation that key subjects are willing to participate in filming. This can be a signed letter or an email originating from the subject.

## **What is the process?**

Applications can be made through the [Application Portal](#) and must be received by 11pm AEST on Monday, 23 October 2017 and include the following items:

- A simple talk-to-camera 'video pitch' of no more than 2 minutes where key creatives talk about their proposal - see [What makes a compelling application?](#) below. The video pitch must be downloadable and password protected. Vimeo links are preferred.
- A maximum 4–5 page outline or treatment of the proposal making clear reference to story structure and key character story arcs and stylistic and visual approach. Refer to [What is a Synopsis/Outline?](#)
- CVs of the producer, writer and director, and any other confirmed key personnel - DOP, editor, etc
- A 200 (really only 200) word bio
- If available, one example of the director's previous work (a complete film not a showreel) via a file transfer service like yousendit, a vimeo password protected link or on DVD
- Written confirmation of key subjects' willingness to participate and mentors or advisers where confirmed
- Where there is Indigenous community participation or content involved in the project, written confirmation of the willingness of both the subject(s) and the community to be involved in the project is essential.

Please note materials will not be returned, so applicants must ensure they keep copies of everything, including all AV materials.

## **What makes a compelling application?**

The Indigenous Department receives many more proposals than it can fund so please consider the following when writing your application:

- a strong idea in the present tense
- a point of difference - why this story and why now? What is the message that needs to be sent? Is this a new idea or an old one that needs a re-discovery
- an exciting creative team that can clarify their project's style and vision and articulate their project's strengths and challenges honestly
- engaging on-screen characters and/or talent or presenters
- collaborations with mentors, advisers or project partners - proposed or confirmed. For example it could be an experienced and like-minded screen content maker, an expert from the CSIRO, Tim Flannery, Helen Caldicott, Al Gore, Alan Finkel, climate change organisations, SEED Indigenous Youth Climate Network, Oxfam Australia, a credible presenter to impart

your message on screen, a Philanthropic organisations, NGO's – find or suggest who the best people are to help you realise your project's potential

- an achievable plan to make it
- comparable documentaries, standalone or series that inspire you or may influence your work
- a clear idea about its audience and why we will want to watch the program

Proposals lacking visual storytelling structure like extended NewsCaff reports with very little action unfolding on screen are less likely to be successful.

## Important dates

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Stage 1 application deadline:</b>   | <b>23 October 2017</b>     |
| <b>Stage 1 decisions:</b>  | <b>13 November 2017</b>    |
| <b>Development &amp; workshop attendance compulsory:</b>   | <b>4 – 7 December 2017</b> |
| <b>Development delivery:</b>   | <b>23 February 2018</b>    |
| <b>Stage 2 - Successful teams invited to apply for production funding:</b>   | <b>23 March 2018</b>       |
| Production applications via the online application portal and will need to include final scripts or treatments as well as complete budgets, finance plans and production schedules |                            |
| <b>Expected delivery and program launch</b>  | <b>July 2018</b>           |

Funding decisions will be made against the following equally weighted criteria:

- Strength of the proposal including the distinctiveness of the idea and story point of difference and the team's creative vision for its realisation
- Capacity of the team including proposed mentor/s to manage the project creatively and commercially, given the nature of the proposal and their track record and professional development benefit to the team
- The project's potential to connect to its target audience

All applications will be assessed by a Screen Australia Investment Manager and an external industry specialist.

Following the workshop and development stage, projects selected for production funding will be required to provide a revised budget, finance plan and schedule that complement the funding offered, for approval.

## Terms of funding

Funding through this program is provided as a grant.

Projects may also be eligible for a grant under the [Producer Equity Program](#).

All projects selected for production will be subject to the Commissioning requirements of the broadcaster and Screen Australia funding processes.