

SCREEN SERVICES

ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

November 14, 2008

The Screen Services Association of Victoria (SSAV) was established to represent the film, television and digital services & infrastructure sector in Victoria

Key points for Screen Australia submission from Screen Services Association of Victoria

- The abolition of professional development programs such as the Shorts production fund and the IndiVision low budget feature production fund is of concern. These programs have been an important platform for emerging filmmakers. An extension or alternative to funding such programs could include funding the development of a scene/or scenes from a film project. This is particularly relevant as it is part of the development process of a feature film. It has multiple purposes. It can demonstrate the ability of the producer / director in general, (same as a traditional short film) and it crystallizes the vision of the film in the writing, visual style and sound, which adds significantly to the development process. It is an invaluable selling aid for distributors, studio's, and investors as it presents the film's style and pace in the appropriate visual medium, moving pictures.
- The definition of "experienced" practitioner is too restrictive. Developing and supporting new and establishing producers is equally as important as supporting 'experienced' producers and as such there is a risk that some of our more exciting projects may not get made – looking backwards this would include films such as Kenny & Wolf Creek, which were box office success stories. When assessing 'experience' it is important to take a broad approach to the track record of producers & directors, who may indeed have many years of cross-disciplinary experience in related fields, eg advertising, documentaries etc.
- June 30 deadlines will not work. It may suit the tax office, but this is a creative industry and as such, requires a level of flexibility in order to create 'great work'. To insist that films be completed by the same deadline each year (or have to fund the offset for up to a further 12 months) will culminate in some sectors including post production, vfx & deliverables being crammed into the last few months of each financial year. Consistent work throughout the whole year is required to build & maintain such infrastructure and promote a sustainable industry. There's also high possibility that some companies could not sustain their businesses while waiting for reimbursement, given that they have to fund the tax offset.
- One good project is far more likely to succeed than a slate of mediocre projects. Eligibility for federal funding should be merit-based first and then include a range of other measurable criteria.

- The definition of 'culture' needs to be kept as broad as possible so that government can support a broad range of projects.
- Practical experience is essential to this industry the world over. Professional development programs need to include internships with measurable outcomes.
- Distribution deals need to have flexibility. Cutting a deal early takes away any significant leverage the filmmaker may have.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. A. Schwarze". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'S' at the end.

Kerri Schwarze
President, SSAV
On behalf of the Committee