

EMERGING WRITERS' INCUBATOR

HOST PRODUCTION COMPANY EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: Guidelines

Date: 14 April 2021

SBS, in partnership with Screen Australia, state and territory agencies Screen NSW, Screen Canberra, Screen Queensland, Screenwest, Film Victoria and the South Australian Film Corporation, and with the assistance of the Australian Writers' Guild, has launched the Emerging Writers' Incubator: a new initiative to support the development of underrepresented fiction writing talent in the Australian screen sector.

Working with some of Australia's leading production companies, the Emerging Writers' Incubator will bring the industry together to contribute to greater inclusion among Australian screenwriting talent, by providing significant work experience in drama production for up to 18 emerging writers from diverse backgrounds and with lived experiences currently underrepresented in the sector.

For the purposes of this initiative, underrepresented includes those who identify as First Nations Australians; those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds; those who are living with a disability; are female or trans/gender diverse; identify as LGBTQIA+; and people located in regional and remote areas.

Each year for the next three years, six successful candidates (Selected Writers), will be employed for 12 months in production companies acclaimed for their delivery of Australian drama, from around the country, with placements commencing from July 2021.

Selected Writers will work across the production company's entire fiction slate (irrespective of commissioning network / platform).

WHAT

The Emerging Writers' Incubator is seeking production companies to lodge expressions of interest (EOI) to participate in the first year of the initiative from July 2021- June 2022.

It is expected that the production company will facilitate opportunities and support the Selected Writer to perform and develop their skills in accordance with the following indicative role description:

- Attend writers' rooms (as deemed appropriate by the production company - as participant, note taker, or observer); and
- Participate in the production company's development slate meetings; and
- Shadow the production company's development producers and/or producers (as appropriate), building capacity, knowledge and honing industry / craft skills; and
- Assist with devising and writing pitches; and
- Assist with assessing creative material (e.g.: pitches); and
- Assist with creative feedback (e.g.: script notes, script feedback meetings); and
- Attend pitch meetings (as appropriate); and
- Draft funding applications for script development.

The Emerging Writers' Incubator partners (SBS, Screen Australia and the Selected Writer's local Screen Agency) will provide funding of up to \$80,000 to each production company as the salary for the writer (inclusive of superannuation, payroll tax, insurance, workcover). The production company will be ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Selected Writer is paid according to all applicable legislation and industrial awards including the superannuation guarantee and workplace insurance.

All intellectual property generated will be the property of the production company, but each writer's credit, where applicable, and associated benefits will be determined by AWG standard agreements. To the extent that a writer may subsequently be engaged as a writer of an episode of television, that work will fall outside of the scope of their duties under the Initiative and will not be funded under the Initiative. Any fees due to the writer will be met by the production company separately in respect of such work in keeping with the Miniseries and Telemovie Agreement 2010 (MATA) (2021 rates) or Series and Serials Agreement 2008 (SASA) (2021 rates) as negotiated between the writer and the production company but at all times in accordance with the relevant industrial agreements.

Successful production companies will be expected to outline a plan for managing the Selected Writer, including setting KPIs and committing to periodic performance reviews.

MATCHING WRITERS WITH SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTION COMPANIES:

A shortlist of writers will be circulated to the six host companies, who will select the writers that they wish to interview. Production companies may elect to interview as few or many writers as they choose. Each interview will involve a representative from their respective screen agency as well as representatives from key stakeholders SBS and Screen Australia.

Once all interviews have been completed both the production companies and the applicant writers will be asked to nominate their preferred choices.

The local screen agency, SBS, and Screen Australia will use these nominations to determine the most suitable and appropriate match between company and applicant. Decisions will be communicated to the Selected Writers following final consultation and confirmation with the host companies.

ASSESSMENT

EOIs with respect to Host Companies will be assessed against:

- Track record and experience as a production company; and
- The production company's ability to support the development of the Selected Writer over a 12-month period; and
- History with supporting similar placements or, (where this is the company's first placement) the company's commitment and willingness to support a placement of this nature.

SUBMISSION

Your submission (of no more than 2 pages) will need to include:

- Brief company bio with credits; and
- A brief description of the production company's anticipated projects/workload over approx. July 2021 - July 2022 (NB: This is to assess that the production company has sufficient activity over this period to be of benefit to the Selected Writer. We do not need the specifics of projects if this is confidential information, simply list the broad details of a project (e.g.: 4 x 1-hour drama in late development with a confirmed broadcaster, 6 x 1/2-hour comedy in early development)
- Nomination of the production company staff member and their role who will supervise the Selected Writer (ideally this would be the company's head of development/development producer), and the list of key staff who will undertake mandatory cultural safety training (which will be jointly paid for by SBS and Screen Australia and delivered via Zoom).
- A brief description of any other placements that the production company has supervised.
- Any pre-existing commitments as regards placements/trainees/interns who may also be present/engaged in the company during the period.

Please email EmergingWritersIncubator@screenaustralia.gov.au with these EOI materials by Friday 23 April 2021.

Successful companies will be notified by 28 May 2021.