

Future Leaders Delegation – BitSummit 2026 - Guidelines

**Issued 23 September 2025**

Screen Australia reserves the right to change its program guidelines. Please ensure you check the website for the latest version. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Screen Australia’s [Terms of Trade](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding/business/Terms_of_trade.aspx).

**Accessibility**

If you have accessibility requirements relating to submitting an application, please contact our Program Operations team via email at [games@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:games@screenaustralia.gov.au), or phone 1800 507 901, so we can assist.

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# About this funding program

## Overview

The Future Leaders Delegation will support up to eight early-to-mid career Australian gamemakers to travel to Kyoto, Japan to attend BitSummit 2026 (22–24 May 2026) with a games project. This initiative will enable the selected delegates to connect with their peers, seek out partnerships, funding, and marketplace opportunities, develop their networks in a strategically relevant region, and understand their practice within the broader international sector. This initiative also aims to support gamemakers from under-represented backgrounds.

In addition, delegates will be provided the opportunity to exhibit their game as part of an Australia stand at BitSummit 2026, granting access to a marketplace of close to 60,000 attendees.

BitSummit is a growing destination for independent gamemakers around the globe, bringing the international games sector together for a public showcase of independent games, an awards ceremony, and networking events.

## Available support

Successful applicants will be funded up to $6,000 towards flights, accommodation, ground transportation, meals, and event tickets. Screen Australia will provide pre-departure and on-the-ground support through a mix of workshops, presentations, mentoring, and networking opportunities.

Costs to travel to the pre-departure workshop in Melbourne will be covered separately by Screen Australia.

# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

For Australian screen content to effectively deliver cultural and economic benefits it must speak to, and be for, all Australians. Ultimately a diversity of ideas and a diverse workforce will grow the Australian screen industry, make it more relevant to Australian audiences and more competitive internationally.

Screen Australia is committed to building diversity, equity, and inclusion and accessibility into its programs and into our engagement with the community. Screen Australia encourages applications from applicants from all backgrounds, cultures and experiences. In particular, the agency welcomes applications from under-represented groups.

Screen Australia strives to make its programs accessible by removing barriers for people who are d/Deaf and disabled and/or those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

# Eligibility

## Applicant eligibility

* This initiative is open to applicants who are individuals or companies and meet Screen Australia’s [Terms of Trade](https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/screen-australia/about-us/doing-business-with-us/terms-of-trade)
* Applicants must have an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
* Applicant companies must elect an individual to attend BitSummit 2026 on behalf of the company

## Delegate eligibility

To be eligible for this initiative, individual applicants and company delegates (**delegates**) must:

* have released and/or published at least one game on a public platform (e.g. on Steam, itch.io, etc.)
* be actively working on at least one game (for company delegates, this must be a company game) that is or will be ready for public showcasing by the event dates
* be available to attend BitSummit 2026 (22–24 May 2026 and travel dates around these) and to participate in a pre-departure workshop in late April 2026 in Melbourne (domestic travel costs will be covered for successful delegates)
* must not have participated in a previous Future Leaders Delegation initiative

# Application Process

Before applying, applicants must read and understand these guidelines, Screen Australia’s [Terms of Trade](https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/screen-australia/about-us/doing-business-with-us/terms-of-trade), [Information for Applicants](https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/screen-australia/about-us/doing-business-with-us/information-for-applicants), [Information for Recipients](https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/screen-australia/about-us/doing-business-with-us/information-for-recipients), Future Leaders Delegation FAQs and preview the application form on SmartyGrants.

## How to Apply

Complete and submit the online application form through Screen Australia’s [Application Portal](https://screenaustraliafunding.smartygrants.com.au/) on SmartyGrants.

Applications close **5pm AEDT** on Thursday 13 November 2025.

## Application Form

Through the application form, applicants must:

* provide all the information requested and answer the application questions
* address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
* include all required supporting materials

## Required Materials

Applicants must upload the following materials with their application form:

* **Delegate’s CV** including details of any work history, commercial or non-commercial game releases, festival awards, speaking opportunities, and/or volunteer work (maximum 2 pages)
* **Delegate’s Career Development Proposal** (maximum 1,000 words) that includes:
  + How this opportunity would benefit the delegate, their practice, their current project, and their career
  + Overview of the delegate’s current and past projects, including for each title:
    - stage of development
    - their role on the project
    - if released, a link to the game’s store page
  + The delegate’s current career objectives and how attending BitSummit 2026 will help the delegate achieve their objectives
  + Who the delegate would like to meet at BitSummit 2026 and why
* **Playable Build of the Delegate’s current project**
  + please ensure that your game has been tested and is functional prior to finalising your application
  + applicants whose games are inaccessible or unplayable after the close of the round may be deemed ineligible
* **30-second video of gameplay footage**

# Assessment

## Assessment Process

The Program Operations team will review each application to check eligibility and ensure the required application materials have been provided. Once confirmed, the applicant will receive an email advising that their application has moved to assessment and an estimated timeframe of the outcome.

Complete and eligible applications will be considered and reviewed by Screen Australia against the assessment criteria.

## Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following equally weighted criteria:

* **Strength & Relevance**
  + the strength and quality of the application and proposal
  + the quality and suitability of the applicant’s current games project
  + the timeliness, relevance, and suitability of the program to the delegate’s career stage and trajectory
  + the extent to which the delegate is informed about the themes and issues they are facing in their games career and/or practice
  + the level of connection of the delegate to the wider gamemaking community and/or communities relevant to their practice
* **Impact**
  + the extent to which participation in the initiative will lead to tangible career and/or practice benefits for the delegate
  + the level of conviction and intent the delegate displays in sharing the benefits of the opportunity with their gamemaking community
* **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility**
* the alignment of the application with the equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility aims of the initiative

Shortlisted delegates may be interviewed; any interview requests will be made ahead of time.

## Decision & Notification

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application **by Friday 12 December, 2025**. Screen Australia acknowledges and appreciates the time and effort that goes into preparing and submitting applications, but given the anticipated volume of applications, we will not be able to provide individual feedback on each application.

# Successful applicants

## Contracting

If successful, direct funding for this opportunity will be provided in the form of a grant. Successful applicants will enter into an activity grant agreement (AGA) with Screen Australia.

## Terms of Support

Successful applicants will be required to book international flights and event tickets for the delegate. Reservations for accommodation for BitSummit 2026 will be provided for the core dates of Wednesday 20 May until Tuesday 26 May 2026, to be paid for by successful delegates. Those delegates wishing to extend their travel outside these dates will be wholly responsible for all expenses, including accommodation and travel insurance.

Screen Australia staff will travel to BitSummit 2026 alongside successful delegates to provide on-the-ground support. Pre-departure training and workshops will be provided by a mix of Screen Australia staff and games industry professionals.

Please note: while travelling to BitSummit 2026 with business associates or partners is an anticipated and acceptable circumstance, there will be delegation-specific activities prior to and during BitSummit 2026 that are limited to only the chosen delegates.

Domestic travel and accommodation for the delegate’s participation in the pre-departure workshop will be arranged and covered by Screen Australia. Once approved, successful applicants may apply for carer and or accessibility costs required for attending the pre-departure workshop.

# Contact

For any enquiries, please contact the Screen Australia Program Operations team on 1800 507 901 or [games@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:games@screenaustralia.gov.au). Please note that we are not able to provide creative advice or suggestions to strengthen your application.

# Privacy

Screen Australia collects personal information from individuals in different ways, including via funding applications, acquittal reports, or supporting material supplied with forms. Screen Australia will handle any personal information provided in connection with a funding application in accordance with its [Privacy Notice](https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/sa/about-us/corporate-documents/policies/privacy/privacy-notice) relating to funding applications and its [Privacy Policy](https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/about-us/corporate-documents/policies/privacy).