

AWG The Creators: GUIDELINES

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The Australian Writers' Guild's (AWG) The Creators is a career acceleration program for high-calibre, mid-career screenwriters to build toward the creation of their own shows.

Building on the success of Year 1, Year 2 of The Creators program will provide selected screenwriters international high-level showrunner training, project and pitching development and networking opportunities to sell their stories in domestic and international arenas.

Up to six writers will be selected as The Creators delegation to travel to Los Angeles to participate in showrunner and pitching training, industry meetings, mixers and networking events in May 2024

The program is funded by Screen Australia, designed and delivered by the Australian Writers' Guild with industry partners Scripted Ink and Film Independent.

What support is available?

Up to six writers will be selected for funding of \$15,000 per person to participate in The Creators program and cover travel and accommodation in Los Angeles in May 2024. Successful applicants will also be provided with:

- showrunner and pitching training by [Jeff Melvoin](#);
- pre departure onboarding webinar with Jeff Melvoin and The Creators Year 1 cohort to share insights into the program and assist in preparation
- significant industry promotion of the group in domestic and international media
- attendance at networking event at Film Independent in Los Angeles
- showcasing to the Australian market on return

Applications from writing teams can be accepted where the team is no larger than two (2) and provided that both writers meet the eligibility criteria individually. The funding of \$15,000 will be afforded to successful applicants whether they are an individual or writing team.

Important dates for AWG The Creators in Los Angeles are:

- Saturday 4 May 2024: Informal Welcome Dinner
- Monday 6 May – Friday 10 May 2024: Showrunner Training and Pitching Workshop with Jeff Melvoin; Networking Event
- Monday 13 May – Friday 17 May 2024: Industry Meetings

Who can apply?

To be eligible for this program, applicants must be Australian citizens or residents and meet Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#), and be available for the duration of the program.

Due to the high-calibre nature of this program, applicants must fulfil all three points below:

- 1) meet competitive **credit criteria** in either episodic series, features or theatre, and
- 2) have a **slate** of episodic projects, and
- 3) existing **engagement** with the global community.

Please see below for the breakdown of eligibility requirements.

1) Credit Criteria

Applicants must meet **one** of the requirements listed below to be eligible. Credit requirements must come from one format (TV, feature or theatre), and cannot be a combination of the three.

1a) Episodic TV Series

Applicants must have **5 cumulative hours* of episode credits** as a sole writer of scripted episodic drama or comedy series that;

- have screened in any territory on recognised broadcast or streaming platforms in the last 7 years (from 2016), and
- includes at least one sole authored scripted episode that has recently screened (in the last 5 years, from 2018);

**Cumulative hours are based on episode length, not broadcast length.*

Please note, self-released content on YouTube, Vimeo or other online platforms is not eligible for the purposes of this program.

1b) Feature

Applicants must have a minimum of **2 scripted feature films** (produced and screened in Australia or internationally) as sole writer, produced in the last 10 years (from 2013);

1c) Theatre

Applicants must have a minimum of **2 mainstage theatre productions** as sole or lead writer that were:

- produced nationally or internationally in a professional theatre or professional festival context where that production was either commissioned and/or programmed by selection,
 - produced in the last 7 years (from 2016).
- Applicants must also have been a recipient of, or nominated for, a significant domestic or international award such as a Helpmann, Green Room, AWGIE, Tony, or Olivier; and,
 - in addition to theatre writing credits, the applicant has either underlying IP optioned for screen adaptation and/or been engaged to write an episode for a scripted episodic series in the last 5 years (from 2018).

2) Episodic Slate

Those who meet the credit criteria of one of the formats above must also have:

A slate of 3 - 5 scripted episodic projects in development of any genre, noting:

- The applicant writer must own the IP for original material and have evidence of ownership, if applicable, for any underlying material if an adaptation of underlying IP,
- One project should be selected as **lead** scripted episodic project with a draft pilot script, well suited to gaining global interest and traction. This lead project must be unencumbered**, and the applicant writer must hold all rights.

The remaining two-to-four projects may be a combination of:

- Another pilot (or pilots)
- Bibles, pitch bibles, or pitch decks
- Scripted spoken-word pitches, or extensive notes clearly articulating your projects for pitching

***Unencumbered should be taken to mean the applicant maintains full creative and financial control of their lead project. No rights can have been assigned, no future development agreements, or production or broadcast agreements, can have been entered into. The project may have received previous development investment but the applicant must continue to hold all the rights as at the time of application to The Creators program.*

3) Global Engagement

The applicant should have existing experience, traction and evidence of interest from the global community. This may be demonstrated by one or a combination of the following:

- engagement in a writers' rooms on an international series or writing/producing a television drama or comedy for any recognised network or SVOD, especially where that program has been screened on, or distributed to a major foreign outlet;
- writing a feature film that has screened at major festivals, and/or been distributed to other major international territories;
- writing a theatrical work (a play or musical) that has been commissioned or produced or toured in a recognised major international/foreign theatrical market.
- interest may also be demonstrated by having IP under option by recognised studios, networks, production companies, or producers; previous selection for international labs, pitching events, development programs; or by securing pitch opportunities in the global marketplace (e.g. Series Mania); and/or through representation by recognised international agents or managers.

Practitioners from underrepresented communities are encouraged to apply. This may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; people who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; people who are Deaf, hard of hearing or with a disability; people who are female or gender diverse; people who identify as LGBTQIA+; and people located in regional and remote areas.

When and how can applications be made?

Applications close **5pm AEDT 1 February 2024** and can be made via the Screen Australia [application portal](#) with the following materials:

- Fully completed application form including contact details and applicant eligibility (including demonstrated cumulative hours of episode credits);
- CV including credits applicable to the required credit criteria (specifying credited role, project duration (minutes), performance run dates and location, etc);
- detailed information on your **current slate of projects**. For each title mentioned on the slate provide: logline, synopsis, the stage of development and what materials are currently available; any secured development funding; the estimated budget; and information on any currently secured key creative, cast and marketplace attachments and/or interest where applicable;
- detailed information on **the lead project** for nomination to be worked on through the AWG The Creators and as the focus project in the showrunner and pitching training;
- specific and intended professional development objectives;
- one set of sample pages of writing (15 pages max.) from a scripted project that has been produced.

Applicants do not need to be Australian Writers' Guild members. Successful applicants will receive a complimentary 12-month membership to the AWG.

How are applications assessed?

Complete and eligible applications will be considered and reviewed by Australian Writers Guild, Screen Australia and/or industry specialists.

Assessment Criteria

Funding decisions will be made against the following criteria:

- the strength of the proposal and the perceived strength and diversity of the projects on the slate, as well as the stage of development and suitability for the event including quality and global appeal;
- leadership qualities of the applicant;
- the amount of perceived traction internationally from the applicant's body of work; and,
- the perceived experience and knowledge of the applicant pertinent to the activity.

Applicants will be advised of either a decline or shortlisted outcome in writing by Monday 4 March 2024.

Those who are shortlisted may be asked to submit further materials or attend an interview over video software with AWG and Screen Australia.

Final outcomes for the shortlisted applicants will be advised in writing by Friday 15 March 2024.

If you are unsure about your eligibility or have questions about the application form or FAQ's, please email us at development@screenaustralia.gov.au or call Program Operations on 1800 507 901.

Please note that we are not able to provide creative advice or suggestions to strengthen your application.

If you have questions relating to the program and program content, please email the Australian Writers' Guild at thecreators@awg.com.au. Please note that we are not able to provide creative advice or suggestions to strengthen your application.