



Skip Ahead 11 Guidelines

Issued 19 March 2026

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, Information for Applicants](#) and [Information for Recipients](#).

Accessibility

If you have accessibility requirements relating to submitting an application or attending the workshop in person, please contact our Program Operations team via email at initiatives.narrativecontent@screenaustralia.gov.au, or phone 1800 507 901, so we can assist.

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1. About this funding program

1.1. Overview

Skip Ahead is a joint initiative of Screen Australia and YouTube Australia. Since 2014, over the course of ten funding rounds, Skip Ahead has supported 47 YouTube content creators and their projects to develop their skills and support them to work towards sustainable careers. Past recipients include minbitt, The Macfarlane Brothers, Lyanna Kea, Never Too Small, Michael Shanks (timtimfed), Rainbow Bop, Toby Hendy (Tibeas), Danny and Michael Philippou (Racka Racka), and more.

Skip Ahead is open to both documentary and scripted narrative projects from Australian content creators where the producers and creators of the content maintain and retain control of self-distributing the work and taking it to audience on YouTube or YouTube Kids.

Skip Ahead aims to:

- support a new generation of online/direct-to-audience storytellers and IP creators to expand their vision and ambition;
- cultivate original Australian documentary or scripted narrative content made specifically for local and global online audiences; and,
- ensure the storytellers and stories being told reflect the diversity of people and experiences from around Australia, and promoting their importance - culturally, creatively and economically.

1.2. Available Funding/Support

What you can apply for:

- Up to five projects will be funded.
- Up to \$130,000 is available per project.

In addition, financial support will be offered to successful applicants to participate in a three-day in person workshop held in Sydney. For successful projects with team members based outside of Greater Sydney, Australian domestic travel, accommodation and stipend support will be provided. The maximum amount of team members who can attend the workshop per project, is three. This workshop will aim to build a peer and industry cohort, develop participants' projects, and provide industry skills to assist in the development, production and release of selected projects.

2. Inclusive Storytelling

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

Screen Australia is committed to building equity, diversity, 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 funding programs accessible by removing barriers for people who are d/Deaf, disabled and/or those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

3. Eligibility

3.1. Applicant Eligibility

Applicants and projects must also meet the general eligibility requirements as set out in Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#), any general eligibility or other requirements listed on the agency's website (see [Information for Applicants](#) and [Information for Recipients](#)), as well as the specific eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines.

Specific requirements apply to projects which involve [First Nations community participation or content](#).

Specific requirements may apply to projects which involve community participation or content with the following communities: d/Deaf, disabled, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQIA+, or those from other under-represented groups.

3.1.1. Eligible Entities

Applicants can apply as a company or in certain circumstances, an individual* (either alone or as part of a team). To be eligible, the applicant must:

- be an incorporated company carrying on business in Australia, with its central management and control in Australia;
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- be registered for the purposes of GST if required by law;

- control the rights necessary to carry out the project, meaning that it must have clear chain of title and must generally be party to any underlying rights agreements;
- maintain and retain control of self-distributing the project and taking it to audience on YouTube or YouTube Kids; and
- be the original content creator or team responsible for **one** of the following:
 - a current YouTube channel with at least 25,000 subscribers; OR
 - a maximum of two current YouTube channels with a combined subscriber base of 40,000; OR
 - a YouTube video which has achieved a minimum of 1 million views on a Youtube channel which has a subscriber base of at least 10,000.

Applicants must meet at least **one** of the requirements listed above to be eligible. *Applications will be accepted from eligible individuals (sole traders) that are Australian citizens or permanent residents (holding a permanent visa), who are over the age of 18 and have an ABN. However, if successful, the applicant must incorporate as a company before contracting with Screen Australia for production funding.

Genuine collaborations between a YouTube content creator(s) and established producers, production companies and/or entertainment properties are encouraged and may strengthen an application.

3.1.2. Ineligible Entities

The following types of entities are **not eligible** to apply for this funding program:

- any YouTube Channel if the channel is only a distribution platform or an aggregator channel for the project;
- Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies or bodies; and
- any organisations that are otherwise excluded pursuant to the [Information for Applicants](#).

3.2. Project Eligibility

The project that is the subject of the application **must:**

- be for a scripted narrative project of any genre or documentary;
- be intended to be uploaded to YouTube or YouTube Kids;
- **not** be a 'How to...' or lifestyle program (including travel and cooking) or reality;
- **not** have entered pre-production or production prior to the conclusion of the workshop dates; and,
- **not** be an advertorial or intended primarily as advertising or marketing material.

3.3. Additional Eligibility Criteria

Successful applicants must be available 28 - 30 July 2026 to attend the in-person workshop in Sydney. Please note dates are subject to change.

The channel's creator(s) must also be part of the key creative team for the project and be an in-person attendee at the workshop.

4. Application Process

4.1. How to Apply

Applications close 5pm AEST Thursday 30 April 2026 and can be made through Screen Australia's [application portal](#) on SmartyGrants.

4.2. 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; and
- include all required supporting materials.

4.3. Required materials

Applicants are required to upload the following supporting materials with their application form:

- a downloadable pitch video (up to 3 minutes) which includes information on:
 - the series or singular format (how many episode(s), length of episode(s));
 - premise, genre, characters, story arc and brief plot and/or arc summary;
 - themes and tone of the project;
 - the target audience, including demographics and viewing habits;
 - the release strategy;
 - the team and their experience creating content, including a 'why now' and 'why us' for the applicant and/or team; and
 - what is unique and exciting about the project;
- a written pitch document (up to 4 pages) that you can upload with your application and which includes information on:
 - page 1: a brief profile of the creator(s) YouTube channel(s) and team members, including topline analytics;
 - page 2 and 3: a pitch that:

- describes the project;
 - details the audience development and social media strategies to promote the series to a wider audience than the creator's existing subscribers; and
 - a plan for how the creator(s) might continue to grow the channel(s) following the release of the Skip Ahead funded content;
- page 4: outlines of episode(s);
- a box production schedule; and
- a summary production budget.

If an applicant's first application for a project to this program is not approved for Skip Ahead, they can make a further application for the same project, at a future deadline, if significant changes have been made. The applicant will need to outline these in a statement of changes.

Please contact initiatives.narrativecontent@screenaustralia.gov.au to discuss before submitting. Screen Australia will not consider more than two funding applications for the one project.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

4.3.1. First Nations Community Participation or Content

Where there is First Nations participation or content involved in the project, applicants should provide:

- a statement setting out how they are approaching the First Nations content or participation with regard to appropriate protocols, even if the content is not specific to a particular community or individual. Applicants must demonstrate that they have a consultation plan covering the full production process and are following it. The statement should be based on the checklists available in Screen Australia's guide [Pathways & Protocols: a filmmaker's guide to working with Indigenous people, culture and concepts](#);
- evidence of consultation to date; and
- if the project will involve First Nations individuals or communities, signed letters of consent confirming their willingness to participate.

5. Assessment

5.1. Assessment process

Once submitted, the Program Operations team at Screen Australia will review each application to determine eligibility and ensure that required materials have been submitted. A member of the team may contact the applicant if there are questions regarding submission materials or eligibility. Once eligibility is confirmed, the applicant will receive an email advising that their application has moved to assessment.

Applications are assessed against the published criteria by Screen Australia and YouTube Australia delegates, with industry specialists as required.

All projects involving First Nations content or participation will be assessed or co-assessed by First Nations Assessors.

Some projects involving representation of communities and culture may be assessed by Specialist or Cultural Assessors.

5.2. Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Creativity (25%):

- The creative strength and distinctiveness of the proposal, including the concept and entertainment value.

Audience potential (25%):

- The potential of the project to expand the subscriber base of the applicant's channel(s) and/or reach new audiences and opportunities for commercialisation.

Viability (25%):

- The viability of the proposal with respect to the budget and scale of the project.

Team and industry skills development (25%):

- The track record of the creator(s) and key participants involved in the proposal and the likelihood that this program will demonstrably develop their skills in direct-to-audience/online content development, production and release.

Other factors may be considered including the:

- availability of funds;

- range of projects in receipt of funding from Screen Australia inclusive of a project's budget, intended audience, genre, themes;
- range of applicants in receipt of funding from Screen Australia inclusive of applicant, company and geographic diversity;
- extent to which a project is likely to effectively amplify equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

Shortlisted applicants may be interviewed.

5.3. Decision & Notification

Screen Australia will advise applicants in writing of the outcome of their application within ten (10) weeks from the application deadline.

Screen Australia and YouTube Australia acknowledge and appreciate the effort that goes into applications, but due to the high volume of applications anticipated to be received, will not be able to provide individual feedback to applicants.

Decisions on applications are final.

6. Successful applicants

6.1. Contracting

- Successful applicants will receive an email detailing the level and type of Screen Australia and YouTube Australia's approved contribution, as well as information about the contracting process and any applicable conditions.
- Successful applicants will enter into a Participant Agreement and Production Grant Agreement with Screen Australia.

6.2. Terms of Funding

Successful applicants must make the production publicly available for the first time on YouTube from a date agreed upon with Screen Australia and YouTube Australia. Successful applicants must maintain the content on YouTube for a minimum of 5 years.

Successful applicants and productions must comply with YouTube's [terms of service](#) and [community guidelines](#). In addition to this, concepts aimed at children will need to comply with YouTube's Content policies for YouTube Kids.

Other terms, including delivery requirements, marketing and credit requirements for Screen Australia and YouTube Australia, will be

detailed in the Participant Agreement and Production Grant Agreement with Screen Australia .

7. Contact

If applicants have any further questions after reviewing these guidelines, the application form, and other available resources, they may contact Screen Australia's Program Operations team on 1800 507 901 or via email at initiatives.narrativecontent@screenaustralia.gov.au.

Please note that Screen Australia is unable to provide creative advice or suggestions to strengthen an application.

8. 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](#) relating to funding applications and its [Privacy Policy](#).