Narrative Content Production Funding Guidelines

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Screen Australia reserves the right to change its program guidelines. Applicants should 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 on the agency's website.

If applicants have questions about this program or accessibility requirements relating to submitting an application contact Screen Australia's Program Operations team at production.narrativecontent@screenaustralia.gov.au, or on 1800 507 901.

Contact an Investment Manager
Before applying to Screen Australia for Narrative Content Production funding, it is essential that applicants contact a Screen Australia Investment Manager to discuss their project. If applicants are unsure who to speak with contact our Program Operations team at production.narrativecontent@screenaustralia.gov.au or on 1800 507 901.

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1. Funding Program

1.1. Overview

The Narrative Content Production Program supports content makers to produce narrative projects for online/direct-to-audience, television and theatrical feature film platforms.

The aims of the Narrative Content Production Program are to support:

- exceptional Australian narrative content for **production and release** for online/direct-to-audience, television and feature film platforms;
- distinctive **storytelling** for a range of audiences across different platforms and budget levels;
- **talent** at different career stages who are connected to the stories they tell and that reflect the breadth of Australia in service of cultural, creative and economic benefits; and
- stories with viable **budgets** and pathways to **audiences** locally and/or globally.

The Narrative Content Production Program replaces the Screen Australia Feature Film Production, General Television Drama Production, Children's Television Drama Production and Online Production programs and guidelines.

This program will have four application rounds per financial year.

1.2. Available Funding

The amount of funding provided will depend on the scale of the project, the first and primary platform, the production budget and the amount of additional finance required or secured from other sources.

Screen Australia may decide to provide a different amount of funding than that applied for based on the assessment of all projects submitted to each funding round.

1.2.1. Direct-to-Audience Production (inclusive of Children's)

- For those projects for which Online/Direct-to-Audience (inclusive of VR, XR, AR and social media platforms) is the first and primary release window.
- The creators of the work are in control of self-distributing the work and taking it to audience.
- Direct-to-Audience projects are those that have **not** been commissioned by any third party anywhere and for which the first and primary window is a social or direct-to-audience platform.
- In the instance of a project being VR, XR, AR and/or other immersive media, Screen Australia will accept projects that:
    - may be co-financed and distributed by local and/or international hardware and distribution partners;
    - have a pathway to Australian audiences;
    - in which the applicant retains ownership of all intellectual property rights;
    - provides exclusivity to such distribution partner for no longer than two (2) years; and
    - otherwise meet all other guideline requirements.

- If your project is VR, XR, AR and primarily a Game experience, that is, where the user can impact the central narrative and engage in game mechanics and game play elements, please refer to Screen Australia Games Funding.

- If your project is VR, XR, AR and, primarily Factual, please refer to Screen Australia Documentary Production Funding.

1.2.2. Children's Television Production

- For episodic or feature-length projects for which Children are the intended audience
- Television (including SVOD or BVOD) is the first and primary release window, and a local commissioning platform and Rest of World (ROW) distributor have been secured.

1.2.3. Television Production

- For episodic or feature-length projects for which Television (including SVOD or BVOD) is the first and primary release window, and a local commissioning platform and Rest of World (ROW) distributor have been secured.

1.2.4. Feature Film Production (Creative First, inclusive of Children's)

- Creative First:
  - Applicants may apply for a Letter of Interest (**LOI**) from Screen Australia for a Theatrical project if:
    - the project does **not** yet have marketplace attachment from a Rest of World (ROW) Sales Agent;
    - the project does **not** yet have an Australian and New Zealand territory (ANZ) Distributor secured;
    - the production budget is $5,000,000 or less; and
    - the direct funding request is up to $500,000, provided that the combined direct funding and producer offset does not exceed 60% of the budget.

  - If an application to Creative First is successful:
    - A LOI will be issued by Screen Australia to the project for up to $500,000 and the LOI will be valid for **four (4) months** from the date of issue (**LOI Deadline**);
    - the project must (i) secure the required market attachments on terms and conditions acceptable to Screen Australia; and (ii) satisfy any special conditions and other elements of the project's Finance Plan as noted in the LOI (**LOI Conditions**);
    - the LOI Conditions must be submitted to Screen Australia no later than the LOI Deadline for review and final approval;
    - where the project is unable to satisfy the LOI Conditions by LOI Deadline, the LOI will lapse.
    - producers are encouraged to reach out to Screen Australia's Market & Audience team for guidance.

- producers are advised to not countersign the Letters of Offer (LOOs) for ANZ and ROW territories until Screen Australia's Market & Audience team have approved such LOOs.

A project can only be the subject of one Creative First application regardless of the applicant.

Any future application for a project that has either been unsuccessful for a Creative First LOI or successful (and unable to fulfil the Creative First LOI requirements) must next apply through the Market First stream, subject to meeting all relevant eligibility requirements.

1.2.5. Feature Film Production (Market First, inclusive of Children's)

- **Market First:** For those projects for which:
  - theatrical is the first and primary release window in Australia;
  - an ANZ Distributor has been secured; and
  - a Rest of World (ROW) Sales Agent has been secured.

If your application is successful, Screen Australia will provide direct funding as either a non-repayable grant or as a recoupable equity investment. Direct funding from Screen Australia is separate to the Producer Offset and is a contribution to your production budget.

Screen Australia has set a cap on the maximum amount of combined Producer Offset and direct Screen Australia support that applies to all funding requests. The cap varies for different platforms and budget levels and some genres (i.e., Children's) and applies to the combined amount of support provided through direct funding from Screen Australia and Producer Offset.

For all platforms, funding by way of a grant or recoupable equity investment is at Screen Australia's discretion, noting that:

- funding will **generally** be provided by way of grant if direct funding is at or below $500,000 or as a recoupable equity investment if direct funding is over $500,000; and
- the minimum funding amount requested at time of application must be $150,000.

For Official Co-Productions, the **percentage caps apply only to the Australian components and proportion of the budget.**

For Television projects only:

- for any application that is for a subsequent season, Screen Australia will normally treat any approved funding as a recoupable equity investment.

Funding Guide (Direct Funding)

The below Funding Guide table is generally the **maximum** amount you can apply for in relation to budget and platform, expressed as a percentage of the project's production budget (inclusive of below-the-line and above-the-line). At all times, the level of combined support (Screen Australia direct investment or

grant and Producer Offset) must sit below the caps set out in the far-right column of the Funding Guide table per platform and budget level.

All Direct Funding caps are inclusive of any Screen Australia development funding.

For Official Co-Productions the **percentage caps apply only to the Australian components and proportion of the budget**. Refer to the column that aligns with the project's entire production budget, for example: $5,000,001 - $10,000,000 and the platform of your project, for example: Feature Film – Market First, and identify the percentage cap for that budget, for example: 15%. Then determine the Australian financial contribution of the overall budget. That is, if the Australian financial contribution to the Official Co-Production is 30% of the production budget, then the Direct Funding and Producer Offset Combined Cap is X% of that 30% Australian portion.

Platform & Production Budget	**Less than $500,000**	**Up to $5,000,000**	**$5,000,001$10,000,000**	**$10,000,001 - $15,000,000**	**$15,000,001 - $20,000,000**	**$20,000,001 - $30,000,000**	**Direct Funding and Producer Offset combined Cap**
Online & Direct-to-Audience **(inclusive of Children's and VR, XR, AR)**	85% #	30% ^	15%	10% ^	10% ^	10% ^	Max. 60% #^ see footnote
Children's Television	-	20%	20%	10%	7%	10%	Max. 50%
Television	-	15%	15%	10%	7.5%	5%	Max. 45%
Feature Film – Creative First **(inclusive of Children's and VR, XR and AR)**	-	Up to $500,000, provided that the combined direct and producer offset does not exceed	-	-	-	-	Max. 60%

		60% of budget					
Feature Film – Market First **(inclusive of Children's and VR, XR and AR)**	-	10%	15%	10%	5%	3%	Max. 55%

Noting that this Federal Cap does **not** apply to recipients of 85% funding

^ Noting that any project applying for $500,000 or above of direct funding needs to be 1 (one) hour minimum to qualify for the Producer Offset

2. Inclusive Storytelling

For Australian screen content to 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, with the aim of ensuring that the stories being told on screen are authentic and reflect the diversity of people and experiences within Australian society, both in front of, and behind the screen.

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.

Screen Australia expects applicants to consider accessibility at all stages of their projects (for example, by engaging an access coordinator to support cast and crew) and to conduct their activities in accordance with best practice and their obligations under relevant legislation including the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).

3. Eligibility

- Applicants and projects must meet 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 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. Applicant Eligibility

This program is open to companies and in certain circumstances, individuals*.

To be eligible, an 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;
- demonstrate, with the exception of anticipated Official Co-Productions, that the project is written and directed by Australian citizens or permanent residents and that any non-Australian producers do not prevent the project from meeting the requirements of Screen Australia's Terms of Trade and other eligibility requirements;
- if applicable, be independent of the nominated local Commissioning Platform for the first release of a program in Australia; and,
- demonstrate and/or have relevant experience through comparable work that shows the capability to produce work for the platform for which they are applying.
- For the avoidance of doubt, Screen Australia will not finance programs where the producer is not independent of the nominated local Commissioning Platform for the first release of a program in Australia.

***Note** that for projects applying for funding at $300,000 or below with Direct-to-Audience as the first and primary release window, Screen Australia will accept applications from individuals (sole traders) that are Australian citizens or permanent residents (holding a permanent visa). However, if successful, the applicant will need to incorporate a company to make the project before contracting with Screen Australia. All other eligibility criteria listed above continue to apply for these projects.

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

- 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

To be eligible, the project must:

- have been developed by Australian production companies/producers and creatives, not sub-contracted from a commissioning platform;
- have Significant Australian Content (SAC) or be an Official Co-Production;

- with the exception of Official Co-Productions, be written and directed by Australian citizens or permanent residents; and
- be intended to commence pre-production no sooner than approximately six (6) months after the relevant application deadline to allow time for assessment and contracting.

The following projects/costs are **not eligible** for funding:

- narrative projects for which the first and primary window is not online, television or theatrical feature film;
- projects that have been declined twice for Narrative Content Production funding or through any predecessor Screen Australia Feature Film Production, General Television Drama Production, Children's Television Drama Production and Online Production programs;
- projects that intend to be in pre-production or principal photography on or before either the application deadline date or decision date will not be eligible as Screen Australia does not fund retrospective costs;
- note that for Creative First Feature Films, if the project has been declined **once** for a Letter of Interest (LOI) or was **not able to meet the requirements** of an LOI if issued, then the project cannot be the subject of a further Creative First LOI application;
- capital works or purchases;
- retrospective costs;
- purchase of underlying Intellectual Property;
- projects that have been submitted concurrently to another Screen Australia funding program, such as Development;
- non-narrative projects, such as documentary, factual, sporting or entertainment (i.e. panel shows, variety shows and sketch);
- non-narrative projects created for VR/AR/XR platforms (see Documentary programs);
- educational and training programs and projects; and
- digital or online extensions to an Online, Feature or TV program or ancillary content where the primary purpose is campaign or marketing.

If an applicant's first application for a project is not approved, they can make a further application for the same project if significant changes have been made (with the exception of Creative First). Changes will generally be in relation to creative, team, pathway to audience, marketplace and/or budget. The applicant will need to outline these in a statement of changes and discuss it with an Investment Manager before submitting. Screen Australia will not consider more than two funding applications for the one project.

3.2.1.1. Direct-to-Audience Production (inclusive of Children's) – Additional Eligibility Criteria

- Direct-to-Audience projects requesting funding of greater than $500,000 must be a minimum of at least a broadcast hour with Qualifying Australian Expenditure (QAPE) of at least $500,000.
- where there is more than one shooting block, and where there is more than one director engaged, at least one block must be directed by a woman, non-binary or gender diverse person, or a person from a historically under-represented group/s, (or in the case where there is a single director, Heads of Department may be considered for this criterion instead at Screen Australia's discretion).

3.2.1.2. Children's Television Production and Television Production – Additional Eligibility Criteria

- For episodic or feature length projects for which Television (including SVOD or BVOD) is the first and primary window, applicants must:
    - have a local commissioning platform secured on terms acceptable to Screen Australia, including meeting the following minimum licence fee requirements*, and otherwise in accordance with all relevant industry agreements and having regard to issues of overall commerciality:
        - a confirmed minimum licence fee of $550,000 per broadcast hour allocated toward the initial licence period (3 years) against the primary right for the program being on the platform on which the program premieres in Australia; or
        - for Children's content, a confirmed minimum of:
            - $125,000 per broadcast half hour for one commissioning platform with limited exclusivity holdbacks; or
            - $144,000 for (i) combination of commissioning platforms; or (ii) one commissioning platform with full exclusivity during the initial licence period,

          allocated toward the initial licence period (3 years) against the primary right for the program being on the platform on which the program premieres in Australia.

          To the extent that the local commissioning platform acquires secondary rights during the initial licence period, please refer to the table below for minimum requirements.
    - have secured a ROW Distributor with a letter of offer (LOO) or Deal Memo including commercial deal terms and forecast sales figures for all major territories including an estimate for Worldwide buyout excluding Australia; and
    - where there is more than one shooting block, and where there is more than one director engaged, have at least one block directed

by a woman, non-binary or gender diverse person, or a person from historically under-represented group/s, (or in the case where there is a single director, Heads of Department may be considered for this criterion instead at Screen Australia's discretion).

*__Note that:__

- the minimum licence fees set out in these guidelines take effect for any Narrative Content Production Television application project applying to the 14 May 2026 Narrative Content Production deadline, with the first funding decision within the updated minimum licence fee requirements being in force from 1 July 2026;
- the minimum licence fee cannot include equity; broadcast rights for New Zealand or any ROW territory; secondary rights; distribution rights; or ancillary rights;
- where applicable, if further rights or extended licence periods after the initial licence period are sought from the commissioning platform, additional licence fees are to be negotiated in good faith for payment to the producer, in line with current market rates on terms acceptable to Screen Australia and in accordance with relevant industry agreements; and
- the minimum licence fees are minimum requirements, and Screen Australia recognises that producers may be in a position to negotiate for more favourable rates with respect to certain rights, depending on the unique circumstances of the relevant project.

Rights acquired by the commissioning platform (for initial 3 year licence period)*	**Minimum Licence Fee per broadcast hour (Adult)**	**Minimum Licence fee per broadcast half hour (Children)**
Primary right for the program being on the platform on which the program has been commissioned and premieres (e.g., FTA, SVOD, Pay TV)	$550,000	For one commissioning platform with limited exclusivity holdbacks: $125,000 For (i) combination of commissioning platforms; or (ii) one commissioning platform with full exclusivity during the initial 3 year licence period: $144,000

Secondary right for the program being on a branded/related-party platform: a) AVOD/FVOD/BVOD for FTA commissioning platform and/or Digital additional rights (including third party free subscription platforms e.g., Tubi, YouTube); and b) FTA/other VOD for an SVOD commissioning platform	a) $14,000 b) $50,000	a) $7,000 b) $25,000
Monetised Third Party AVOD/Digital additional rights for the program being on a platform/channel controlled by the commissioning platform and approved by the producer (Geoblocked)	Royalty share no less than 50:50	Royalty share no less than 50:50

3.2.1.3. Feature Film Production – Creative First – Additional Eligibility Criteria

- For Creative First feature film projects for which Theatrical is the first and primary window and the production budget is below $5,000,000 the project must:
  - not have been declined previously for a Letter of Interest (LOI) for the project you are applying with;
  - not have been previously approved for a Letter of Interest (LOI) and been unable to fulfill it for the project you are applying with; and
  - have evidence of some level of interest from **either or both** an ANZ Distributor or ROW Sales Agent in the form of written correspondence.

3.2.1.4. Feature Film Production – Market First – Additional Eligibility Criteria

- For Market First feature film projects for which Theatrical is the first and primary window and the production budget is up to or below $30,000,000, you must:

- have a Letter of Offer (LOO) or Deal Memo to distribute the project in Australia with an ANZ distributor with the LOO outlining commercial deal terms and estimated Australian Gross Box Office (AGBO) and a marketing & release plan;
- have a LOO from a Rest of World (ROW) sales agent outlining the commercial deal terms and providing sales estimates for all territories as well as a worldwide buyout price; and
- where such contributions are in relation to worldwide rights for a project, allocate a portion of the amount, to be agreed by Screen Australia, to the ANZ territory.

  Note: the remaining ROW portion of the contribution, and related expenses, cannot be recovered from ANZ receipts.

- Advances against ANZ and ROW must be clearly split and expenses should be treated separately.
- Screen Australia does not allow marketplace contributions to be treated as equity.

3.2.1.5. Official Co-Productions and the Producer Offset

Projects approved as **Official Co-Productions** are eligible for, but not automatically guaranteed, direct Screen Australia support.

For Official Co-Production projects, you will need to provide evidence that an application for Provisional Approval as an Official Co-Production has been **lodged**.

If you are approved for direct funding, you will need to receive **provisional approval** from all relevant competent authorities prior to contract execution.

In the instance of an anticipated Official Co-Production applying for a Creative First LOI, please provide evidence of engagement with Producer Offset and Co-Production Unit, if applicable. Creative First LOI projects do not require evidence of an application for Provisional Approval as an Official Co-Production.

You do not need to have lodged an application for your **Producer Offset Provisional Certificate** at the time of applying to the Narrative Content Production Program. If you are approved for direct funding for a project utilising the Producer Offset, you will need to lodge your Producer Offset application and receive your certification prior to contract execution.

Official Co-Production provisional approvals must not be more than two years old (from the date of your application for Narrative Content Production Program).

In the instance where a Producer Offset Provisional Certificate has been issued to the project, provisional approval must not be more than two years old (from the date of your application for Narrative Content Production Program).

If approvals were granted over two years ago, a reassessment by the Producer Offset and Co-Production Unit (POCU) will be required.

3.2.1.6. Foreign Actors

Screen Australia encourages producers to engage with the Foreign Actor Certification Scheme (FACS) process early if they intend to bring foreign actors into Australia for any production. Separate to any requirement from Screen Australia, a production must meet the requirements of this scheme.

4. Application Process

Before applying, applicants must read and understand these guidelines, Screen Australia's Terms of Trade, Information for Applicants, Information for Recipients, and preview the application form on SmartyGrants.

4.1. How to Apply

- Complete and submit the online application form prior to the application deadline 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;
  - meet, where required, all eligibility criteria; and
  - include all required supporting materials.

4.3. Required materials

Applicants are required to provide information on or upload the following supporting materials with their application form:

All Applicants and All Platforms

- Creative
  - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan, where applicable
  - First Nations Statement, where applicable
- Finance
  - Completed Finance Plan using Screen Australia's template (noting that Finance Plans for Feature Film Production - Creative First may have blank marketplace items)
  - Offset Cash-flow or PDV Provider, if applicable
  - Gap Lender, if applicable
- Production
  - Production Budget**. See below for production budget requirements for all applicants and all platforms.
  - Production Schedule (including shooting, post and any documentation detailing the project's proposed production methodology)
- Audience
  - Audience Plan
- Rights

    - ASIC Company extract, where applicable, dated no later than 30 days prior to the application submission date
    - Chain of Title, a summary of chain of title for the project, and if available at the time of application, a solicitor's opinion letter

Online/Direct-to-Audience (inclusive of Children's)

- Creative
    - For episodic, minimum 75% of scripts, submitted in one document (with a cover page per script)
    - For singular, one (1) script
    - Bible or Pitch Deck, if available
- Finance
    - Documented evidence for all lines of the Finance Plan. For any other pending finance that is being sourced from other Australian or international funding authorities, confirmation of decision dates must be provided.
- Production
    - If the direct funding request is $500,000 or more, Completion Guarantor documentation
    - For episodic, overall Project Schedule
    - For episodic, Writing Schedule
- Audience
    - For subsequent seasons, audience data on previous season/s

Children's Television & Television

- Creative
    - For episodic, minimum two (2) scripts
    - For singular, one (1) script
    - Bible or Pitch Deck, if available
- Finance
    - Marketplace offer(s), terms and agreements, sales forecasts, revenue projections
    - Documented evidence for all lines of the Finance Plan (for example, evidence of equity, private investment). For any other pending finance that is being sourced from other Australian or international funding authorities, confirmation of decision dates must be provided).
    - For Official Co-Productions evidence substantiating items in the Finance Plan from partner country/ies
- Production
    - For episodic, overall Project Schedule
    - For episodic, Writing Schedule
- Audience
    - For subsequent seasons, audience data on previous season/s
- Rights

- **co-production agreement** – where relevant, applicants must provide supporting documentation (such as a co-development agreement or heads of agreement between the co-producers) outlining the terms on which the shared rights-holding or anticipated Official Co-Production will be governed

Feature Film – Creative First

- Creative
  - Script
- Production
  - Completion Guarantor documentation

Feature Film – Market First

- Creative
  - Script
- Audience
  - Marketing & Release Plan, if available
- Finance
  - Marketplace offer(s) inclusive of: terms and agreements; sales forecasts/estimates; and, revenue projections
  - Documented evidence for all lines of the Finance Plan (for example, evidence of equity, private investment). For any other pending finance that is being sourced from other Australian or international funding authorities, confirmation of decision dates must be provided.
  - For Official Co-Productions evidence substantiating items in the Finance Plan from partner country/ies
- Production
  - Completion Guarantor documentation
- Rights
  - **co-production agreement** – where relevant, applicants must provide supporting documentation (such as a co-development agreement or heads of agreement between the co-producers) outlining the terms on which the shared rights-holding or anticipated Official Co-Production will be governed
  - If a co-production, any applicable co-production or joint venture agreement (including but not limited to for an Official Co - Production) where the rights in the project may be shared between multiple parties

** **All Applicants and All Platforms** must provide a **Production budget** using either Movie Magic or Screen Australia's A-Z template, including separate QAPE Spreadsheets if using Movie Magic. The Production Budget must include:

- production costs (including any development costs)
- post-production costs

- financing and indirect costs
- dedicated Marketing Budget to support the early development and creation of high-quality marketing assets as well as audience testing
- all Delivery costs relevant to the platform and market partners, and associated requirements for the National Film and Sound Archive
- foreign currency hedging mechanism, if applicable
- closed caption and audio description costs, only required for Feature Film and Television projects
- allowance for a Study Guide, if the total production budget is over $5,000,000, the project is feature film or television production, and the anticipated classification for the project is C, G, PG, M, MA15+ or below
- allowance for a completion guarantor for all feature film projects regardless of the production budget and amount requested from Screen Australia
- allowance for a completion guarantor for online/direct-to-audience projects where Screen Australia's direct funding is at or over $500,000
- for the avoidance of doubt, a completion guarantor is generally not required for any television project at any budget level
- cast and crew wages must be at least award minimums
- allowance for Crew Placement Scheme (CPS), if applicable (see 6.2.1.)
- allowance for carer and accessibility costs (for example, Accessibility Coordinator), if applicable
- contingency as outlined in platform subheadings below:
    - feature film and online/direct-to audience projects must have a contingency of 10% of below-the-line (BTL) budget;
    - television projects must have a contingency of 8% of below-the-line (BTL) budget
- the project budget threshold of under $AUD30,000,000 must be met

Incomplete applications will not be accepted. This includes applications without finalised finance plans in place with associated documentation for each item in the finance plan.

4.3.1. First Nations 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 film maker's guide to working with Indigenous people, culture and concepts
- evidence of consultation to date

- if the project will involve particular First Nations individuals or communities, signed letters of consent confirming their willingness to participate

5. Assessment

5.1. Process

- Once submitted, Program Operations 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.
- If any application materials have not been submitted, a 'missing materials' email will be sent, and the applicant is required to supply the 'missing materials' in the specified timeframe. No extensions will be granted. On provision of 'missing materials', the applicant will receive an email advising that their application has moved to assessment.
- Once eligibility has been confirmed, the applicant will receive an email advising that their application has moved to assessment which will take approximately eight (8) to twelve (12) weeks.
- Applications are assessed against the published criteria by Screen Australia delegates, with industry specialists as required.
- Applicants may be required to undertake a meeting with Screen Australia delegates and industry specialists during the assessment process at mutually agreed times.
- 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.
- Funding recommendations will be made at a meeting chaired by the CEO and comprised of relevant Screen Australia staff.
- Screen Australia reserves the right to refer any project with potentially contentious or sensitive subject matter to the Board for decision, regardless of the funding request amount.

5.2. Criteria

Applications will be assessed the following criteria:

- **Story (25%):**
    - Is the story strong, distinctive and entertaining and does it demonstrate storytelling craft?
    - Is the story suited to its platform and audience?
    - Is the story production ready?
    - Does the story contribute to a depth and diversity of Australian stories?
- **Talent and Team (25%):**

    - Does the previous experience and/or track record of the talent and team position them to execute the vision and deliver the project at its budget level?
    - Does the talent and team have authentic connection to the content of the story, characters and world they are representing?
- **Audience and Budget (25%):**
    - Does the project have the potential to resonate significantly with Australian and/or global audiences and will it invite them to click, turn on, or buy a ticket?
    - Will the story have impact for audiences and/or reflect the depth and diversity of people and experiences from around Australia?
    - Does the budget align with its intended audience reach?
    - Does the project have the potential to reach its intended audience on its intended platform?
    - Is the project budgeted appropriately and can the project be successfully realised for its budget and methodology?
- **Marketplace and Finance (25%):**
    - Is marketplace and finance compliant with industry standards and appropriate for the project, budget, reach, impact and platform?
    - Does the marketplace and finance sit within Screen Australia's Terms of Trade and Credit Policy?
    - If applicable, is the track record of marketplace and finance contributors appropriate to the project and the potential commerciality?
    - Is the ask on Screen Australia's direct funding appropriate to budget, audience engagement and impact and, where applicable, recoupment?
    - For Creative First applications, is there potential for the project to unlock distribution and financing partners?

Other factors may be considered including the:

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

Preference will be given to projects that, at the time of application, are no further than six (6) to nine (9) months from the start of pre-production, excluding Creative First Feature Film applications.

5.3. Decision & Notification

- Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within ten to twelve (10-12) weeks of receiving the 'moved to assessment' email.
- If your project is approved for $1,000,000 or less you will be notified of that approval within ten to twelve (10-12) weeks.
- If your project is approved for over $1,000,000, you will be notified that your project is being recommended to Board within ten to twelve (10-12) weeks.
- Projects requiring Board approval will receive a Pre-Board Letter ahead of the next scheduled Board meeting, confirming the amount recommended to the Board and applicants will be notified of the outcome of their recommendation at the corresponding Board meeting for the round.
- In the instance of Feature Film Production – Creative First, successful applicants will be issued a Letter of Interest (LOI) valid for four (4) months from the date of issue.
- If successful, Screen Australia will advise the Applicant of the decision verbally (including details of any special conditions of funding), after which the decision will be notified in writing.
- Where an application is unsuccessful, Screen Australia will advise the Applicant of the decision verbally, after which the decision will be notified in writing.
- In the instance of Feature Film Production – Creative First, where an application is unsuccessful, Screen Australia will advise the Applicant of the decision in writing, due to volume of applications.
- Decisions on applications are final.

6. Successful Applicants

6.1. Contracting

If a project is approved, the applicant will receive a Letter of Approval detailing the level and type of Screen Australia's contribution, as well as information about the contracting process and any conditions.

- Successful applicants will enter into a production grant agreement (PGA) or production investment agreement (PIA) with Screen Australia.
- If a project has received development funding from Screen Australia, the previous development funding must be recognised in the production budget and will become part of Screen Australia's total grant or investment in the project.
- Applicants must adhere to the Screen Australia Credit Policy in any signed or future deals with any partners.
- In the instance of Feature Film Production – Creative First, if a project is approved, the applicant will first receive a Letter of Interest detailing the level and type of Screen Australia's contribution and the conditions to be

met by the applicant within the four (4) month timeframe. Such conditions must be satisfied before any contracting can commence.

6.2. Terms of Funding

- For further information about Screen Australia's standard conditions of funding, see Screen Australia's Terms of Trade, Information for Recipients and the FAQs for the program.
- Official Co-Production projects must have the Provisional Approvals issued by both competent authorities prior to contract execution.
- Projects utilising the Producer Offset must have the Producer Offset Provisional Certificate approved and issued prior to contract execution.

6.2.1. Crew Placement Scheme

As a condition of Screen Australia production funding, below-the-line crew placement opportunities must be allocated to each project for emerging to mid-career practitioners to gain experience in mid and senior crew and leadership roles.

- Productions that **receive between $500,001 and $1,000,000** in production funding from Screen Australia must budget for and engage **one** emerging or mid-career crew Placee in consultation with Screen Australia.
- Productions that **receive more than $1,000,000** in production funding from Screen Australia must budget for and engage **two** emerging or mid-career crew Placees in consultation with Screen Australia.
- The costs for the Placee must be included within your production budget. Potential roles for the placements can be discussed with your Investment Manager or Screen Australia's Industry Development Unit.

For more information about the requirements of the Crew Placement Scheme, click on these FAQs.

7. Other Resources

Further information about Screen Australia funding and resources to assist with submitting an application is available on Screen Australia's website:

- Terms of Trade
- Information for Applicants
- Information for Recipients
- Program FAQ
- Finance Plan Template
- A-Z Budget Template
- Producer Offset FAQ
- Producer Offset Guidelines

8. Contact

If applicants have any further questions contact Screen Australia's Program Operations on 1800 507 901 or at production.narrativecontent@screenaustralia.gov.au

Please note that Screen Australia is unable to provide creative advice or review any materials that may form part of an application.

9. 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.