

Screen Story Development Fund

Generate Fund Guidelines

Date: 1 July 2018

Updated: 1 July 2023

Through the Screen Story Development Fund, Screen Australia supports screen content makers to take advantage of existing and emerging opportunities to develop compelling scripted stories. Applicants may apply for development funding from one of two strands - The Generate Fund or the Premium Fund.

The **Generate Fund** is for lower budget long form episodic television and feature film projects with an emphasis on emerging screen content makers.

The **Premium Fund**, also open for episodic television and feature film projects, is for higher budget long form projects of ambition and scale from successful screen content makers. The commercial viability of the project, and the path to a significant and clearly defined audience is a key focus of this fund.

[Jump to Premium Fund Guidelines.](#)

Online and VR projects are supported through the Online Development Funding Program. [Jump to Online Fund Guidelines.](#)

About this program

The Story Development Generate Fund provides development funding support for emerging screen content makers to develop bold and distinctive lower budget drama stories for episodic television and feature films.

The Generate Development fund has the following aims:

- **Talent:** to identify and support new and emerging talent and their career progression.
- **Story & Audience:** to encourage bold and distinctive lower budget drama stories for any platform that can demonstrate a clear pathway to audience.
- **Culture & Diversity:** to ensure the storytellers and stories being told reflect gender equity and/or the diversity of people and experiences from around Australia, all of which are important culturally, creatively and economically.

Who can apply?

Applications for Generate are open to anyone who:

- Meets all requirements and conditions in our [Terms of Trade](#)
- Is an Australian individual or team. Co-productions may also apply with an application from the Australian Company.
- Controls the rights whether they are the writer, director or producer.

- Is able to develop, finance and produce the project for the intended platform and audience.
- Meets the following budget thresholds
 - One-off or series for a Commissioning Platform - under \$1,500,000 per hour
 - Feature Films - under \$3,000,000

There are no minimum credit requirements to apply.

Applications can be made by individuals or creative teams, however individual applicants must demonstrate the ability to attract other team members at later stages of development.

With the exception of official Co-Productions, it is Screen Australia's expectation that applications for direct funding will demonstrate that the project is written and directed by Australian citizens or permanent residents. Please email development@screenaustralia.gov.au to discuss with a Story Development team member before applying if this is not the case.

Specific requirements apply where a project involves First Nations content, stories, characters or community participation. Please see the First Nations content, collaboration and participation section below and our [Pathways and Protocols guide](#) for more detail.

What is not eligible for this program?

You will not be eligible for Generate if you have a project that:

- Is a standalone short film
- A short form series
- Does not meet all requirements and conditions in our [Terms of Trade](#)
- Has been declined twice for Screen Australia development funding (except in exceptional circumstances)

Applications from experienced screen content makers should refer to the [Premium Fund](#).

What funding is available?

Funding is for development costs. The Development budget can include whatever the project and team need including a treatment, scriptment, draft script, bible, research, writers' rooms, and/or the production of a Proof of Concept (POC) or sizzle reel. For more detail on POC requirements, see [Generate Fund FAQs](#).

There is no cap on funding but the amount applied for must be reasonable relative to the scope of the project, experience of the creative team, the development activities proposed, and any additional sources of development financing raised or expected.

Requested amounts should also align with our [Contribution Guide](#).

Funding limits

- Screen Australia will only fund Australian creatives and costs of the development budget, but will also contribute to costs for international consultants, mentors and script editors.
- Screen Australia development funding cannot be retrospective.
- Whilst Screen Australia can support the development of TV series, when marketplace

(broadcaster, streamer etc) commits to development of a project, that project cannot apply to Screen Australia for further or matched development funding.

How and when can I apply?

Applications are open all year and can be made at any time through Screen Australia's [application portal](#) with the following materials:

- Completed online application form
- An up to 4-minute downloadable video pitch to camera
- A two-page Creative Vision statement
- A two-page Development plan
- Story documents such as treatment, draft script etc.
- Supporting material that will help communicate your creative vision, such as images, music or related material.

Story Development funding is now a one stage process.

First Nations content, collaboration and participation

Screen Australia supports the telling of First Nations stories by First Nations creatives and storytellers and/or meaningful collaboration with the First Nations communities to which these stories belong.

Whenever there is First Nations content and/or First Nations community participation in the project, or when there are First Nations members of the team who do not have the authority to speak for the people or place being represented in the story, you will need to follow the checklists from [Pathways & Protocols: a film maker's guide to working with Indigenous people, culture and concepts](#).

The checklists include a statement on how you are approaching the First Nations content, (even if you believe the content is not specific to a community or individual), evidence of your collaboration to date and where relevant, signed letters of consent confirming the community and/or individual's willingness to collaborate.

Inclusive storytelling

Gender equity, diversity and inclusivity are priorities for Screen Australia. We therefore expect that the diversity of the story world and characters are reflected in the creative team and IP of the project and/or that integrated and meaningful collaboration occurs from early stages of development. Also, consider whether your team has the right to tell the story and whether your telling of it will be authentic.

How are applications assessed?

The Program Operations team will review each application to ensure eligibility and required application materials. Once confirmed, the applicant will receive an email advising that their application has moved to assessment and an estimated timeframe of the outcome - generally around 6 weeks from receipt of email.

In addition to addressing the specific aims of the Generate Fund above, applications will be assessed by Screen Australia executives and/or industry specialists against the following criteria:

- **Talent:** The ability of the individual or team to develop and finance the project, execute the vision and leverage the opportunity to progress their careers/business. In the case of a solo writer applicant, the quality of the plan for the attachment of a producer at a later stage will be taken into consideration.
- **Story & Audience:** Is the story concept strong and distinctive and will it reach and resonate with the intended audience? Is there a demonstrated pathway to audience appropriate to the project's size and financing strategy? Proof of Concepts (POC) will also be assessed against the criteria.
- **Culture & Diversity:** Do elements of the project reflect gender equity and/or the diversity of people and experiences from around Australia?
- **Development plan:** The degree to which the development plan identifies the challenges in the current material while also offering potential strategies to address them in the next phase(s) of development, taking into account any development funding already received.

All projects involving First Nations content or participation will be assessed with First Nations Assessors.

Decisions will take into account the assessment criteria, availability of funds, diversity of the current slate of projects and teams across all platforms, as well as the perceived need for Screen Australia funds by the applicant

Applicants will be advised of the outcome approximately six weeks after email receipt of their project's eligibility.

Terms of Funding

Funding will be in the form of a grant and subject to a non-negotiable standard contract. All screen story development funds will be paid 100% on signing. Generally, the delivery date will be six months after signing the contract.

What will help your application?

We receive many applications every year, so you need to make a strong case for your project. Here are some pointers to help you deliver the strongest application possible:

- Please refer to the [Generate Fund FAQs](#) and carefully consider the objectives, eligibility requirements and assessment criteria for the Generate Fund before applying.
- Make sure you meet all eligibility requirements in these guidelines and in [Terms of Trade](#).
- Preview the [application form](#) before you start
- Make sure your application talks directly to the assessment criteria as well as the aims of the fund outlined in these guidelines

If you have any further questions, 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.

Update Log

1 July 2023 -

- Applications are now single stage process.
- TV budget threshold lifted to \$1.5million from \$1.3 million