



Screen Production Investment

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Queensland
Government

SQ Content

Screen Production Investment

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What is Screen Production Investment?

Screen Queensland Screen Production Investment supports producers to create high quality screen projects capable of engaging local and international audiences, winning critical acclaim and achieving commercial success. Funding is to support producers and projects as the foundation of a successful and sustainable industry.

Screen Production Investment aims to increase diversity on screen and within the creative teams funded by Screen Queensland, in the process unearthing new voices and new stories that reflect and resonate with who we are as Australians.

Funding may be used for production and post-production of screen projects in any genre and for any platform.

Projects may be:

Commercial

A commercial project is one whose benefits to Queensland are primarily commercial, for example projects with Queensland Production Expenditure (QPE) of more than \$3.5 million. A commercial project will also typically have significant market and equity investment and the ability to generate returns on investment through broadcast, distribution and/or sales. An example may be a high-end broadcast series that has the financial backing of an Australian broadcaster with significant overseas presales.

Career-building

A career-building project predominantly has significant career benefits to the Queensland screen industry through supporting bona fide Queenslanders in key creative roles, especially where this represents a significant step in the career of an individual or team. Career-building projects will also typically employ Queenslanders in heads of department positions as well as in meaningful professional attachments. An example may be a film with a first-time writer, director or producer with content that may be selected for major international film festivals but unlikely to do significant commercial business.

Cultural

A cultural project may principally create cultural benefits for the state of Queensland and/or tell a story that has significance to Queensland and Australia. An example may be a documentary or film about a true story that took place in Queensland which is unlikely to be widely distributed but is important in capturing the story for cultural reasons.

Who can apply?

To be eligible, applicants must be a bona fide Queensland Producer **or** an Australian Producer working with a Queensland Producer or Line Producer. The applicant must also be the demonstrated owner of the rights of an eligible project.

Applications with team members in default with Screen Queensland are **not eligible** to apply until all previous funding has been acquitted. If you are not sure whether you are in default, contact Screen Queensland (07) 3248 0500 / content@screenqld.com.au.

In addition to meeting the requirements of this funding program, all applicants must adhere to the Screen Queensland Terms of Trade available at www.screenqld.com.au

What kind of projects are eligible?

Feature Film – Dramatic and factual feature films that will:

- have a theatrical release
- be broadcast on television; and/or
- be released on VOD, SVOD or a streaming service

NB. Finance plans that include the Producer Offset must take into account guidelines and accordingly offset amounts for different platforms.

Broadcast - Drama and factual series, singles and interstitial content that will:

- be broadcast on television; and/or
- be released on VOD, SVOD or a streaming service

Screen Productions must have:

- Well-developed, production-ready screenplay/s
- A clear and complete finance plan suited to the project's audience and platform with documentation to evidence all forms of finance. Significant arms-length investment must be included for projects including arms-length financial attachments, archive and other production assets
- A clear pathway to audience, including significant arms-length market attachments. In the case of broadcast, a broadcaster (i.e. arms-length network or SVOD service) in line with the scope of the project; in the case of feature film an arms-length distributor and/or international sales agent that is in line with the scope of the project
- Projects that are intended to be released in ways outside of traditional theatrical and broadcast models need to provide a convincing audience and recoupment plan
- Significant benefit to the Queensland screen industry including demonstrable Queensland Production Expenditure (QPE). **Commercial projects should request an amount no more than 8 per cent of their QPE and cultural and career-building projects should request an amount of no more than 10-15 per cent of their QPE.** See *'How much can I apply for?'* on page 5 for details.
- A budget that allows for early to mid-career professional attachment opportunities for Queensland talent. See *'Queensland Attachment Requirements'* on page 7 for details.
- For projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, some or all of the intellectual property must be owned by members of these communities
- A completion bond or waiver
- A provisional certificate will be required when contracting SQ-supported projects where the Producer Offset makes up part of the finance plan; this should be provided at the earliest opportunity.

What doesn't SQ Screen Production Investment support?

- Short films
- News or current affairs
- Advertising
- Content whose primary purpose is for marketing
- Content whose primary market is the education sector
- Funding for magazine programs and reality shows **except where Queensland production entities can demonstrate the investment will be used to create these programs as part of and to support a broader slate. Such applications will be strictly assessed against the production funding standard criteria, with particular focus on the benefits to the Queensland screen industry being significant**
- Projects that have entered pre-production. Requests for retrospective funding will not be accepted
- Projects that have been declined once by Screen Queensland previously except where the applicant can demonstrate the application has been significantly reworked prior to submitting
- Projects that have been declined twice are not eligible to apply again.

How much can I apply for?

Screen Queensland funding for screen production will be capped at \$850,000.

Commercially-focused projects

To ensure maximum effect through SQ funding of screen production, recipients with commercial projects that will spend **more than \$3.5 million** in Queensland may apply for up to **8 per cent of the state spend (QPE)** and make this a part of a finance plan. **On audited delivery of the state spend, where the QPE as contracted has been delivered in full, a further 2 per cent of the projected state spend as a Producer Bonus Scheme (PBS) will be awarded to the applicant to support investment in future projects, to be approved by Screen Queensland.** For example, a project with a Queensland production expenditure of \$4,000,000 may apply for up to \$320,000 from Screen Queensland (8% of QPE). Upon reaching their QPE target of \$4 million in full, the producer would then be awarded a further \$80,000 to support development of future projects. Should there be a shortfall in achieving the full contracted QPE, no PBS will be paid.

Cultural and career-building projects

To qualify for SQ funding of screen production, projects spending **less than \$3.5 million** in Queensland will need to clearly demonstrate significant cultural benefits or to provide career development opportunities to talented Queenslanders. Where a project can demonstrate cultural or career outcomes, as outlined, it may apply for no more than **10 per cent and 15 per cent of state spend (QPE)**. Funding will not exceed 15 per cent of state spend (QPE) unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

The commercial and cultural benefits to Queensland will be evaluated during your application's assessment.

Applications requesting 100% of their budget from Screen Queensland or for retrospective funding will not be accepted.

All funding in projects with a commercial focus is a recoupable investment. Screen Queensland will consider offering grant funding to projects that demonstrate significant cultural and career-building benefits to Queensland up to a maximum of \$100,000.

Screen Queensland funding is limited, competitive and subject to creative and commercial assessment.

Applications requesting over \$100,000 will be subject to board approval and must be submitted by specific deadlines outlined on the Screen Queensland website (<http://screenqueensland.com.au/about-sq/meet-the-board/>). Projects requesting over \$100,000 must demonstrate contributions to the finance plan from arms-length marketplace entities.

If you are requesting \$100,000 or less, your application may be submitted at any time.

How is my application assessed?

Your application will be assessed by Screen Queensland executives and may be subject to external peer assessment. Projects recommended for investment will be subject to the approval of Screen Queensland's EVP (\leq \$50,000) CEO (\leq \$100,000) and/or the Screen Queensland Board ($>$ \$100,000).

The following assessment criteria applies to all applications for investment in screen production:

- The track record of the applicant, the key creative team and any attachments. An application will not be assessed or considered if any of the applicants or key creatives are in default
- The creative execution of the project and its critical, commercial and/or cultural potential
- The strength and appropriateness of arms-length market attachments (for project requesting above \$100,000 arms-length market support for the project must contribute to the finance plan), distribution, marketing strategies and release plans, demonstrating a clear audience for the project
- The viability of the production including an assessment of the finance plan, budget and schedule (which may also take into account an evaluation of the project and team by a completion guarantor)
- The commercial, career-building and cultural benefits to the Queensland screen, including an assessment of the levels of Queensland Production Expenditure (QPE), key Queensland-based key creatives, heads of department, crew, cast upskilling opportunities offered through meaningful attachments and any broader commercial or cultural benefits to the industry.

Funding approvals may also be contingent on a completion bond and, in the case of projects that include the Producer Offset as part of their finance, a Provisional Certificate.

What happens if I'm successful?

Successful applicants will enter into a contractual agreement with Screen Queensland.

Delivery, reporting, acquittal requirements, deadlines, attachments and a drawdown schedule for payment will be agreed.

Payments cannot be made without a fully executed contract, Screen Queensland's acceptance of executed transaction documents and receipt of a valid tax invoice.

Applicants will be given 60 days from approval to satisfy any approval conditions and commence contracting with Screen Queensland. This may only be extended with the agreement of Screen Queensland.

Funding can be revoked in the event that contracting does not begin within this period or the contracting period extends longer than three (3) months.

Queensland attachment requirements

Screen production budgets must include allowances for early to mid-career professional attachment opportunities. Attachments must be arranged prior to application. Applicants can contact the SQ Content team for details of current talent seeking attachment opportunities and to ensure their attachments are targeted at filling specific roles and skills shortages.

Attachments should be engaged for a minimum of 5 weeks full time, be compensated at least level 1 award minimum rates for their time and receive appropriate credits for their work.

- Projects applying for under \$200,000 must budget for at least 1 attachment
- Projects applying for between \$200,000 up to \$299,999 must budget for at least 2 attachments
- Projects applying for \$300,000 or more must budget for at least 3 attachments

Where Screen Queensland is the principal state investor, applicants are also expected to utilise Queensland talent for attachments through Screen Australia's 'Inclusive Attachment Scheme.'

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Content

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories will only be eligible for Screen Queensland support where some or all of the Intellectual Property is owned by members of these communities.

How do I apply?

1. Read the guidelines, paying special attention to the eligibility and assessment criteria for the fund. Your team must pass all eligibility and strongly satisfy all assessment criteria to have a competitive application. Incomplete and ineligible applications will not be assessed.

2. Contact Screen Queensland's Content team to discuss your application. Email content@screenqld.com.au or phone (07) 3248 0500.
3. If you are requesting more than \$100,000 your application will be assessed in rounds subject to board approval. Consult the Board Dates at <http://screenqueensland.com.au/about-sq/meet-the-board/> to determine which application deadline will be appropriate for your application. If you are requesting \$100,000 or less, your application may be submitted at any time.
4. Complete the application form at <https://screenqueensland.smartygrants.com.au/>. An automated email will be sent to you within 30 minutes of your submission to indicate Screen Queensland has received your submission. It is **your responsibility as applicant to contact Screen Queensland** if you do not receive an application receipt email.
5. Screen Queensland will notify the applicant via email of any missing materials. These materials will need to be submitted within five (5) business days of notification or the project **will not proceed to assessment and will be deemed withdrawn**. An application will only proceed to assessment when all sections of the form are complete and all requested materials and documentation have been submitted satisfactorily. Allow at least six weeks to receive notification of your application's outcome.

Tips for a competitive application:

Ensure that your application is of high quality, if you are declined once you will need to significantly rework your proposal before attempting to reapply and if your project is declined twice it will not be eligible for future applications. You can give your application the best chance of being competitive by:

- Strongly meeting the eligibility and assessment criteria
- Discussing your applications with a member of the SQ Content team prior to submission
- Having a request in line with your Queensland Production Expenditure and benefits to Queensland. See *'How much can I apply for?'* on page 5 for a guide.
- Employing Queensland talent in key creative roles and as heads of department. For details on Queensland crew visit Screen Queensland's crew directory at <http://screenqueensland.com.au/crew/>
- Having IP held by a Queensland producer
- If your project has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, ensure some or all of the IP is owned by a member of this community
- Perform as much development, production and post-production in Queensland as possible
- Ensuring that your audience, budget, marketing and finance plan are suited to your primary distribution platform
- Building meaningful attachments for Queensland talent into your budget
- Keep in mind that the information you provide in your application will form your contract with Screen Queensland if you are successful

Production application checklist:

Screen Production

Screen Queensland requires the following documents to assess an application. Incomplete applications will not be assessed:

- Production company details, including Certificate of Incorporation and the names of the Company Directors
- Co-production agreement or deal memo (if applicable)
- For International Treaty Co-productions, a Provisional Certificate or evidence of application for a Provisional Certificate
- Synopsis (one paragraph and one page)
- Script(s) and/or series bible plus sample scripts
- Director notes outlining vision for the project
- A producer statement detailing the rationale of the project, its finance plan, budget and market attachments.
- CVs and bios of key creative team
- Written confirmation of any key cast attachments
- Written confirmation of any market attachments which include any relevant deal terms (at least a Letter of Intent is required)
- Copies of all legal documentation, including all agreements and chain of title documentation
- Details of professional placements for Queenslanders
- Details of Queensland crew, locations and facilities
- Details of Queensland production expenditure levels in both production and post production
- Proposed finance plan and recoupment schedule (please use the Screen Australia template)
- A-Z Production Budget with Queensland production expenditure clearly highlighted
- Production schedule (please use the Screen Australia template)
- Copies of all financing documents associated with each finance source. Please ensure these documents include deal terms (at least a Letter of Intent is required)
- Executed letter of intent from Completion Guarantor or waiver
- Proposed recoupment structure/profit participation
- Sales estimates for all territories (low, medium, high)
- Detailed marketing plan and audience plan
- For projects applying for the Producer Offset, a provisional certificate will be required at contracting
- For Reality and Magazine applications, a statement outlining how the production forms part of the Queensland production company's broader slate
- For Reality and Magazine applications, evidence that the Queensland producer owns a significant percentage of the project's IP
- For projects where any fees are being reinvested, the following must be provided:
 - Where the producer is reinvesting part of their fee: either a letter from an independent accountant confirming the producer's financial capacity to invest the amount prior to drawing down their fee; or a cash flow statement outlining how the producer plans to drawdown their fee and then reinvest

into the production. The Completion Guarantor will also need to confirm their approval of this reinvestment in their letter of intent.

- Where other crew or suppliers are reinvesting their fee, a list of budget line items and their associated crew member will be required as well as a letter of commitment from each crew member that is reinvesting their fee.

Screen Queensland will inform you in writing of any missing materials and you will have five (5) business days to supply the missing documents, after which the application will be deemed to have been withdrawn.

What do I do if I have read all of this and want to talk it through?

Contact the SQ Content team by telephone (07) 3248 0500 or email content@screenqld.com.au.