

MEDIA RELEASE

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(Pictured L-R: Tammi Grech and Alana Jonas)

RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED FOR FNQ SCREEN INDUSTRY MENTORSHIPS

Two early-career screen practitioners from Cairns have been selected for the FNQ Screen Industry Bootcamp – a Screen Queensland initiative delivered in partnership with Screenworks.

The six-week bespoke program is a mentorship with two Queensland-based games and animation experts, to give the recipients exposure to the industry, while enhancing their skills and career potential.

Tammi Grech, a 24-year old Macquarie University alumna living in Cairns, has been selected to be mentored by Liz Ballantyne, Art Lead at the Brisbane branch of the international game development company Gameloft (*Modern Combat*, *Disney Magic Kingdoms*).

“I am very excited to be able to connect with Liz and the people at Gameloft, Screen Queensland and Screenworks,” said Ms Grech.

“I can’t wait to see what I am going to learn and come up with over the six weeks,” she said.

Alana Jonas, a recent graduate from SAE Quantm institute Brisbane who has recently returned to Cairns, has been selected to learn alongside mentor Chris Bennett, an animator at the multi-Emmy® award-winning production company Ludo Studio (*Bluey*, *Robbie Hood*), based in Brisbane’s Fortitude Valley.

“Over the years my love for animation has developed greatly,” said Ms Jonas.

“Being granted this opportunity was so exciting and I feel confident that it will help me so much in my journey towards becoming an animator,” she said.

The two mentees will receive six weeks of online mentoring which will be augmented by the opportunity to travel to Brisbane to shadow their mentor in each of their professional environments.

Speaker of the Queensland Parliament and Member for Mulgrave Curtis Pitt acknowledged Far North Queensland's diverse pool of talented artists.

"Since launching the FNQ Screen Production Strategic Plan with the Premier in August last year, our screen industry has remained buoyant and continues to generate opportunities for Cairns' locals to showcase and develop their talent, both off and on camera".

The bootcamp is the first program that Screen Queensland will deliver in partnership with Screenworks, as part of Queensland Government's Advance Queensland Far North Queensland Screen Production Strategic Plan, which aims to boost the capability of the sector in FNQ and foster creative networks and screen culture.

Information and applications for future initiatives for the FNQ strategy will be available through the Screen Queensland and Screenworks websites, screenqueensland.com.au and screenworks.com.au.

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PARTICIPANT BIOS:

Tammi Grech, Games Mentee

Tammi is a 24-year old Macquarie University Alumni, living in Cairns. Like many people her age, Tammi has been playing video games since she was a child and has always wanted to work in the industry. She loves drawing for other people and bringing their ideas to life through her own unique style, as well as putting her own twist on things. She specialises in character design but loves to learn new techniques that can make her a better artist overall.

Alana Jonas, Animation Mentee

Alana started her studies in 2018 at SAE Quantm institute Brisbane, and after learning the basics and history, her passion grew, and she worked hard to achieve the best she could for each project. She graduated with a Bachelor of Character Animation in 2020 and moved back to her hometown of Cairns. Her main interest in the field is creature animation, and her goal is to be able to work on productions at the level of Walt Disney's 2019 *The Lion King*. Recently she has been looking for opportunities to break into the animation industry.

MENTOR BIOS:

Chris Bennett, Animator, ludostudio.com.au

Chris has worked in the Animation Industry since 2013 when he created the popular web series *Alfred & Poe* in affiliation with YouTube pioneers [Smosh](https://www.youtube.com/user/Smosh). From there he went on to work with Smosh full time until 2017 when he joined Ludo Studio as an Animator for the Emmy award winning series *Bluey*. He also served as a Writer for episode 'Fancy Restaurant'. Chris and his wife, Cassandra have two young boys together and love living in Brisbane. www.alfredandpoe.com

Liz Ballantyne, Art Lead, gameloft.com

Liz is the Lead Artist at Gameloft Australia and Women in Games Ambassador. She has been creating video games for over 15 years and has worked with international brands including, Disney, Star Wars, Microsoft and Warner Brothers. Liz is responsible for leading art teams in the creation and delivery for original IP's and licenced games. Liz has expertise in user experience and interaction design, graphic design and brand strategy.

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About Screen Queensland:

Screen Queensland is a Queensland Government-owned company that invests in talent and production to grow a creative, innovative and successful screen industry with a focus on stories and audience, secures production and post, digital and visual effects to Queensland, and delivers an active screen culture through festivals and events funding across the state. Screen Queensland invests in stories and talent through a range of mechanisms including development, production investment, initiatives, sqhub and mentorships. Screen Queensland is deeply committed to increasing diversity in the screen industry to reflect the Australian community. For more information visit screenqld.com.au

About Screenworks:

Screenworks is a registered charity that provides support, leadership and vision for the regional screen industries in Australia. The principal objective of Screenworks is to promote and advance the screen industry in regional, rural and remote Australia, with a focus on the industry cluster in the Northern Rivers region of NSW. Their principal activities provide screen-related development and networking opportunities, programs and initiatives specifically designed to support people living in regional, rural and remote Australia. Screenworks is a home-grown not-for-profit, membership-based association managed by a board of volunteer directors that provide industry, management and screen industry knowledge and experience
www.screenworks.com.au