



Documentary Development Investment Fund Guidelines

What is it?

A fund that invests in the development of documentary and factual programming in order to support and grow a sustainable Western Australian screen industry.

There are a minimum of two rounds per financial year.

What Can I Apply For?

- Up to \$25,000 per application
- Funding is not automatic, even if an applicant can demonstrate they meet all the assessment criteria
- Screenwest may approve funding less than the requested amount, as guided by the recommendations made during the assessment process and the total demand on available funds

Am I Eligible?

To be considered eligible for this program/initiative, the below general minimum eligibility applies.

Applicant / Company Eligibility

The applicant / company must:

1. Meet the general eligibility requirements set out in the [Screenwest Terms of Trade](#).
2. Be a Western Australian resident or Production Company as defined in the Screenwest Terms of Trade. (Non-Western Australian productions will only be considered where the Production Company brings demonstrated strong economic and/or ongoing creative opportunities to the State).

Project Eligibility:

The project must be a documentary project in one of the following formats:

- Feature
- Single
- Series
- Large format (e.g. IMAX)
- Innovative documentary project

What Do I Need to Apply?

Applicants will need to provide:

1. A completed Application Form on SmartyGrants, including any additional information, documentation and materials listed in the form.
2. If the project has been submitted and declined funding previously, you must list the specific changes made to the re-submitted application.
3. A log line, one paragraph summary and a detailed synopsis, and information on format and timeslot.
4. A development budget that breaks down the investment from all investors, including the Applicant. The applicant is expected to include acceptable rates for fees when preparing the development budget.
5. A written budget rationale that explains the Screenwest funding request, what the costs are for, and how they will be expended. Screenwest prefers to invest in Western Australian elements, although exceptions can be made.
6. If relevant, there must be strong Indigenous representation on all projects that tell Indigenous stories, through the involvement of an Indigenous key creative or through consultation and collaboration that is adequately budgeted for. Written confirmation of the willingness of both the subject(s) and the community to be involved in the project is essential. **See pages 19 – 29 of [Screen Australia's Pathways & Protocols](#) for protocols relating to initial research, project development and script development.**

7. The latest draft script, preliminary treatment or a detailed concept document including character outlines and episode synopses.
8. A clear development strategy outlining the objectives and tasks to be undertaken (e.g. writer's notes and a clear strategy from the producer on how they are going to move the project forward to commissioning).
9. CVs (one page) of the project principals and, if applicable, a company profile indicating past success in developing and producing projects.
10. Letters or emails of intent or other documentation giving proof of marketplace interest.

Note: A COVID risk management plan may be requested at any time during the application or assessment process.

How Is My Application Assessed?

Assessment Criteria

Screenwest will assess all eligible applications against the following criteria:

1. Market interest and likely audience appeal.
2. The applicant and key creative team's track record.
3. The quality of the overall proposal or concept.
4. The participation of a Western Australian producer (Screenwest will always give priority to projects that have a Western Australian producer as an active part of the team).
5. The likely chance of the project being realised in Western Australia considering budget, locations, and creative elements.
6. Overall diversity of projects funded by Screenwest e.g. factual, TV-series, and one-off documentaries, as well as ensuring a diverse slate of experienced, mid-career and emerging production companies.
7. Cultural and/or economic benefits to Western Australia.
8. Support for Screenwest's commitment to the creation and growth of diverse representation as described in the [Screenwest Diversity Statement](#), below.

9. Alignment with [Screenwest's current Strategic Plan](#).

In evaluating the application, Screenwest will take into account any information and weight the above criteria as it judges appropriate to best serve the purpose and strategy of the organisation.

Assessment Process & Timeline

Screenwest will follow this process in assessing applications for this program:

1. Screenwest will check the application meets the general minimum eligibility.
2. Any applications found ineligible will be reviewed by another Screenwest Program Manager.
3. Depending on the number of applications, Screenwest Management reserves the right to shortlist applications, prior to formal panel assessment.
4. Final applications will be approved at a panel assessment meeting with Screenwest Management and at least one external industry assessor.
5. The assessment timeline is approximately 6 – 8 weeks from application deadline to funding decision.

Diversity Statement

Screenwest is committed to reflecting the broad diversity of Western Australia's community on screen and behind the camera, through stories funded and practitioners supported.

Screenwest recognises diversity as differences in:

- gender
- age
- Indigenous identity
- cultural and linguistic diversity (CaLD)
- disability
- sexuality and gender identities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and ace (LGBTQIA+)
- location (including regional and remote regions) and
- socio-economic status.

Indigenous Content and Participation

Where there is Indigenous content or participation in any project, Screenwest requires that each applicant complies with protocols related to the treatment of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights (ICIP). For more information on ICIP, please refer to the [Arts Law Centre of Australia](#).

There must be strong Indigenous representation on all projects that tell Indigenous stories, through the involvement of Indigenous key creatives and thorough consultation and collaboration that is adequately budgeted for.

Please ensure you allow sufficient time for consultation so that people giving consent can more fully understand what they are consenting to.

These requirements apply equally to Indigenous and non-Indigenous filmmakers.

For information on what Content, Consent and Consultation means, please refer to the Screenwest website for more information on [Filming with Indigenous People, Content and Land](#).

For more detailed information on Indigenous Content and Participation protocols, please refer to [Screen Australia's Pathways & Protocols: a filmmaker's guide to working with Indigenous people, culture and concepts](#).

Terms of Funding

1. Funding will be provided as an investment.
2. Successful recipients will enter into a Development Investment Agreement (DIA) with Screenwest, specifying the terms of the funding and what the applicant will need to deliver to receive their scheduled payments.
3. Recipients are required to provide a written acquittal report detailing the outcomes achieved as a result of the funding. Aspects of these may be published on the Screenwest website following consultation with the applicant.
4. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain and keep current, all necessary permissions, permits and Chain of Title documentation for the development, production and exploitation of the Project. Screenwest reserves the right to sight and approve the above at any time, upon written request to the Producer.

Deadlines and How to Apply

- Applications must be completed in full and submitted by **5:00pm AWST on the specified closing date**. Please check the Screenwest website and the [Screenwest SmartyGrants Portal](#) to see all announced application deadlines.
- Acceptance of any additional application materials after this date is subject to Screenwest's discretion.
- Applications will be accepted through the Screenwest SmartyGrants Portal. Do not email applications directly to individual Screenwest staff members.
- You can start your application at any time once the portal opens. You can save your progress and return to it at any time before the deadline. **Do not start your application the day it is due.**
- An application receipt will be automatically forwarded to the applicant from SmartyGrants to confirm that Screenwest has received the application. **It is the applicant's responsibility to contact Screenwest if an application receipt has not been received within two working days.**
- If you are unable to submit an application online or having difficulties, please call Screenwest on [+61 8 6169 2100](#) or [1800 463 043](#) (WA regional callers).

Please note: the submission portals for all funding programs close automatically at **5:00pm AWST sharp** on the specified due date.

Allow plenty of time to submit your application in case of unanticipated problems. **Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.**

Who can I contact for more information?

For more information about this program, please contact:

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Please note that meetings with program contacts can be in high demand, so it's best to telephone or email for an appointment or general advice well before planning to submit an application.

Applicants are **strongly** encouraged to discuss their applications before applying.