



Australian Government



# Australian Screen Festivals Fund 2025-2028: 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](#).

## **Accessibility**

If you have accessibility requirements relating to submitting an application, please contact our Program Operations team via email at [industry@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:industry@screenaustralia.gov.au), or phone 1800 507 901, so we can assist.

Please note: applications for industry events including conferences, are now made through [Screen Industry Partnerships](#).

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# 1. About this funding program

## 1.1. Overview

Screen Australia is now accepting applications for festivals (up to three years of funding) which exhibit unique benefits to the Australian screen industry and to Australian audiences.

These festivals must demonstrate an understanding of changes in audience engagement, and how they will have an impact on their audience or within their particular niche.

Screen Australia is interested in receiving applications from organisers of festivals which are innovative and forward-focused.

The aims of the program are to:

- offer opportunities for Australian content creators and titles
  - to have an impact on audiences or in the domestic and international screen industry; and
  - to reach new/niche audiences
- support impactful events which are also evolving to be relevant to future audiences and the future of the screen industry
- provide opportunities for Australian talent that has not been recognised or had equal opportunities
- showcase Australian film, television and interactive digital media projects and practitioners to audiences through recognising excellence and achievement
- support the marketing needs of Australian content
- promote the national industry and its practitioners

## 1.2. Available Funding

This program provides up to three years of funding starting from the 2025/26 financial year. The funding is for festivals focused on audience engagement across multiple mediums.

# 2. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility

For Australian screen content to effectively deliver cultural and economic benefits it must speak to, and be for, all Australians. A diversity of ideas and an inclusive workforce will enhance the Australian industry, making it more relevant to Australian audiences and competitive internationally.

Screen Australia is committed to building equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility into its programs and into our engagement with the community.

Screen Australia encourages applications from applicants from all backgrounds, cultures and experiences. In particular, the agency welcomes applications from applicants who are First Nations, d/Deaf and disabled, culturally and linguistically

diverse, LGBTIQ+, women or gender diverse, regionally based, or those from other under-represented groups.

Screen Australia strives to make its programs accessible by removing barriers for people who are d/Deaf and disabled and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## 3. Eligibility

### 3.1. Applicant Eligibility

Applicants and projects must meet Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#), as well as the specific eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines.

- Applicants must apply as an Australian company. Individuals or sole traders are not eligible to apply.
- An applicant company must be an incorporated company carrying on business in Australia, with its central management and control in Australia.

### 3.2. Activity Eligibility

The following specific requirements also apply:

- To be eligible, activities must:
  - be (or for new activities, intend to be) annual or regular film festivals;
  - take place within Australia; and
  - be available for public and screen industry audiences. This program is not intended for screenings at private institutions or schools.
- Screen Australia will not provide funds to cover festivals that have already taken place.
- This program is intended to support festivals of scale. As such, individual launch activities/screenings are not eligible to apply.
- Applications for Games festivals should be made through the [Games Festivals and Events Fund](#).

Please note: applications for industry events including conferences, are now made through [Screen Industry Partnerships](#).

## 4. Application Process

### 4.1. How to Apply

Applications close **5pm AEDT Thursday 27 March 2025**.

Applicants must 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
- address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- include all required supporting materials

## 4.3. Required Materials

Applicants are required to upload the following supporting materials with their application form:

- A Statement addressing the aims of the program
- A Strategic Business Plan including:
  - a statement of the festival's intent or purpose
  - forward plans outlining the festival's adaptability to changes in audience behaviour and evolving screen production and industry practices
  - an executive summary
  - mission statement
  - specific plans for the festival, including a timeline/schedule
  - intended outcomes or KPIs (should be quantifiable)
  - financials
  - marketing plans
  - governance and operations
  - access and inclusion strategy
- A detailed Budget for the festival including substantiating documentation. Please include actuals from the previous year's budget (if applicable) against the forecasts in this application. This might form part of the applicant's Strategic Business Plan.
- Accounts: The most recent set of audited and un-audited annual accounts for the applicant's organisation or business

## 5. Assessment

### 5.1. Assessment Process

- Once submitted, the Program Operations team will review each application to determine eligibility and ensure that required application materials have been provided. Once eligibility has been confirmed, the applicant will receive an email advising that their application has moved to assessment.
- Screen Australia executives and/or industry specialists will assess all applications, taking into account the assessment criteria below.

### 5.2. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following equally weighted criteria:

- **Alignment with the aims of the program.** The extent to which the application demonstrates that there are clearly identified outcomes that contribute to the aims of this program.
- **Impact for screen industry.** Impact of the festival today and the applicant's strategies for ensuring its future relevance for the Australian screen industry.
- **Distinguishing features.** Distinguishing features of the festival e.g. accreditations, competitions and prizes, industry programs.
- **Viability & planning.** How effectively the applicant has planned the festival and within budget. Screen Australia will consider:
  - the extent to which the applicant has considered financial and corporate governance
  - evidence provided of strategic partnerships that maximise revenue (both cash and in-kind support)
  - the applicant's plans for marketing and promoting the festival and their level of knowledge of the event's target audience
  - the capability, experience and relevant track record of the applicant and proposed team (including, where relevant, previous project acquittals)
  - the length of time the festival has been in operation (applications are open for new festivals with suitable strategies and business plans).

### 5.3. Decision & Notification

Applicants will be advised of Screen Australia's decision in **May 2025**.

## 6. Successful Applicants

### 6.1. Contracting

If approved, the applicant will receive an email detailing Screen Australia's approved contribution, as well as information about the contracting process and any applicable conditions.

Successful applicants will enter into an Activity Grant Agreement with Screen Australia which will outline the terms of funding.

### 6.2. Terms of Funding

Funding through this program is generally up to three years, subject to satisfactory performance and reporting against KPIs. Shorter terms may be approved in some circumstances. Funding is in the form of a grant and is not recouped by Screen Australia. Recipients will, however, be required to provide reports as set out in their funding agreement KPIs.

Receipt of funding should not lead to any expectation of continued assistance from Screen Australia beyond the term of the funding agreement.

## 7. Contact

For any enquiries, please contact the Screen Australia Program Operations team on 1800 507 901 or email [industry@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:industry@screenaustralia.gov.au).

## **8. 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](#).