

# CANBERRA SCREEN AND GAMES FUND

## *TV and Film Production Guidelines*

**Guidelines released: 4 December 2025**

**Last updated: 3 December 2025**

### 1 **General Principles**

#### OVERVIEW

The Canberra Screen and Games Fund is an ACT Government Program delivered in partnership with Screen Canberra. It has been established to support the creative industry within the ACT.

The aim of the production funding program is to support the production of a diversity of high-quality, market-ready feature films and television series that meet these funding guidelines.

- The TV and Film Production Program supports content makers to produce features, series or single documentaries or narrative content that has a confirmed pathway to Audience.
- The program supports projects that are at least a commercial half-hour in duration.
- At least 30% of the financing must be confirmed at the time of application.
- Screen Canberra is generally one of the last contributors to the Finance Plan.
- For projects in partnership with cultural institutions i.e.: museums, galleries and with a demonstrated pathway to audiences, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### 2 **Available Funding**

- The amount of funding provided will depend on the scale of your project, the first and primary platform and the amount of additional finance required or secured from other sources.
- Screen Canberra may decide to provide funding at a different level than that applied for based on the assessment of all projects submitted to each funding round.
- Other sources of finance need to be in place. The assessment process will take into account the percentage of funding requested from Screen Canberra as a proportion of the overall budget. Other contributions may come from marketplace entities, as well as from state/territory agencies, other government organisations, cultural institutions, international sources, private investors, philanthropy or other partners.

#### NON-RECOUPABLE GRANT - PRODUCTION (TV AND FILM)

- Screen Canberra's contribution is intended to trigger significant additional expenditure in the ACT, with every **\$1** provided expected to trigger at least **\$4** in qualifying ACT expenditure.
- The creative team in consultation with Screen Canberra will offer at least one ACT practitioner a meaningful career development opportunity.

#### EQUITY INVESTMENT - PRODUCTION (TV AND FILM) - OVER \$300,000

- For projects over \$300,000 Screen Canberra may consider taking on an equity position on the project.
- Funding is generally provided on a recoupment basis, with terms negotiated in the funding agreement.

- Screen Canberra's contribution is intended to trigger significant additional expenditure and extra benefits to the ACT, with every \$1 provided expected to trigger at least \$4 in qualifying ACT expenditure.
- Local employment targets and key skill development requirements will need to be met. The creative team in consultation with Screen Canberra will offer at least one ACT practitioner a meaningful career development opportunity.
- Canberra will feature significantly on Screen.

Investments above the standard thresholds will be considered in exceptional circumstances. This type of production would be evaluated on its unique merits, potential impact, and alignment with strategic objectives.

### 3 Inclusive Storytelling

Screen Canberra is committed to supporting a diverse and inclusive screen industry. Applications are strongly encouraged from:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- Multicultural communities, including migrants and refugees;
- People who identify as living with a Disability;
- People of different age groups;
- People who identify as being part of LGBTIQ+ communities.

### 4 Environmental Sustainability

Screen Canberra is committed to the ACT Governments emissions reduction targets of achieving Net Zero emissions by 2045.

We encourage all productions filming in the Territory to consider the environment and strive to reduce their Carbon Footprints. Projects which can incorporate sustainable practices on and off screen are encouraged.

### 5 Eligibility

- Applicants and projects must meet Screen Canberra's Terms of Trade, as well as the specific eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines.
- Specific requirements apply to projects which involve [First Nations participation or content](#).
- Specific requirements may apply to projects which involve community participation or content with the following communities: d/Deaf, disabled, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ+, or those from other under-represented groups.
- All projects must fit the ACT Government's [Ethical Investments Framework](#)

#### 5.1 Applicant Eligibility

This funding program is open to companies and in certain circumstances, individuals.

#### 5.2 General Eligibility for All Applicants

##### ALL APPLICANTS MUST:

- Have an active ABN and be registered for GST if required by law.
- Be based in the Australian Capital Territory or be able to display **clear ACT economic benefit**.
- Meet the specific requirements of the relevant program guidelines.
- Not be engaged in a legal dispute related to the application.
- Have meaningful financial and creative control of the project.
- Have the capacity and resources to execute the project.
- Hold the necessary rights (e.g., copyright) to carry out the project.

### 5.3 Individual Applicants

#### AN INDIVIDUAL APPLICANT MUST BE:

- At least 18 years of age.
- ACT-based, or have at least one ACT-based Key Creative (Producer, Director, or Writer) on the project.

#### INDIVIDUAL APPLICANTS CANNOT BE:

- A full-time secondary or tertiary student.
- An individual must not have a real or conceived conflict of interest with ACT Government or Screen Canberra
- An individual with an outstanding obligation to Screen Canberra unless an exception has been agreed upon.

### 5.4 Organisational Applicants

#### TO QUALIFY FOR THE SCREEN & GAMES FUND AN COMPANY MUST EITHER BE:

- based in the ACT;
- or be a non-ACT-based company genuinely co-producing with an ACT-based company;
- or meet a minimum qualifying ACT spend requirement and display clear economic and employment benefits to the ACT.

#### ORGANISATIONS CANNOT BE:

- An educational or training institution.
- A gambling company.
- An organisation with an outstanding obligation to Screen Canberra.

### 5.5 Project Eligibility

#### TO BE ELIGIBLE, THE PROJECT MUST:

- Have applicant control of the rights necessary to carry out the project, meaning that it must have clear chain of title and must generally be party to any underlying rights agreements;
- Screen Canberra considers a maximum of two funding applications per project.
  - A second application will only be considered if significant changes have been made to the application.
- Applications missing finalised finance plans and their supporting documentation for each item will be considered incomplete and will not be accepted.
- If producing a documentary it must follow the [ACMA Guidelines](#) for the definition of 'documentary';

#### THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING:

- Projects whose first and primary window is not for television broadcast or theatrical feature film.
- Projects that have been declined by Screen Canberra for the second time.
- Capital works or purchases.
- Retrospective costs. Screen Canberra reserves the right to consider retrospective costs in exceptional cases.
- Purchase of underlying Intellectual Property.
- Educational and training programs and projects.

### 5.6 Additional Eligibility Criteria

#### CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

For features, series or single documentaries or narrative projects the creative team responsible for the project must include one producer, director or writer who has at least one eligible credit across different projects in their respective role.

An 'eligible credit' is a documentary or narrative production that is 30 minutes or longer in duration, and has:

- been broadcast by a recognised Commissioning Platform or channel; *or*
- had a commercial theatrical release; *or*
- been invited to screen at an internationally recognised festival, such as Sundance, Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), SXSW, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), Hot Docs, CPH:DOX, Sunny Side of the Doc, Sheffield DocFest, or an equivalent program of similar standing.
- been invited to screen at a major Australian festival such as Sydney Film Festival, Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF), Adelaide Film Festival or Brisbane International Film Festival (BIFF).

#### PRESALE REQUIREMENTS (TELEVISION PRODUCTION ONLY)

For feature length, series or singles for which Television (including SVOD, AVOD or BVOD) is the first and primary window, applicants must have:

- a confirmed local Commissioning Platform secured on terms acceptable to Screen Canberra,
- a ROW distributor with a Letter of Interest (LOI) or Deal Memo including commercial deal terms and forecast sales figures for all major territories

#### PRESALE REQUIREMENTS (FILM)

For features for theatrical release applicants must have:

- a Letter of Offer (LOO) or Deal Memo to distribute the project in Australia with an ANZ distributor with the LOO outlining commercial deal terms and estimated Australian Gross Box Office (AGBO) and a marketing release strategy;
- and/or have a LOO from a Rest of World (ROW) sales agent outlining the commercial deal terms and providing sales estimates for all territories.

## **6 Application Process**

- Before applying, applicants must read and understand these guidelines, Screen Canberra's Terms of Trade, and preview the application form on SmartyGrants.
- A non-refundable application fee of **\$100** for applications.

### **6.1 How to Apply**

Complete and submit the online application form prior to the application deadline through Screen Canberra's Application Portal on SmartyGrants.

#### APPLICATION FORM

Through the application form, applicants must:

- provide all the information requested and answer the application questions;
- meet, where required, all eligibility criteria; and,
- include all required supporting materials.

Applicants must upload the following required materials with their application form:

#### CREATIVE

- Proposal
- Project Bible or Pitch Deck
- Director's Statement

#### FINANCE

- Finance Plan (using Screen Australia's template)

- Confirmation of decision dates for finance sourced from other Australian or international funding authorities
- Deal agreements
- Cashflow lender agreement for the Producer Offset or other screen incentives (such as the Post, Digital and Visual Effects [PDV] Offset), if applicable.
- Gap lender agreement, if applicable.
- For Official Co-Productions: evidence substantiating finance items from partner country/ies
  - Documented evidence for any confirmed finance (including equity or LOIs from funders such as state/territory agencies, private or philanthropic investment, or marketplace interest).
  - Confirmation of decision dates for any other pending finance from Australian or international authorities

*Note: Prior to contracting, marketplace interest must be confirmed with high-level deal terms or a Letter of Offer provided to Screen Canberra.*

### PRODUCTION

- Production Budget\*
- Production Schedule (including pre-production, production, post, and methodology details)

### MARKET & AUDIENCE

- For subsequent seasons: audience data on previous season/s

### RIGHTS

- ASIC Company Extract (dated within 30 days of application submission), where applicable
- Summary of Chain of Title; if available, solicitor's opinion letter.
- Co-production agreement or joint venture agreement, where rights are shared, where applicable.

### BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

\*[The A-Z Budget template](#) must be used.

\*\*Any subsequent updates to the budget/schedule must be provided prior to contracting.

Where a Production Budget is required, it must include:

- Production costs (including any development costs)
- Post-production costs
- Financing and indirect costs
- Dedicated Marketing Budget to support early development and creation of high-quality marketing assets, as well as audience testing
- Delivery costs relevant to platform and market partners, including requirements for the National Film and Sound Archive
- Foreign Currency Hedging Mechanism, if applicable
- Closed Caption and Audio Description (required for Feature Film and Television projects only)
- Cast and crew wages at or above award minimums
- Allowance for Crew Placement Scheme (CPS), if applicable
- Allowance for carer and accessibility costs (e.g. Accessibility Coordinator), if applicable
- Contingency (as outlined below):
  - Feature Film: 10% of below-the-line (BTL) budget
  - Television: 8% of below-the-line (BTL) budget

Incomplete applications will not be accepted. This includes applications without finalised finance plans in place with associated documentation for each item in the finance plan.

## FIRST NATIONS PARTICIPATION OR CONTENT

Where there is First Nations community participation or content involved in the project applicants must provide:

- a statement setting out how they are approaching the First Nations content or participation with regard to appropriate protocols. Applicants must demonstrate that they have a consultation plan covering the full production process and are following it. The statement should be based on the checklists available in Screen Australia's guide [Pathways & Protocols: a film maker's guide to working with Indigenous people, culture and concepts](#);
- evidence of consultation undertaken to date; and
- if the project will involve particular First Nations individuals or communities, signed letters of consent confirming their willingness to participate and any relevant access agreements.

## 7 **Assessment** PROCESS

- Once submitted, Screen Canberra will review each application to determine eligibility and ensure that required materials have been submitted.
- Once eligibility has been confirmed, the applicant will receive an email advising that their application has moved to assessment which will take approximately eight **(8)** to twelve **(12)** weeks.
- Incomplete applications will not be assessed
- Applications are assessed against the published criteria by Screen Canberra delegates, with industry specialists as required.
- Applicants may be required to undertake a meeting with Screen Canberra delegates and industry specialists during the assessment process at mutually agreed times, either in person or online/phone.
- All projects involving First Nations content or participation will be assessed or co-assessed by First Nations Assessors.
- Some projects involving representation of communities and culture may be assessed by Specialist or Cultural Assessors.
- Screen Canberra reserves the right to refer any project with potentially contentious or sensitive subject matter to the Board for decision, regardless of the funding request amount.
- All funding decisions will be signed off by the responsible ACT Government Minister.

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

If eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

### **Creative Strength & Audience Engagement**

- **Distinctive Storytelling:** How original, compelling, and well-developed is the concept and/or script? Does it have a unique voice or perspective?
- **Audience:** Is there a clear and identifiable target audience? What is the plan to reach and engage this audience (e.g., distribution strategy, marketing plan)?
- **Creative Team:** What is the track record and capacity of the key creative team (writer, director, producer) to deliver a high-quality production?

### **ACT Economic & Industry Impact**

- **ACT Expenditure:** What is the proposed amount and percentage of the total budget to be spent in the ACT (i.e., ACT Qualifying Production Expenditure)?
- **Local Employment:** How many ACT-based cast, crew, and post-production personnel will be employed? What is the quality of these key creative and crew roles?
- **Capability Development:** Does the project offer significant skills development opportunities for local practitioners, particularly through the required crew placements for emerging talent?

- **Studio/Business Growth:** Does the project contribute to the growth and sustainability of an ACT-based production company or studio?

### Cultural & Regional Significance

- **Showcasing the ACT:** Does the project feature recognisable Canberra locations, tell local stories, or otherwise promote the region on a national or international stage?
- **Diverse Voices:** Does the project genuinely reflect and include diverse perspectives, stories, and practitioners from the ACT community?
- **Cultural Value:** Does the project contribute to the cultural landscape of the ACT and Australia?

### Project Viability & Feasibility

- **Budget & Finance Plan:** Is the budget thorough, realistic, and compliant with industry standards (including fair wages)? Is the finance plan credible, with a significant portion of the budget already secured or confirmed?
- **Project Planning:** Is there a viable project timeline from pre-production to delivery? Have potential risks been identified and addressed?

Other factors that may be considered include the:

- availability of funds;
- range of projects in receipt of production funding from Screen Canberra, inclusive of a project's scale, budget, intended audience, genre and themes.

### Decision & Notification

- Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within ten (10) to twelve (12) weeks from the submission closing date.
- Where an application is unsuccessful, the applicant will be advised and can request feedback.
- Decisions on application outcomes are final.

## 8 Successful Applicants Contracting

- If a project is approved, the applicant will receive a Letter of Offer (**LOO**) detailing the level and type of Screen Canberra's contribution, as well as information about the contracting process and any conditions.
- Successful applicants will enter into a Production Grant Agreement (**PGA**) or Production Investment Agreement (**PIA**) with Screen Canberra.
- Screen Canberra reserves the right to cancel a contract if it is not closed within a nine-month period.

### Deliverables

As a condition of production finance, the producer must deliver the materials in the funding agreement.

### DELIVERABLES FOR THE NFSA

- For all projects, the materials specified in the Delivery Deed between the producer and the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA) are to be delivered directly to the NFSA (at the best quality available and at the completed resolution).
- NFSA deliverables must be included in the project budget.

## Terms of Funding

- If a project has received development funding from Screen Canberra, the previous development funding must be recognised in the production budget and will become part of Screen Canberra's total grant or investment in the project.
- Applicants must adhere to the Screen Canberra Credit Policy in any executed or future deals with any partners.
- For further information about Screen Canberra's standard conditions of funding, see Screen Canberra's Terms of Trade.
- Official Co-Production projects must have the Provisional Approvals issued by both competent authorities prior to contract execution.
- Projects utilising the Producer Offset must have the Producer Offset Provisional Certificate approved and issued prior to contract execution.
- Projects must register and complete the Everyone Project on delivery.

## Publicity

Funding for the CBR Screen and Games Fund is provided by the ACT Government. The Territory and Screen Canberra may disclose and publicise funding details (including recipient name, project title, funding amount and a brief description of the funded activities) as required under applicable [freedom of information legislation](#) and for reporting or promotional purposes, including websites, media releases, announcements and annual reports. Except for such disclosures, the applicant and Screen Canberra must keep all application and assessment information confidential and must not disclose it to any third party without prior written consent.

## Crew Placement Scheme

- As a condition of Screen Canberra production funding, crew placement opportunities must be allocated to each project for emerging to mid-career practitioners to gain experience in mid and senior crew and leadership roles.
- Depending on the role, the length of each crew placement opportunity must be for a period of time that provides genuine career advancement (minimum of 6 weeks).
- The costs for the placement must be included within your production budget. Potential roles for the placements should be discussed with Screen Canberra.

## 9 Other Resources

Further information about Screen Canberra funding and resources to assist with submitting an application is available on Screen Canberra's website:

- Screen Canberra Terms of Trade
- Information for Applicants
- Information for Recipients
- Screen Canberra Credit Policy
- Screen Canberra's AI Guiding Principles
- [Finance Plan Template](#)
- [A-Z Budget Template](#)
- Qualifying ACT Expenditure
- [Producer Offset FAQs](#)
- [Producer Offset Guidelines 2024](#)

## 10 Contact

For any enquiries, please contact the Screen Canberra team. Please note that we are not able to provide creative advice or suggestions to strengthen your application.

Email: [info@screencanberra.com.au](mailto:info@screencanberra.com.au)

Post: GPO Box 9, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia

## 11 Privacy

Screen Canberra collects personal information in various ways, including through funding applications, acquittal reports, registrations for events, program participation, and supporting documentation provided with forms.

All personal information is managed in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2014 (ACT) and Screen Canberra's Privacy Policy, and may be used for assessment, administration, reporting, and other related purposes.

## 12 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure it remains consistent with Screen Canberra's operational objectives, national screen industry standards, and evolving technologies and creative practices.