



Australian Government

SCREEN
AUSTRALIA

Documentary grants: how will they work?

For all documentary projects approved after 1 March 2010, Screen Australia funding of \$200,000 or under will be provided as a grant, rather than as recoupable investment, and will not have to be repaid unless the terms of the grant agreement are breached.

1. What counts towards the \$200,000 threshold?

'Screen Australia funding' in this case means production finance through the National Documentary Program, Domestic & International Documentary programs, the Special Documentary Program, Indigenous Department documentary programs and other initiatives such as jtv docs. If a project has received development funding from Screen Australia or its predecessor agencies, the development funds will be added to the production funds for the purpose of determining whether the \$200,000 grant threshold has been reached. Support provided through Screen Australia's marketing programs is not included.

2. What difference will it make?

All the normal requirements of each documentary funding program will still apply, including eligibility, marketplace attachments and delivery requirements.

However, where funding is provided as a grant it will mean:

- simpler contracting – the grant agreement is relatively simple, with less need for negotiation and fewer transaction documents; for example Screen Australia will not generally need a solicitor's opinion but will rely on warranties from the producer;
- reduced reporting, with the number of funding drawdowns and associated cost reports reduced to three stages – on execution of the grant agreement, at rough cut, and at final cost report;
- reduced consultation with Screen Australia;
- an improved recoupment position for the producer, with Screen Australia no longer an equity investor; and
- that the Screen Australia contribution will be agreed upfront and not varied.

Screen Australia will retain the right to audit accounts.

3. What about copyright?

Screen Australia will hold 1% copyright in all projects where its investment is greater than \$100,000.

4. What will it mean for other investors?

It will be up to the producer to coordinate the finance from third parties such as broadcasters and state agencies. Broadcasters should not be affected as they will generally have a separate licence agreement with the producer. We will be consulting with the state screen agencies as part of implementing the grant agreement.

5. Why has Screen Australia made this change?

After taking a close look at our administrative processes, documentary budgets and recoupment patterns, we believe that the grant model can provide significant benefits to the documentary community as well as improved efficiency and minimal loss of revenue for Screen Australia.