



Australian Government



PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Producer Equity Program

First issued 1 July 2011

This version issued 27 February 2012 (see page 3 for change log).

The Producer Equity Program provides a direct payment of funds to producers of eligible low-budget Australian documentaries, equal to 20 per cent of the approved budget.

The program is administered by Screen Australia's Documentary Unit, and is subject to Screen Australia's Terms of Trade (section 1 only).

Eligibility

To be eligible, a project must:

- be a documentary, having regard to the guidelines compiled by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)
- have Significant Australian Content
- be a single-episode program of at least a commercial half hour in length, or a series of at least two episodes each of which is at least a commercial half hour in length
- have an approved budget/finance plan of \$500,000 or less in total and at least \$250,000 per hour
- be intended for distribution to the Australian public.

Applications for series must demonstrate that the series is the whole series and not part of a larger series.

The project and the applicant/s must also be eligible under Screen Australia's Terms of Trade.

Application process

Applications can be submitted to any documentary funding round; see www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding/Deadlines.aspx for closing dates.

Projects with Screen Australia investment

Producers applying to Screen Australia for documentary production funding (grant or equity investment) will apply for the Producer Equity payment in the context of their funding application.

Projects with Screen Australia funding approved on or after 1 July 2011 are eligible.

The project's finance plan should include the Producer Equity payment as 20 per cent of the total budget. For example, the Producer Equity included in a budget of \$400,000 would be \$80,000.

Once investment is approved, Producer Equity will flow automatically and be rolled into the agreed drawdown schedule.

Projects without Screen Australia Investment

Producers not applying to Screen Australia for documentary production funding will need to satisfy the eligibility criteria above as well as the following provisions in order to access the Producer Equity Program.

- The project must have commenced pre-production on or after 1 July 2011.
- The project may be in pre-production, production, post-production or complete when an application is made. However, an application cannot be submitted more than six months after the project is completed.

Successful applicants will need to sign an agreement outlining the producer's obligations.

If the project is not yet complete, the successful applicant will invoice Screen Australia for:

- 50 per cent of the approved amount on signing the agreement; and
- 50 per cent of the approved amount on delivery of a copy of the completed film, a final cost report, and proof of public distribution.

If the project is already complete, the successful applicant will invoice Screen Australia for:

- 100 per cent of the approved amount on delivery of the completed film, a final cost report, and proof of public distribution.

Screen Australia may require an audit of the final cost report. Screen Australia may also withhold payment/s until satisfied that the film is/will be genuinely available to the Australian public.

Important points to note

- We will not vary the amount of the Producer Equity payment, once decided, even if your budget subsequently changes. Note also that if you receive Producer Equity for your project, you may not subsequently apply for the Producer Offset even if the project budget increases to the level of the applicable QAPE threshold.
- Projects approved for Producer Equity cannot apply for the Producer Offset under any circumstances.

This may affect projects:

- with duration changes e.g. from a commercial hour to a feature-length documentary with cinematic release; and
- that attract further production funding after the Producer Equity payment has been approved by Screen Australia.

Change log

4 August 2011: 'Important points to note' box; first dot point amended for clarification.

27 February 2012: 'Eligibility'; clarifying dot point regarding eligible durations to read 'be a single-episode program of at least a commercial half hour in length, or a series of at least two episodes each of which is at least a commercial half hour in length'.