

A Screen Industry for the Future

The people who make Australia's favourite film and TV shows have called on the Prime Minister to work with them to "future-proof" Australia's screen industry.

The industry wants to ensure that Australians continue to see themselves reflected in screen content across all platforms into the future. That means confronting head-on the challenges of changing technology, copyright law and open world markets.

The Australian Screen Industry Group (ASIG), which unites the industry's organisations, together representing more than 15,000 screen industry professionals, is seeking:

- no further cuts to the ABC, SBS, or Screen Australia;
- permanent increases to the tax incentives that encourage offshore and local film and television production; and
- extension of Australian content minimums to new platforms, such as online streaming services.

The ASIG consists of: Australian Directors Guild (ADG), Australian Guild of Screen Composers (AGSC), Australia Screen Editors (ASE), Australian Writers Guild (AWG), Australian Cinematographers Society (ACS), Australian Production Designers Guild (APDG), Australian Screen Sound Guild (ASSG), Equity, Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA), Screen Producers Australia (SPA), Women in Film and Television (WIFT) and the Visual Effects Society (VES).

Zoe Angus, director of Equity said "The government plays a vital role in ensuring that Australians continue to see themselves reflected on screen."

Kingston Anderson, CEO of the Australian Directors Guild said "As some of the most innovative professions in Australia, screen content makers have been quick to respond to new technologies that impact our industry."

Matthew Deaner, CEO of Screen Producers Australia, added, "Never before has there been a more exciting time to working in our industry. Audiences are flocking to our screen content and we are providing economic, cultural and diplomatic returns to our nation as the best and brightest stars and technicians travel our nation and the world working on the most exciting screen content being made here and across the globe."

"We however must not take our success for granted and much work has to be done if we are to continue to succeed. There is much at stake. We need to see screen policy positions and frameworks from all political parties that are ambitious and deliverable in order to ensure our industry's ongoing health and success."

ASIG has also developed an overview of the matters that a comprehensive screen policy should address. Please see the attached *Policy Proposal from the Australian Screen Industry*.

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A POLICY PROPOSAL FROM THE AUSTRALIAN SCREEN INDUSTRY GROUP

The Australian Screen Industry comprises the following:

Businesses: Film, television, animation and games production companies, post production, digital and VFX companies and other equipment and service supply companies.

People: Writers, directors, producers, actors, cinematographers, designers, picture and sound editors, composers and other production and post production personnel.

Screen Landscape: Feature film, television and online streaming of drama, comedy, documentaries, factual, reality, mobile and games.

The Australian Screen Industry urges bipartisan support from the major political parties committing their support to the development and implementation of a holistic industry policy framework that focuses on supporting the industry into the future.

This bipartisan support would allow the industry to continue to be a significant contributor to Australia's culture and economy while fostering excellence in the Australian Screen Industry.

The screen industry crucially reflects who we are as a culture. It is the way we tell our Australian stories and it is the key medium to tell those stories to our children. The screen industry plays a vital role in reflecting and shaping the evolution of our national identity in an increasingly multicultural society.

A future focussed policy framework, with clear settings and goals would instil confidence in the industry, enabling it to take a long-term view in an environment which promotes confidence and stability, thereby encouraging continued investment in business infrastructure, jobs, skills, and R&D into new technologies and markets.

Key issues that should be addressed include:

- Refinements to enhance the Australian Producer Offset legislation to better align it with domestic and global changes in the production and distribution landscape since the legislation was introduced in July 2007;
- Ensure secure, sufficient and transparent funding for Screen Australia to support the development and production of Australian screen content;
- Ensure secure, sufficient and transparent funding for the ABC and SBS that is dedicated to the development and production of a diverse slate of Australian screen content;

- Maintain and develop relevant legislative settings such as content quotas for screen content production and/or minimum investment requirements in all forms of television production including free-to-air, pay, streaming services and online;
- A commitment to the production and maintenance of children's programs across all platforms for the benefit of all Australian children;
- A commitment to the continued legal protections of intellectual property;
- A commitment to the exclusion of the cultural sectors from the scope of free trade negotiations;
- To support the role of the Location and PDV Offsets in attracting international production activity to Australia and the appropriate settings for its implementation;
- The recognition of the games sector as creators of screen content, and therefore the need for policies to support this sector including access to the Australian Producer Offset;
- The maintenance of fair and flexible guidelines, that regulate the importation of screen industry personnel, maximise Australian jobs, and rely on engagement with all affected stakeholders;
- The recognition that the Australian screen industry people who tell Australian stories are professionals who strive to be able to earn a living on fair and reasonable terms in safe working environments as part of a sustainable industry;
- In an increasingly digital world, support mechanisms must be platform neutral;
- The ongoing development of other mechanisms to support and grow the Australian Screen Industry into the future.

AUSTRALIAN SCREEN INDUSTRY GROUP

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