

GUIDELINES

First Nations Short Film Writing Program



South Australian **Film Corporation**

The South Australian Film Corporation is committed to supporting First Nations filmmakers to tell their stories, develop their screen storytelling craft and build their professional careers through practical learning opportunities and mentoring.

What is on offer?

The **First Nations Short Film Program** is a skills development program for First Nations storytellers at all career levels.

The objective of the program is to support the career development of South Australian First Nations writers, directors, and producers.

The program will support scripted short films (not unscripted, factual, or documentary). Stories that include the use of First Nations languages are encouraged.

This program is delivered in two phases.

An experienced First Nations Script Consultant and experienced Supervising Producer, selected by SAFC, will provide support across both phases.

Phase 1 – First Nations Short Film Writing Program

The SAFC will conduct a call out asking for applications from South Australian First Nations writers to apply with a concept for a 7- 10-minute short film script.

Up to six teams will be funded to develop a short film from early concept to polished final draft. The writers will receive support through workshops, one-on-one feedback sessions and industry mentors.

A networking event during Phase 1 will help writers to connect with short film directors and short film producers.

By the end of the program, each writer will deliver a polished short film script and be eligible to apply for Phase 2.

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Phase 2 – First Nations Short Film Production Program

At the completion of Phase 1, SAFC will call out for applications for short film funding. Applicants will be required to apply as a team (writer, director, producer).

Only those projects developed through the First Nations Short Film Writing Program will be eligible for short film production funding through the First Nations Short Film Fund.

Up to two short film teams will receive support through workshops, one-on-one feedback sessions and industry mentors.

SAFC staff will work with the teams to introduce them to experienced crew and Heads of Departments.

Each film will receive up to \$45,000 per project to produce their short film.

About the Teams:

This is a skills development program for the South Australian First Nations screen sector.

The writer and the director must be First Nations. Priority will be given to projects with First Nations producers.

Experienced producers who are not First Nations will be considered on a case-by-case basis where they can demonstrate a prior track record in successfully producing scripted short films to a high standard.

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Who is eligible?

Key eligibility requirements and criteria are defined in the [SAFC Terms of Trade](#).

In addition, for Phase 1:

- The writer must identify as First Nations
- The writer can be at any career stage
- The writer must demonstrate a commitment to screen writing and/or body of writing work
- The writer must own or have option to acquire the rights to develop the work
- The writer must be available to meet all program deadlines and participate in all meetings

If you are not sure if you are eligible, please contact the SAFC.

Proposed Timeline*

- Monday 11 December 2023 – Applications open
- Wednesday 17 January 2024 – Applications close
- Monday 29 January 2024 – Applicants notified
- Week Beginning 5 February 2024 – First meetings with mentors (online)
- Week Beginning 4 March 2024 – Full-day workshop (in person)
- Monday 18 March 2024 – Short film script due (first draft)
- Tuesday 2 April 2024 – Script feedback with mentors - session 1 (online)
- Monday 15 April 2024 – Short film script due (second draft)
- Monday 29 April 2024 – Script feedback with mentors - session 2 (online)
- Monday 1 May 2024 – Short film production fund - applications open
- Early May 2024 – Short film networking event (in person)
- Monday 27 May 2024 – Polished short film script and production funding applications due
- Week Beginning 10 June 2024 – Two scripts selected for production
- Monday 24 June 2024 – Successful applicants announced
- June 2024 – Full day workshop (in person)
- June-August – Contracting

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- August – Pre-production
- September – Principal photography
- End of September – Start of post-production
- Monday 14 October 2024 – Rough cut due to SAFC
- Monday 28 October 2024 – Fine cut due to SAFC
- Friday 29 November 2024 – Final delivery of completed short film

*SAFC will endeavour to maintain these dates, but final dates may be subject to change

How will applications be assessed?

For Phase 1

- The originality and creative ambition of the concept
- The overall quality of the pitch materials
- The track record of the writer
- The benefits of the program to the writer's career
- The willingness of the writer to engage in the Writing Program development process and to work professionally and to a high technical standard within the timeframes provided, as demonstrated by their Professional Development Statement

For Phase 2

- Participants in Phase 1 (and producers and directors they wish to work with) will be given guidance on how production applications will be assessed.
- The SAFC will provide a workshop for participants on issues to consider in writers agreements. For this particular SAFC program, in assessing applications for production funding SAFC will require such agreements to meet certain minimum requirements in favour of the writer.
- The SAFC and mentor producer to work with participants to connect and collaborate with experienced Heads of Departments.

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How do I apply?

You will need to submit:

- **A one-line and up to 1–3-page synopsis of the idea**
For tips on how to write a synopsis visit:
<https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/getmedia/ae5708a4-05d9-4db0-b5fb-4f999dfed57/What-is-a-synopsis.pdf?ext=.pdf>
- **A short bio**
Include: your name, your current job title, your hometown, your professional goals and any relevant achievements or accomplishment in the screen and or arts industry.
- **A Writer's Statement** (maximum of two pages)
Include your vision for your project, the theme, the genre, style, tone and other film references. Ask yourself what are the motivations and goals for telling this story? What do you want to say? And why are you the best person to tell this story?
- **Professional Development Statement** maximum (maximum one page)
Tell us how participating in this program will help you to achieve your goal of becoming a screenwriter and director and how you will benefit from the program
- If available, please provide examples of your previous writing.

Submit your application through the SAFC's online grant portal safilm.smartygrants.com.au
Before you apply, please make sure you are familiar with [SAFC Terms of Trade](#).

Where can I find out more?

For more information, please contact:

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