

“Supporting Australian Stories on Our Screens”

I am an emerging Australian Screen Composer located in Melbourne and current climate of my ability to do my craft is deeply concerning to me. There isn't many avenues for new composers to make a meaningful living often diminishing new talent. Nature of streaming platforms is that they can work with composers all over the world which is good for only driving up competition and driving down rates and ability to make meaningful living as a creative locally in Australia. I lived in London for 6 years and tax incentives in the film industry helped grow the whole sector massively allowing younger composers to find work that they could support themselves financially. Productions would seek local talent, projects would grow organically and that in return would get more people producing local content and helping the economy. Art sector brings in a lot of income to the government. I would ask the government to, if not from an art perspective, purely from the financial standpoint, look at how helping the local industry is beneficial long term for all of Australians.

I wish to make the following recommendation as an AGSC member in response to the Options Paper “Supporting Australian Stories”:

Adoption of **Model 3 - Significant**: this allows for a more even playing field amongst the Free to Air Networks and Streaming Services. This model supports regulation that would make subscription services pay a percentage of their income to make locally produced content, or, pooled into as Australian Production Fund (APF) that will be distributed to make local productions of drama in feature film and TV, children's television and documentary

The modelling should support decision-making ensuring a level that moves past the status quo and allow for substantial growth in the amount of Australian content available to audiences. New modelling must not result in a drop in production.

Further Recommendations:

1. Streaming Services Contribution to Local Content

Streaming Service providers should contribute 10% of their subscription services revenue derived in Australia to make, promote and broadcast Australian made content.

2. Big Tech contribution to the Australian Production Fund (APF)

Giant technology companies such as Google/YouTube and Facebook should contribute 1% of their advertising revenue generated in Australia (estimated at \$6billion p.a.) to be pooled into the same Australian Production Fund (APF). This system could be based on the mandated code of conduct that the ACCC is preparing in order to compensate media companies for news services.

3. Reinstatement of Quotas for Free-to-Air TV with regulation and allocated funding for National Broadcasters

Until such time that new regulations are implemented, I call for the immediate revocation of any current suspension on quota obligations for Free-to-Air broadcasters. It is imperative that broadcasters continue to be required to produce and show Australian drama, documentary, childrens' programs and First Nations screen content.

4. Harmonisation of Production and Post-Production Offsets

The Producer, Post, Digital and Visual Effects (PDV) and Location Offsets should be harmonised to 30% with a “cultural uplift” incentive of an additional 10% applied if key Australian crew, including composers, are being utilised. This would bring Australia into line with territories such as New Zealand that has a 40% offset for both film and TV and incentivise productions to use Australian screen personnel, on local and international productions that are made in Australia, both large and small.

5. The Post Production Spend Threshold

The Post Production Offset (PDV) threshold (that is currently \$500,000) be reduced or removed. This would allow overseas productions to more readily employ Australian composers and post production services without only being applicable to large budget films.

Furthermore, the Post Production Offset (PDV) should have a weighted or points based system to further define post into the categories of visual effects, editing, sound and music. This would attract international as well as local productions to use Australian based talent across the Post Production sector rather than simply utilizing large Digital and Visual Post Production Houses.

6. Reinvestment Deals

Reduce or abolish the current trend towards unsustainable reinvestment practices, where composers are being asked to reinvest up to 70% of their fee back into the film, with little to no likelihood of seeing a return on their investment. This practice has enabled production companies to attract a government rebate, whilst predominantly resulting in composers not receiving their full fee but being taxed on the full amount up front.

7. **Incentives for Film Distributors**

Film exhibitors and cinemas be allocated a form of rebate or offset to screen Australian made films in order to help attract Australian audiences to the box office.