
James Manche

Freelance Screen Editor

I graduated from the AFTRS in 1987 and have since worked as an editor, a sound editor, director, and producer. I was nominated for an AFI Award twice, and an Australian Screen Editors Award for "Best Editing in a TV Drama" on six occasions, winning in 2010, and in 2019. I have mostly worked as a TV drama editor, and all up I have edited about 380 hours of television drama. Earlier in my career I edited a lot of documentary, and I have edited several shorts too.

In that time I have worked between 50 and 70 hours per week, and sometimes up to 70 hours weeks for sustained periods, for years even. People in our industry work very hard, and we do not get the rewards that people in other industries get, when compared with the same level of expertise. Nowhere near in fact. The remuneration has always been poor. This is undoubtedly because budgets are always tight, and the available work very competitively sought after. The industry has always laboured under the pressure of a lack of funds, leading to low budgets and limited amounts of production. This has been exacerbated by various changes of government leading to fluctuations in support. It is risky for people to invest their lives in this business, and hard for companies to invest in project development when there are no long-term funding strategies in place.

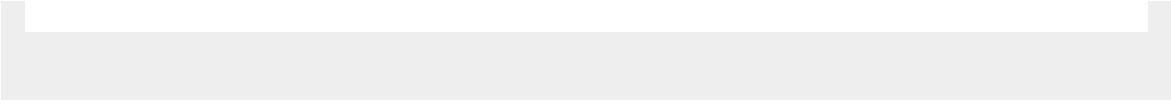
Individually and collectively we desperately need funding strategies if we are to continue making quality programming as right now we are looking into a black hole. And we do make good product, that reaches overseas audiences, and we do have the talent. From Peter Weir to Gillian Armstrong and Warwick Thornton, we have shown time and time again that we have the talent and the craft. Our actors and crews are regularly represented at the Academy Awards. As an industry we have grown to the point where we can compete with overseas, but we do not have the financial resources to continue doing this and to create an environment that give opportunities to up and coming talent. It is extremely difficult for young editors for

example to break through, due to lack of opportunity. Yet we have several international and national streaming companies who reap huge amounts of money from local subscribers that give nothing back to our industry. This, while the free to air model is falling apart at the seams. It is time for the government to do something to ensure the future viability of our industry, and the futures of the hard-working creatives who work in it so we can continue to tell Australian stories. No-one else is going to do it.

Australian stories are so important. When we see ourselves on the screen it helps us make sense of who we are, and helps us rationalise and comes to terms with what we might be going through in our own lives. The Sullivans, Picnic and Hanging Rock, My Brilliant Career, McLeod's Daughters, Redfern Now, Mad Max, Packed to the Rafters, Muriel's Wedding, Prisoner, Kath and Kim, The secret Life of Us, Wanted, Red Dog, Crocodile Dundee, Walkabout, Samson and Delilah, A Place to Call Home, and Rabbit Proof Fence, are Just some examples of the kind of TV and film that reflects who we are and has also helped shape our culture and our perceptions of who we are, contributing to our sense of identity, giving us confidence as a nation. And that is not to mention any of the amazing documentaries that have made in the country that inform us and help us interpret our world. Employable Me, for example, was so inspiring for my own disabled son to watch. Especially important to mention is the role film and TV plays in helping our First Nation people tell their stories, and communicate to the non indigenous population the history of displacement, so we can understand who we all are. For so many reasons it is so very important for the future of our nation that our hard-working and talented screen practitioners can continue in these very important endeavours, and it is up to the Australian parliament to help us secure our financial future by putting into place the funding models that do this. And we have an opportunity now, and we need to do this now. The current models are failing us and deregulation would likely see a collapse in our industry. We must demand all content providers contribute to funding the future of our industry.

I wish for my submission to be anonymous: No

I wish for my submission to be private: No



This submission has been lodged via the [Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance](#).