

Emerging Writers' Incubator Writer Applicant Guidelines

About the opportunity

The Emerging Writers' Incubator (the Incubator) is a nationwide initiative to develop underrepresented scripted writing talent in the Australian screen sector.

The second year of the Incubator is presented by SBS, in partnership with Screen Australia, VicScreen, Screen NSW, Screen Territory, Screen Queensland, Screenwest and the South Australian Film Corporation, and with the assistance of the Australian Writers' Guild.

Working with some of Australia's leading production companies, the Incubator aims to promote inclusion among Australian screenwriting talent and provide significant work experience in drama production to writers with lived experiences that have been underrepresented in the sector.

For the purposes of this initiative, underrepresented means those who:

- identify as First Nations Australians
- are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- are Deaf or hard of hearing or People with disability
- are Female or Trans/Gender diverse
- identify as LGBTQIA+, and/or
- are located in regional and/or remote areas.

Six successful candidates (Selected Writers), one from each of the participating states and territories, will be employed full time for 12 months in leading Australian production companies (Host Companies) acclaimed for their delivery of Australian drama.

The successful Victorian writer will join Victorian production company [Sweetshop & Green](#), who produce culturally diverse stories and artistically driven film and TV projects, and specialise in international co-productions, developing and producing distinct projects for global audiences.

Placements will commence from approximately September 2022 (or as soon as possible after contracting). The Selected Writers will work across the Host Companies' entire drama slate, irrespective of commissioning network or platform.

Who is eligible?

Applicants must:

- Be an early career writer from one or more of the following backgrounds:
 - identify as First Nations Australians
 - are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
 - are Deaf or hard of hearing or People with disability
 - are Female or Trans/Gender diverse

- identify as LGBTQIA+, and/or
- are located in regional and/or remote areas
- Meet at least one of the experience criteria:
 - Have participated as a writer in a scheme run by a major screen agency, organisation and/or broadcaster in Australia (e.g. AWG Pathways, Screenability, AFTRS Talent Camp, Plot Twist Programs, Cinespace's Package to Pitch, Impact Australia), and/or
 - A writer or co-writer credit on a piece of completed narrative fiction (television episode, feature film, or webseries of at least 30 minutes cumulative duration), and/or
 - A writer who is currently in development on a project with support from a broadcaster, major online content provider or screen agency/organisation), and/or
 - A body of work in related areas (e.g. playwright)
- Not have been previously engaged by Sweetshop & Green (or any related entity) for three months or more in a script department or in-house development role or similar, and
- Be available to undertake a full-time, paid placement for a period of 12 consecutive months, and
- Meet the general eligibility requirements set out in VicScreen's [Terms of Trade](#) and Screen Australia's [Terms of Trade](#).

What are the key dates?

Applications Open: Tuesday 26 April 2022

Applications Close: Friday 27 May 2022

Unsuccessful Stage One and Two Applicants Notified: Friday 5 August 2022

Shortlist Interviews: Monday 25 July – Friday 26 August 2022

Successful Applicants Notified: Friday 9 September 2022

Successful writers commence: From approximately September 2022

What do you need to do to apply?

Applicants must provide:

- A completed application form, including any additional documentation and materials listed in the form
- Up to 1-page statement outlining where you are at in your writing career and how participating in this scheme will benefit your career development
- Up to 1-page of your writing CV/credits
- A 10-page sample of screenwriting (for Stage One assessment), and
- A full-length writing sample, i.e. a script for a half-hour or hour episode of television, or a feature film script (reviewed as part of Stage Two assessment only).

Who can you talk to about this initiative?

- If you have general queries or queries about submitting your application, please contact [Angie Tassakos](#), Program Services Officer, 03 9660 3240
- For all other queries, please contact [Jana Blair](#), Manager, Industry Skills and Inclusion, 03 9660 3273

The Details

What is the assessment and selection process?

1. Writer Applications and Assessment

- **Stage One Assessment:** VicScreen will receive and assess all writer applications for eligibility. They will produce a longlist of applicants based on the career statements, CVs and 10-page writing sample for SBS, Screen Australia and Sweetshop & Green to assess by Monday 27 June 2022.
- **Stage Two Assessment:** SBS, Screen Australia and VicScreen will work with Sweetshop & Green to select a shortlist of writers from that state, reviewing all application materials (including the full-length writing samples) from the shortlisted writers. They will select the three (3) shortlisted candidates that they wish to interview by Friday 29 July 2022.

2. Interviews

Sweetshop & Green will select a narrative screen project from their slate and set a script assessment task for the three shortlisted writers. This can be an oral or written script assessment. Interviews and tasks will be coordinated by Screen Australia.

The interview panel will include representatives from Sweetshop & Green, VicScreen and SBS and/or Screen Australia. Interviews are estimated to take place between Monday 25 July and Friday 26 August. Interviews will be grouped by state and each state's interviews will take place over 3 days during this period.

3. Selection

Once all interviews have been completed, Sweetshop & Green, SBS, Screen Australia and VicScreen will discuss the shortlisted candidates and mutually agree on the Selected Writer, having regard to the most suitable and appropriate match between Sweetshop & Green and the Selected Writer.

Decisions will be made within 3 days of the final interview and will be communicated to the Selected Writers following final consultation and confirmation with the Host Companies.

What are the Assessment Criteria?

Each eligible applicant will be assessed taking into consideration the below criteria:

- The writer's objectives for undertaking the placement, including how it will assist their career development and what specific skills they expect to gain from the experience if successful

- The writer's perceived ability to successfully engage with Sweetshop & Green's slate across the 12-month period
- The standard of the supplied writing sample, and its demonstration of the abilities and skills of the writer, and
- The alignment of the writer with the diversity and inclusion aims of the initiative.

Previous funding to undertake a placement or equivalent program will be taken into account.

What funding is available?

Sweetshop & Green will be provided with funding of up to \$80,000 in total as the salary for the Selected Writer (inclusive of superannuation, payroll tax, insurance, workcover).

Sweetshop & Green is responsible for ensuring that the Selected Writer is paid according to all applicable legislation and industrial awards including the superannuation guarantee and workplace insurance.

The successful applicant will enter into a standard employee or contractor agreement containing provisions consistent with these guidelines with Sweetshop & Green before commencing the placement.

How will the placement work?

Sweetshop & Green will facilitate opportunities and support their Selected Writer to perform and develop their skills in accordance with the indicative role description provided as Annexure A.

All intellectual property generated by the Selected Writer in the course of their employment or engagement with Sweetshop & Green will be the property of Sweetshop & Green. Each writer's credit, where applicable, and associated benefits will be determined by AWG standard agreements.

To the extent that a writer may subsequently be engaged as a writer of an episode of television, that work will fall outside of the scope of their duties under the initiative and will not be funded under the initiative.

Any fees due to the writer will be met by Sweetshop & Green separately in respect of such work in keeping with the Miniseries and Telemovie Agreement 2010 (MATA) (2022 rates) or Series and Serials Agreement 2008 (SASA) (2022 rates) as negotiated between the writer and Sweetshop & Green, in accordance with the relevant industrial agreements.

Where and to the extent that the Selected Writer owns original scripted projects that existed prior to their employment relationship which they do not wish Sweetshop & Green to own as part of this engagement, these projects must be disclosed and specifically excluded from their employment arrangement at the time their employee or contractor agreement is negotiated and agreed.

Sweetshop & Green will be expected to outline a plan for managing the Selected Writer in accordance with the above, including setting KPIs and committing to periodic performance reviews.

What are the Terms of Funding?

Funding will be provided as a grant to Sweetshop & Green to pay the salary (and other benefits) of the successful applicant over the year placement.

The Selected Writer will be required to enter into a standard employee or contractor agreement containing provisions consistent with these guidelines with Sweetshop & Green before commencing the placement. SBS, Screen Australia and VicScreen reserves their right to request a copy of these agreements at any time.

At the mid-point and the conclusion of each placement, the Selected Writer and Sweetshop & Green will be required to each deliver a report offering an update on how the placement is working for each party and sharing any suggestions for the ongoing shape of the initiative.

It is a condition of funding that successful applicants co-operate with VicScreen, Screen Australia, and SBS in any PR and press activity relating to their participation in the Emerging Writers' Incubator. Participants may also be asked to contribute to future seminars or workshops to share their experiences and knowledge with other filmmakers.

VicScreen, Screen Australia and SBS acknowledge and appreciate the effort that all applicants put into their applications however, due to high volume of applications received, partners will be unable to provide feedback to individual applicants.

Ready to start your application?

Start your application

ANNEXURE A:

Company: Sweetshop & Green

Position: Staff Writer

Supervisor: Gal Greenspan

Location: Abbotsford, VIC

Position Description

An in-house writer position to support Sweetshop & Green's ongoing participation in the Australian and New Zealand market, with an emphasis on written development materials.

The selected writer will work within Sweetshop & Green's scripted team, supporting internal staff and external key creatives across the departments slate of projects. They will be mentored to identify new ideas and IP for the Australian and international marketplace, as well as work across the existing development slate to move pitches from conception to greenlight.

The role will also require maintenance of the departments creative talent databases, with a particular focus on writers. The writer will establish a wide knowledge of working writers, a familiarity with their written work, and the ability to recommend writers relevant to projects in consideration.

Core Accountabilities

- Read and evaluate potential projects for development, including writer submissions, concepts, treatments, scripts, books, etc.
- Read and evaluate development materials and provide considered coverage and recommendations.
- Take an active role in in-house development efforts including notetaking, participating in ideation sessions, research, pitch document creation, editing and design etc.
- Prepare supporting materials for development funding applications, as required.
- Provide story consultation across Sweetshop & Green's entire slate of projects
- Develop positive and collaborative working relationships with the creatives we work with to assist in the development of outstanding film and television.

Essential Skills

- Reading and writing for the purposes of critical analysis
- Writing marketable material for the purposes of both national and international sales
- Local and international knowledge of the film and television industry/market
- A demonstrated understanding of the fundamental principles of storytelling for film and television.

- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- A resourceful self-starter; deadline-oriented with strong work ethic and attention to detail.
- Passionate about high quality film and television with a focus on excellence.
- Ability to operate in a high-energy and rapidly evolving environment.
- Strong organisational skills with the ability to work collaboratively under deadlines.
- Excellent sense of screenplay structure, character, and analysis
- Knowledge of film/tv/theatre and the entertainment industry, and strong interest in story.

Desirable Skills

- Design skills – knowledge of Adobe programs such as Photoshop and Illustrator

Professional Development Plan

Area	Learning outcome
Script analysis and development, film & TV (scripted narrative)	<p>Outcome: Build confidence in assessing the potential of a project based on its script, through ongoing reading and reporting to Managing Directors.</p> <p>Work with delegated script/story editors on Sweetshop & Green slated projects to further understand their approach to script development and feedback.</p> <p>KPI: Writer to work alongside script editors to provide notes on 1 project p/month.</p> <p>KPI: Writer to work independently to provide coverage on 5 scripts p/month</p>
Creating pitch materials, including pitch decks, synopses, loglines, outlines, and mood boards (scripted narrative)	<p>Training: Gal Greenspan and Head of Drama to share previous and existing pitch materials and templates for a variety of productions to further understand market expectations.</p> <p>KPI: Writer, alongside Sweetshop & Green creatives, to deliver 1 pitch deck p/month.</p>
Note taking	<p>Outcome: Build familiarity with writer's rooms and develop skills in note taking.</p> <p>KPI: Attend 2 writer rooms / story sessions, take notes and distribute to key stakeholders.</p>

Develop Original Concept	<p>Outcome: Work with the Sweetshop & Green team to develop an original concept through to Early Development, that is ready to be shared with the industry for feedback.</p> <p>KPI: Creation of early development pitch materials for 1 original concept.</p>
Festival/Market attendance	<p>Training: Sweetshop & Green delegate and Writer to attend local festivals and markets with a view to expand relationships with writers, directors, government funding bodies and other relevant industry contacts.</p> <p>KPI: Writer, alongside Sweetshop & Green creatives, to attend 2 festivals/markets over the 12-month placement</p>