



## Elevate Guidelines 2025

The Elevate initiative is for early-to-mid career key creatives who can create high-quality scripted short films, animation or online series.

The core objectives of this initiative are to:

- Uncover distinctive WA voices and projects.
- Support the career progression of WA key creatives.
- Support the development of a project that acts as a calling card for their next career milestone.

An Executive Producer will be appointed to oversee the production and delivery of projects to Screenwest. Successful applicants may be required to attend production, legal and/or marketing information sessions provided by Screenwest.

## Funding Available

The Elevate initiative will fund up to 8 films from one of two funding streams:

1. **Elevate30** - for projects up to 7 minutes long.  
Funding available - up to \$30,000 per project.
2. **Elevate70** - for projects up to 10 minutes long.  
Funding available - up to \$70,000 per project.

Screenwest funding is limited and competitive.

## Elevate Project Marketing and Festival Submissions

- Up to \$2,000 towards the cost of marketing the completed project and submitting it to festivals.

This funding is not automatic or guaranteed. Once the project is completed Elevate recipients may apply for this funding by submitting a marketing and release strategy for the project.

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### Elevate Guidelines

## Eligibility

### Applicant / Company Eligibility

The applicant / company must:

- Meet the general eligibility requirements set out in the [Screenwest Terms of Trade](#).
- Hold the underlying rights to the project at the time of application.

### Team Eligibility

The team:

1. Must be a WA resident filmmaking team (producer, writer, director).
2. Screenwest may consider an application from a team with a non-WA resident writer, however preference will be given to teams where all members are WA residents.
3. Must have a separate producer and director attached to the project. Submissions with producer/director applicants are not eligible.
4. The director and producer must each have at least one short film or equivalent project credit.
3. Directors must not have a theatrically released feature film credit or equivalent. Directors can only be attached to one successful Elevate project per funding round.
4. Directors of previous Elevate projects must demonstrate a compelling case as to why making a new Elevate project is an essential step in progressing their career.

If an approved producer, writer or director withdraws from a successful project and a suitable replacement can't be found within a timeframe set by Screenwest, Screenwest reserves the right to lapse project funding. The replacement producer/director/writer must be approved by Screenwest.

### The Project:

1. Must be production ready and able to be completed within a 12-month timeframe.
2. All (100%) production and post-production must occur in Western Australia.
3. Be submitted as either an Elevate30 or Elevate70 project, not both.

## Resubmissions

A project that has been declined Elevate funding previously must have been substantially changed to be eligible to apply to a second Elevate funding round.

Projects must clearly demonstrate substantial changes (as determined by Screenwest Management) if the project has previously been declined twice for funding.

If Screenwest is not satisfied the changes are substantial, the project will be deemed ineligible.

It's recommended you discuss the application with the Program Manager before resubmitting a project.

## Application Materials

Applicants must submit the following materials:

1. A completed script of an appropriate length for the intended project.
2. A written statement from the key creative team on how Elevate will support each team member's career path and their desired outcomes from the initiative.
3. A Producer's Statement that includes:
  - a. How the producer will approach challenging components of the production and schedule.
  - b. Any cultural permissions that are relevant to the project.
  - c. An audience identification and festival strategy.
  - d. A production methodology that provides a rationale for the funds requested relative to the project schedule and budget.
4. A Director's Statement and supporting documents outlining:
  - a. The creative approach.
  - b. The vision and story purpose.
5. A Writer's Statement outlining:
  - a. The core purpose of the story.
  - b. The story's relevance to the team and the intended audience.
  - c. Why this story needs to be told now.
6. CVs of each member of the key creative team.
7. A shooting schedule including pre-production, production and post-production dates.
8. A completed A-Z short film production budget.

Projects being submitted for a second time must provide a document that outlines all the project changes that have occurred since the first Elevate application.

Applicants may find the following Screen Australia resources useful:

1. [Getting Started](#) as a guide to finding your voice, audience and team.
2. [Tools and Insights for feature films](#) as a reference for A-Z budgets and script tools.
3. [Indigenous Pathways and Protocols](#) as a guide to working with Indigenous content and communities.
4. Australian Screen Industry Code of [Practice](#) for information on the best practice guide for employers in the Australian Screen Industry.

## Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. The originality, strength and distinctiveness of the script.
2. Evidence of a distinctive directorial voice and compelling storytelling style in the Director's Statement and in the samples of the Director's previous work.
3. Strategy for how the project will elevate the key creative team careers.
4. Quality and rigor of the supporting application materials, including consideration of the audience.
5. The skills, relevant experience and track record of each of the key creative team.
6. The viability of the budget, schedule and production methodology is reflective of the script requirements.

## First Nations Australian Content

Screenwest supports the telling of First Nations Australian stories by First Nations Australian creatives and storytellers.

There must be strong First Nations Australian representation on all projects that tell First Nations Australian stories, through the involvement of First Nations Australian key creatives and thorough consultation, incubation and collaboration that is adequately budgeted for.

## Diversity Statement

Screenwest is committed to reflecting the broad diversity of Western Australia's community on and off screen, through stories funded and practitioners supported.

It is important that you / your team of key creatives authentically represent the story and characters in the project.

Screenwest recognises diversity broadly as differences in gender; age; Indigenous identity; cultural and linguistic diversity (CaLD); disability; sexuality and gender identities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and ace (LGBTQIA+); location (including regional and remote regions) and socio-economic status.

## Application Process

Prior to applying:

1. Read these guidelines and the [Screenwest Terms of Trade](#). The Terms of Trade set out the core terms on which Screenwest conducts its business.
2. Review the online application form on SmartyGrants and make sure you have all required documents ready to submit with the application.
3. Discuss your application with the Screenwest Program Contact person, if you have any questions.

## How To Apply

- Complete an online application form through the [Screenwest SmartyGrants portal](#)
- Attach all relevant documentation and supporting material (refer to the 'Application Materials' section above).

## After You Apply

The assessment process will involve two stages:

### Stage 1 - Shortlisting

- Applications are reviewed to ensure they meet the general minimum eligibility criteria.
- Screenwest Management and an external industry assessor will assess all eligible applications and create a shortlist.

### Stage 2 - Shortlisted Applicants Meet with Assessment Panel

- Shortlisted applicant teams meet with the assessment panel to outline the vision for their project. The assessment panel is made up of the Elevate Executive Producer, an external industry assessor and Screenwest Management.
- Final decisions are made by the Board of Directors of Screenwest.

- You can expect a decision within 8-10 weeks of the funding round closing date.
- Screenwest will advise applicants of the outcome of their application via email or phone.

## Terms of Funding

Successful applicants will sign a written agreement with the appointed Elevate Executive Producer outlining funding conditions, cash flow details and the deliverables required for scheduled payments.

## Program Contacts

### General Enquiries

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