



Crew Development Program

Program Guidelines

About the program

The Crew Development Program offers intensive training and paid production placements (with mentorship) for NSW entry-level and mid-career crew from underrepresented backgrounds.

The program addresses the lack of representation and skilled-crew shortage in NSW by fast tracking entry-level and mid-career 'below the line' practitioners via department-specific training delivered by program partners Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS), TAFE NSW and The National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA).

Screen NSW has identified 6 departments most in need of skilled crew. Applications will be open in streams according to the following department groupings:

- Production Accounts & Location departments (with training at AFTRS) – *applications open 15 December 2025 and close 5pm, 21 January 2026 (extended deadline)*
- Production Management & Post-Production Supervision departments (with training at TAFE NSW) – *applications open early 2026*
- Costume & Art departments (with training at NIDA) – *applications open early 2026*

For each stream, the Program will be delivered across two stages:

- **Stage 1:** Intensive training at our partner training institutions
The Program will support selected applicants to receive On Set Onboard training (for 3 days each) at AFTRS, then department-specific training at either AFTRS, TAFE NSW or NIDA (for 5 days each).
- **Stage 2:** Paid production placements on NSW productions and mentorship from an experienced Head of Department (HOD).
Two applicants for each department (up to 12 in total) will be selected to do a paid placement. They will also receive up to two years of mentorship, starting at the commencement of their placement.

The Crew Development Program is funded and administered by Screen NSW, an entity within the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport (DCITHS).

Key information

- Opportunity: Intensive training and paid placements
- Stream A applications open: 17 December 2025
- Stream A applications close: 5pm, 21 January 2026
- Grant Value: \$0 - \$500
- Designated Decision-Maker: Head of Screen NSW (or their financial delegate)
- Opportunity type: Open, competitive
- [Program page](#)
- [Apply here](#)

Program objectives

The objectives of the Crew Development Program are to:

- Provide ‘set ready’ training and opportunities for entry-level and mid-career NSW-based ‘below the line’ practitioners from under-represented communities to support sustainable career pathways
- Partner with key training institutions (AFTRS, TAFE NSW and NIDA) to cohesively address the current skilled-crew shortage in NSW
- Develop ‘on the job’ skills through NSW production placements and meaningful industry mentorship for selected candidates to launch enduring careers
- Contribute to the growth and sustainability of a vibrant and accessible screen industry.

Eligibility criteria

Who can apply

Stage 1

We encourage First Nations people and people from low socio-economic backgrounds to apply.

Applicants must be:

- 18 years of age or older
- A NSW resident (i.e., lived in NSW for at least 6 months immediately before the date of application)

- An Australian citizen or permanent resident
- Available to attend intensive training for their applied department (see dates in [Department streams](#))
- Part of at least one of the following under-represented areas:
 - [Regional NSW](#)
 - [Western Sydney](#)
 - First Nations people
 - People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - People living with disability
 - LGBTQIA+ people
 - People from low socio-economic backgrounds.
- Not in breach of any obligation under any funding agreement they may have with the NSW Government
- Not an employee of a Federal or state or territory government screen agency.

Bursary for accessibility or travel costs

Applicants may additionally apply for a bursary of up to \$500 to go towards accessibility and/or travel costs for the training component if they fulfil one or more of the following:

- Live in [regional NSW](#) or [western Sydney](#), and are unable to cover travel costs
- Are living with disability and require accessibility measures.

Stage 2

In their application form, applicants will be asked if they want to also be considered for Stage 2.

Stage 2 applicants must fulfil the Stage 1 eligibility criteria above, as well as:

- Have a current drivers licence (provisional or full)*
- Have an Australian tax file number (TFN)
- Have an Australian bank account
- Be available and commit to a trainee placement on a NSW production for up to 20 weeks
- Commit to regular meetings with an industry mentor following placement for up to 2 years
- Have satisfactorily completed the Stage 1 training for the department relevant to the placement.

*Applicants to the Location, Art and Costume department stream will require a full current drivers licence.

Who cannot apply

Applicants will be ineligible to apply if they have more than 5 years of paid experience in the department for which they are applying.

Applicants may apply for multiple departments but can be only awarded for one department.

Successful applicants may not apply for future streams of the program, however unsuccessful applicants are welcome to reapply.

Provided support

Stage 1: Training

Stage 1 successful applicants will receive:

- 8-day intensive training at no cost to the participant, by one or more of the following institutions: AFTRS, NIDA and TAFE NSW, depending on the department stream
- Access to select networking opportunities such as events run by Screen NSW and/or partner institutions.

Applicants with accessibility needs or regionally/western Sydney based applicants with travel needs may also receive a bursary of up to \$500 to attend the training component.

Stage 2: Production placement and mentorship

In addition to Stage 1 support, Stage 2 successful applicants will receive:

- A paid placement on a NSW film, television and/or online production for up to 20-weeks
- Industry mentorship for up to two years, commencing during or following the placement
- 6-month MEAA membership (optional).

Department streams

Screen NSW has identified 6 departments most in need of skilled crew. Applications will be open in streams according to the following department groupings:

- A. Production Accounts & Location departments (with training at AFTRS) – *applications open 15 December 2025 and close 5pm 21 January 2026*
- B. Production Management & Post-Production Supervision departments (with training at TAFE NSW) – *applications open early 2026*
- C. Costume & Art departments (with training at NIDA) – *applications open early 2026*

Information about the intensive training provided in Stage 1 for each department is detailed below. *Course details may be subject to change.*

Stream A: Production Accounts department

On-set on boarding Course

3 day course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 4 - 6 March 2026.

Production Accounts department Course

5-day Production Accounts department course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 9 - 13 March 2026.

Course Description: Gain the essential skills and knowledge to launch your career in Production Accountancy, guided by experienced industry professionals. This course offers practical training in accounting technologies and workflows, alongside a comprehensive understanding of production stages and their financial reporting obligations. You'll work hands-on with industry-standard software and gain valuable insights into the Production Accounts roles through real-world applications and expert perspectives.

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify the production accountant and accounts department's role and responsibilities at each stage of production.
- Analyse relevant production documentation essential to accounting procedures, reporting and audit.
- Apply production accounting skills using screen industry standard software.

Stream A: Location department

On-set on boarding Course

3-day course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 4 - 6 March 2026.

Location Department Course

5-day Location department course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 9 - 13 March 2026.

Course Description: The Location Department Intensive is a comprehensive five-day course exploring the dynamic world of film and TV location management. This course has been developed with the input of industry experts and is taught by experienced members of the Australian Location Managers Guild, ensuring participants receive the highest standard of professional training.

This intensive program covers all aspects of the location department, from scouting and securing locations to ensuring on-set safety and managing logistics. This course will provide essential, hands-on experience and knowledge.

This course also provides participants with a six-month student membership to the Australian Location Managers Guild where you will receive their newsletter and be able to access resources and network. The course covers:

- Location Department Fundamentals: Understand the full process, from reading a script to wrapping a location, including the responsibilities of scouts, coordinators, and on-set managers.
- Collaboration and Creative Problem-Solving: Work closely with Producers, Directors, and Designers to interpret creative briefs, balance budgets, and meet the practical needs of the production.
- Scouting and Advanced Tools: Learn to scout effectively and understand how to assess risks while scouting, as well as understand how advanced tools such as drones and 360-degree cameras are used in industry.
- Legal Frameworks and Logistics: Gain in-depth knowledge of permits, contracts, insurance, and logistical planning.
- Risk and Safety Management: Explore strategies for conducting thorough risk assessments, ensuring safety on set, and managing real-world location risks.
- Well-being and Work-Life Balance: Delve into the realities of working in the Location Department, including long hours and stress, while learning strategies to maintain mental health and well-being.

Stream B: Production Management department

On-set on boarding Course

3-day course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 17 - 19 June 2026.

Production Management department Course

5-day Production Management department course to take place at TAFE NSW (St Leonards) between 22 - 26 June 2026.

Course Description: To be published at a later date.

Stream B: Post-Production Supervision department

On-set on boarding Course

3-day course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 24 - 26 June 2026.

Post-Production Supervision department Course

5-day Post-Production Supervision department course to take place at TAFE NSW (St Leonards) between 29 June - 3 July 2026.

Course Description: To be published at a later date.

Stream C: Art department

On-set on boarding Course

3-day course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 1 - 3 July 2026.

Art Department Course

5-day Art department course to take place at NIDA (Kensington) between 6 - 10 July 2026.

Course Description: This industry-focused course provides participants with a comprehensive introduction to the core responsibilities and workflows of a screen art department. Through structured practical activities, students will develop key skills in research, documentation, and communication, supporting the design process from concept development to on-set execution.

The course will also provide an overview of the key roles within the art department - including Production Designer, Art Director, Assistant Art Director, Set Decorator and Standby Props - and how these roles work together to realise the visual world of a production. Participants will gain insight into the career pathways available in the industry, understanding how to progress within the department and the skillsets required at each level.

Participants will learn how to assist Art Directors and Production Designers by managing survey notes, dressing plans, construction drawings, and department consumables, while gaining hands-on experience in set surveys and model-making. Engagement with industry guests will offer valuable insight into current practices, expectations, and collaborative processes within professional screen environments.

Designed to build practical capability and industry readiness, this course equips emerging practitioners with the tools and knowledge to confidently support an art department team in the role of trainee.

Acquire the practical skills, industry knowledge, and professional insight required to step confidently into an entry-level role such as Art Department Trainee or Assistant.

Stream C: Costume department

On-set on boarding Course

3-day course to take place at AFTRS (Moore Park) between 1 - 3 July 2026.

Costume Department Course

5-day Costume department course to take place at NIDA (Kensington) between 6 - 10 July 2026.

Course Description: This industry-focused course offers a comprehensive introduction to the responsibilities of a Costume Trainee within the screen industry. Through a series of structured practical activities and simulated on-set exercises, participants will develop the skills required to maintain costume continuity, support fittings and alterations, and prepare costumes for shoot days using appropriate tools and techniques.

The course will also explore the structure of the costume department, providing an overview of key roles and responsibilities - from Costume Designer to Assistant Costume Designer to Costume Supervisor and Standby. Participants will gain an understanding of the collaborative nature of the department, how each role contributes to the storytelling process, and the career pathways available within the screen industry.

Participants will engage in tasks reflective of real industry practice, including managing the extras area, performing costume maintenance, and handling purchases using petty cash procedures. Sessions with industry guests will provide critical insight into professional workflows, communication protocols, and on-set expectations, ensuring participants are equipped to effectively support senior costume staff. Designed to build practical competence and industry readiness, this course prepares emerging practitioners to work confidently as part of a professional costume department.

Acquire the practical skills, industry knowledge, and professional insight required to step confidently into an entry-level role such as Costume Trainee or Assistant.

Assessment criteria

Stage 1

Applications will be competitively assessed against the following weighted criteria:

- Potential for a long-lasting career as a crew member in the applied for department (60% weighting)

This includes:

- Enthusiasm for the screen industry
- Ability to effectively work in a team
- Reliability.

- Suitability to the applied department including demonstrable transferable skills and/or experience (40% weighting).

Accessibility and Travel Bursary

Applicants requesting a bursary of up to \$500 to contribute to costs related to attending the training component will be assessed on their demonstrated need for the bursary funds.

In instances where there are not sufficient funds to support all qualifiable bursary requests, the applicants will be ranked in order based on the Stage 1 criteria above.

Stage 2

Applications will be competitively assessed against the following weighted criteria:

- Demonstrable aptitude in the Stage 1 training component (60% weighting)
- Ability to fulfil the required skill needs and technical competencies for the department-specific paid placement on a NSW production (40% weighting).

Application process

Screen NSW uses the SmartyGrants platform for submission of all applications. Applications made using any other format will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted by the advertised closing date and time.

Late applications due to technical difficulties will be reviewed and eligibility determined with absolute discretion by Screen NSW. A request for late submission due to technical difficulties must be submitted by email to crewdevelopment@screen.nsw.gov.au within 60 minutes of the application close time, setting out the reasons for the request, along with any evidence.

A preview of the application form can be viewed on the SmartyGrants portal.

What to include in your application

With regard to the assessment criteria, applicants must prepare responses to all questions and submit all core materials listed on the application form, including:

- An up-to-date CV, outlining any related experience or transferable skills, including 2-3 referees (*maximum two A4 pages*)
- A personal statement outlining how you best address the assessment criteria (*maximum one A4 page or 2-minute self-tape video*).

Please note that if you submit over the maximum allowed page or time requirements, those additional pages or minutes will not be assessed.

Applicants requesting the bursary to go towards accessibility or travel costs will be prompted to answer a question within the application form on how the applicant fulfils the bursary eligibility and assessment criteria.

What happens after you apply

When an application has been submitted, applicants will receive an email from our secure online grants system, SmartyGrants, confirming receipt of your application.

Please note that applicants cannot edit or modify an application once it has been submitted.

Assessment process

Eligibility

Applications will be initially assessed by Screen NSW staff to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria, and that all application materials are acceptable. Applications deemed ineligible will not proceed to the formal assessment process.

Screen NSW will inform all ineligible applicants via email within 14 days of this outcome.

Assessment and Recommendations

Stage 1

Eligible applications will proceed to formal assessment by an assessment team, comprising two Screen NSW staff and one external industry subject matter expert.

The assessment team will individually assess each application before meeting to deliberate and agree on final consensus scores for each applicant and each criterion. This will determine a ranking for each application.

The highest ranked applications will be recommended to the designated decision-maker in writing for approval.

Stage 2

Stage 1 training participants will be given a Certificate of Attendance if they satisfactorily attend the whole course. Training staff will prepare a report for Screen NSW on the suitability of the course participants to move into the 'Placement' stage of the Program.

An assessment team, comprising of a Screen NSW staff and one external industry subject matter expert, will individually assess each training participant who has completed the course and opted into stage 2, before meeting to deliberate and agree on final consensus scores for each participant and each criterion. This will determine a ranking for each participant.

The highest ranked participants will be interviewed before being recommended in writing to the designated decision-maker to receive the trainee paid placement for up to 20 weeks on a NSW production and industry mentorship.

In the instance that there are not sufficient participants awardable in one department stream for the (2) allocated production placements, Screen NSW has the discretion to reallocate placement(s) to another department stream.

Decision and Approval

The designated decision-maker, the Head of Screen NSW (or their financial delegate), will review, consider and approve the final successful applicant based on the recommendations from the assessment team at each stage.

All applicants will be informed of their application outcome via email.

Timing

The assessment process for Stage 1 will take up to five weeks from the application closing date.

Screen NSW aims to advise all Steam A applicants of their Stage 1 application outcome by Tuesday 17 February 2026.

The assessment process for Stage 2 will take up to six weeks from the conclusion of the Stage 1 training.

Award process

The successful applicant must enter into, and abide by, the terms set out by Screen NSW, which will include all deliverables and acquittal requirements, in addition to the process for dealing with any variations to the training placement (if relevant).

Deliverables, acquittals and final reporting

The successful applicant must submit various deliverables and acquittal materials to Screen NSW. This may include feedback on the program and updates on success measures such as employment status in the screen industry.

All acquittal materials and final reports must be submitted via SmartyGrants.

Publication of grants information

The NSW Government Grants Administration Guide (the Guide) requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the funding grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide).

This information is also open access information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the funding awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the funding grant agreement is executed.

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW).

Conflict of Interest Management

Any conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with the Guide.

A conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, may be identified if staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel has:

- A professional, commercial, or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application selection process
- A relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- A relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation received funding under the program.

If you identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest at any time, you must inform Screen NSW immediately via email at industry@screen.nsw.gov.au.

NSW Government staff, committee members and other officials including the decision maker must declare any conflicts of interest and ensure they are managed as per the DCITHS's Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Guide.

Complaint handling, access to information and privacy

Details on how Screen NSW handles complaints, access to information and your private information is available at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/dciths/policies-plans-and-procedures/access-to-information/agency-information-guide>

Support and contact

Screen NSW staff are available to provide technical advice and general information to potential applicants on the interpretation of these guidelines, including eligibility and assessment criteria as well as support with the online application process.

Screen NSW staff cannot help directly with your application. To maintain a fair and equitable process, staff cannot edit or correct any applications or provide advice on the content or choices required against the Assessment Criteria for this opportunity.

For further information or clarification, please contact the Screen NSW Crew Development Program team via email at crewdevelopment@screen.nsw.gov.au.