

PART 1

What do you see as the biggest opportunity for your organisation / members in the next five years?

For the organization, continual growth to become the go-to membership organization for as many screen composers working in Australia as possible, who can benefit from the advocacy, lobbying, education and professional development, collaborative opportunities, information and support that the AGSC currently offers our members; as well as providing outreach to the wider screen music community and working with new and existing partners and organizations to create more opportunities for education, career development and exposure, such as our partnership with APRA's NATSIMO aimed at generating career pathways for indigenous screen composers.

For our members, an increase in the development and production of screen content, both from local and international production companies and broadcasters/streaming services where Australian screen composers, musicians, post-production sound facilities and personnel are used, including co-productions where all other HODs are Australian.

What do you see as the biggest challenge facing your organisation / members in the next five years?

Ensuring that government policies for screen content reform and regulation consider the issues facing Australian screen composers – such as buyouts, work-for-hire arrangements, re-investments, inclusion as Heads of Departments and retention of Australian intellectual property in Australia. Tied in with this is the challenge of shrinking budgets for television and film composed music that don't allow for realistic and fair composer fees that take all the additional costs a screen composer has to cover when using live musicians, studio facilities, required software and equipment etc. The challenge is also to ensure that the post-production sector is not overlooked which composers are part of, and that post production talent and facilities are included in international production that comes to Australia.

Thinking about the biggest opportunity and challenge you identified above, what would have the most effective impact in supporting your organisation / members over the next five years?

Funding guidelines that mandate use of Australian screen composers on all government funded productions at local, state and federal level, helping keep Australian intellectual property in Australia, contributing to the economy and ensuring the sustainability and survival of Australian screen composers, their creativity and contribution of the nation's cultural, creative and economic output. Reforms should mandate a minimum investment into the creation and promotion of Australian content, by the big international and local streaming platforms such as Netflix and Disney to ensure that world-access to Australian content.

Post Production is often overlooked and the trickle down effect of international productions shooting in Australia needs to be bolstered by specific guidelines and policies that encourage and foster the post-production sector, and specify the use of our post-production facilities and expertise as well.

Core funding at State level to support more education and career/professional development opportunities and pathways and exposure available for our Victorian-based members and the wider screen composing community.

Promotion of Australian screen composers and increased opportunities for producers, directors and other filmmakers and production companies to use them instead of production music libraries would impact beneficially for our members.

What would have the most effective impact in growing the industry over the next five years?

Expanding outreach to international markets for sale of local Australian content that showcases our already excellent screen talent and our Australian stories, that can increase demand for our content and in turn increase production. Increased development and production funding and with increased industry consultation and throughout the process to ensure this content is meeting market needs and expectations.

A greater emphasis on **script development** of quality scripts, with adequate funding and timelines that avoids rushed and compromised results will help grow the industry. Script development could also include creating more mentoring/script supervision opportunities for emerging Australian writers with acclaimed Australian and international scriptwriters.

Do you have anything else you would like to share with us?

Our belief is that we already have a world-class Victorian and wider screen workforce that is perhaps underutilized through insufficient levels of content production across all budgets and platforms, which needs to increase from 2021 and take advantage of the window that the pandemic is offering to Australia as an ideal place to make content.

PART 2

Theme 1: Increase domestic and global competitiveness and grow the scale and volume of the Victorian screen industry.

OPPORTUNITY

There is a great opportunity to increase our domestic and global competitiveness right now that can impact the next 5 years, as Australia is virtually Covid-Free and able to make content across all platforms and media. This can be done through domestic production, showcasing our Australian stories and identity; co-productions

that give HOD roles to local practitioners by and utilising our domestic screen talent, locations and facilities to attract suitable international productions. This would help not only build skills but elevate and facilitate expansion and opportunity.

Any such productions receiving Australian government assistance should be mandated to employ Australian Heads of Departments including Screen Composers. Opportunities for Australian musicians, sound post facilities, sound studios, musical arrangers, orchestrators etc. will then also be part of the chain.

THREAT

The threat to increasing this competitiveness and growth is in not taking advantage right now of this pandemic opportunity and in not enough funding for content development and production that focuses beyond the domestic market to the global one.

SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION

Ensure sufficient funding through state and federal screen agencies for content development and production and production attraction, with strong industry interaction and feedback during the development process, and maintain quality leadership of the industry that focuses on the global stage as well as domestic one.

Theme 2: Develop market ready Victorian intellectual property that attracts international investment.

OPPORTUNITY

The opportunity here is for local Victorian projects to be seen by the world, increasing awareness of our stories, screen talent, skills, locations and facilities, which will translate to an increase in content development and production that uses local talent, developing that talent and increasing our value and worth.

THREAT

The threat is that such projects with international investment may not result in jobs and opportunities for Australian creatives, a serious concern for the screen composer community and individual composers as well as other fields such as directing and post-production.

Not enough local funding and investment to expand our existing local industry, in terms of infrastructure and skills/craft across all departments, that would make our local screen workforce attractive internationally.

SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION

An investment strategy that goes beyond 4 years and mandates for Victorian and Australian intellectual property to remain with Australian practitioners, through use of Australian HODs in all production and post-production departments. This issue

cannot be resolved within the timeframe of a single political cycle. Investment in solid script development is part of this action.

Theme 3: Develop a screen workforce in Victoria with world-class skills.

OPPORTUNITY

While the belief is that the Victorian screen workforce is already equipped to a great degree with world-class skills, the opportunity to increase the skills and craft base even further can come through education and increased training opportunities, greater interaction with experienced / leading film and content makers at educational and development level, assisted by quotas and attachment schemes for greater female inclusion in departments where they are under-represented.

The Covid-19 pandemic situation in the rest of the world also presents a huge opportunity for our existing workforce who could be working on international productions and those that can be brought to Australia, helping develop the skills and talent of the Victorian and wider Australian screen workforce.

THREAT

Missing the opportunity to bring productions to Australia that are affected by Covid-19 in other countries and not communicating our willingness and ability far and wide for this. There is also the threat that we won't negotiate as hard and as much as possible to have internationally funded content entirely made here, using Australian crews and HODs and not pay our screen workforce properly.

SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION

- Connecting international globally-focused content producers to the local industry and selling Victoria as a one-stop-shop for filming, post-production to deliver completed content for an international market ASAP, that will establish trust and positive relationships that lead to more work. As part of this, continue to develop screen industry education and skills training at all tertiary levels and provide more paid attachment opportunities in production.

Theme 4: Develop an internationally recognised and vibrant screen culture in Victoria.

OPPORTUNITY

Produce screen content including fiction and documentary films that are shown at key international film festivals and greater publicity and promotion of the same.

Continue to increase quality local production to be promoted to the world and supplied to the ever-voracious international markets demanding quality content.

THREAT

The belief that international productions working here will have a trickle down effect that benefits the rest of the industry, when this is often not the case for the music/composing department who often miss out as a non-Australian composer is used and the work takes place off-shore using non-Australian crew and facilities.

SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION

- Increase content production across all areas and then promote this content far and wide. Promote and publicise those films that get into international festivals, network with international distributors to present and promote our films and shows internationally, with more collaboration and discussion at every stage of production. Australian and international film festivals should be places where we can promote Victorian and Australian-made screen content and local festivals should be encouraged to screen quality Victorian/Australian films for Opening and Closing Nights where possible

Other comments

Feedback from our membership based in Victoria included:

- More Collaboration, more vibrant discussion, more screenings, more attachments.
- Education and training needs to be part of the growth of the screen industry and include opportunities to hear from and work with and discuss projects with leading practitioners.
- Attachments to film projects from the pre-production to post-production stages.
- Feedback also covered the fact that we already have a world-class Victorian and wider screen workforce that is perhaps underutilized through not enough production, which from 2021 needs to increase and take advantage of the window that the pandemic is offering to Australia as an ideal place to make content. Add increased promotion and communication.
- Ensure that under-represented and minority groups get as much funding as possible to ensure a diversity of stories and content is made.
- The industry is at risk with changes to the content reform policy that will challenge production financing and budgets and potentially lead to increased inequitable practices such as re-investment deals where screen composers are asked to 're-invest' unfair % of their fees, to buyout practices where screen composers royalties are removed from negotiation deals and other practices that disadvantage screen composers and musicians and threaten both income streams for the individual as well as for the Australian economy.