

# **'FILE OPEN'**

## **PRODUCTION INITIATIVE 2009**

### **Application Guidelines**

Did you know that *Star Wars* was turned down by nearly every Hollywood studio before being 'reluctantly' picked up by Twentieth Century Fox? Or that J.K. Rowling's first Harry Potter book was rejected by 14 publishers before becoming an international best-seller and movie franchise? Or that the pilot episode of the original *Star Trek* TV series was initially rejected by NBC for being, "*too intellectual, too slow, with not enough action...*"?

Do YOU have a script for a short film that's been previously rejected? Maybe you have a great idea for a short film BUT have never applied for funding? Or perhaps you are just waiting for a second chance to finally make THAT film and be discovered?

If so, then *File Open* is for you! This initiative is designed for both first-time applicants who have yet to receive any third-party funding, as well as those who have previously submitted unsuccessful projects for production investment.

#### **Background**

The Members' Production Group (MPG) is a professional development initiative of the MRC. The MPG makes it easier for MRC members to make films, videos and digital media projects by providing fully subsidised access to MRC equipment and facilities. The MRC also now provides continued script development for all successful applications funded under each initiative.

#### **Aim**

The *File Open* initiative aims to assist MRC members to develop and produce a short film of up to 10 minutes. It is open to applicants who have either not yet received production funding from any Screen Development Agency or who have previously submitted projects for production investment that were unsuccessful. Up to three (3) films will be provided with \$3,000 worth of in-kind investment to be used on MRC equipment and facilities hire. The finished films will be screened at the Mercury Cinema early 2010.

#### **Guidelines**

- Scripts must be no longer than 10 minutes in length (1 page = 1 min).
- The initiative is open to both new and previously unsuccessful projects. Rejected scripts need to demonstrate how they have been reworked with attention to any assessment committee feedback.
- Only complete applications will be considered.
- Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.
- Applicants may submit up to 3 separate projects under the initiative.
- Applicants must consult with an MRC staff member prior to submitting an application.

- All applicants must be current financial members of the MRC at the time of applying and remain so throughout the duration of the production of the project.
- Applicants need to apply with a minimum crew of writer, director and producer, or combination of two of the above roles.
- MPG selection panel members may be listed as crew members on applications, but in the event of this occurring, will be excluded from the selection process.
- Applicants must demonstrate a clear chain of title for any and all materials used in relation to the production.
- The MRC strongly advises applicants to purchase public liability insurance, if the production of the project proceeds.
- All consumables, insurance, sundry items and non-MRC hire equipment costs are the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- The MRC's terms and conditions of hire for equipment and facilities apply to all MPG projects, including the payment of deposits and insurance levies as required.
- Any party who is in default of any contractual obligations to the MRC is not eligible to apply.
- Successful applicants will undergo a one-on-one script consultation session with an MRC staff member before going into production.
- Successful applicants will receive \$3,000 in-kind investment only. This initiative does not provide a cash budget. Please see the MRC website for details about the equipment and facilities available.

## **Application Materials**

### **1. Completed Application Form**

Available from the MRC or can be downloaded from [www.mrc.org.au](http://www.mrc.org.au)

### **2. Completed Script**

Please ensure your script is formatted according to industry standards, does not exceed 10 pages and on the cover page includes the following information:

- the working title of the project
- writer's name
- draft number
- the copyright holder (usually the producer) and all their contact details

Please contact the MRC if you require any information on script formatting or presentation.

### **3. One Sentence Synopsis**

Describe your film's plotline in one sentence. Your pitch should include who your protagonist is, what the problem or conflict is and what they do about it. It should be written in such a way that it should make readers want to know more about your story.

### **4. One Page Synopsis**

In up to one page, describe your story in terms of the themes you are exploring through action and character. This is not the plot of the story! Please don't merely tell us what happens in your story but focus on what your story is about, your 'controlling idea', and what it is you as a filmmaker want to say to an audience with this project.

### **4. Director's Statement**

In one page, outline your project and how it will be realised. Talk about your stylistic intent for the material and how you will approach the storytelling, both visually and from a performance point of view. Discuss how this film fits into your career trajectory, and why you want to tell this particular story. If your film has been previously rejected, discuss how and why you have subsequently reworked the script for this initiative.

## 5. Feasibility Statement

It is assumed that films in this initiative will have limited cash budgets, if any. As part of the assessment process, explain in one page how you will achieve the production of the film without a cash budget. How will production design and costuming be handled? SFX or stunts? Cast and location considerations? What external resources can you access so as to best maximise your production value?

## 6. Budget

Applicants need to provide a one page A-Z budget summary breakdown itemising all essential crew departments costs and expenses. Please include all deferrals, private investment and/or subsidies provided as part of the MRC's \$3,000 in-kind investment.

## 7. CVs of the Key Creative Crew

CVs must be no longer than two pages each and be relevant to screen production experience.

## 7. Chain of Title Documents

Please supply agreements clearly confirming that the writer is the sole owner of copyright in the script and that it is an original work. Also confirm that the writer grants to the producer the option to acquire certain rights in the work for the purposes of producing a film and exploiting that film in the marketplace.

Please forward **3 copies** of all application materials to:

*File Open*  
Media Resource Centre  
13 Morphett Street  
Adelaide SA 5000

by no later than **5pm, Wednesday 18 November 2009**.

Applications received or postmarked after the deadline will not be accepted.

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## FILE OPEN PRODUCTION INITIATIVE TIMELINE

<b>Wed 14 October 2009</b>	MPG <i>File Open</i> Production Initiative launched
<b>Wed 18 November 2009</b>	Deadline for applications
<b>Tues 1 December 2009</b>	Successful applicants announced
<b>Wed 2 – Fri 18 December 2009</b>	Script consultations with MRC
<b>Mon 21 December 2009</b>	Pre-production commences
<b>Mon 4 January 2010</b>	Production commences
<b>Fri 26 March 2010</b>	Completed projects due to MRC by 5pm

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