SOUTH EAST NSW REGIONAL SCREEN STRATEGY 2021 - 2024

Prepared by Far South Film Inc for South East Arts (NSW) Inc



Photo courtesy of Hiromi Matsuoka, Indigo Pictures 2020

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
1.1 Vision	3
1.2 Mission	3
1.3 Scope	3
1.4 Purpose	3
1.5 Alignment	3
1.6 Methodology	4
1.7 Key conclusions	5
2. Review of Previous Screen Strategy 2015 - 2018	6
2.1 Background	6
2.2 Previous strategy vision	6
2.3 Review of key elements from previous strategy vs actual outcomes	6
3. Current state of play	9
3.1 Key Organisations	9
3.2 Training & Professional Development	11
3.3 Recent Productions	12
4. Industry Survey	14
4.1 Notes on survey data	14
4.2 Roles in the screen industry	14
4.3 Entities operating in the industry	15
4.4 Percentage of stakeholder budgets allocated to screen production	15
4.5 Screen industry experience	15
4.6 Screen output: projects worked on per annum	16
4.7 Screen output: percentage of creatives engaged in each category	16
4.8 How screen creatives describe themselves	17
4.9 Sustainability: Percentage of income from screen-related work	18
4.10 Sustainability: Total income for screen creatives (prior to COVID)	18
4.11 Sustainability: Typical budget of screen projects worked on (prior to COVID)	19
4.12 Financial Flow-On Effects	19
4.13 Viability: Funding sources as a percentage of screen budget (pre COVID)	20
4.14 Percentage of screen work undertaken inside and outside the region	20
4.15 Impact of bushfires and COVID-19 on regional screen content production	21

4.16 Outlook for 2021 screen content production	21
4.17 Audience Engagement - platforms used	22
4.18 Aspirations of screen creatives for 2021	22
4.19 Aspirations of screen creatives for 2022 - 2024	23
4.20 TOP TEN Priorities the strategy needs to deliver for regional screen creatives	23
5. Strategies 2021 - 2024	24
5.1 Drivers, Outcomes, KPIs and Actions in priority order	24
5.2 Review Timetable	27
5.3 Strategy Management	27
6. Resource Plan	27
7. Attachments & References	28
7.1 Workshops	28
7.2 Key Survey Priorities	31
7.3 Interview Summaries	32
7.4 Source Documents	34
7.5 Acknowledgments	34

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Vision

By 2024 there will be a self-sustaining, active and diverse screen industry based in the SE Region of NSW creating screen stories to engage with regional, national and international audiences.

1.2 Mission

Help establish a collaborative and cooperative industry that supports filmmakers and content creators, especially diverse screen storytellers and the next generation of screen creatives, with rich partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders, making a worthwhile contribution to the regional economy.

1.3 Scope

This strategy covers the screen industry in the South East region of NSW, including the Bega Valley, Eurobodalla and Snowy Monaro shires. The boundary aligns with the existing arts region managed by South East Arts (NSW) Inc and the membership area of Far South Film Inc.

The term 'screen' is defined broadly and includes content created for physical, online and virtual platforms, including films, TV programs, commercials, social media content, web series, animation, virtual and augmented reality and games. It covers still and moving visual and related audio content.

The term 'industry' includes emerging and professional content creatives working in the region, creatives from outside the region who wish to make content within the region and businesses and organisations in the region that directly support those endeavours.

More broadly, the strategy seeks to include the views and needs of key stakeholders who support and enable the industry, through funding, regulation or collaboration.

The strategy covers calendar years 2021 to 2024.

1.4 Purpose

The document:

- reviews key elements and actual outcomes from the <u>previous SEA Screen Strategy covering 2015/16 2017/18</u>
- assesses the current state of play key organisations and productions
- identifies the needs of regional screen practitioner via a survey conducted in late 2020
- defines key drivers, outcomes, KPIs and actions for 2021 2024
- identifies resources needed to achieve outcomes
- sets review milestones for future years
- serves as a tool for creatives, funding bodies and other stakeholders to measure projects against desired outcomes for the region.

1.5 Alignment

A screen strategy can only work when the environment is conducive to supporting the screen industry. A collaborative approach is needed with federal, state, regional and local government bodies as well as tourism, arts and general businesses in the region, and the broader screen industry beyond the region, who can provide work and employment opportunities for regional screen creatives.

Eurobodalla Shire In its Creative Arts Strategy 2019, there are no specific references to film or screen, and only two mentions of audience organisations (Moruya Film Club and Narooma Film Society). However, it did in the past have a film contact officer involved in the multiyear River Cottage series.

Bega Valley Shire has a stated <u>film-friendly policy and filming guidelines</u> on its website. There is no reference to the screen industry in its business development policy however. There is a designated film permit officer in council.

Snowy Monaro Shire includes *Information Media and Telecommunications* in its Regional Economic Strategy as an 'enabling industry' to support its main industries of tourism, agriculture, forestry and fishing but film or screen is not mentioned specifically, nor does it appear in its Arts Strategy. Council's Tourism Manager is the contact person for filming in the shire.

Screen NSW is the major screen funding body in NSW. Its major programs in 2020 seek to identify events and programs that stimulate screen content and innovative practice in NSW and supports high-quality activity, engagement and participation with one of the Priority Areas being people living and/or working in regional NSW. We note that there is no specific <u>regional filming contact</u> for our region listed on Screen NSW's website.

Screen Australia is an independent agency of the Federal Government funding individuals, screen businesses and industry organisations for the creation of Australian drama and documentary content for all Australians, including feature films, documentaries, TV and online content, industry development, indigenous opportunities, international co-production programs and the producer offset program. The agency promotes Australian screen stories both at home and abroad. Funding may be provided at the Development, Production or Completion stages. See State of Play for more details on priorities.

Other Stakeholders include regional business chambers, businesses, arts, tourism and community organisations wanting screen content to promote their services. There are opportunities here to better promote and coordinate the use of local crews, as anecdotal evidence suggests that the first approach is to metropolitan crews, unaware that there are local professional providers.

1.6 Methodology

In developing this strategy we have sought the input of screen creatives, local councils, tourism and business representatives, land managers as well as key arts and screen bodies in NSW.

Stakeholder Workshops were held in November 2020 in Merimbula, Bega (Bega Valley Shire), Malua Bay (Eurobodalla Shire) and Crackenback (Snowy Monaro) for key regional stakeholders to define the key drivers for a screen strategy. These workshops included representatives from council, tourism, arts organisations, chambers of commerce, filmmakers and other screen creatives including photographers and game developers. See 8.1 for details.

A **survey** gathered detailed data on the status and needs of individual screen creatives in our region. The survey was accessible online in November/December 2020 and a link was emailed to more than 200 screen creatives and stakeholders whose addresses had been collected through events and activities held by Far South Film over the last 12 months and promoted through social media, regional media outlets and South East Arts/SEA Screen. There was a 12% response rate.

Zoom interviews were conducted with individuals from South East Arts, Screenworks and Screen NSW.

Outcomes, KPIs and Actions were then developed by Far South Film in response to the drivers, survey and interviews.



Screen Strategy Stakeholders Workshop Bega 2020

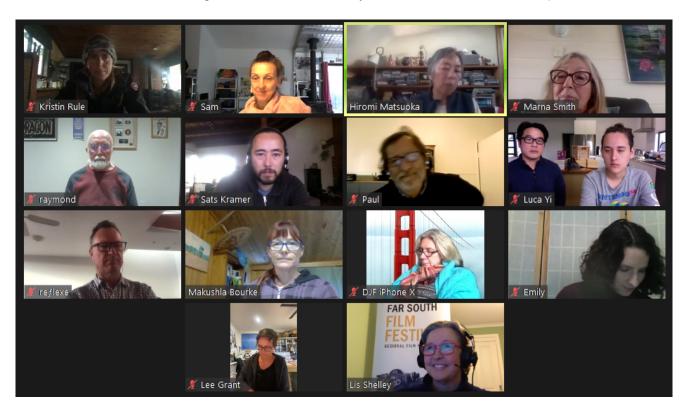
1.7 Key conclusions

- The key drivers identified in the workshops and in the survey results were notably consistent across the region.
- Participants were keen to avoid duplication of effort, and to work together to maximise opportunities available by playing to our strengths.
- COVID has forced many organisations to move their offerings online, which has levelled the playing field
 for regional screen practitioners, by removing the previous distance and cost barriers. This changed
 environment is likely to continue into the future and offers greater opportunities for screen creatives to
 access professional development and content/audience development opportunities without leaving region.
- There is still a need for local on-the-ground events and support in the region to connect crews and emerging filmmakers.

1.8 Major drivers identified

These are described in further details under 5.1.

- 1. Finance, support and enable content creatives to produce high quality local content.
- 2. Establish relationships with tourism, local government, arts and business groups.
- 3. Establish a network of creative professionals and develop a list of local industry suppliers and services.
- 4. Facilitate training and skills development and involvement opportunities for emerging creatives to ensure enough skilled creatives are available
- 5. Promote the Southeast region and its screen industry to external screen bodies and producers.



Creative Roundtable Online with southeast NSW region screen creatives during COVID lockdown 2020

2. Review of Previous Screen Strategy 2015 - 2018

2.1 Background

South East Arts (SEA) is one of fourteen Regional Arts Boards in NSW. A not for profit association managed by a skills-based volunteer board, it is funded by Arts NSW and local councils to support regional cultural development.

With a ten year history and an established track record SEA decided to support screen industry development as a priority area for the first time in 2015 with the creation of a screen industry advisory board and a part time position for a screen project officer. This project officer position finished up in 2018 and funding has not been renewed.

The SEA Screen: South East NSW Screen Industry Development Strategy 2015/16 - 2017/18 was the first of its kind for the the region and proved to be a valuable milestone and catalyst for the industry by identifying practitioners, their skill levels and areas of interest, depicting the state of the regional industry generally and pointing the way forward for further development.

The authors wish to express their thanks to SEA and author Lois Randall for outlining a vision for our emerging regional industry and laying solid foundations for this new strategy.

2.2 Previous strategy vision

The overall vision of the previous strategy was:

"By 2018 there will be a networked self managing cluster of screen practitioners in the South East NSW region, creating vibrant screen content that is reaching regional, national and international audiences."

As evidenced by the activities on its website, the establishment of grass-roots association Far South Film Inc in mid 2019 has certainly achieved the above. By its very nature filmmaking and screen content creation is collaborative, and by being a creative hub for information, skills, ideas and crew for the region, Far South Film hopes to grow the vision first enunciated in 2015.

2.3 Review of key elements from previous strategy vs actual outcomes

2.3.1 Supporting screen practitioners to establish a regional network or production hub that can become self-sustaining

This element has been largely fulfilled through the establishment of Far South Film Inc as a self sustaining screen hub (though its sustainability in the long run has to be carefully considered and supported by the new strategy).

2.3.2 SEA Screen Summit - annual future-focused professional development and capacity building forums

This was to be a regional screen conference with presenters of high calibre and experience, opportunities for participants to network with peers and to pitch their work to producers, broadcasters and funders to "go to market" with their work.

Logistical and budgetary difficulties hampered the establishment of this event, but probably more than anything, it was the low skill and experience level of south east practitioners and the low numbers of practitioners with a market-ready slate and the right level of experience and relevant body of work that hampered the fulfilment of this part of the strategy.

With the advent of Screenworks in the Northern Rivers region as an organisation now supporting regions nation-wide by holding its annual "Business of Screen Producing" program in the Northern Rivers region (unfortunately cancelled in 2020 due to COVID) the necessity of this Summit in the SE region may have been superseded. However, there is a need to support filmmakers from our region to attend this important event by funding places and travel, or online access where available.

Networking and professional development elements of the summit are addressed later in this strategy.

2.3.3 SEA Screen Clinics - one-on-one feedback sessions for local practitioners with experienced professional (eg script editor, producer/developer)

This too was an idea that may have been a little too early for its time and never quite came to fruition, due primarily to the lack of market- or development-ready scripts and projects from the local area.

Far South Film believes that this idea still holds value and is relevant, and that more local practitioners may be ready now to pursue this as a project. A number of creative round tables have been held by FSF that have been well received and have resulted in closer ties and collaborations between professional and emerging practitioners.

2.3.4 SEA Screen Pitch - in the third year, private one-on-one pitching modelled on SPA Ready Steady Pitch

This was to have been part of the Screen Summit but did not eventuate. An essential skill in financing a movie or TV /web series, and the more practice pitching the better. On a smaller, local scale, Far South Film encourages practitioners to practice-pitch their ideas during Creative Roundtables for feedback from peers, as well as holding screenings for audiences with feedback surveys. Pitching opportunities are addressed later in this strategy.

2.3.5 Facilitation of incoming productions

SEA's Screen Industry Officer naturally became a conduit for inquiries regarding the potential of the SE region as a filming destination until 2019. However the industry's knowledge of SEA's involvement in this area was sporadic; in many cases enquiries would go direct to the local tourism bodies or councils instead, with mixed results.

Incoming productions filmed in the region during this period included:

- The Horizon 2015 (web series) partly filmed in Narooma
- Sydney Weekender 2016 (tourism series episode filmed in Cooma)
- World's Greatest Bridges 2017 (BBC Channel 5 in Moruya for episode on Sydney Harbour Bridge)

We note that there are no contacts listed on Screen NSW's website for the southeast region and Far South Film has since made contact with them to be listed as a regional point-of-contact. Far South Film is also establishing working relationships with each shire council's film officer and other stakeholders such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and the Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs).

2.3.6 Supporting young people with a passion for screen content creation

SEA supported the *YoofTube* Youth Film Festival from 2010 - 2018 and the annual holiday *Film Schools* run by Footprint Theatre until 2019. This is a particularly important part of the work, with more youth funding going to sporting activities than cultural activities in the regions. With the loss of funding for the SEA Screen Officer, YoofTube ceased in 2018. Far South Film has taken over the workshops role from Footprint Theatre and has been successful in attracting funding from a variety of sources to continue this work.





Far South Film Youth filmmaking workshops in Bega & Moruya in 2020 – Photos Lis Shelley & Rima Bos

2.3.7 Showcasing local culture and stories on screen

Local screen stories produced in the south east region 2015-2018:

- The Shallows 2015 (short)
- Whippersnappers 2015 (short)
- In Patchy Waters 2016 (short)
- Life Class 2016 (feature)
- Perfect Cuppa 2015 (short)
- The Long Lunch 2015 (short)
- Being Change 2016 (documentary)
- Connecting With The Earth 2016 (short) ABC Open/TV/Radio
- Australian Story Peacemaker 2017 (ABC TV series episode with footage from Toni Houston)
- Corey the Warrior 2017 (short)
- The President of Australia 2017 (TV series)
- What I Love About Tathra 2018 (Destination NSW tourism promo)



Filming in Kosciuszko National Park - Photo courtesy of Raymond Toms, Pi Productions

3. Current state of play

3.1 Key Organisations

South East Arts (NSW) Inc

Although SEA no longer has a dedicated Screen Industry officer, it continues to help individuals and organisations source resources in the form of crew contacts and funding for screen projects, as well as professional development opportunities and promoting screen-based activities across the South East region. Screen production continues to a key component of a range of creative projects that SEA supports. Its screen directory listing is no longer on its website but this function may be taken over by Far South Film in the near future.

Far South Film Inc owes its existence to a series of activities that came out of the previous SEA Screen strategy in 2014 - 2017. Formed initially as a grassroots group of professional filmmakers, it incorporated in July 2019 as an association of professional and emerging screen creatives living and working in the Bega Valley, Eurobodalla and Snowy Monaro shires. Its focus is not on creating screen content itself, but on actively supporting its members and other screen creatives to do so. Far South Film administers open, youth and professional development workshops, networking events, screenings, access to equipment, a members directory, crew finding, provides social media and e-news updates from the Australian screen industry, and creative roundtable activities. Its major project is an annual film festival for regional filmmakers around Australia called the Far South Film Festival.

Screen Australia currently has the following priorities:

- Gender Matters seeks to address the underutilisation of female talent in key creative roles in the Australian screen industry by having a KPI of 50% of the key creatives across all projects that receive Screen Australia development and production funding to be women, across a three-year-average. For the purposes of the KPI, the key creatives are directors, writers and producers and the tracking period is 2019/20 to 2021/22.
- Documentary Funding
- The Enterprise program, which funds individuals to take the next steps in their career and helps Australian screen businesses diversify.
- Attachments, which are short-term paid placements on a specific production, to help creators get experience on set.
- Funding to help support Australian film festivals, events and screen industry guilds.
- International support, which helps creatives attend international festivals, markets and events in order to attract attention to their Australian works.
- Targeted funding for parts of the screen sector, such as the programs run by our Indigenous Department (which is like a mini Screen Australia, covering development and production for Indigenous-led stories) or as part of Gender Matters for women.
- Special initiatives, which are announced throughout the year and vary from helping more experienced creators connect with the global industry (e.g. Talent USA, Mentor LA), to assisting new creators obtain funding for their story e.g. VidCon Pitcher Perfect, Google Skip Ahead, Vice Pitch Australiana, ABC Fresh Blood.
- Bespoke programs to help new creators up-skill e.g. Developing the Developer, Talent Camp.
- Source: https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding-and-support

Screen NSW targets the following groups for their funding programs:

Target Groups	Industry Development	Audience Development	Strategic Development	Attachment Registers	AIDC Indigenous Creators Program
People living and/or working in regional NSW	Y	Y	Y	Y	
People living in Western Sydney	Y	Y	Y		
Aboriginal people	Y	Y	Υ	Υ	Y
People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	Y	Y	Y	Υ	
People with disability	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Women	Y	Y		Y	
LGBTQI people	Y	Y		Y	
Young people	Y	Y	Y		
Carers				Y	

Source: https://www.screen.nsw.gov.au/funding-incentives Dec 2020

Tourism Bodies

As tourism plays a large part in the economy of our area, there is an opportunity to increase the screen industry's visibility in this sector as a way of generating local screen jobs through promotional screen content. It also enables us to promote the location to visiting filmmakers because of the amount of tourism infrastructure available for cast/crew, particularly in the cooler months of the year when the weather is calm and clear in the Bega Valley/Eurobodalla and in the summer months in the Snowy Monaro.

Bega Valley Shire Council is regarded as a film-friendly location, with published Filming Protocols and Guidelines available on its <u>website</u> in support of the screen industry and a Film Contact Officer (Communications) responsible for supporting filmmakers who need approvals or other council assistance to film. The screen industry is not however mentioned in the council's business development strategy.

Eurobodalla Shire Council

Eurobodalla council employees have many jobs so they are currently hard pressed to offer support to film productions, though previously they did support the River Cottage production in Tilba.

Snowy Monaro Regional Council does not directly address screen specifically any of its published strategies. However, the Tourism unit of Council plays an active role in assisting visiting filmmakers access locations and resources and there is a form available on their website for screening permissions. Much of the screen activity in the mountains is driven directly by the private ski resorts.

National Parks & Wildlife Service manages a large part of the land area of our region and plays a critical role in providing film permits. Apart from environmental and habitat protection concerns, in many areas NPWS works closely with rLocal Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC) to monitor and protect culturally sensitive areas. Drone use is also strictly governed and permission must be sought from NPWS Aviation Unit and ParkAir as drones are in use by NPWS themselves for environmental and fire surveys. We propose that further contact be made to establish strong relations with National Parks (including forest reserves, marine parks and LALCs) for the screen industry.

Forestry Corporation NSW manages the state forests and reserves which also make up a significant part of our region. Permits for filming and drone use are available via their <u>website</u>.

Marine Parks (Dept of Fisheries) manage the Batemans Marine Park extending from Murramarang Beach to the southern side of Wallaga Lake entrance. Permission is required for any commercial activities including filming, available from their website.

Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC) in the <u>South East region</u> are listed below. **Screen Australia**'s protocols developed for filming on indigenous land and engaging with indigenous organisations are available on their <u>website</u>.

Batemans Bay Bega Bodalla Cobowra Eden

Merrimans Mogo Ngambri Wagonga

3.2 Training & Professional Development

COVID has enabled more opportunities for regional participants in online learning and skills development.

NSW TAFE and High Schools have several regional students enrolled in VET Media and Screen courses provided online. There is an opportunity to engage with these organisations to provide placement opportunities for students on local productions.

AFTRS Since COVID, more <u>AFTRS courses</u> are using online delivery, to the advantage and financial benefit of regionally based screen practitioners. Two south east region directors completed the Directors' Journey program and one completed the Script Assessment short course online in 2020.

Screenworks now offers more of its <u>professional development programs online</u> to its members which greatly reduces the costs of travel for south east regional creatives.

Screen ABC under the direction of veteran Producers Andrena Finlay and Sue Milliken have also taken their Producer courses online in 2020. https://screenabc.com/

Academy of Interactive Entertainment has campuses around Australia including Canberra and Online. This enables practitioners in our region to have greater access to <u>short and tertiary level courses</u> and direct engagement with leading animators and digital artists.



Batemans Bay Networking: Guest speakers Jesse Milne & Nick Bolton from TenAlphas: The DNA of Storytelling

3.3 Recent Productions

3.3.1 Festival

The Far South Film Festival for regional filmmakers was established in 2020 by FSF to provide a screening opportunity for regionally-based filmmakers, not just from our region but Australia-wide. The Festival attracted \$5000 in prize money from sponsors keen to encourage and further the aspirations of our regional creatives. Its Youth Section fills the gap left by YoofTube Film Festival's departure. FSF has also run youth filmmaking workshops with CASP and local council funding after Footprint Theatre passed on the baton.

The festival has spurred on productions by giving a deadline for filmmakers to enter. In being a festival that was open to productions outside the region as well, it raised the bar for local filmmakers seeing their work in the context of Australian wide regional content being produced.

3.3.2 Local Productions 2019-2021

- Seven Ages 2019 (short for the Lights! Canberra! Action! festival)
- Mirror & Me 2019 (short)
- Ghost Baby 2019 (short)
- Candelo Village Radio series 2019 (series of music videos to promote music festival)
- Victimas (web series in post)
- Destination NSW: Snowy Mountains and Tathra 2019 (tourism promos)
- Bunaan 2020 (short doco)
- The Oudmaker of Narooma 2020 (short doco)
- La Laguna 2020 (short)
- Anactoria Good Mind 2020 (music video)
- E-Waste 2020 (short doco)
- Gone 2020 (short doco)
- The Ambassador 2020 (short)
- Through the Garden of Eden 2020 (short)
- The Secret Gift 2020 (short)
- Being Frank 2020 (short doco)
- Sapphire Coast Wildlife (tourism promo)
- Unspoilt Eurobodalla (tourism promo)
- Unspoilt South Coast (tourism promo)
- Cruise Into Eden (tourism promo)
- Fearless Season 2 Sam I Am (short doco)

There are several regional production houses that specialise in commercial work including Gooseboy TV, Indigo Pictures, Pi Productions, Propelled Pictures, Reflexe, Schope Creative and Torchlight Media.

3.3.3 Incoming Productions 2019-2021

- The Drover's Wife (feature) by Leah Purcell filmed in Adaminaby, the Snowy Mountains and the Monaro Plains in 2019, due for release in 2021. Purcell had the idea to return and film the story in the mountains after filming the feature *Jindabyne* there in 2006.
- Adam Liaw's Road Trip For Good 2020 (SBS food series) An episode was filmed in Tathra exploring the recovery of areas affected by bushfires).
- SAS Australia 2020 (reality TV) Seven Network filmed a 12 episode season of its military-style series in the Snowy Monaro in 2019 after they were unable to film in New Zealand due to COVID-19. Locations were Bobundara and Perisher Valley with the crew staying in Jindabyne and Berridale
- Farmer Wants a Wife Seven Network filmed two episodes with local farmers in the Snowy Monaro in 2020 in Dalgety and Delegate, to be screened in 2021.
- Mother Mountain Mother Mountain SPV Pty Ltd is filming a feature length drama based in Tilba, Bermagui and surrounds in December 2020.

- Yuinj Dhari-Bulwal -Yuin Country Explored 2020 (documentary Eurobodalla Shire Council/National Museum of Australia) community theatrical release January 2021
- Bagan, Barra Barra Mirriwar Original songs in language composed by Lou Bennet & Djinama Yiliga indigenous women's choir, performed by Djinama Yiliga. To be released at Four Winds Festival 2021
- An as-yet-unnamed feature produced by Scarlett Pictures is due to be shot in the Bermagui/Tathra area in mid 2021 and will have opportunities for local crew



On location Yuinj Dhari-Bulwal -Yuin Country Explored 2020 Photo by Hiromi Matsuoka, Indigo Pictures



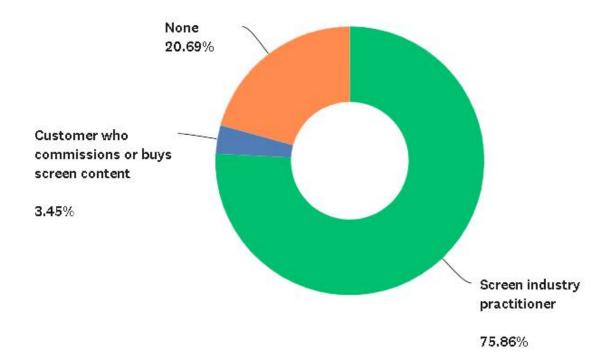
Youth Live Digital Effects for Streaming Workshop Bega - Photo by Lis Shelley

4. Industry Survey

4.1 Notes on survey data

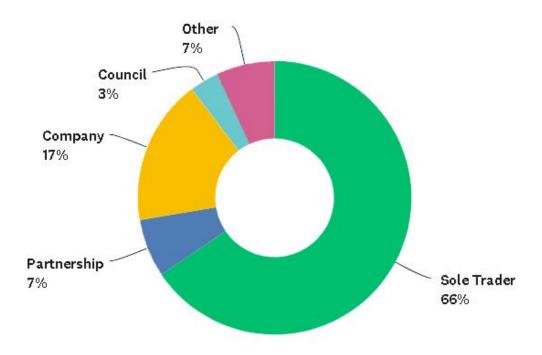
- The survey was sent to a database of 230 screen industry people on the Far South Film mailing list. An
 invitation was also sent to regional film social media groups SEA Screen, Bega Valley Filmmakers, Bega
 Valley Screen Actors and the Far South Film Festival. Stakeholders who attended our workshops were
 also invited to complete the survey.
- Given the significant upheaval in the industry in 2020, respondents were asked for pre-COVID financial figures to provide a reasonable baseline for future comparison, with additional questions on the impact of bushfires and COVID on regional screen industry jobs. and the expected outlook for 2021.

4.2 Roles in the screen industry



Although almost a fifth of respondents said they had 'no role' in the screen industry, closer scrutiny of the data reveals that all but one who answered 'None' have in fact worked on films in the past, or have been working on non-film screen projects. There is evidence that practitioners in the fields of photography, animation, games and VR do not readily perceive themselves to be part of the screen industry. There is a need for further engagement with non-traditional screen practitioners since the industry is no longer just 'film' but relies on all kinds of screen content in the digital age. Given the low number of stakeholder responses, there is also work needed to engage with other organisations that - knowingly or otherwise - are part of the support network for the screen industry. This includes councils, business and tourism organisations.

4.3 Entities operating in the industry



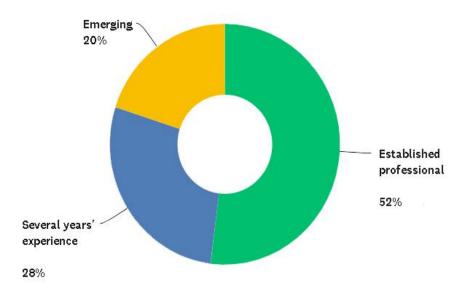
The majority of screen creatives operate as sole traders. As standard industry practice is to set up a Special Purpose Vehicle, anecdotal evidence suggests that many of these either contract to SPVs or companies for larger projects. Those who responded as 'Other' were actually either Sole Traders or connected with a Council.

The dominance of the sole trader highlights the need for industry development leadership from Far South Film, in the absence of larger production companies to build scale, and building partnerships for long term sustainability.

4.4 Percentage of stakeholder budgets allocated to screen production

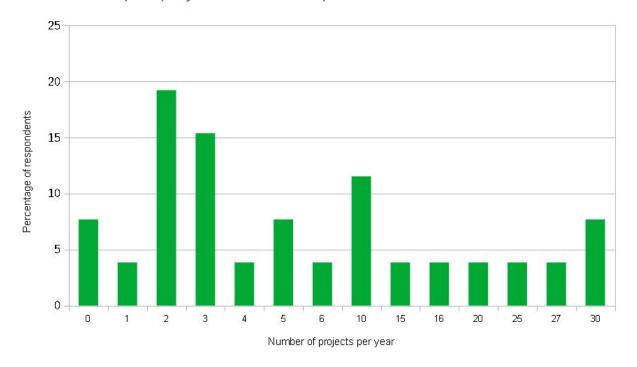
This question was directed at councils, businesses, funding bodies and other screen content buyers elicited no responses - so the data has not been included in the survey.

4.5 Screen industry experience



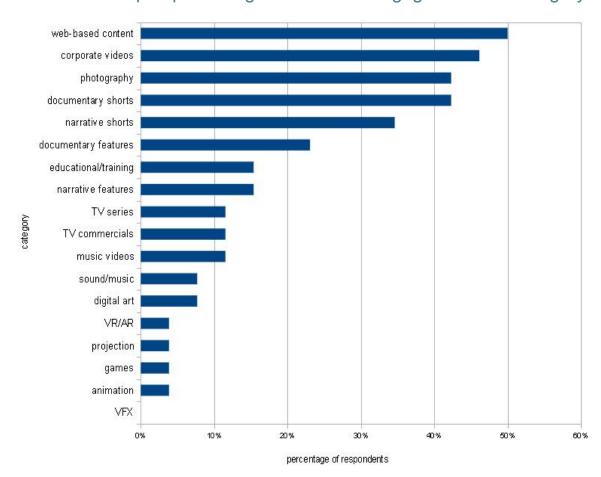
There is a strong presence in the region of established professionals, with a solid number of up-and-coming screen practitioners. In addition, an encouraging number of young people are showing a keen interest in screen careers by attending workshops and electing to take screen related courses.

4.6 Screen output: projects worked on per annum



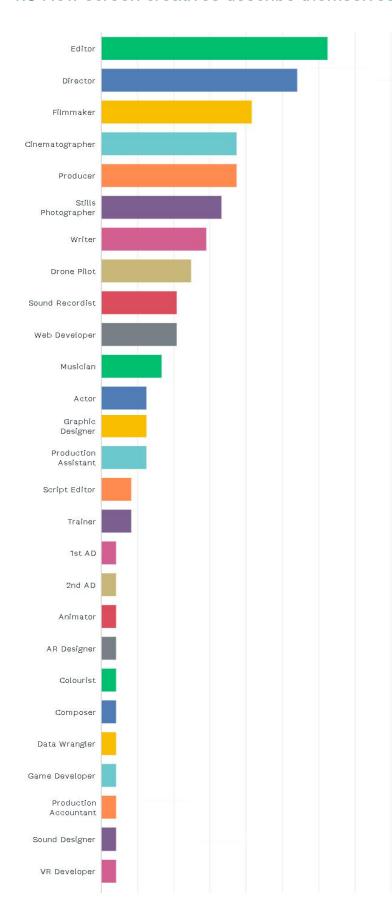
Minimum: 0 Maximum: 30 Median:8 Average: 12

4.7 Screen output: percentage of creatives engaged in each category



Documentary and other non-narrative work is a particular strength in our region.

4.8 How screen creatives describe themselves

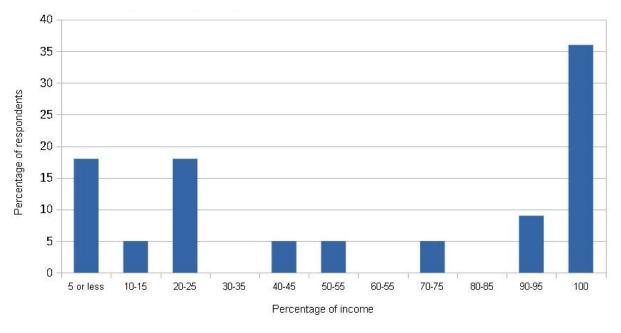


Respondents were able to choose multiple creative roles.

No respondents identified themselves as: Armourer, Best Boy/Girl, Caterer, Costume Designer, Digital Designer, Grip, Hair Artist, Location Scout, Makeup Artist, Production Runner, Set Designer or Stuntperson.

Anecdotal evidence suggests most of these skills are in the region, but there is work to be done to locate and ensure these roles are represented in any resource directory.

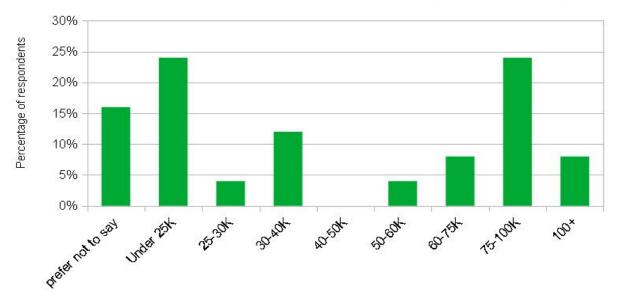
4.9 Sustainability: Percentage of income from screen-related work



Minimum: 0% Maximum: 100% Median: 60% Average: 57%

Most screen practitioners earn 40% or more of their income from other sources. Assuming creatives would prefer a greater proportion of income from screen work, the strategy needs to address funding and promotion activities to increase local projects to ensure sustainability.

4.10 Sustainability: Total income for screen creatives (prior to COVID)



Income bracket

Average income comparison (pre COVID)

This survey	South East Region ¹	NSW ¹
\$53455	\$48745	\$67200

¹ Source: ABS data 2017-2018

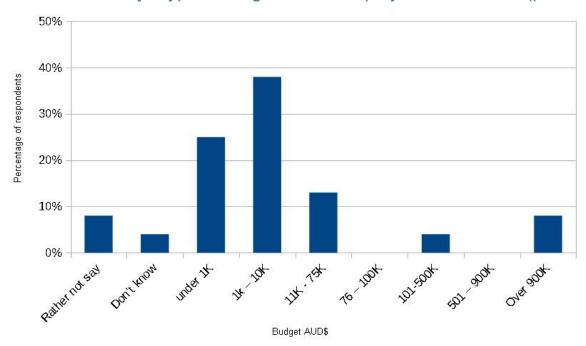
Overall respondents were earning more than the average income for the region but less than the state average. A snapshot of the top five identified screen occupations in the region who make 80% or more of their income from

screen work indicates that income for editors, videographers / cinematographers and photographers did well against the national average, while income for producers and directors was significantly lower than the average.

Role	South East NSW Regional Average ¹	National Average ²
Producer	\$59875	\$66768
Director	\$61000	\$98264
Editor	\$64179	\$54403
Videographer	\$54850	\$53572
Photographer	\$54850	\$54532

- 1. Only income attributable to screen-related work was included
- 2. Source: payscale.com data for Australia 2020

4.11 Sustainability: Typical budget of screen projects worked on (prior to COVID)



Typical screen projects in the region prior to COVID were mainly no-budget productions with 63% under \$10,000. 12% of respondents didn't know or preferred not to state an amount. Only 8% of budgets would have reached the qualifying budget threshold for the producer offset. In 2021 this threshold will increase to \$1 million for feature length content.

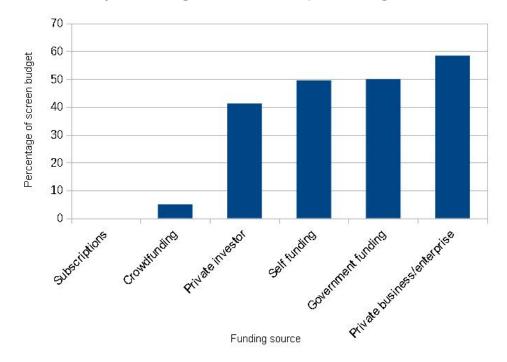
4.12 Financial Flow-On Effects

Percentage of production budgets spent on supplies or services from non-screen-related local businesses:

Minimum: 4% Maximum: 74% Median: 19% Average: 25%

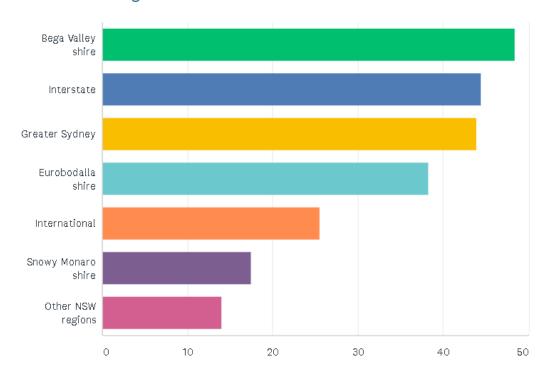
1 in 4 dollars spent by our regional screen industry is with non-screen-related businesses. Supporting screen projects is therefore a good way to also support other regional businesses and local economies.

4.13 Viability: Funding sources as a percentage of screen budget (pre COVID)



Just as other businesses benefit from screen industry spends, the screen industry also relies on healthy businesses to sustain projects and ongoing work in the region, with almost half of funding coming from private sources. In the post-COVID era, funding may not be as readily available. On the other hand, COVID has meant an increase in screen-based work. Promoting the value of the industry to the region and making private investors more aware of regional filmmaking resources will be vital in creating a sustainable business model.

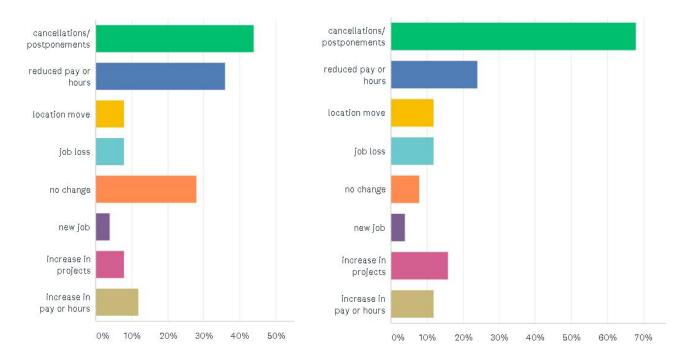
4.14 Percentage of screen work undertaken inside and outside the region



The survey did not include incoming productions.

A large number of regional creatives work outside the region (45%).

The Snowy Monaro shire has hosted several TV/film projects recently driven largely by commercial stations and the ski resorts, which have generally only employed non-regional creatives. This may explain the relatively low amount of screen work in that shire.



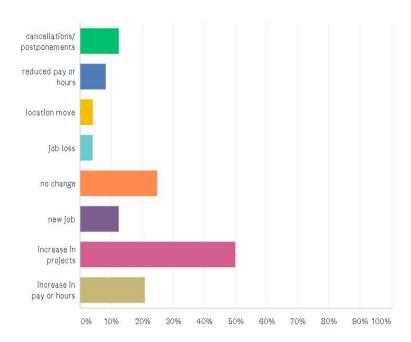
4.15 Impact of bushfires and COVID-19 on regional screen content production

Left: Impact of 2019/20 bushfires.

Right: Impact of COVID-19

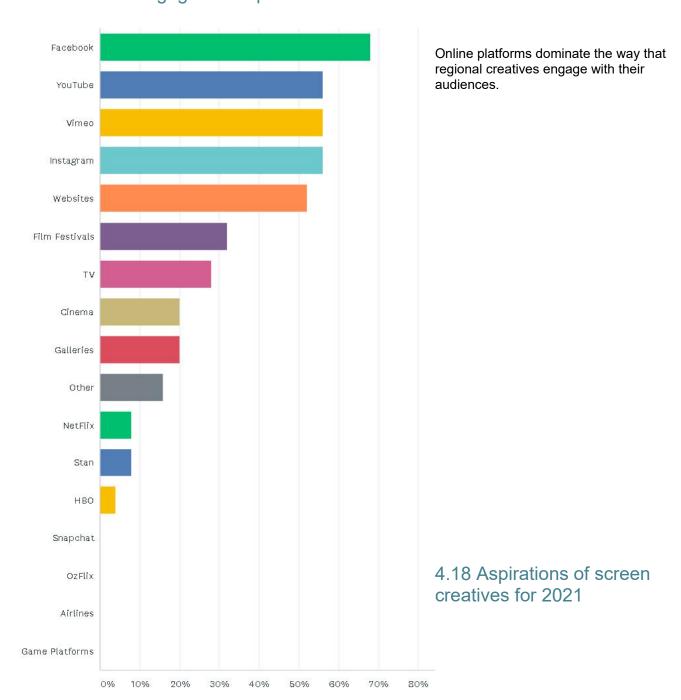
Overall the impact of bushfires in the region had a significant negative effect with loss of projects, pay and hours in 2020. However, for around a quarter of respondents it created more opportunities. Unsurprisingly, COVID-19 has had a greater lasting negative effect on screen content production, with a larger number of respondents reporting having projects cancelled or postponed. However, the opportunity for increased projects was greater as clients pivoting online needed more screen-based content.

4.16 Outlook for 2021 screen content production



There is a generally optimistic outlook for 2021 by regional screen creatives. This may be in light of continued cancellations/postponements of live performances due to COVID restrictions and because more organisations are choosing to deliver content via screen-based methods.

4.17 Audience Engagement - platforms used



Produce skills WOrk narrative film short feature

Increase skills in directing, shooting and editing. Develop project ideas into screen content. Attend training and networking. Get more narrative form experience. Expand drone operation. Advance technical skills with new software. Produce more TVC's and branded documentaries in the local area. Develop skills in short promotional video production. Successfully release last feature. Produce a feature film with international release. Have a TV series script produced. Write and co-produce a short film based in the Bega Valley Shire. Improve my cinematography skills. More of the same. Screen to an audience. Get 30k funding to translate all of the footage for my feature film. Produce a local short narrative film. Complete a documentary. Bring more productions to the far south coast. Continue working on projects that showcase environmental improvements, sustainable agriculture, heritage and the people involved. Exhibit my current work across large public venues either regionally or in city spaces or both. Film a short narrative. Finish more films. Find more resources and opportunities to create and share my work, particularly in physical spaces. Be in business. Attend 10 training workshops. More work and

income. Create more local short content, particularly narrative. Create a second cinema feature. Establish myself as a producer. Sell film rights from original work.

4.19 Aspirations of screen creatives for 2022 - 2024

production feature films film screen

Meaningful capacity to create screen content both independently and with others and have it funded and screened. Earn a larger portion of my income from working in the screen industry. Get back to pre-covid production levels. Get a major production role. See the shire as a hub for online production. See almost-edited feature find an agent and distributor or approach US agent hired for last feature. Create two feature films and one TV series with international release. Write and have produced 3 TV series scripts. Have time/money to fund a private doc. Slow down. Earn regular income from screen productions. Finish editing and release a film. Produce a feature film shot locally. More of the same. Develop a film industry on the far south coast. Get better internet services. Return to making film content about Japan as per pre-COVID. Get an exhibition in New York. Have my images displayed across billboards in Times Square New York. Complete a PhD. Develop more scripts. Be in business. Attend 40 training workshops. Get more work on feature films. Build enough regional capacity to create series/ long form locally. Win a festival award. Make my own short film.

4.20 TOP TEN Priorities the strategy needs to deliver for regional screen creatives

- 1. Government funding (local, state or federal)
- 2. Promotion of the value of the screen industry to the region
- 3. Funding of a screen industry development position in the southeast region
- 4. Support for getting funding (eg assistance with grant applications and crowdfunding)
- 5. Local screen industry directory of people/ locations/equipment in the area
- 6. Networking opportunities with other screen industry creatives
- 7. Networking opportunities with screen content buyers (business, council, tourism, distributors etc)
- 8. Professional development opportunities
- 9. Skills Development
- 10. Improved Internet access and speed

A full list of regional creatives' needs can be found at 7.2.



Photos courtesy of Isabel Darling and Hiromi Matsuoka

5. Strategies 2021 - 2024

5.1 Drivers, Outcomes, KPIs and Actions in priority order

No.	Driver	Outcomes	KPIs	Actions	Timeframe
1	Finance, support and enable content creatives to produce high quality local	Screen creatives are supported with sourcing and applying for funding.	Screen Industry Development officer recruited	Apply for funding for a Regional Screen Industry Development officer position	2021
	content.	Screen creatives are supported with professional feedback and encouragement to produce high quality content	Increase in number of projects moving from development to production stage	Hold quarterly creative roundtables / pitching events	Ongoing
		Higher production budgets for regional projects	Increase in number of successfully funded productions/attachments	Promote funding and financing opportunities to content creators in the region.	Ongoing
			Increase in average production budgets	Include budget question in annual survey	End of year
		Increased proportion of screen creatives earning their income solely from the screen industry	Survey reports increase in number of projects worked on as well as increase in proportion of screen-based income.	Include income proportion and number of projects questions in annual survey	End of year
		Recognition of the Southeast region as a source of high quality screen and content production.	Number of Southeast films accepted/awarded by film festivals.	Promote festival opportunities to content creators in the region.	Ongoing
			Amount of content broadcast or accepted by 3rd party online platforms	Encourage creators to promote their work and how audiences can watch it.	Ongoing

No.	Driver	Outcomes	KPIs	Actions	Timeframe
2	Establish relationships with tourism, local government, arts and business groups.	Increased recognition of the screen industry and its importance to the region	Evidence of growing recognition of the screen industry within the region through council, arts and tourism strategy / business development / annual report documents.	Invite these organisations to screen industry networking events and screenings of locally made content	Q3 2021
			Survey or annual reports indicate increase in budget allocation to screen-based projects	Include question on stakeholder budget in survey and review annual reporting documents.	End of year
		More local creatives involved in projects with tourism, local government, arts and business groups	Survey reports an increase in the number of projects for these organisations.	Promote screen industry directory to these organisations and invite them to cross-promote on their communication channels	Q3 2021
3	Establish a network of creative professionals and develop a list of local industry suppliers and services.	Greater knowledge of available people, skills, equipment	Increased number of contacts in directory with ongoing maintenance and growth funding	Promote directory within the region to attract more creatives.	Ongoing
		Increased promotion and visibility of screen creatives in the local area	Increase in number of creatives attending events	Quarterly networking events online and/or in person hosted in different locations in the region	Ongoing
			Increase in audience numbers at screenings, festival and online	Promotion of screen creatives work through screenings, festival and links to online work.	Ongoing
		Greater knowledge of support services in the region	Addition of secondary suppliers to the regional directory	Survey regional creatives for recommendations of suppliers	2022
			Suppliers report more enquiries for services	Promote regional directory to suppliers, regional screen creatives and external producers and screen bodies	2022

No.	Driver	Outcomes	KPIs	Actions	Timeframe
4	Facilitate training and skills development and involvement opportunities for emerging creatives to	Well funded ongoing regionally based and/or online opportunities for training and skills development	Regional skills/training needs are known and prioritised	Include question on creatives' skills and training needs in annual survey	Ongoing
	ensure enough skilled creatives are available		Appropriate number of courses to meet needs are funded and held.	Apply for funding to support workshops, skills and professional development or travel for individuals to attend 3rd party opportunities	End of year
		Higher number of skilled creatives in the Southeast region leading to more sustainable industry	Increase in number, breadth and diversity of attendees at workshops, professional development events and attachments	Arrange and promote workshops or attachments for emerging and professional content creators targeting diverse groups including youth, CALD, LGBTIQ, women, carers and Indigenous	Ongoing
5	Promote the Southeast region and its screen industry to external screen bodies and producers.	Southeast region becomes known as a go-to film-friendly location for large production companies.	Increase in the number and quality of incoming productions and projects being made in the region.	Add our regional filming contacts to the Screen NSW website.	2024
			Increase in the number and quality of location images from the Southeast region on the Reel Scout database	Promote a campaign for local creatives to populate the Reel Scout database with support from experienced film scout	2022
		Increase in local screen creatives working on incoming productions and projects.	Improve and populate the regional screen creatives directory	Promote the directory to regional screen creatives	Ongoing
			Promote the regional directory to external screen producers and screen bodies	Promote the regional directory to external produces and screen bodies	Ongoing
			Increase in local resource requests from external producers	Include question on external projects in annual survey	End of year

5.2 Review Timetable

The strategy will be reviewed in November each year from 2021 to 2024. A survey to check current priorities will be sent to screen creatives, and the results of any changes will be sent to screen creatives and key stakeholders in the region, as well as screen funding bodies.

5.3 Strategy Management

The strategy activities and reviews will be coordinated by the Screen Industry officer in consultation with the Far South Film Inc Committee and South East Arts.

6 Resource Plan

Far South Film Inc will continue to play a key role in providing support for screen creatives in the South East region and in staging the Far South Film Festival each year.

Some of the activities it currently carries out on a voluntary basis will transfer to the proposed Screen Industry Development officer as funding and recruitment allows.

Funding of around \$22k per annum will be sought to support a screen industry officer position at the regional level as well as support specific projects identified in the strategy. This will commence initially as a 1 day/week position supporting Far South Film Inc, with a review in late 2022 to determine if more hours are required to help support festival activities.

Potential funding sources:

- Screen Australia Industry Partnerships Program
 https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding-and-support/industry-development/businesses/industry-partnerships
- Screen Australia Enterprise Business and Ideas Program https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding-and-support/industry-development/businesses/enterprise-business-and-ideas
- Screen Australia Australian Festivals and Events Program
 https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding-and-support/industry-development/audiences/australian-festivals-and-events

7. Attachments & References

7.1 Workshops



South East NSW Screen Industry Development Strategy Workshop Bega

Location: Bega CWA Rooms, 31 Church Street, Bega

Meeting: 30 October 2020 10.30 – 12noon Facilitators: Rick Molony and Lis Shelley

Stakeholders Present

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
David Gallan	David Gallan Photography	Andrew Gray	South East Arts
Sats Kramer	Music NSW	Isaac Lynnah	2Pi Software
Raymond Toms	Pi Productions	Makushla Bourke	Far South Film
Skye Owen	Bega Valley Shire Council Communications	Chum Ehelepola	Sydney Actors Collective (Bega)

The strategy workshop was held to enable stakeholders to suggest and then rank the most important drivers that they saw for the South East NSW Screen Industry Development Strategy that Far South Film is developing for South East Arts.

We believe it is important to include input from a range of stakeholders who live and work in this region and will be affected positively by the development of their local film industry. Stakeholders have been identified from councils, tourism, chambers of commerce, music industry, gaming developers, digital arts developers and, of course, filmmakers.

Key Drivers for the Strategy

No.	Driver	Importance
1	Facilitate training and skills development and emerging involvement/opportunities to ensure skills are locally available	30%
2	Build relationships/partnerships between local/regional screen practitioners and broader industry	25%
3	Establish/maintain and promote resource database of skills, equipment, locations	20%
4	Aspire to high level of artistic integrity via work output and professional development/mentoring	20%
5	Promote south east region location and film makers to external screen practitioners	5%

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South East NSW Screen Industry Development Strategy Workshop Malua Bay

Location: Malua Bay Hall, George Bass Drive, Malua Bay

Meeting: 3 November 2020 11am – 12.30pm

Facilitators: Rick Molony and Lis Shelley

Stakeholders Present

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Tim Booth	Manager Tourism &	Indira Carmichael	Co-ordinator Creative
	Events ESC		Arts Development ESC
Lee Grant	Film maker - Lee	David Rowland	Filmmaker -
	Grant Photographer		UnderseaROV
Isabel Darling	Film maker -		
_	Torchlight Media		

The strategy workshop was held to enable stakeholders to suggest and then rank the most important drivers that they saw for the South East NSW Screen Industry Development Strategy that Far South Film is developing for South East Arts.

We believe it is important to include input from a range of stakeholders who live and work in this region and will be affected positively by the development of their local film industry. Stakeholders have been identified from councils, tourism, chambers of commerce, music industry, gaming developers, digital arts developers and, of course, filmmakers.

Key Drivers for the Strategy

No.	Driver	Importance
1	Finance, support and enable content creatives to produce high quality local content	60%
2	Industry led strategy	15%
3	Increase the visibility and perceived value of the screen sector with local government and organisations	10%
4	Develop and promote a database of professional cast and crewin the south east region including Canberra	10%
5	Develop and implement mentoring and show and share sessions	5%



South East NSW Screen Industry Development Strategy Workshop Snowy Monaro

Location: Wild Brumby Distillery Cafe, Crackenback

Meeting: 9 November 2020 10.30 – 12noon Facilitators: Rick Molony and Lis Shelley

Stakeholders Present

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Luke Kneller	Tourism Snowy Mountains	Mandy Lamont	Lamont Mountain Lifestyle Magazine
Donna Smith	Tourism Manager Snowy- Monaro Regional Council	Henry Schofield	Schope Creative
Fiona Latham- Cannon	Tall Red Poppy Marketing / Jindabyne Chamber of Commerce	Sarah Blyton	Economic Development, Snowy Monaro Regional Council
Hiromi Matsuoka	Indigo Pictures / Far South Film	Lisa Hogben	Photojournalist/ Filmmaker

The strategy workshop was held to enable stakeholders to suggest and then rank the most important drivers that they saw for the South East NSW Screen Industry Development Strategy that Far South Film is developing for South East Arts.

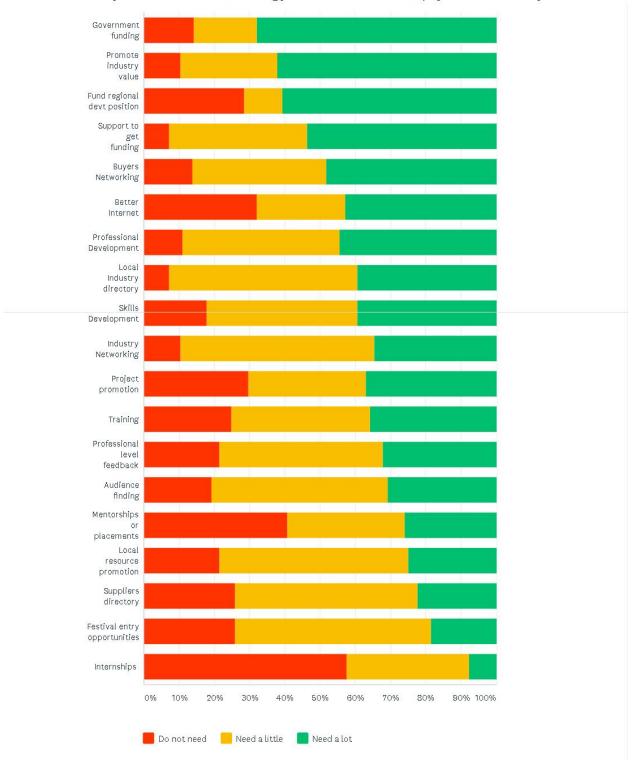
We believe it is important to include input from a range of stakeholders who live and work in this region and will be affected positively by the development of their local screen industry. Stakeholders have been identified from councils, tourism, chambers of commerce, music industry, gaming developers, digital arts developers and, of course, filmmakers.

Key Drivers for the Strategy

No.	Driver	Importance
1	Establish a network of creative professionals and develop a list of local industry suppliers and services	50%
2	Establish pathway and facilitate funding for emerging and independent local screen content creatives	25%
3	Facilitate relationships and communications across government and screen industry	25%

7.2 Key Survey Priorities

Q20 What do you need the strategy to deliver to help you achieve your aims?



7.3 Interview Summaries

7.3.1 Interview with South East Arts

Andrew Gray, Executive manager with South East Arts Inc, was interviewed about the past strategy - what worked, what didn't, and about the current status of the industry.

The SEA Strategy written by Lois Randall in 2015 had these goals:

- · Networking/database of filmmakers
- Promotion of our region's locations using Reel Scout
- Building connections with Screen NSW & Matt Carroll

The opportunities are there - US productions - all work coming through networks not active job seeking. Other elements of the screen industry such as digital gaming etc - can be done from anywhere so great opportunities for our region exist there.

Connections with Screen ACT have been fairly small to date, but the Eurobodalla Shire is particularly keen to connect because of their close proximity to Canberra and the large number of Canberrans who travel to the Batemans Bay area for weekends and holidays.

The ACT is a growing industry – international production house Wild Bear has connections with the region and there is potential there for building that network.

YoofTube Youth Film Festival was not designed to feed into the professional industry but was great for identifying a few young people who were interested in building further careers (and indeed have done so). South East Arts was keen to promote a more diverse screen industry by including a youth and indigenous focus in the previous strategy.

The non-indigenous community is hungry for indigenous content but it's sometimes harder for film makers to engage with the indigenous community unless there is personal contact via key people, for example South East Arts' Aboriginal Liaison Officer Jaz Williams, who goes and connects in person.

David Batty (*Black As & Bush Mechanics*) - did a pilot for *Secret Place* at Wallaga Lake with the idea of developing a series. SEA wanted to spark some production through funding available but funding was not enough to get some traction in pitching – this was not SEA's area of expertise - so more ambitious outcomes could not be actioned.

Andrew sees more opportunities in areas like music videos, because we have great musos in our region. Individuals don't often budget for that but organisations like Four Winds do have budget and they have pulled in everyone in this area. That is the exception rather than the rule; there is little understanding by clients in this region of what it costs to make a film recording. Would be useful to tap into people who do have funding and show them how to approach videos.

One of the challenges for arts/film collaborations is that funding for film is often specifically excluded from arts funding. Given that post-COVID everyone is moving online and the strategy's data shows that COVID has increased film projects in our region, it's important that art funding bodies be more flexible in their funding guidelines, particularly since the lines between screen and other art forms are now blurred (eg through outdoor projections, use of film as theatre backdrops, music videos, webinars, use of VR/AR in museums and galleries and the generational change in use of video vs more traditional arts content).

Funding bodies also often love to see video documentation as an outcome as it easy to see the results directly.

Changes have occurred with Regional Arts NSW and the federal Regional Arts Fund. CASP will no longer be administered by RANSW but by the RADO in each region. Micro grants will also be administered by South East Arts with some separate screen buckets.

South East Arts no longer connect directly to screen. The best outcome for screen in the region has been the emergence of Far South Film Inc, which now needs to develop good relationships with Screen NSW.

A small organisation like Far South Film is something people can connect to and it's good for South East Arts. Whilst Screenworks is more advanced in its development and networks, there is a lot to be said for local knowledge. South East Arts recommends meeting once or twice a year with FSF to exchange information from our networks.

The existing SEAScreen Facebook page could be merged with Far South Film's Facebook page.

The Far South Film 'story so far' should continue to be updated as a promotional tool.

- what planned outcomes happened
- what didn't happen and what were the barriers and
- any other lessons learned
- estimate of costs of implementing strategy

7.3.2 Interview with Screenworks

Participants: Ken Crouch, Louise Hodgson, Lisa O'Meara

Screenworks has grown from being local to the Northern Rivers region to covering Australia-wide regional areas over 20 years. Covid forced their programs to go online but Screenworks are now delivering across Australia via Zoom, keeping a small number of face to face programs.

The key to their success is maintaining a connection to members and creating pathways to careers in screen.

They see their role as matching the goals of members with the goals of funding bodies. They don't try to replicate what larger entities are offering – instead they find members to 'polish those diamonds' to boost the best resource - which is the members' talent.

Screenworks provide elements to large productions to attract them to area. They are seeing professionals coming back from overseas post COVID and more metro people coming to the regions. The challenge is to manage the knock-on effects of growth – by supporting it and not leaving it to grow organically, to leverage what's happening now.

Screenworks have changed their website, branding, procedures and database to setup Northern Rivers as a viable option for incoming productions. Productions are often not in their control but knowing what resources are in the area via a database is useful. A database that is continually being refined has helped to grow the business from the inside. They have recently opened it up to people outside Northern Rivers following many requests.

Working with Councils to make them more film friendly – with community to help – was a key to attracting more productions to the area. They also did location scout training needed in the area so they could work with large productions in the area, not just the normal tourism photos that councils are used to providing.

The more production you attract the more productions you can get... but this can create a 'Chicken & egg' problem. Northern Rivers is as far from Sydney as the South East region is, but close to Brisbane/Gold Coast so they are able to draw professional crew from there, making it easier. Border closures did hurt productions however.

Skilling regional people up can mean they go to the city because there's not the work in the region. Northern Rivers has a reputation as a creative area - top level people go out of the region and hopefully they will come back and support the region, as they did when the COVID boom hit.

Southeast region is well placed because you have the mountains, which are unique. Building partnerships (business, council, communities) is vital. For example, Screenworks working with partner SCU on Fearless Films and this supports them financially. Screenworks is willing to collaborate and support with backing from South East Arts, as well as creative days to help people find their triibe and give them the confidence to go for it and get finance.

Screenworks carry out surveys for feedback for operational program each year. They started with volunteers and obtained a federal grant for operational funding and are now 40% self funded. Screen bodies cover project costs. They also do fundraising and offer pay what you can workshops and screenings. Growth won't come from government funding. Board members employ CEO and other staff are employed from Screenworks business.

7.4 Source Documents

- SEA Screen Strategy covering 2015/16 2017/18
- Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022
- Eurobodalla Economic Development Strategy 2019-2028

7.5 Acknowledgments

Thank you to the following people who provided input to this strategy:

Andrew Gray (South East Arts)

Hiromi Matsuoka, Lis Shelley, Raymond Toms, Makushla Bourke, Marna Smith, Rima Bos, Sats Kramer, Rick Molony (Far South Film)

Ken Crouch, Louise Hodgson, Lisa O'Meara (Screenworks)

Luke Kneller, Henry Schofield, Mandy Lamont, Lisa Hogben, Donna Smith, Fiona Latham-Cannon, Sarah Blyton (Snowy-Monaro)

Isabel Darling, David Rowland, Tim Booth, Indira Carmichael, Lee Grant (Eurobodalla)

Chum Ehelepola, Isaac Lynnah, Skye Owen, David Gallan (Bega Valley)

All of the stakeholders and screen creatives of the South East region who completed the anonymous survey