

I am writing as an emerging screen producer working within a small Australian production company as an Associate Producer, and am concerned about the long-term sustainability of Australia's screen workforce, particularly pathways for emerging and grassroots creatives.

The Australian screen sector contains a growing gap in the classification of producer-track roles, particularly positions such as an Associate Producer, which often sit between creative, administrative, and production functions without clear or consistent industrial classification. This ambiguity contributes to inconsistent employment conditions, including unclear expectations around hours, overtime, minimum wages, and workplace standards. Greater clarity through formal role definitions, strengthened award guidance, or minimum employment standards for producer-track roles and clear industrial classification of Associate Producer and similar producer-track roles within appropriate Modern Award frameworks would improve workforce consistency, transparency, and sustainability across the sector.

As a [REDACTED] resident, I am also concerned by the limited availability of structured upskilling pathways for emerging screen practitioners. Attachment opportunities through VicScreen are often unavailable, limiting access to actual industry experience. Greater collaboration between Screen Australia and state agencies to expand attachment opportunities fairly across all states, alongside targeted funding for production companies to train and attach emerging producers, would strengthen workforce development and improve career sustainability for early-career creatives.

VicScreen has identified roles where shortages are present, including Production Accountants, Location Managers, and Line Producers, among others. The identification of these roles needs to be corroborated with tangible funding opportunities that encourage training in these roles by production companies, as well as increased availability of coursework or training modules to provide real training in these areas, as many of the aforementioned roles are expected to simply learn by osmosis from industry experience or a lengthy career of working in adjacent roles, with no tertiary education courses available. This needs to be backed up with industry placements that are designed to foster the next generation of below-the-line crew in demand.