



WA Screen Workforce Development Strategy

2026 - 2034

Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders both past and present.

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Executive Summary

The Western Australian Government and industry envision a world-renowned screen industry, showcasing exceptional creative content and sharing Western Australian stories with the world.

Western Australia boasts exceptional screen practitioners and businesses actively developing and producing screen projects. Western Australia's highly skilled and experienced screen practitioners and developers are renowned for their innovation, drive, and unique storytelling.

The Western Australian Screen Industry Strategy: 2024-2034 is the State's first whole-of-government strategy that aims to leverage favourable global conditions to accelerate growth in Western Australia's screen industry, attracting investment, fostering business growth and creating quality local jobs. The Strategy recognises the growth of the screen industry cannot occur without a skilled and available workforce.

Recognising the State's exceptional talent and future potential, the strategy consolidates various government initiatives into a cohesive plan. It focuses on growing the capacity of the screen industry to deliver improved outcomes across multiple sectors, including film, Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD), television, digital games, postproduction, animation, visual effects, and emerging technologies like virtual and augmented reality.

The WA Screen Industry Workforce Strategy 2024-2034 has been developed in partnership between the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport, and the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Screenwest, training providers and industry stakeholders to build a skilled and available workforce. It focuses on creating career pathways and building capacity of the screen industry by leveraging the State's strong tertiary and vocational training ecosystem to support students to develop technical, creative and leadership skills needed by the screen industry.

The workforce strategy focuses on building and retaining an inclusive and diverse workforce for Western Australia's screen industry through robust education and training strategies over a phased implementation period.

- Pilot Phase 2024 to 2026: Screen capacity building programs
- Phase 1 2026-2027: Building capacity and capability (continuation)
- Phase 2 2026-2029: Strengthening and expanding
- Phase 3 Beyond 2029: maturing

Workforce strategy scope

The scope of the WA Screen Industry Workforce Strategy focuses on the roles, functions and activities required for physical production both on location and at the new Perth Film Studios. The strategy focuses on scripted and documentary production 'Above the Line' (ATL) and 'Below the Line' (BTL) skills and roles.

ATL roles include the writers, directors, producers. BTL crew roles consist of Heads of Department and on-set crew that do not sit ATL. BTL roles range from camera, lighting and rigging, sound, production design, art department, costume and make-up, production department, unit and transport, locations, stunts, health and safety, production accountants, and payroll.

The majority of the sector's workforce are below the line roles.

Goals

- Build WA's crew depth to meet demand and aim to close critical skills and local service gaps in key roles¹
- Improve pathways to employment for WA trained graduates and practitioners.
- Increase the proportion of salary expenditure meeting the Qualified Western Australian Expenditure (QWAE) funding criteria on Government funding productions.
- A screen industry workforce that better reflects the diversity of the community's population and workforce across all screen roles.

Acknowledgements

The Western Australian Screen Industry Workforce Strategy 2024-2034 was developed in consultation with stakeholders in the WA screen industry, education and training institutions, and government agencies.

The Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport and Department of Training and Workforce Development gratefully acknowledge the support and contributions from steering committee representative organisations and delivery partners.

- Arts and Culture Trust
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Future Now

¹ Including Line Producers, Production Managers, Unit Production Managers, Production Accountants, Location Mangers, Grips, Gaffer and Riggers - as identified by Screenwest and consistent with national skills gaps identified by Screen Australia.

- Home Fire Operations Pty Ltd, operator of Perth Film Studios
- North Metropolitan TAFE
- Screenwest
- WA Screen and Media Academy, Edith Cowan University

Implementation

The Strategy is intended to be read in conjunction with the Screen Industry Workforce Development Action Plan. The Action Plan provides an overview of actions to be delivered under the strategy and the intended beneficiaries of each activity.

The Screen Industry Workforce Development Action Plan has been developed in consultation with steering committee and government. The Department of Creative Industries Tourism and Sport, Department of Training and Workforce Development are co-leads for the Screen Industry Workforce Strategy, key delivery and collaboration partners have been identified in the action plan.

The Action Plan groups actions identified in the strategy under five strategic themes:

- Raise awareness
- Build strong foundations
- Maintain a job ready workforce
- Foster diversity and inclusivity
- Plan and adapt.

Activities under the Strategy commenced in late 2024. These pilot programs laid the groundwork for the expansion of Screenwest's screen capacity development programs designed to address immediate screen business capacity and skills gaps. The timing of these activities supporting business preparedness in time for the opening of the Perth Film Studios.

Following the opening of Perth Film Studios in early 2026, capacity development programs will continue to be refined and delivered, with the introduction of new public facing initiatives under the revised strategy focused on career awareness activities and active promotion of career pathways going forward.

The Action Plan reflects how the strategic activities will be delivered concurrently or at different stages of the plan. Phases 1-3 in the Action Plan are indicative only, as some activities within the Action Plan are consolidated and will depend on opportunities that arise during the life of the plan and partner participation.

Phase 1: Building capacity and capability

2026 – 2027

Objective: Establish a strong foundation for workforce development by focusing initially on training and building capacity and capability of Western Australia's screen industry.

Phase one will continue on from the pilot Screen Capacity Building programs, delivered in partnership with Screenwest (from 2024 to 2026) to build the immediate screen workforce and industry capacity in the lead up to the opening of the Perth Film Studios.

The latter stages of Phase 1 will introduce new public facing initiatives to focus on raising awareness of job roles and career opportunities through collaboration between the screen industry, education and training providers, and the State Government. This includes career awareness strategies such as a centralised online presence for screen career resources and career education activities.

Increasing participation in the screen industry is crucial, with a focus on diversity in the workforce and reducing barriers to participation. On-the-job experience is vital, and government-supported productions will provide opportunities for practical skill development.

A key strategy is establishing a network of industry training and education practitioners to ensure ongoing success. This network will bring together secondary schools, Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions, universities, and industry representatives to discuss education and training needs, promote pathways into the industry, and support workforce planning.

Phase 1 will leverage the expertise of established screen industry companies and the highly skilled and experienced screen practitioners and developers who are actively developing and producing screen projects. It will build on existing funded programs by the Department of Creative Industries Tourism and Sport and Screenwest as well as utilising existing or planned education and training programs to build accessible career pathways for new entrants and existing workers.

Strategy 1: Raise awareness and build strong foundations

To help grow the WA screen industry skill base and workforce, a multifaceted approach will be adopted, focusing on skills development, developing diverse career pathways, and creating employment growth through training and migration strategies. This strategic initiative aims to raise awareness in the community about the various job

opportunities within the screen industry and create education and training pathways to enable people to pursue those opportunities. It also promotes strong connections between the screen industry and the tertiary, VET and school sectors to create a pipeline for students.

Career promotion: Promoting the various careers and job opportunities within the screen industry will contribute to growth in the industry by inspiring more individuals to explore and pursue screen industry careers including:

- An online presence: a central reference point for screen industry career resources will be established to enable people to explore different job roles and associated education and training pathways.
- Career expos: promoting careers through formal jobs, facility and institution opens days, and career expos.
- School awareness programs: foster early interest and awareness of screen industry careers among secondary school students through the Career Taster Program and VET delivered to secondary school students.
- Consider transferable skills and identify alternative pathways to industry roles.

Student and pre-employment pathways: Establishing clear and accessible pathways for students and jobseekers and helping them prepare for careers in the screen industry will help build a strong pipeline of new talent for above-the-line and below-the-line roles.

- Pre-employment programs: Establish clear entry pathways for new entrants that help them understand the various roles and opportunities in the screen industry.
- Attract workers from other industries: Addressing skills gaps in the screen industry by attracting workers with transferrable skills from other industries through short courses.
- Promote portfolio careers within creative industries and skills transfer across roles within the screen industry.
- Foundation skills for screen: Develop foundational skills programs to support core underpinning skills and knowledge also relevant to the screen industry.
- Set ready programs: Leverage programs such as Edith Cowan's Set Ready Experience Program to help new workers work safely and with minimal supervision on a live set.
- Alumni programs: utilise existing education networks to connect recent graduates and students approaching completion of their study program with entry level placement opportunities.

Increasing participation: Increase engagement and participation in the screen industry by encouraging a wider and more diverse range of individuals to explore various roles and opportunities.

- Targeted First Nations mentoring: Increasing First Nations peoples' participation in the screen industry through mentorship and attachment opportunities to ensure continued career pathways and storytelling opportunities for Indigenous filmmakers.
- Accessibility and inclusion: Increase accessibility to screen industry training for equity and low socioeconomic communities by developing accessible and relevant training programs for people from diverse communities.
- Reduce barriers to entry: Consider additional resources to address and reduce barriers for diverse groups to participate in the screen industry.
- Supporting workers with caring responsibilities: Facilitate the return of workers with caring responsibilities to the screen industry. Promote job sharing as a viable option in the screen industry.
- Regional opportunities: Enhance regional employment and support opportunities in the screen industry through physical or virtual education, training, employment and attachment opportunities. Grow regional film industry activity and build regional capacity.

Migration Strategies: Support the growth of the WA screen industry by attracting and retaining interstate and overseas talent through effective migration strategies.

- Attracting WA workers: encourage workers with existing connections to WA to return and contribute to the local screen industry by raising the profile of WA screen industry and creating career progressing opportunities.
- Migration programs: ensure that specialised screen industry roles that cannot be filled locally are included in migration programs.
- Skilled migration job matching: facilitate the employment of overseas skilled migrants in the WA screen industry through the WA Skilled Migrant Employment Register.

Strategy 2: Government supported infrastructure, productions and incentives

A key theme that arose during stakeholder consultation was the need for on-the-job experience in screen productions of all sizes. WA Government support, through Lotterywest and CITS funding, is essential to grow the industry by creating opportunities for skilled workers to gain valuable experience. The availability of skilled, experienced Western Australian screen practitioners to support the attraction of productions to the State is critical for sustained long term growth. Consistent production across all screen industry sectors is essential for growth, requiring steady production funding and a film-friendly environment.

Government support includes:

- Government-funded productions: enable screen workers to develop practical skills and industry knowledge through on-the-job experience through government-funded productions.
- This may require increased investment in the number of local and inbound productions.
- Paid medium and short-term placements and support screen businesses in key areas of need to scale up teams and build capacity.
- Short form scripted and documentary productions: create entry-level opportunities for new entrants in the screen industry through short form scripted and documentary productions.
- WA Government advertising: leverage WA Government television and social media advertising as a strategy to support the development of skills in the WA screen industry.

Strategy 3: WA screen industry training and education network

A formalised education and training network will be established to foster a collaborative, non-competitive environment for education and training providers and industry representatives. Its purpose is to promote, grow and support the WA screen industry through education and training programs aligned with industry needs, and ensure that resources are directed effectively.

The screen industry training and education (SITE) network will be open to universities, TAFE and other training providers, secondary educators (media) and industry representatives, under a governance structure to be determined by the membership with executive support provided by the industry training council (Future Now).

The objectives of the network will include:

- Industry advice: to inform training curriculum, address industry needs, highlight issues, and maintain engagement with the WA Government through the network.
- Identify and advise on workforce issues and skills gaps in the screen industry.
- Educational programs: ensure educational programs align with industry requirements.
- Secondary school curriculum: ensure the Creative Arts and Screen secondary school curriculum, through the engagement of the Australian Teachers of Media, supports the future of the WA Screen industry.

Phase 2: Strengthening and expansion

2026 – 2029

Objective: Enhance and expand workforce capabilities by focusing on advanced training, leadership development and scaling-up operations.

Phase 2 will focus on expanding and enhancing workforce capabilities in the WA screen industry. Key strategies include leadership development, mentoring, and creating career maps to help workers navigate the industry. Upskilling and reskilling programs will be essential, with an emphasis on gaining experience across various production sizes and specialised areas. Support for both above-the-line and below-the-line roles will involve training options, pathways, placements, short courses, and practical skills development.

The WA Screen Industry Training and Education Network will continue to define skills gaps and pathways, potentially supported by a curriculum fund for bespoke training programs.

Diversity and inclusion strategies will ensure that people who identify as either First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse or as coming from a diverse background have opportunities to thrive, this is a shared responsibility of all delivery partners, workers and business engaging in the screen industry.

Strategy 4: Upskilling and reskilling programs

Upskilling and reskilling programs are essential for the growth and sustainability of the screen industry in WA. These initiatives keep the workforce adaptable and ready to meet the industry's evolving demands.

Gaining experience across productions of diverse sizes is highly beneficial for screen industry workers. This exposure helps them understand different production scales, from small independent projects to largescale commercial projects. Such experience broadens their skill base, enhances their versatility, and makes them more competitive in the job market.

There will be a need for workers to upskill in specialised areas, including mastering modern technologies, understanding advanced production techniques, and staying up to date with industry trends. Additionally, practitioners will benefit from understanding how funding grants work and how to maximise their chances of securing funding for their projects.

Screenwest supports professional attachments, mentorships and placement opportunities on government funded productions in WA. They also offer opportunities

for WA screen practitioners to gain experience on productions, building industry skills and workforce capability.

Upskilling and attachments support: focuses on enhancing the skills of screen industry professionals through targeted upskilling programs and providing attachment opportunities that offer practical, hands-on experience in real-world settings. Supports proposed include:

- Skills development workshops: expansion of skills development workshops to provide upskilling options and career development opportunities.
- Retention of WA skilled workers: encourage the retention of skilled workers in the WA screen industry by providing mid-career skills development opportunities.
- Specialised training: explore micro credentials and skills sets to provide specialised training for in demand ATL and BTL roles.
- Curriculum development: regularly review the training packages to address specific industry training needs within the screen industry.
- Ongoing support: for below the line roles beyond their first screen credit, by retaining the use of attachment/placement/mentorship opportunities for all career levels.

Articulate pathways for job clusters for all skill levels and production sizes: aims to clearly define and communicate career pathways within the screen industry, ensuring individuals of all skill levels and those involved in productions of diverse sizes can identify and pursue relevant job opportunities.

- Career pathways: building on the programs developed in Phase 1 this strategy aims assist new entrants and support mid-career professionals in developing their careers in the screen industry through detailed career pathways.
- Education pipeline: Establish pathways from secondary school and traineeships to build a pipeline of skilled workers into the screen industry.
- Larger production experience: Attract and secure larger productions in Western Australia to enhance the skill level and expertise of local workers.
- Emerging roles: Equip local workers to take on new and additional production roles.
- Traineeships and Secondary School Programs: Explore incorporating screen industry components into both VET traineeships and VET delivered to secondary school programs.

Support for above-the-line and below-the-line roles: aims to provide comprehensive support for both above-the-line (creative and decision-making) and below-the-line (technical and production) roles, ensuring all aspects of screen production are well-resourced and developed.

Additionally, create opportunities for transitional skills development across the entertainment and arts and screen industry, allowing workers to be employed across multiple sectors.

- Local talent: ensure local talent is represented and developed in key industry roles.
- Transferrable skills development: enable workers to develop skills across a broad range of roles and industries through cross-industry training.
- Skills exchange increase Western Australia's skill base by bringing in skills talent from interstate or overseas.
- Industry partnerships: enhance skills development through practical on-the-job experience.

Strategy 5: Diversity and inclusion strategies

These strategies aim to foster a diverse and inclusive workforce to enhance creativity, innovation and problem solving within WA's screen industry. Creating an inclusive environment for WA's screen industry will help retain talented professionals who feel valued and engaged, leading to higher commitment and lower turnover rates.

Implementing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategies is crucial for fostering a more equitable and inclusive environment, enhancing creativity and productivity while reflecting the diverse communities it serves. Recognising the complexity of DEI within the screen industry, the proposed strategies are based on stakeholder feedback and research to drive meaningful change.

One of the challenges in measuring DEI is self-reporting. Although some products offer confidential reporting systems, many workers are still reluctant to participate. This issue is prevalent across industries nationwide.

Establish industry-wide standards: aims to create consistent and comprehensive standards across the screen industry to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion strategies are in place, supporting the employment of people from diverse backgrounds.

- Minimum standards: ensure WA policy aligns with national standards.
- Encourage industry to contribute to the tracking of progress towards national goals and diversity targets.
- Cross-sector collaboration: encourage collaboration within the screen industry and with other industry sectors to share best practice and resources. Leverage successful DEI initiatives from other sectors to enhance the screen industry's approach.
- Diversity funding incentives: retain diversity incentives and where appropriate include diversity assessment criteria in local production guidelines and

supporting producers with strong diversity records and those with diverse heads of departments.

- Encourage data collection: maintain and incentivise participation in the collection of data to inform decision-making, identify trends, and drive continuous improvement.
- Support further research: ensure DEI standards are best practice by supporting ongoing research.

Training and awareness programs and best practice: aims to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion by developing training and awareness programs that increase understanding of DEI principles among industry professionals. This will ensure accessibility and support for diverse cohorts are in place to foster inclusive practices throughout all production phases.

- Training and awareness: enhance DEI understanding and its benefits through training sessions and workshops for industry professionals.
- Inclusive workplaces: improve inclusivity on set by encouraging productions to include specialist roles such as Accessibility Coordinators, Cultural Liaisons, and Intimacy Coordinators. These roles advocate for adjustments, improve team culture, enhance safety, and provide equitable access in the workplace.
- Inclusive production practices: promote flexible and inclusive production practices.
- Gender equity: aim to achieve gender equity in key creative roles and production crews and track progression over time.

Leadership, support and advocacy: supporting new and existing workers in the screen industry through support and advocacy networks; fostering an inclusive, safe and diverse environment and access to opportunities.

- Inclusive leadership: engage leaders in the screen industry to promote inclusive practices and support diverse representation.
- Networking opportunities: facilitate access to mentorship and support networking opportunities for individuals from diverse communities to connect with production services companies, distributors, broadcasters, and creative heads of departments. This initiative aims to break down barriers and foster inclusivity within the industry.
- Industry advocacy: encourage diversity advocates to share their stories of success.
- Diversity representation: maintain representation through the Diversity Leadership Group to provide advice on key policies, issues and ways to improve equity, diversity and inclusion in the WA screen industry.

Phase 3: Maturing

2029 AND BEYOND

Objective: Achieve a mature and sustainable workforce development system that supports long term growth and adaptability.

During Phase 3 of the Workforce Strategy the focus will be on further strengthening and expanding the formalised education, training and mentorship programs that have been developed during Phase 1 and Phase 2.

As the screen industry in Western Australia matures and grows, with ongoing local productions becoming more prevalent, greater opportunities will emerge for more collaborative models of skills development, including models such as group training organisations or more formalised industry internship programs for university students.

These strategies aim to build capability and capacity within the industry, ensure clear career pathways, support essential roles, and establish a cohesive training and education network.

Additionally, they focus on embedding equity and inclusion practices across all aspects of workforce development and industry operations.

Strategy 6: Innovation and adaptability

Embedding ongoing education and training strategies to support the screen industry. This will include formalising mentorships, formal training strategies like group training models to improve accessibility to the screen industry for apprentices and trainees across all roles, including support roles in aligned industries and trades.

- Promote formalised mentor agreements that involve creating and implementing structured mentor agreements to clearly define the roles, expectations, and goals of both mentors and mentees, ensuring a productive and mutually beneficial mentoring relationship. These programs will assist individuals in navigating the sector, securing new production roles, and applying for job positions.
- Explore Group Training Organisation (GTO) model: involves investigating the Group Training Organisation (GTO) model, which facilitates the employment of apprentices and trainees through a centralised organisation, offering a flexible and supportive approach to development of the screen industry.
- GTO model: specifically investigate the feasibility of a GTO model to manage industry apprentices and trainee placements, and attachments across multiple

productions. This would ensure continuity in training and support for industry traineeships and placements.

- Trade apprenticeships: expand engagement of construction and other technical support workers such as electricians in the screen industry through the GTO model.
- VET and higher education work integrated learning involves integrating unpaid placements or internships within the screen industry to support university and VET students gain practical experience as part of their studies. Unpaid placements (or internships) can occur as a work integrated learning unit at university and through the VET system. Integrated learning needs to ensure that new workers are set ready prior to their first day on the job.
- Work integrated learning: integrate practical learning experiences into vocational and higher education programs. Explore partnering with ECU student films as a means of gaining valuable on set experience.

Strategy 7: Continuous learning and development

Support innovative curriculum development that designs programs linking industry, secondary and VET. Ongoing monitoring of industry needs to ensure that the curriculum is flexible and adaptable to meet potential industry changes.

- Secondary education: prepare secondary students for careers in the screen industry by enhancing the curriculum through development programs.
- VET: prepare VET students for emerging skill needs in the screen industry through curriculum development programs.
- Higher education: prepare tertiary students for emerging skill needs in the screen industry through curriculum development programs.

Monitoring of strategies

Monitoring of the workforce strategy will involve ongoing stakeholder engagement to consider training needs and workforce gaps, measure of success of strategies and monitoring of curriculum. This includes reporting on outcomes and progress of the plan under the WA Screen Industry Strategy 2024-2034, which is overseen by the cross-government oversight and advisory body, the Screen Industry Development team.

Stakeholder engagement

Regular engagement with delivery partners and other key stakeholders will gather insights and feedback to ensure the Workforce Strategy remains relevant and effective. The new WA Screen Industry Training and Education network will play an important role in ensuring that education and training responses are aligned with industry needs. This will be strengthened through the engagement with Western Australia's Future Now: Creative Industries Training Council and the national Jobs and Skills Council Service and Creative Skills Australia (SacSA) to gain regular feedback on workforce gaps and training needs.

Tracking progress

CITS will continue to work closely with Screenwest to collect workforce data on government funded productions, and participation in screen capacity development programs. This will include the number of placements and attachments by role, workshop participation, and other notable outcomes.

The ultimate goal is that the workforce will meet the needs and standards of the sector and meet future demand according to targeted levels of growth anticipated in the WA Screen Industry Strategy.

Ongoing monitoring of data collection will enable Government to track capacity issues and respond to skills gaps, crew shortages, retention issues, and the effectiveness of equity and diversity inclusion measures. This will include the benchmarking of the WA screen industry workforce alongside national data collected.

VET and higher education data on course completions will help monitor the number of graduates available for the screen industry.

Ongoing advice on WA's production capacity needs will be provided through liaison with Screenwest.

Continuous improvement

The strategy will be periodically reviewed and updated based on feedback and industry trends.

Ongoing monitoring of curriculum development will ensure it meets industry needs. A culture of continuous improvement will be fostered, ensuring the strategy evolves to meet the changing needs of the screen industry in Western Australia.