

# AFTRS

Australian Film Television  
and Radio School

2019-2020 CORPORATE PLAN  
For the period FY 2019-2023

# 1. BACKGROUND, PURPOSE AND VISION

AFTRS' role is to find, develop and support Australian storytelling talent.

Through world-class, practice-led education, training and research, we build the creative capacities of practitioners in the screen and broadcast industries and beyond.

AFTRS' establishment was premised on the idea that quality Australian screen and broadcast content is a public good that benefits us all.

In the late 1960s, a group believing in the need to train and resource talented local storytellers to tell Australian stories began lobbying for Government support for a local film industry. Following a concerted campaign, AFTRS was established with bipartisan support by an Act of Parliament in 1973.

If the School's foundations were cultural, many of its outcomes are practical, industrial and tangible. Over 46 years, it has built and supported a skilled industry of talented creative practitioners and storytellers.

We have inspired, skilled up and challenged Australian storytellers to create, innovate and lead.

Under the Act, the School is charged with contributing production skills and knowledge to the screen and broadcast industries through training, education and research – with a view “to enabling and encouraging the production of programs of a high degree of creativeness and of high technical and artistic standards.” In short, to support excellence.

We know the power of great storytelling, to build connections, perceptions and identities that reflect, shape and change our culture.

The School's strategy for impact is informed by its stated purpose and principles:

## **Our Purpose:**

To find and empower Australian talent, to shape and share their stories with the world by delivering future-focused, industry-relevant education, research and training.

## **Our Vision:**

Be the focal point for innovation in screen, sound, and storytelling, globally.

## **Our Values:**

### **We strive for Mastery**

We believe true mastery is a lifetime endeavour. AFTRS values the pursuit of personal excellence at every stage of the creative journey.

### **We encourage Daring**

Nothing great comes from playing safe. We value the courage to take risks, to explore boldly and continually strive for new ideas that enrich our world.

### **We believe in Merit**

Talent, wherever it comes from, will always get a fair go. We champion Australian creativity and culture in its entirety, irrespective of age, race, gender or circumstance.

### **We practice Generosity**

The desire to share generously — new ideas, new talents and thinking — is a fundamental condition for any culture to thrive. We believe creativity, and the stories we share, enrich the whole of society.

### **We work Together**

We believe in the remarkable possibilities that arise when unique perspectives come together. We work together to create a whole that's bigger than ourselves.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The AFTRS Council, as the accountable authority of the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS), presents the 19-20 AFTRS Corporate Plan, covering the period FY2019-2023, as required under section 35 (1) (b) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act).

AFTRS is accountable to the Australian Government through the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts and is administered through the Department of Communications and the Arts. It operates under the Australian Film, Television and Radio School Act 1973, and receives Commonwealth support through an annual appropriation in the Budget.

***“Support the development of a professional screen arts and broadcast culture in Australia including through the provision of specialist industry-focused education, training and research”***

***- Portfolio Budget Statement Outcome, 2019-20***

## 3. ENVIRONMENT, FACTORS AND FOCUS

The ways we make, find, consume and share content continues to change. Whatever the platform, format or device, the benefits of great storytelling remain consistent. Powerful stories engage us emotionally, communicate nuanced ideas and provide insights and common points of reference through which we can better understand ourselves and each other.

AFTRS has a unique role – as a fully self-accredited Higher Education provider with strong links to industry and a commitment to supporting excellence. We support the industries we serve to stay relevant in an increasingly competitive landscape for content and creative practice.

To be successful in realising our strategic objectives, we must:

- work with industry;
- be inclusive; and
- foster innovation.

### 3.1 Screen and Broadcast industries

AFTRS consults and collaborates with our sector – including through industry skills surveys to identify skills needs, which we then address in our industry training. Our students and graduates benefit from over a hundred placements and internship opportunities in workplaces and productions across the industry, and we forge partnerships designed to build skills and capabilities in target areas.

There is an ever-increasing need for creative practitioners to be entrepreneurial and to ensure their skills remain relevant. The ability to extend creative ideas and intellectual property in new directions, to cultivate unexpected connections and partnerships and to articulate and pitch a creative vision are now more important than ever. The well-worn paths of creative production are narrowing as the field of creative practice expands via the ubiquity of video and audio content for communication, the evolution of new storytelling technologies and the development of new forms of engagement.

### 3.2 Diversity and Inclusion

AFTRS' commitment to diversity and inclusion reaches into all levels of the organisation and student experience. This includes accessible application processes, supporting students, and partnering with agencies and the production community to build career pathways.

The School also works closely with industry to promote best practice – including through the Screen Diversity and Inclusion Network – and improve our ability to reflect and draw from the talents of the entire Australian population.

### 3.3 Innovation

AFTRS seeks out new practices, ideas and inspiration through a wide set of networks and creative research partnerships. We work with innovative companies and thinkers to inspire new approaches, update our curriculum and challenge our students to become catalysts of new forms of practice. Our thought leadership programs, and industry-focused training, research and workshops help practitioners reimagine their creative output, business models and audiences.

Our focus on audiences demands a rethink of traditional practices as the ways we engage with media and story are radically changing. We need to challenge ourselves and each other to find new ways to preserve the unique value of storytelling, across a range of new forms and platforms.

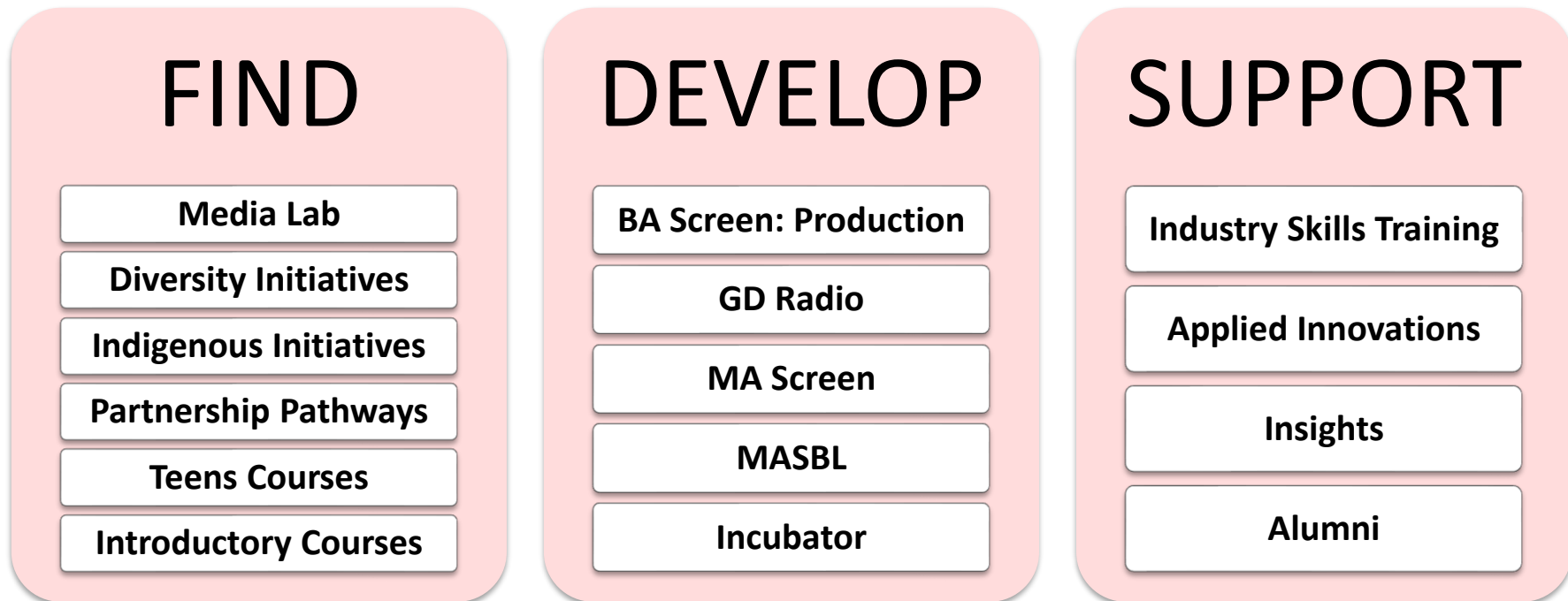
Changing technology has deepened access to media practice beyond the traditional screen and broadcast sectors — and the role of AFTRS along with it. Media literacy, production and creative thinking skills have now become staples for contemporary work, study and modern life — and will become increasingly more vital for all Australians. Building on its expertise in training in these skill areas, including the work it does with corporate clients, schools and youth courses, AFTRS has designed MediaLab: online education resources and programs for schools, to help teachers embed these literacies into children, from Kindergarten to Year 12.

## 4. STRATEGIC DIRECTION, DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE

To deliver against the School's key impact agendas, AFTRS' Corporate Plan has been designed around three strategic pillars: finding, developing and supporting Australian storytelling talent.

### STRATEGIC PLAN: PLATFORM FOR 2023

WE FIND, DEVELOP & SUPPORT AUSTRALIAN STORYTELLING TALENT



## Finding Talent

AFTRS Outreach program delivers creative thinking, media literacy and production skills to school students, young people and emerging practitioners Australia-wide. Some key initiatives for FY2019-20 include:

- MediaLab – a resource for teachers and students (Kindergarten to Year 12) that builds storytelling, content creation and creative problem-solving skills applicable across the entire curriculum.
- Indigenous workshops – finding and building skills for Indigenous storytellers across Australia.
- Talent Camp – a national professional development program for creative practitioners from a range of diverse backgrounds.
- Introductory short courses – designed for new entrants into the screen and broadcast industry, aged 16 years and over.
- Teens Courses – held during school holidays for secondary students to build awareness and interest in the Screen and Broadcast creative industries.

## Developing Talent

As an elite national arts education and training school, AFTRS' core business is to bring out the very best in students through industry-relevant, practice-oriented Awards courses. The School offers a BA Screen: Production, Graduate Diploma in Radio, MA Screen in key discipline areas and MA Screen: Business and Leadership. These courses develop:

- Industry relevant skills.
- Work-readiness, including an extensive internships, attachments and opportunities /placements program.
- An understanding of how to reach audiences, informed by a strong appreciation of Australian screen and broadcast culture.
- An understanding of creativity and entrepreneurship, to generate new ideas that can create sustainable careers and commercial impact.

## Supporting Talent

AFTRS promotes life-long learning, and offers a holistic slate of courses and programs that arms current practitioners with the skills to stay competitive, such as short-courses, masterclasses and talks, along with the latest insights into new technology, business models and the future of storytelling. AFTRS continues to build the reputation of the School so graduates benefit from the brand of AFTRS through their entire career. These offerings include:

- Industry-verified skills training delivered through Industry Certificates and Short Courses.
- Industry thought-leadership events and talks (such as 8 from 8, TV Talks, Black Talks and RE:FRAME events).
- Research and innovation projects (e.g. Blockchain in the Arts and a program of alternative screenwriting practices).
- AFTRS Alumni Program which harnesses and supports a community of alumni committed to the Australian screen and broadcast industry, offering lifelong connections and professional development opportunities.

All of these outward-facing priorities are underpinned by an efficient, impact-driven organisation that delivers value to the Federal Government, the screen arts and broadcast industries, and Australian audiences everywhere.

# FINDING TALENT

## Strategic focus: 4.1 Outreach

We will:

- Challenge ourselves, adapt and set targets to reflect Australian diversity throughout the school and our activities;
- Collaborate with industry and creative partners to help new storytellers prove themselves;
- Empower Australians to tell their stories by providing meaningful insights, media skills and creativity training.

2019-20					
What? (Desired Result)	How? (Key Activities)	Targets	2020-21 Activities	2021-22 Activities	2021-23 Activities
4.1.1 Find great storytellers, whatever their background or circumstance	Run national Talent Camp for emerging practitioners	60 participants in Talent Camp nationally	-	√ (Biennially - subject to funding)	-
	Implement a Student Recruitment Strategy	425 applications for award courses received, including:	√	√	√
	Indigenous Unit recruitment	35% Applications from outside Sydney;	√	√	√
	Fulfil the AFTRS Accessibility Action Plan 2018 - 2020	16% Applications outside NSW; 50% female; 20 Indigenous students; 10% speakers of a language other than English at home; 15% CALD students; and 25% First in family in higher education	√ (Update AFTRS Accessibility Action Plan)	√	√
4.1.2 Partner within and outside the industry to identify talent	Pursue community, corporate, education and cultural partnerships	10 partnerships per year to deliver training nationally	√	√	√
	Scholarships	(see 4.3.1) 20 student scholarships per year	√	√	√

4.1.3 Build capabilities that contribute to Australian culture	Offer Youth programs	950 participants in Teens, Indigenous, Introductory courses, Engagement courses; and	√	√	√
	Offer Introductory courses + short courses		√	√	√
	Build national Media Lab engagement	700 Media Lab resource downloads	√	√	√
	Run Black Talks + Indigenous Workshops	6 Black Talks / workshop events per year	√	√	√

# DEVELOPING TALENT

## Strategic focus: 4.2 Talent Development

We will:

- Support a changing screen and broadcast industry with relevant, future-focussed creative education;
- Build awareness of audiences during content development, and encourage students to think about new applications of their skills across all platforms and business models;
- Uphold the AFTRS pledge, committing staff and students to support diversity and inclusion in a safe, creative environment

What? (Desired Result)	2019-20		2020-21 Activities	2021-22 Activities	2022-23 Activities
	How? (Key Activities)	Targets			
4.2.1 Offer world-class, industry-relevant education and skills	Deliver BA, Graduate Diploma and MA Award Courses	300 new and ongoing enrolments in Award courses	√	√	√
	Conduct teacher professional development	50 students accessing internships/placements	√	√	√
	Implement an innovative curriculum	80% eligible completions	√	√	√
	Manage academic governance		√	√	√
4.2.2 Cultivate a focus on creative and cultural entrepreneurship	Deliver an Incubator program	1 new Incubator program partner	√	√	√
	Teach students to pursue audience outcomes for their work	2 new businesses supported through incubator program	√	√	√
		2 episodic series delivered in BA			

4.2.3 Generate an inclusive culture supporting creative risk-taking	Create a safe, creative culture for work and study through AFTRS Charter commitments and safe conversation officer program	80% eligible completions for students from underrepresented communities	√	√	√
	Ensure strong student support, including for students from underrepresented communities	Recruit and train an additional 2 Safe Conversation Officers within the School	√	√	√
		Student centre provides support for 100 students per year			

## SUPPORTING TALENT

### Strategic focus: 4.3 Industry Training

We will:

- Offer opportunities for talent to hone skills, learn through practice, build useful relationships, and prove themselves;
- Offer industry-informed courses in key craft skills, innovation, business development and creative skills for a changing industry.

What? (Desired Result)	2019-20		2020-21 Activities	2021-22 Activities	2022-23 Activities
	How? (Key Activities)	2019-20 Targets			
4.3.1 Work with industry to offer relevant training	Partner in training delivery	10 training partnerships delivered nationally	√	√	√
	Inform training with Industry Advisory Panels	30 participants in Industry Advisory Panels	√	√	√
	Triennial consultation on national skills requirements of industry conducted		-	√	-
	Application of learnings from industry conducted research.		√	-	√
4.3.2 Upskill practitioners through industry training	Offer Industry informed certificates	200 industry practitioners trained through Industry Certificates or Industry Partner workshops	√	√	√
	Offer Industry masterclasses		√	√	√
	Offer Industry short courses	1100 Industry Practitioners undertaking Industry Short courses	√		
				√	

## Strategic focus: 4.4 Research and Innovation

We will:

- Run applied industry innovation projects, to explore new applications of technology and creative practice;
- Resource the industry with the latest insights, access and innovative ideas.

What? (Desired Result)	How? (Key Activities)	2019-20	2020-21 Activities	2021-22 Activities	2022-23 Activities
		2019-20 Targets			
4.4.1 Explore new frontiers of storytelling, technology and business models	Generate and run applied Innovation projects	2 industry research projects per year	√	√	√
4.4.2 Establish AFTRS as a hub for innovation, creativity and ideas	Run thought leadership events	10 thought leadership events and representations in industry forums and panels per year	√	√	√
	Conduct workshops and talks		√	√	√

# EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

## Strategic focus 5.1 Inclusion

We will:

- Maintain reputation as a school that reflects great talent drawn from the entire population of Australia, supported by a safe and inclusive culture.

What? (Desired Result)	2019-20		2020-21 Activities	2021-22 Activities	2022-23 Activities
	How? (Key Activities)	2019-20 Targets			
5.1.1 Diversity supported across all school activities	Fulfil the AFTRS Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan	Applicants diversity (see 4.1.1)	√	√	√
	Conduct cultural awareness training	AFTRS Staff composition includes:	√	√	√
	Support Indigenous talent into industry through the Indigenous Unit	3% Indigenous; 4% People living with disability; 25% CALD; and 50% Women in leadership roles.	√	√	√
	Support good practice through the Screen Diversity and Inclusion Network	100% of cultural awareness training completed for relevant staff.	√	√	√

## Strategic focus 5.2 Operations

We will:

- Maintain effective systems and processes and own-source revenue to support the organisation, including ensuring it remains financially viable.

What? (Desired Result)	2019-20		2020-21 Activities	2021-22 Activities	2022-23 Activities
	How? (Key Activities)	2019-20 Targets			
5.2.1 Ensure an efficient and effective financially sustainable organisation	Implement the Business Development Plan	25% of AFTRS funding is made up of own-source revenue	√	√	√
	Implement the Technology Plan and the Capital Expenditure Plan		√	√	√

## Strategic focus 5.3 Communications

We will:

- Promote AFTRS nationally and internationally to reinforce AFTRS' position as the reference point for innovation in screen, sound, and story-making, globally.

What? (Desired Result)	2019-20		2020-21 Activities	2021-22 Activities	2022-23 Activities
	How? (Key Activities)	2019-20 Targets			
5.3.1 Position AFTRS as a leading international centre of innovation in education for the screen and broadcast industries	Consolidate and build Alumni Program	Increase Alumni Program engagement by 30%	√	√	√
	Build traffic through AFTRS website	50,000 views of AFTRS content across all platforms	√	√	√
	Enhanced stakeholder communication through improved Customer Relationship Management system functionality	85% positive responses to 'AFTRS is relevant to Industry' question in industry survey	√	√	√

## 5. OPTIMISING RESOURCE AND CAPABILITIES

As detailed in the Portfolio Budget Statement, the Commonwealth Government has allocated \$22.605 million to AFTRS for the 2019-20 financial year. AFTRS has budgeted to generate an additional \$8.74 million to supplement its operations for the financial year. AFTRS makes revenue from a number of sources, primarily through student fees for Award courses and short course programs. This non-government revenue, combined with the appropriation, creates a total revenue budget for 2019-20 of \$31.35 million.

During each of the four years of the Corporate Plan, AFTRS will develop new streams of non-government revenue, including attracting philanthropic support and new corporate partnerships, to ensure its financial sustainability.

AFTRS has a capital management plan, covering acquisition and updating technical resources and facilities, to support its activities across each year of the Corporate Plan. The School reviews its budget plan annually. To support the Corporate Plan's strategies, the capital management plan allows flexibility across FY2019-23 for the adaptation of equipment and facilities, and to meet the needs of AFTRS' diverse student population.

The School occupies a purpose-built campus in the Entertainment Quarter at Moore Park in inner city Sydney, NSW. AFTRS has the option of extending the current lease (ending in 2023), through to 2036.

To improve workforce planning and optimisation, AFTRS will continue to implement a workload model that ensures an Average Staffing Level of 145 is achieved and sustained.

The School's ICT capability allows for integration and automation of systems responsive to student needs at scale. Its further development will again improve AFTRS' capability to deliver online courses of education and training, to achieve greater scale, revenues and impact.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

AFTRS' Risk Management Framework is overseen by the Finance Audit and Risk Management Committee. It demonstrates how governance, policies, processes, review and consultation work together to meet the requirements of the PGPA Act 2013 and promote a well-informed decision-making framework.

AFTRS' risk tolerance, set out in the Business Risk Register, is informed by AFTRS' Administrative Orders, and the Financial and Human Resources Delegations. Any risk at a high or significant level is escalated to the CEO and reported to the Finance Audit and Risk Management Committee. The Business Risk Register is reviewed monthly by AFTRS Executive team to take into account changes to the School's risk environment and to relevant strategies, goals and endeavours.