



PAUL FLETCHER MP

Federal Member for Bradfield
Minister for Communications,
Urban Infrastructure,
Cities & the Arts

MS21-000450

Mr Russel Howcroft
Chair
Australian Film, Television and Radio School Council
PO Box 2286
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

Dear Mr ~~Howcroft~~ ^{russel}

I am writing to outline my expectations for the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS) for 2021-22.

I first want to acknowledge the work of AFTRS in 2020-21, particularly in showing tremendous resilience, leadership, and innovation during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, AFTRS quickly launched a national program of quality online courses, and had very low numbers of students withdrawing. AFTRS developed world-leading COVIDSafe Guidelines and Production Protocols to support and assist all students and staff in eliminating and minimising risks related to the transmission of COVID-19 while undertaking screen and radio activities at AFTRS.

As we move into 2021-22, Australia's screen industry is booming with domestic and international productions taking advantage of Australia's talented cast and crew, generous incentives, world-class facilities, and our successful management of COVID-19. It is essential that we capitalise on the opportunities presented by this activity and prepare the next generations of talent to cement Australia's position as a world-leader in screen production.

I commend the collaborative approach AFTRS has taken in working with production companies on training partnerships. For example, AFTRS students and graduates gained valuable skills through the training program run with Marvel Studios, providing exposure to Location Incentive-supported productions *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* and *Thor: Love and Thunder*. Additionally, I am very pleased that AFTRS is partnering with NBCUniversal and Matchbox Pictures on a training initiative dedicated to virtual production in connection with *La Brea*. It is very pleasing to see AFTRS leveraging the opportunities created by the Government's Location Incentive.

The Australian Government is undertaking a staged process of reform to support the media industry and enhance the range and quality of services and content available to all Australians. This has included changes to the Australian Screen Production Incentive (ASPI) which will increase the Producer Offset rate to 30 per cent for television while retaining the rate at 40 per cent for film, raise expenditure threshold and focusing support to Australian and onscreen costs are fundamental elements of these changes. I look forward to continuing to work with AFTRS in supporting these reforms to foster a vibrant and productive Australian screen and broadcasting sector.

As Australia's national training, education and research institution for screen and broadcast media, the business of delivering industry-relevant and future-focused education, research and training will remain AFTRS' key focus for 2021-22. I expect that through its core work, AFTRS will continue to deliver in the areas of industry relevant training, talent development, outreach, applied innovation research and organisational efficiency. In addition, I ask AFTRS to focus in on the following strategic priorities in 2021-22:

- working collaboratively with the screen and broadcasting sector to capitalise on the boom of screen production in Australia;
- working with productions to identify training and skills development opportunities, including to address capacity gaps and to embrace emerging technology;
- engage with the Australian games development industry on training opportunities to support it to take advantage of the Government's recently announced 30 per cent Digital Games Tax Offset, which will increase its market share in a rapidly expanding global sector and grow highly-skilled transferable jobs;
- continuing to explore opportunities to grow private sector support and increase own-source revenue;
- continuing to undertake data collection and research to strengthen understanding of the challenges and opportunities for the sector; and
- considering opportunities to recognise the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture to Australian society; and

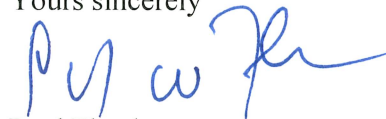
I note that many of these areas are already being actively progressed by AFTRS. The AFTRS Council should continue to foster a strong vision for the School as well as develop clear and achievable objectives for its operations in 2021-22 and beyond. AFTRS is fortunate to have strong leadership at this time of change and opportunity. With this clear focus, AFTRS will be well placed to continue to deliver against its vision to be the reference point for innovation in screen, sound and story-making globally.

I encourage the School to continue working cooperatively with my Department and other portfolio agencies in contributing to the Government's policy settings. I also ask that you continue to alert me and my Department to any significant events or developments related to the activities and functions of the School.

This Statement of Expectations and your corresponding Statement of Intent form an important component of AFTRS' governance framework. As such, I would anticipate both being public documents. I have written to convey my expectations for 2021-22 to all arts portfolio agencies, and have copied this letter to the Director of AFTRS, Dr Nell Greenwood.

I wish you and the AFTRS Council and executive team success in meeting outcomes and objectives for 2021-22.

Yours sincerely



Paul Fletcher

22 / 7 / 2021