

Media Release – Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts

Australian Academy Launches Campaign for Additional Awards

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The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) today launched a campaign to create 10 new AACTA Awards in response to local industry demand.

The move comes as the Academy last week revealed nominees for the upcoming 2nd AACTA Awards, sparking further substantial discussion among screen professionals regarding the need to more adequately recognise all key screen crafts in Australia, particularly within television.

The majority of the proposed new AACTA Awards fall within television categories, bringing AACTA's television Awards in line with its film and documentary Awards by recognising excellence in cinematography, editing, sound, original music score, production design and costume design.

Other slated AACTA Awards would recognise hair and make-up design across film and television for the first time in Australia, as well as screen content innovation.

The final proposed AACTA Award is for Best Original Music Score in a Documentary.

The new AACTA Awards would bring Australia in line with international screen awards, with the proposed new awards each recognised across the Emmys, AMPAS (the Oscars), and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTAs).

AACTA is calling on the screen industry to show its support for the new AACTA Awards through an online petition. The petition will then serve as a case for support for AACTA to work with the industry to identify ways to create the new Awards, which are dependent on sufficient screen sector resources.

Why does Australia need additional AACTA Awards?

AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, said AACTA has long acknowledged that there are a number of highly skilled industry practitioners whose work is not being recognised in Australia, with television craft Awards identified as the biggest gap in AACTA's current slate of Awards.

"The Australian Academy currently recognises film and television excellence across 41 AACTA Awards, with past winners and nominees receiving new job, education and development opportunities, and associated productions achieving increased sales here and abroad as a result of this internationally recognised peer recognition.

"The AACTA Awards serve as international currency for nominees and winners because they are based on international best practice models, and therefore are recognised within the key markets of the US and the UK, as well as at home.

"It is evident from the many formal submissions and countless emails we have received over time in support of new Awards that the industry not only supports our Awards, but sees substantial value in them. We now want to galvanise and capture this support through our online campaign in order to work with the industry to identify ways to create these Awards," Trehwella said.

What's needed to create the new AACTA Awards?

Achieving the standards set by the AACTA Awards requires significant, year-round resources, and to introduce a substantial number of new AACTA Awards requires the expertise, extra staff and resources to create, maintain and sustain the slate of Awards as an ongoing legacy.

Damian Trehwella said that the additional 10 proposed AACTA Awards represent a 25 per cent increase in the Academy's current core production of 41 AACTA Awards per annum, which would represent a 7 per cent increase in production costs for the Academy.

He said that in addition to marketing, public relations and events activity, year-round administrative activity includes: a formal annual review, ongoing industry consultation; entrant support and administrative services; forming and facilitating juries of leading screen professionals; implementing international best-practice IT systems to facilitate voting; and producing Award event materials, including statuettes.

Support so far

In addition to the online campaign, AACTA has consulted with industry leaders to identify ways to introduce the new Awards. AACTA recently met with multiple AFI Award winning Director/Producer Peter Andrikidis, whose work includes *Underbelly* and *East West 101*, and Editor Deborah Peart, whose recent work includes *Puberty Blues* and *The Straits*, both of whom submitted a proposal in support of the new TV Awards earlier this year, which was endorsed by more than 40 screen practitioners and performers, numerous production companies and industry guilds.

Deborah Peart said:

"It is well and truly time for key creatives in television to have their work acknowledged and celebrated. Our industry is of a size where "cross pollination" amongst screen practitioners is common place and there is simply no reason why there should be any differentiation between those who work in features and documentaries and those who work in television. AACTA is internationally recognised as our leading awards body, and therefore on so many levels it is important that we can all have an opportunity for recognition."

Peter Andrikidis said:

"It's time for the AACTA Awards to recognise all the brilliant work from Cinematographers, Editors, Sound Recordists, Production Designers, Costume Designers, Make-Up Designers and Music Composers who work in Television - they are the back-bone of this industry."

Australian Guild of Screen Composers Support

The AGSC has also shown their support for this campaign:

"The Australian Guild of Screen Composers welcomes AACTA's campaign to recognise all industry crafts with the introduction of new categories in future AACTA Awards, in line with other international screen awards. We thank AACTA for their vision and continued commitment to the Australian film and television industry."

Guy Gross, President, Australian Guild of Screen Composers

"Perfect Time" for new AACTA Awards

Trehwella said that this marks the perfect time to introduce new television awards, given the strength of local production in recent years.

"Although television accounts for the bulk of our industry, television screen craft excellence is overlooked in many of the areas in which AACTA currently awards film craft, including costume design and cinematography."

“While in recent years there has rightly been a lot of focus on quantitative audience figures as measures of success, such as box office numbers and ratings, these indicators can be overly reductionist in terms of failing to recognise the importance of screen craft expertise and collaboration between screen professionals working across all screen crafts to yield the best results.

“With a television landscape that is currently so dominated by Australian content, it is time that greater effort is made to acknowledge all of the leading and talented professionals making this possible,” Trehwella said.

To complete the online petition, [click here](#).

Proposed New AACTA Awards

Television Craft Awards

- Best Cinematography in Television
- Best Editing in Television
- Best Sound in Television
- Best Original Music Score in Television
- Best Production Design in Television
- Best Costume Design in Television
- Best Hair and Make Up Design in Television

Feature Film

- Best Hair and Make Up Design

Documentary

- Best Original Music Score in a Documentary

New Media

- Screen Content Innovation or All Media Award

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