

Media Release

The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Regulatory Reform
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Creative Industries



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AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST FILM PRIZE BUILDS VICTORIA'S FILM BUZZ

The Andrews Labor Government is backing Victoria's booming screen industry with the introduction of Australia's largest film festival prize at the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF).

Already the Southern Hemisphere's largest and longest-running film festival, Melbourne International Film Festival's new competition seeks to attract more major titles, global profile and leading filmmakers to Melbourne in August with its \$140,000 award for Best Film.

The Labor Government through Film Victoria is supporting the launch of the competition in celebration of the landmark 70th anniversary of MIFF.

An official selection of up to 10 feature films that have their Australian premiere at the festival will compete for the Best Film Award, with a jury of prominent Australian and international filmmakers and industry professionals deciding the winner. Additional awards will include a new Australian Innovation Prize and the return of the festival's Audience Award.

The new competition crowns a suite of Government-supported initiatives across the festival, including the talent development Accelerator Lab, a commissioning fund and a screen content financing market.

MIFF is one of the few film festivals in the world to feature such a broad offering of industry and public activity, putting it alongside festivals such as the Berlin's International Film Festival – Berlinale.

The awards will be presented at a reshaped MIFF Closing Night Awards Ceremony on 20 August.

The MIFF Award for Best Film is being supported as part of the Labor Government's \$191.5 million VICSCREEN strategy which is investing in talent, skills, businesses, productions and events to grow the state's screen industry.

Activity in the Victorian film industry is at record levels, with more than \$391 million channelled into production expenditure in 2020-21.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson

"Victoria is a film powerhouse offering cutting-edge production facilities, iconic destinations and world-class creative talent – this competition places the state's screen industry firmly on the global stage and showcases Victoria as Australia's screen gateway to the world."

"We're investing in the future of Victoria's screen industry to deliver growth, jobs and opportunities to our creative industries workforce."

Quotes attributable to Melbourne International Film Festival Artistic Director Al Cossar

"The competition will recognise and amplify the new, the next, the breakthrough and the best in screen from Australia and across the globe."

"It will bring incredible films and filmmakers to Melbourne –making MIFF truly unmissable in 2022 and beyond."

Media contact: Corey Croft 0468 897 764 | corey.croft@minstaff.vic.gov.au