

Screen Production and Research Collaboration (SPARC): Developing a collaborative national postgraduate research program for 22 Australian film schools

We invite you to participate in a research study designed to develop a national collaborative postgraduate screen production research program. The above project has been funded by the Office of Learning and Teaching in the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education and the project partners are:

State	Institution	State coordinators
WA	Murdoch University	Dr Josko Petkovic , Director NASS (Project Leader, ASPERA President 2006–2007, ASPERA Advisory Council)
Victoria	University of Melbourne VCA	Annabelle Murphy Research Program Convenor
Victoria	RMIT	Mr Leo Berkley (ASPERA President 2008–2009, ASPERA Advisor Council)
NSW	UTS	A/Prof Gillian Leahy (ASPERA, President 2005–2006, ASPERA Advisor Council);
Queensland	Griffith University Film School.	Professor Herman Van Eyken Head of Griffith Film School & Mr Nicholas Oughton , (ASPERA President 2007–2008, ASPERA Advisory Council)
South Australia	Flinders University	Ms Alison Wotherspoon (ASPERA President 2009-2010, ASPERA Advisory Council)

The project will be evaluated by Professor Su Barker, VCA.

Nature and Purpose of the Study

Screen production is a complex, inter-disciplinary and group-based activity. Because of its complexity, a range of difficulties are encountered when developing postgraduate research programs, including:

- Finding funds for practice-based postgraduate research in screen production.
- Operating viable postgraduate research programs in screen production without adequate funds.
- Dealing with the changing paradigm of screen production research as a result of changes in technology.

This project sets out to address the above difficulties by gathering a network of university researchers to discuss the extent to which these problems and potential solutions exist. Specifically, the project sets out to find out the:

- Level of research and postgraduate research activity in Australian film schools for both staff and students.
- Funding sources that underpin these research activities.
- Potential for collaboration among the various film schools that often do different things; some that are competitive and some that are complementary.

If you consent to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the procedures you will be asked to undergo. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have, and that all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction before you agree to participate.

What the Study will Involve

This Project will survey the current postgraduate research activity in screen production. Christina Ballantyne, Senior Research Officer in the Educational Development Unit, at Murdoch University will administer the collection of the survey data. The project will also undertake sector-wide consultations and colloquiums regarding the conditions required for a viable postgraduate research program in screen production.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in:

1. Two consultations (two hours each).
2. A survey collecting data on screen production programs at your university, with opportunities to update your answers.
3. State-based and national colloquiums (NB: presenters' permission will be sought for video recording).
4. The development and planning for a inter-university postgraduate research collaboration .

The online survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Other time commitments will not be arduous. For example the national colloquium will coincide with the ASPERA AGM that most you normally attend.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without discrimination or prejudice. All information is treated as confidential and no names or other details that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research. Please note that survey information will be published in an aggregated form. If you withdraw, all information you have provided will be destroyed.

Benefits of the Study

This Project is concerned with the long term systemic change and capacity building of the postgraduate research sector for screen producers. The Project outcome is expected to lead to a more directed, sustainable and mix-funded national postgraduate development in screen production, with local as well as global connections. Developing such collaborative national postgraduate research program potentially has many educational, cultural and commercial benefits. While there is no guarantee that you will personally benefit, the knowledge gained from your participation may help practice-based screen production research find a better foothold within academia. In turn, these benefits will flow into greater opportunities for screen production postgraduates.

Possible Risks

There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study; however, you should be aware that if you voluntarily agree to have your presentation recorded on video, you will be asked to sign a personal release form that allows for copyright of this material to be reassigned to the funding body for the purpose of releasing this material under a No Derivatives Creative Commons license.

If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact the project leader, Dr Josko Petkovic on Mob. 040 7900706 who will be happy to discuss any concerns you may have about this study.

Once we have analysed the information from this study a summary of the findings will be placed on our web site. You can also expect to receive feedback at the State-based colloquiums prior to the end of this project in October 2013.

If you are willing to consent to participation in this study, please complete the Consent Form (attached). We will provide instructions about how to locate and complete the anonymous survey separately.

Thank you for your assistance with this research project.
Sincerely



Dr Josko Petkovic

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State Coordinator

This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2011/215). If you have any reservations or complaints about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University's Research Ethics Office (Tel. 08 9360 6677 (for overseas callers, +61 8 9360 6677) or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.