

Media release



FROM THE MINISTER FOR INNOVATION

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\$2.4 MILLION TO PUT LOCAL FILMMAKERS IN THE PICTURE

The Minister for Innovation, John Brumby, today announced a \$2.4 million funding boost for Victoria's local film industry over the next two years.

Mr Brumby said the Bracks Government would provide \$1.6 million for the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) Investment Fund and \$800,000 for the 37 South, Bridging the Gap initiative.

"The MIFF Investment Fund will act as a strategic investor in Victorian feature films and feature documentaries adding not only to the number, but also the diversity of local film," he said.

"It will build a pipeline of Victorian films to premiere at Australia's most popular festival and in turn these films will have an international profile from their association with MIFF.

"37 South, Bridging the Gap will enhance Melbourne's reputation as a screen hub by helping our filmmakers make direct connections with international financing and distribution partners in the context of Australia's most successful film festival.

"The opportunity for producers to meet with potential investors on their home turf, far away from the competition of the rest of the world's producers, is crucial to the future of the Victorian film industry.

"The development of this industry arm of the festival mirrors international developments where film festival activities are being extended to include industry offices, financing hubs and film markets."

Mark Woods, CEO of Ausfilm, ex CEO of the Irish Film Board and former Head of Acquisitions and Investment of the Premium Movie Partnership's Showtime Australia, has been appointed as Manager of the MIFF Investment Fund.

Mr Woods will also act as Consulting Manager of 37 South, Bridging the Gap.

"As a co-financier of acclaimed and successful films like *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*, *Breakfast on Pluto*, *Somersault*, *Rabbit Proof Fence* and *Japanese Story*, Mr Woods brings immense hands-on experience in fund management and fund raising," Mr

Brumby said.

The Bracks Government is a big supporter of Victoria's film industry, having invested over \$75 million in projects and programs, including the Melbourne Central City Studios and the Australian Centre for The Moving Image and the Digital Media Fund.

“In return the industry delivers many direct economic benefits, including screen production activity worth \$134 million in 2005-06 – leading all other States and directly creating over 4000 full-time equivalent jobs,” Mr Brumby said.