

**MIFF'S 37 SOUTH 2008: NEW INITIATIVES AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

**MELBOURNE: 13 March 2008** – The **Melbourne International Film Festival's** film co-financing market **37 South 2008** is now open for applications for producers wishing to participate in the market, which runs from **24-27 July 2008**.

In addition to last year's popular **37 South: Bridging the Gap** program of scheduled one-to-one meetings between selected feature film producers and invited international financiers and roundtables and networking events, new initiatives for **37 South 2008** include:

- **37 South: Breakthrough Screenings** – Screenings for invited international and local buyers of selected new Australia/NZ films seeking world sales agents and/or local distribution;
- **37South: Accelerator Express:** A collaboration of **37 South: Bridging the Gap**, which is focused on producers with 'market-ready' projects, and **Accelerator**, MIFF's skills and craft development workshops for new Australia/NZ short film directing talent, **37 South: Accelerator Express** will comprise:
  - **37 South/Accelerator Producer Express:** One producer of an **07/08 Accelerator** short film who is developing a feature film with the same director will be selected to participate in **37 South: Bridging the Gap** thereby accelerating this team's project for consideration by registered buyers.
  - **37South/Accelerator Screenings Express: Accelerator's** selected program of short films will have special screenings for **37 South: Bridging the Gap's** registered producers thereby exposing the works of **Accelerator** directors to established producers.
- Increased number of meetings scheduled for producers with local distributors
- **37 South's Books at MIFF** is expanding to include scheduled meetings between film producers and publishers holding film rights;
- Producers of projects in receipt of funding from MIFF's **Premiere Fund** will receive preferential selection for **37 South: Bridging the Gap** and/or **37South: Breakthrough Screenings**. (The **Premiere Fund** offers strategic minority production funding to selected quality Victorian feature films that can premiere at MIFF and the A\$730,000 worth of funding distributed so far in the Premiere Fund's first two rounds is supporting nine projects with combined production budgets of more than A\$15 million – yielding a Premiere Fund leveraging factor of around 21:1. For more details on the Fund and its projects, go to: [www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au/miff\\_premiere\\_fund](http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au/miff_premiere_fund))

Organised by the industry programs unit of the Melbourne International Film Festival (**MIFF**), which is Australia's largest and oldest film festival, **37 South 2008** brings the global film financing marketplace to Melbourne's Forum Theatre and Australian Centre of the Moving Image (ACMI) in the opening days of **MIFF**. Australia's only film co-financing market in a film festival environment, **37 South 2008** enables Australian producers with market-ready feature-length projects to meet with key international film co-financiers in Melbourne. The emphasis is on producers pitching projects to financiers with the aim of deepening marketplace relationships and generating financier interest in their slates.

Confirmed international and local guests will be announced in the coming weeks. For details on last year's guests (and program), see <http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au/downloads/Final37Southflyer.pdf>

"The State Government provided \$800,000 for two initial editions of **37 South** to provide local producers the opportunity to meet potential co-financiers on their home turf, far away from the competition from the rest of the world's producers, and to help more local film makers access the funding and relationships needed to put their work on screen," said **Victorian Innovation Minister Gavin Jennings**. "Filmmakers know the importance of meeting with potential backers and financiers, and these meetings and events will be instrumental in helping more Australian films get made and ensuring that film business is transacted in Melbourne. Indeed, at **37 South 2007**, producers brought more than 70 projects to the event and 250 private meetings were conducted."

The enhanced **37 South 2008** offering includes:

- **37South: Bridging the Gap:** a feature film financing market for producers with 'market-ready' projects staged in the opening four days of MIFF. In its second year, it comprises the following popular elements from its first outing in 2007:
  - Scheduled **one-to-one meetings** registered producers with market-ready projects discuss their slates and deepen their relationships with **37 South 2008's** invited local and international film financiers/buyers;
  - **Roundtables:** facilitated by experienced Australian film practitioners, **37South2008's** local and international film financiers/buyers meet with small groups of producers
  - Public **panel sessions:** moderated by leading Australian film professionals, **37South2008's:** local and international financing guests discuss the pressing film funding issues of the day and outline the latest sales and distribution opportunities. These sessions are free and open to the public
  - **Networking** events: mixing registered producers, financiers, government, distributors and sales agents to meet informally and talk about the business of film

**And new, for 2008, will be:**

- **37South: Breakthrough Screenings:** Screenings for invited international and local buyers of selected new Australia/NZ films seeking world sales agents and/or local distribution

- **37South: Accelerator Express:** A collaboration of **37South: Bridging the Gap**, which is focused on producers with 'market-ready' projects, and **Accelerator**, which is MIFF's skills and craft development workshops for new Australia/NZ short film directing talent, **37South: Accelerator Express** will comprise:
  - **37 South/Accelerator Producer Express:** One lucky producer of an **Accelerator** short film who is developing a feature film with the same director will be selected to participate in **37 South: Bridging the Gap** thereby 'expressing' this team's project for consideration by registered buyers.
  - **37South/Accelerator Screenings Express:** **Accelerator's** selected program of short films will have special screenings for **37South: Bridging the Gap's** registered producers thereby exposing the works of **Accelerator** directors to established producers.
- **37 South 2008** also includes the second edition of **37South's Books at MIFF (BaM)**, a one-day event (on 24 July 2008) promoting links and business between publishers, film financiers and producers to foster book-to-film adaptations. The first event of its kind in Australia, **37 South's BaM 2007** was attended by more than 100 publishers, agents, producers and financiers for a morning comprising a pitching event and a networking breakfast where film industry and publishing relationships were advanced.
  - **37 South's BaM** is expanding in its second year to comprise:
    - **BaM Brunch:** including a **case-study panel discussion** on recent adaptations and **public pitching by publishers** of up to 10 books most likely to get made into films (as selected by **BaM's** panel);
    - Up to seven **scheduled one-to-one meetings** for publishers with film producers & financiers;
    - **Networking** and/or **screening** event.

For full details on the new programs and application forms, go to the **37South2008** section of [www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au](http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au). The present call for applications seeks:

- Up to 40 Australasian **producers** with at least one market-ready **screenplay** to participate in **37South: Bridging the Gap**. Application deadline: **03 April 2008**.
- **Producers** with a **completed film** that is seeking world sales or local distribution to participate in **37South: Breakthrough Screenings**. Application deadline: **03 April 2008**.
- Australasian **publishers/literary agents/film rights holders** of **books** that have cinematic potential to be the next big book-to-screen adaptation to participate in the **37South's Books at MIFF (BaM)**. Application deadline: **10 April 2008**.
- **Accelerator Alumni 2007 and 2008 producers** who are developing a feature project with the same director, which they do not believe would otherwise qualify for regular participation at **37 South: Bridging the Gap**. Applications for **37South: Accelerator Express** will close **13 June 2008**.

"Complementing last year's offering of **37 South: Bridging the Gap** with the new initiatives of **37 South: Breakthrough Screenings** and **37 South: Accelerator Express**, as well as the preferred market selection of **Premiere Fund** projects and producers, rounds out the market offering, provides a greater variety of options for producers to seek to participate in **37 South 2008**," said **MIFF 37 South & Premiere Fund Manager Mark Woods**. "The new initiatives provide a road map of engagement for filmmakers at every stage of their career with MIFF and with MIFF's invited local and international financing guests and film suppliers, thereby increasing opportunities for screen business to occur in Melbourne."

"MIFF now offers filmmakers a journey from script to screen from the earlier points in their career, via the **Accelerator** short film director workshop, through to feature film co-financing with the enhanced **37South2008** offerings announced today, to the strategic funding offered via the **Premiere Fund**, through to the exhibitions at the Festival itself and the MIFF Travelling Festival," said **MIFF Executive Director Richard Moore**. "In addition to being about great stories, sound development and audience connection, filmmaking is an international people and financing business, which is why **37 South 2008** aims to advance Australian projects by putting selected local producers and projects face-to-face with **37South2008's** invited international film financiers, world sales agents and local distributors in the context of Australia's largest and oldest public film festival."

"**37 South 2008**, and the **Premiere Fund**, are much appreciated and a very important initiatives of the Victorian State Government to build on Melbourne's position as a centre of the Australian screen production industry," said **MIFF Chair Claire Dobbin**. "These industry initiatives mirror the development of other international film festivals which, like **MIFF**, have extended their remit to become important creative and financing hubs. We look forward to working closely with Minister Jennings to bring these programs to their full potential in 2008."

A detailed program for **37 South 2008** will be released in June, with updates on the program, guests and new initiatives regularly posted on the **37 South 2008** section of [www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au](http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au)



**37South2008: organised by:**

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