



Commissioning Equity & Inclusion Guidelines (2021-2024) Target Report

Published December 2024





Erotic Stories (above), Latecomers (below)

For almost 50 years, SBS has been committed to ensuring that, as Australia grows more diverse, all Australians continue to see themselves and their communities on SBS.

As part of that ongoing commitment, in 2022 SBS published the [SBS Commissioning Equity & Inclusion Guidelines \(2021-2024\)](#) (the Guidelines) to reflect our role in championing ongoing industry change to be more representative and inclusive of our audiences.

What are the SBS Commissioning Equity & Inclusion Guidelines?

The Guidelines were designed to remove barriers and ensure that everyone who wants to participate in Australia's screen sector has an equal opportunity to succeed. Our ultimate goal was - and still is - to ensure SBS represents the diversity of contemporary Australia across the cast and crew on our commissioned productions.

The Guidelines include a comprehensive set of targets to track and measure

how we include under-represented communities across on-screen and off-screen roles, as well as targets for career progression¹ for SBS-commissioned and internally-produced programs between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2024.

What did we commit to?

SBS committed to increasing representation among cast and crew for productions in our unscripted and scripted commissioned content slate, focusing on people who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse,

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with disability, LGBTIQ+ people, and intersectional women. We also committed to monitoring and reporting on our progress. There are different targets for unscripted programs (including all factual, documentary, food, entertainment) and scripted programs, reflecting the different editorial and production needs.

For unscripted, the targets apply percentage benchmarks to all commissioned and internal unscripted programs produced over the three-year period. Meanwhile, for scripted programs, targets were applied on a show-by-show basis.

	Unscripted		Scripted	
	On screen	Off screen	On Screen Meet all three categories	Off Screen Meet all three categories
First Nations	3-5%	3-5%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Main characters¹ to include at least two CALD and/or First Nations people Broader cast² to include <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 33.3% from the four groups & 50% women Inclusive casting 	If the series focuses on a particular under-represented community: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Writing team⁴ to include at least <ol style="list-style-type: none"> two key roles for people from this community & 50% women Other Key Creatives: Directors/Producers⁵ to include at least <ol style="list-style-type: none"> one other creative from this community⁶ e.g. <i>At least one producer or at least one director</i> & 50% women Production team⁷ to include at least <ol style="list-style-type: none"> one Head of Department (HOD)⁸ from the four groups & 50% women
Culturally and linguistically diverse	35-40%	25-40%		
People with disability	5-10%	5-10%		
LGBTIQ+	8-12%	8-12%		
Women	45-55%	45-55%		

¹ The full targets set by SBS are outlined in the [SBS Commissioning Equity & Inclusion Guidelines \(2021-2024\)](#) on pages 6-7. The targets do not apply to NITV productions, as we recognise NITV has unique requirements and equity goals for its slate as set out in the [NITV Commissioning Guidelines](#). They also do not apply to SBS news and current affairs or sport programming, as the Guidelines are focused on SBS's commissioned programs made with production partners.

How well did SBS reflect Australia through our commissioned TV programs?

SBS has met all targets for on-screen, off-screen and career progression roles across both unscripted and scripted genres.

To track progress against the targets, SBS uses data collected through its participation in The Everyone Project (TEP), an industry-wide commitment to measure cast and crew diversity across registered Australian film and television productions led by the

Screen Diversity and Inclusion Network (SDIN) of which SBS is a founding member. SBS also uses Scripted Target Reports which are completed by partner production companies for drama programming.

SBS has measured and analysed three years of TEP data which reports on diversity of cast and crew across all on and off-screen roles on all SBS commissioned and internal productions across 62 SBS programs registered in the three-year period.

The table below summarises SBS TEP results for the period, against benchmark demographic figures from Australia's TV and film industry and the Australian population from 2023-2024.²

The Everyone Project SBS data 2021-2024³

	SBS (%) 2021-2024 ⁴	TV & Film industry (%) 2023-2024	Australian population (%) 2023-2024
First Nations	4.3	2.65	3.2
Culturally and linguistically diverse	64.7	60.01	46.07
People with disability	8.3	8	17.7
LGBTQI+	18.5	19.76	11
Women	53.7	49.93	49.65



While the Men are Away (above), The Swap (below)

²The Australian TV & Film industry and Australian population figures for July 2023 to 30 June 2024 were gathered from The Everyone Project.

³This table summarises The Everyone Project data from SBS programs registered, roles uploaded and survey responses received from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024.

⁴This table shows SBS weighted average demographics across all 62 on-screen and off-screen roles across all SBS Unscripted and Scripted programs registered in The Everyone Project over the three year period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024, taking into account percentages for each category and number of programs in 2022-2024 and calculating the weighted average demographic figures across the combined three year period.

SBS Unscripted programs

For SBS Unscripted programming covering our documentary, factual, food and entertainment shows, we set ranged percentage targets across the five identified diversity categories people who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, First Nations, people with disability, LGBTIQ+ and women in on-screen, off-screen roles and career progression. We have met all unscripted on and off-screen targets for all five groups:

- We met unscripted targets for First Nations, people with disability and women.
- We exceeded unscripted targets for culturally and linguistically diverse people and LGBTIQ+ community.

SBS Scripted programs

SBS received Scripted Target Reports for five scripted programs:

- 100% of these programs met all three categories of on-screen targets relating to main characters, broader cast diversity and inclusive casting. This includes 50% gender parity across all scripted on-screen roles.
- 100% met off-screen targets for the writing team and other key creatives: directors/producers, and 80% met targets relating to diversity of Heads of Department.

Career progression targets

Across both scripted and unscripted programs, SBS committed to career progression targets for TV practitioners from under-represented communities, with a commitment to:

- Provide career progression opportunities for people who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, First Nations, people with disability and/or LGBTIQ+ on SBS productions in off-screen roles.
- Elevate practitioners from the four groups into more senior roles.
- Encourage producers to hire people from these groups to contribute to SBS's targets.

We have measured progress against career progression targets using diversity data from The Everyone Project and qualitative information regarding career progression of practitioners who have participated in SBS's career pathway initiatives over the three-year period.



Swift Street



Alone Australia season 2

How have we improved representation and inclusion in Australia's TV industry?

Over the past three years, SBS has worked with its production partners, screen agencies, industry organisations and practitioners to increase recruitment of people from historically under-represented communities and improve inclusion on our programs.

Working with production partners

We have worked with production partners to improve inclusion skills and cultural safety on our productions. SBS introduced new inclusion requirements, including Cultural Safety Plans and Equity & Inclusion Reports, so partners could outline their plan to make their programs inclusive and ask SBS Commissioning Editors and the SBS Commissioning Diversity & Inclusion team for early, program-specific assistance.

Supporting practitioners from under-represented communities

We have continued to work closely with the sector to create and support sustainable career development for talent, including co-funded roles for TV practitioners with under-represented lived experience across SBS programs.

This includes a suite of [career pathway initiatives and opportunities](#), with highlights including:

SBS has co-funded 18 Talent Escalator positions on our commissioned programs. The Talent Escalator is a nation-wide partnership between SBS and state and territory screen agencies which co-funds 12-16 week placements for emerging and mid-level screen practitioners from diverse backgrounds to work with production companies of SBS-commissioned programs in roles that are a step up from their existing level of experience.

Since 2017, SBS has supported more than 30 Talent Escalator practitioners to work with production companies on SBS programs including *Alone Australia* (seasons 1 and 2), *Swift Street*, *Great Australian Walks* (seasons 1 and 2), *Erotic Stories*, *Mastermind*, *Latecomers* and more. This includes roles such as Production Assistant, Associate Producer, Assembly Editor and Edit Assistant/Post Production Assistant. Alumni of the Talent Escalator initiative have continued to work in the TV industry in production companies or at SBS and NITV following their placements.

SBS has sponsored 19 early career producers from under-represented backgrounds to participate in the year-long Screen Producers Australia (SPA) Practitioner Program (Early Career). The package includes 12 months of SPA Associate Producer membership, access to masterclasses, networking and training and free access to the Screen Forever Conference, Gener8 and more.

Alumni of Digital Originals have gone to work in key creative roles across SBS Original drama series and elsewhere in the industry. This includes Mohini Herse (*Appetite*) who was Director for SBS Original *Four Years Later*, Producer Liam Heyen (*Latecomers*, *Erotic Stories*), Director Madeleine Gottlieb (*Latecomers*, *Erotic Stories*), as well as Director Stevie Cruz-Martin (*The Tailings*, *Safe Home*).

As at 2024, four alumni of diversity career pathway initiatives run or supported by SBS, including the Talent Escalator, AFTRS Graduate Program and SBS x SPA Early Career Practitioners Program, have joined SBS and NITV, working in roles in the SBS Commissioning team, on SBS programs, and in the NITV team.

What's next?

SBS continues to be committed to our role in leading the way to a more inclusive Australian screen sector. We will continue to push boundaries and work with our partners in the industry to improve representation and, ultimately, the stories all Australians enjoy watching on our screens.

In 2025, SBS will launch the next iteration of the SBS Commissioning Inclusion Guidelines (2025-2028). In the interim, we are extending the current targets in the SBS Commissioning Equity & Inclusion Guidelines (2021-2024) to apply to a fourth year for the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 until the new Guidelines are launched.



Mastermind Australia, with host Marc Fennell



The Cook Up with Adam Liaw