

Script to Screen Story Camp Aotearoa 2026 Application Webinar Q&A Transcript.

Command F or Control F the word 'QUESTION' to quickly find the questions asked.

Please note that the transcript has not been edited further, there may be mistakes, errors and missing information.

-

00:00:50:06 - 00:01:03:00 Speaker 1 So my name is Dale. I'm the, executive director here at script the Screen. It's my privilege to be hosting this, call it all tonight around story camp. So thank you very much for joining us.

00:01:03:00 - 00:01:15:11 Speaker 1 We thought we'd do this as a way to just get some more information out there and to us, answer any questions that you've got around story camp, the overall kaupapa, the way in which it runs or the application process.

00:01:15:13 - 00:01:30:12 Speaker 1 So I don't know if it's worth me, maybe just giving a little bit of an overview, first of what story, camp is, for those of you who don't know, you can look on the website. There is a pretty detailed description of it, but I'll just give you the high level overview and then we'll just go into questions, really,

00:01:30:12 - 00:01:37:15 Speaker 1 So, let's just bring up I'm just going to bring up the coco of Story camp so I can make sure I don't miss anything.

00:01:37:19 - 00:01:57:09 Speaker 1 So first off, the deadline. Good. Always good to start with the deadline. So, the deadline September the 22nd. That's Monday. I think it's 1 p.m.. And it's. So we can start processing at that day, and get it out to our readers the next day or the following at the latest. So that's why we tend to stick to the 1 p.m. deadline.

00:01:57:11 - 00:02:19:19 Speaker 1 And. Yeah, get in early and make sure you fill in the form. It's not a complicated form, but, just get it done early. Otherwise it can have some problems on the day if everyone comes in at the same time. But as an email, it's via jot form, so that's pretty simple. So the story camp kaupapa, that most of you, most people know this, but it's a residential labs that runs from Monday to Friday.

00:02:19:21 - 00:02:36:05 Speaker 1 It's kind of a half day on Friday, if you like. But it's from the Monday, about 9:00 in the morning on Monday. All the way through to Friday. You do stay on site. And it's at a place called Billerica, which is out in, West Auckland. And we've been there for a few years now.

00:02:36:05 - 00:03:01:07 Speaker 1 A couple of years now. And, it's, it's a lab primarily focused on story development. So it is really for writers, writer, directors, writer,

producers or the filmmaking team. But we're not looking at the directorial vision or the director voice behind it, necessarily. It's really around the writer's voice and the story and the story development process. Projects can come in at any stage.

00:03:01:09 - 00:03:23:18 Speaker 1 We do suggest a little bit more, advanced than maybe the first draft, because you're still possibly finding the story and even finding your voice within that story. So we do suggest a little bit more advanced, and that is useful. We're not, prescriptive. We don't actually say you can't come in at first draft, but from our experience of seeing it over now 10 times, this will be the 11th iteration.

00:03:23:20 - 00:03:44:08 Speaker 1 Most projects that are very early probably don't get through the process or aren't successful in the application process. So I'm just trying to, ward off those, and say, look, you might not it might not be the right level. Happy to have a conversation with you about it and where it's at. For example, last year we had two, adaptations coming from theater into film.

00:03:44:10 - 00:04:17:05 Speaker 1 So they were probably very early in there scripting for the feature film, but they had a wealth of knowledge and experience of that theater production, with audiences, which actually informed their development as a feature film. So there are always, you know, outliers in this process. So, yeah, it's a it's, it's a story focused lab, although we do invite, directors to come with their writers if they're not a writer slash director, and we do invite producers to come because we, we know how important the team is to that story development process.

00:04:17:07 - 00:04:18:21 Speaker 1 The lab is very bespoke,

00:04:18:21 - 00:04:32:05 Speaker 1 in that you have, 3 or 4 core advisors that you'll have across the week. You'll have one main advisor that you'll see a few times through that week, and then you'll have other guest advisors that will be advising in different ways on your project.

00:04:32:07 - 00:04:52:14 Speaker 1 From a story perspective, some of those advisors will be traditional kind of script editors and people in the story space. Others might come from other artforms like poetry. There might be novelists, there might even be musicians. There might be cinematographers, there might be other art artists. Giving you a different perspective on your work. It's not, designed to derail you.

00:04:52:14 - 00:05:11:21 Speaker 1 It's just designed to, I guess, challenge your thinking sometimes and actually, ask some key questions at key times in your development process. We don't overload you, but you do tend to get 3 or 4 of them across the week. That seems to be a good number. We also have, on top of the bespoke 1 to 1 sessions that you'll have throughout the week.

00:05:11:23 - 00:05:34:02 Speaker 1 We have, in the past, we always have a session with actors, so you'll have someone working with the actors, and the material that you've, you've got, it's not about necessarily staging the work, it's more about looking at the themes and the tone of the work. And through a physical, process with actors in the room and everyone finds that really, really useful.

00:05:34:04 - 00:05:54:01 Speaker 1 We've had group workshops before. We've had 1 to 1, sorry, we've had panel discussions with, industry leaders and then we've had, bespoke kind of guests like, you know, Jane Campion or someone like that dropping in and doing a kind of talk around their career in a more inspirational way. So, and last year we had Vincent Ward do a, a great talk.

00:05:54:01 - 00:06:09:24 Speaker 1 And then we watched one of his films, which was amazing. He was also an advisor on one of the projects. So, you know, we tie it all in. And so, yeah, there's a lot of bespoke kind of support throughout the week. And then there's this kind of more group based work as well. We also have follow up support, from Story Camp.

00:06:09:24 - 00:06:35:22 Speaker 1 So we do have a small amount of budget, allocated to Story Camp for some follow up sessions if teams need it. Or we want it, which can be decided on a 1 to 1 basis. So that's kind of the kaupapa of of story camp. As I said, it's a residential. And the key part of a residential is shutting out the noise from the world around, and getting 4 or 5 days, with your team in a kind of bubble around your project.

00:06:35:22 - 00:06:54:04 Speaker 1 And the reason we encourage writers to come with the other team members, if they can, if they have them, is because then they can, you know, go through the process of the story camp and then out the other side. They've kind of got a common language and a common, point of reference to continue that development on with the rest of the team.

00:06:54:06 - 00:06:58:14 Speaker 1 So that's kind of the overview of what story Camp is.

00:06:58:14 - 00:07:03:22 Speaker 1 is there anything else? I'll just check my little note, make sure I didn't forget anything.

00:07:03:22 - 00:07:31:17 QUESTION Speaker 1 I've talked about the stage of the script. Oh, yeah? The one. The one thing that we often get asked is, what are you looking for? And, I mean, the honest answer is, we don't know. We just know it when we read it. And it's there's an industry panel that, our part of our selection process, along with myself and I would say from last year, the first year that I ran it, certainly the things that pop out, when someone's got a story that telling that one, they have a reason to tell it.

00:07:31:19 - 00:07:58:11 Speaker 1 That reason is really clear with, clearly linked to their perspective on that story, the angle on the story, and then there's something really unique about their voice. There's something really unique about who they are and the way they're telling their story and their angle on that story. That seems to pop out, and you read it and then you can't stop thinking about it, that that's the thing that seems to, resonate for me and certainly for the panelists that I, we brought on last year.

00:07:58:13 - 00:08:17:13 Speaker 1 And that's not to say that, every great project or every a unique project can get through because there's only eight spots. So it's a numbers game as well, unfortunately. But you've got to be into it. So I encourage everyone to come in if you feel this is the right, development process for you. But yeah, it's, it's not easy.

00:08:17:17 - 00:08:25:17 Speaker 1 The odds are never good, but, you've got to be into it. So I encourage you to apply. So. Okay. I'll see you now. That was my bet.

00:08:26:04 - 00:08:30:10 Speaker 1 So I would like to kick us off with the first question. Oh, here we go. More. Got a hand up, I think.

00:08:31:04 - 00:08:49:19 QUESTION: Speaker 3 Sounds fantastic. Do you does the participant have any, choice and who's advising them or are you bespoke? Add a new tailor to the project and the themes and what you think. So is there any input from the participant?

00:08:49:23 - 00:09:08:04 Speaker 1 There is input. Absolutely. So yeah. So what we do is in once we select the teams, we meet with you all, prior to Christmas, and we have a good conversation about what you're looking for as a, you know, both from a project and also your the way you like to work and what, what your values are, what's really important to you.

00:09:08:06 - 00:09:30:18 Speaker 1 And then even at that meeting, I'll probably have some ideas and maybe run some names past you. Because I've already started thinking, as soon as we start reading, I start collecting a list of, potential advisors, for the for the, for for this year. And as I said, it's always bespoke. We, we have had some people that we've used for a number of years and different in different ways.

00:09:30:20 - 00:09:53:11 Speaker 1 And, you know, there are experts in this, in this kind of work. So often they fit, you know, quite a number of different projects, but some projects really do demand a really bespoke team around them. Last year we had a musical, for example, and so I had to find not just musicians, but I had to find people that understood the adaptation process from sea to sea to musical to to film.

00:09:53:11 - 00:10:14:03 Speaker 1 So the lovely John Sheedy from Australia, we got hold of him and brought him on, on, on that project and it worked. He worked for the the Family films as well because he's done a lot of kids and families, family films. So, yeah, so part of it is me working at what's right for you and then working at if I'd be right for other projects, because there's only so many advisors we can have.

00:10:14:05 - 00:10:27:05 Speaker 1 But yeah, definitely. And open to if you've got ideas of people you'd like to work with. Absolutely. Some people come in with, producers who are kind of working a story to editors as well. And that's absolutely. That's fine. Yeah.

00:10:27:07 - 00:10:33:13 QUESTION Speaker 3 Oh, well, it sounds amazing, brilliant and so unique to New Zealand. Did you create this or is this a model that's.

00:10:33:18 - 00:10:51:23 Speaker 1 Not, was a lab. It was was created by Esther, when she was in the role that script to screen. And she's done an amazing job and it's it's evolved over the years. So as I said, this is the 11th iteration of it. What I would say is it is similar in some ways to other development labs around the world and feature film development labs.

00:10:51:23 - 00:11:13:00 Speaker 1 It's taken some of the best elements of of different labs around the world. But I would say certainly in the last 4 or 5 years I've been, around it as a funder previously, it's become more and more uniquely of this land and certainly the way in which sea kind of Maori Moreton that is embedded in the kaupapa of this lab makes it very much from this country.

00:11:13:00 - 00:11:13:15 Speaker 1 Yeah.

00:11:13:21 - 00:11:17:02 Speaker 1 Oh here's another one. Oh yeah. This Keeley at the top.

00:11:17:08 - 00:11:32:12 QUESTION Speaker 3 Mainly it's not only not for the people who have applied and not got in, but what do to you and your team noticed about the project set. Like don't quite get over the line compared to the I also that diff.

00:11:32:14 - 00:11:35:15 Speaker 2 I'm not sure what's common.

00:11:35:17 - 00:12:08:24 Speaker 1 Oh I think I think there's this different groupings I think so some are probably quite early in their, in their development journey and as a result there's not really a clear potentially there's not, not as clear a voice or distinct kind of, perspective on the story. Yet it feels like the stories come out and it's still in that very early formative time where they're trying to find even even trying to find the core narrative of the story.

00:12:08:24 - 00:12:28:03 Speaker 1 It feels slightly objective rather than from a perspective. I think there's this some of some films fall into that grouping. I mean, there are there are, there are films that have fallen. Well, I, I've only been I've only run at one round, but I've obviously funded it for many years as a and in my role at the film Commission.

00:12:28:03 - 00:12:54:16 Speaker 1 But last year there was conversations, around whether projects were actually kind of ready for production. And actually this process of development might not be the best, you know, do they, do they need it, type thing? Not not from a financial point of view, just a it's it feels really, really strong and solid and, and so there are a few that fell into that category and didn't get through.

00:12:54:18 - 00:13:13:13 Speaker 1 A couple did get through or one did get through, but that was because it was clear what the development, needs were like when we went back to the application itself. So and sometimes that can be a subjective conversation that we've got to watch as a panel. Panelists need to, you know, actually, we can't make those decisions.

00:13:13:13 - 00:13:37:17 Speaker 1 If people think they want to do more development, then that's that's actually, and I think the key thing is, you know, I didn't see this last year, but I potentially have seen it over the years of reading different scripts is when it feels like it's not a pastiche necessarily, but it's not really, uniquely you or uniquely your, your perspective on something or your voice.

00:13:37:19 - 00:13:55:07 Speaker 1 And maybe there's a sense of what is the market one or what is someone else want rather than what I want to say, you know? So, like, someone can fall into that space as well. I didn't see that last year. But, and then unfortunately, there's a group of films that should have gone in, but there's only eight spots.

00:13:55:09 - 00:14:01:24 Speaker 1 And so you sit there and argue with your other panelists and you win some arguments and you lose some,

00:14:01:24 - 00:14:10:01 Speaker 1 and you go off and you ring the filmmakers and tell them, sadly, they didn't get in, but you're aware of them and you hope they come back.

00:14:10:03 - 00:14:12:10 Speaker 1 That's the reality.

00:14:13:01 - 00:14:33:11 Speaker 1 Okay, so here's one. What would you consider the duty to do to be the most essential piece of the application material? Is there a piece should encourage us to focus on the script, the timing, the personal connection to the material the statement project needs. Good question. All of the above note I would say. Well, yes or no.

00:14:33:12 - 00:15:00:04 Speaker 1 I think that's the honest answer, I think. So what happens is we read, we read it all, but in the first instance, before we get into a shortlisting, you read the first 20 or so pages of the script and you read all the other material, and that gives you a really good understanding of the story. You know, obviously you read the synopsis so you know the story going to, you the telling and everything, and what they want to do with that.

00:15:00:06 - 00:15:29:07 Speaker 1 And then that first 20 or so pages really gives you a sense of the writing craft of where the project set in terms of craft, but also, the writing craft of the writer themselves. And then, once we make a shortlist, that's when we read the entire script. And so, I would say what's really important is, because of that two stage process, making sure that your 21st 20 pages is, is, you know, the best it can be.

00:15:29:09 - 00:15:45:05 Speaker 1 Because it's going to put your best foot forward, but also that all of your support material really does tell us the core aspects of that film and all of the kind of, the journey it's on in terms of the development needs, because we're going to read that 20 pages with that in mind.

00:15:46:09 - 00:16:10:04 Speaker 1 And I've always found personally when I read and, you know, no scripts are perfect, of course. It's really about what you, what you want to do with the development of it, because it's the development lab. It's not a production lab. So it's very much about what you want to try and achieve out of this process. And I think that's the key thing for most people is, is this the right lab for it?

00:16:10:06 - 00:16:29:11 Speaker 1 Can we help? And do they have a sense of where they're going with it? And, yeah. And then do they have the team or if they're on their own, have they got the ability to get there? But we don't expect an end end result. There's no outcome that we're expecting out of story camp. You know, it'd be great if there's another draft and the majority of films.

00:16:29:11 - 00:16:48:04 Speaker 1 Well, certainly I think it's now 50 or 60 over 50%, probably 60% of the films that have come through in ten years have gone on and got further development finance. So that's a good testament to the process leading to something else. And as I've said in my previous columns, there's nine of the nine of the films have been made, which is great.

00:16:48:06 - 00:16:55:18 Speaker 1 We really want a 10th one to get to double figures, so no pressure. If I want to be, you've got to get in and make your film.

00:16:55:18 - 00:17:16:02 QUESTION Speaker 3 Yeah, I wanted to ask about obviously, it talked a lot about, online about being based in Aotearoa and you spoke about the take on the Māori as part of the process. Is the team also looking for the actual story content itself to be based in Aotearoa? Is that a focus for you guys?

00:17:16:04 - 00:17:38:08 Speaker 1 That's a good question. And not particularly, we are funded by the New Zealand Film Commission, who I need to acknowledge. Thank you very much for the poutine. We're very thankful for now, the elements here. So I guess if as long as it fits within their criteria of a New Zealand film, then that kind of makes sense.

00:17:38:08 - 00:17:59:22 Speaker 1 Now, those films could be set anywhere. They can be, co-productions. So they could be with co-production partners. The UK, Canada, China, you know, India, you know, all the other of a 17 or 18 countries or that could be set on the moon. So it really is about the talent from, from our point of view.

00:17:59:24 - 00:18:27:22 Speaker 1 And if that film qualify, would likely qualify as a New Zealand film under their guidelines. I think that's probably where we need to kind of, operate with them. But once again, because it's a development lab, and it's about the process of that project being developed. The writers, the directors and producers of thorough from here, even if they're not based here without regard as I can be here for the story camp itself, we're able to support them through this lab.

00:18:27:22 - 00:18:30:16 Speaker 1 So, I think there's a bit of a gray area there.

00:18:30:16 - 00:18:32:16 Speaker 1 Where is your film set currently?

00:18:32:16 - 00:18:34:18 Speaker 3 It's set in England. Yeah.

00:18:34:20 - 00:18:39:04 Speaker 1 I've got co-production agreements with that, so that's okay.

00:18:39:04 - 00:19:10:13 QUESTION Speaker 1 Oh, here we go. Have the book adaptations been used in this development camp or are they in the wrong place yet? No, they're definitely not in the wrong place. Yes, they have been previously and was last year. Last year was I think they were all plays actually, that were being adapted. But the year before, we had a novelist actually, first time screenwriter, but she was adapting her own novel, and her writing partner was there with her.

00:19:10:15 - 00:19:28:06 Speaker 1 And previously she had been an advisor, a few years before that, as a novelist who's advising on different stories. So. Yeah, absolutely. And adaptation is a big conversation we're having in the industry. So yeah, the more more we can talk about this and the more projects that we can develop in this space, the better.

00:19:28:06 - 00:19:48:15 Speaker 1 So absolutely. Key. Would it be Michael? Would it be an adaptation of your own work or an adaptation of someone else's work? Because I guess the question then is if you don't have the well, if you have the rights to it, that's

fine. But if you don't, then you'd need to have those in place before you'd come to the camp.

00:19:48:19 - 00:19:59:20 Speaker 1 Yeah. Okay. So you've got the contract in place, correct? Okay, good. Yes. It's always evolving. So it's the following thing. But yeah, we just want to make sure that you.

00:20:01:12 - 00:20:17:03 Speaker 1 Yeah, you have the right rights and in place to be able to develop it and utilize that, the time and the money and the resources that we're putting into it. So, yeah, we can have a chat about that if you want as well.

00:20:17:05 - 00:20:18:01 Speaker 2 Cool.

00:20:18:01 - 00:20:42:12 QUESTION Speaker 1 Is there a spread of genres each year? Yes. James. Yeah, it tends to be. Certainly in the application pool there. There's a pretty good spread of. Well, there was last year. And that is part of the consideration we, we take when we're looking at trying to get the final eight is have we got a good spread of different types of projects?

00:20:42:14 - 00:21:03:21 Speaker 1 It's not, a major decision making because you're not working together. You might do some, group work, but the bespoke 1 to 1 stuff is literally the project and an adviser. So, and sometimes grouping them together, I if this is your genre that certain advisers are really, really, experts and then that could be quite useful.

00:21:03:23 - 00:21:28:20 Speaker 1 For example, as I said last year, we had, we had, see the translations and, we'll kind of family films. So we had a grouping in that space. So that was quite interesting to find advisers in that space. But we normally get a pretty good, pretty good range. Yeah. We're getting more genre films coming through more, I guess traditional genre films coming through and also in or in general, I would say.

00:21:28:22 - 00:21:33:00 Speaker 1 So that's quite interesting. Not getting as many comedies actually.

00:21:33:04 - 00:21:34:17 Speaker 2 Which is interesting.

00:21:34:19 - 00:21:45:08 Speaker 1 But we're not feeling as funny at the moment, which is understandable given the state of the world. But, yeah, not quite as many comedies. I would say.

00:21:45:16 - 00:22:08:10 QUESTION Speaker 1 Is it frowned upon? If we don't have a producer? No, not at all. So writers can come in on their own. It is a writers lab, after all. And in fact, in previous iterations, probably 4 or 5 years ago and before, producers

weren't really encouraged to come. It was very much focused on writers. But I think it was, the number of years there was a conversation that was had around.

00:22:08:10 - 00:22:32:22 Speaker 1 Hang on. It feels like, especially for writers that are deep diving into the story development and, tethering themselves a little bit, that then the poor producer picks them up at the end of the week and goes, oh, we're heading in this direction now. That's interesting. So, so, so then, you know, this idea of inviting producers and, and to be involved in the journey was, was kind of taken on, but no, it's not frowned upon at all.

00:22:32:22 - 00:22:56:13 Speaker 1 We had two writers last year that were writing only bits. They didn't have producers and absolutely fine. And you know, from our marketing, our perspective, certainly, we make sure we look out for those writers and just check in on them a bit more than maybe the others, because they haven't got team members around them to be, you know, just, sounding, you know, sounding out things and sounding board kind of approach.

00:22:56:15 - 00:23:12:21 Speaker 1 Throughout the week because it's really quite intense. But yeah, no, it doesn't doesn't matter if you've got a team or not. What we do say is that the producers may not be in every session with you, like it's up to the right of the adviser and the producer to work out which sessions they go to.

00:23:12:23 - 00:23:34:07 Speaker 1 And sometimes it's better for producers to actually stick up and allow those writers and those advisers to have those conversations they need to have, you know, they're are really, effective in any way around logistics or around around, the feasibility of something at the moment. You know, it's really purely just the creative conversation. And then other times, you know, it's it's really appropriate that they're in the whole time.

00:23:34:10 - 00:23:56:08 QUESTION Speaker 1 Okay, here we go. Or because if you've already have some ideas about what the weaknesses are, your story. Would you just pitch the synopsis as it currently stands, but then outline the kind of changes you'd make in the statement about we need to story camp? If I'm understanding, yes, I think that's a good idea. You'd still need to provide a script if you've got one.

00:23:56:10 - 00:24:17:13 Speaker 1 Because we're going to need to read the script at some point. But I think what has worked quite well for people is and I reckon we recognize that there's a time, you know, like we're talking September now, you know, March is the lab. You can have a whole other draft for them, you know, so or even, you know, two.

00:24:17:15 - 00:24:37:06 Speaker 1 So there is a we got to kind of agree to cut off time for the final script that you want us to, assess. So we really do encourage you to try and

make that your application one. If you get shortlisted, there is the potential that we could, talk to you and go, actually, if you've got another version, you could give it to us now,

00:24:37:06 - 00:25:11:01 Speaker 1 Otherwise it delays the whole process. So where possible, the application script should be the script that you're submitting. But absolutely, if you think there's some areas that you really want to develop and, you know, you would you think that that's the area of weakness, then just speak to that. And, you know, even if you put holding, if you've got scenes that are holding scenes within the middle of the film, the end of the film that say, you know, more synopsis based scenes, here's this, this, this, this, this happens, this happens the second, because I haven't actually fleshed this out yet, because I still need to get it.

00:25:11:03 - 00:25:24:17 Speaker 1 That's absolutely fine. People can people can read past it and go, oh yeah, I can see where you're going. As I said, the the, the key thing is we get a sense of the craft of the writer, and what the story potential is.

00:25:24:17 - 00:25:30:18 QUESTION Speaker 1 do assessors look for projects to fill slots with the family of genres? No, no, not at all.

00:25:32:09 - 00:25:55:09 Speaker 1 No, that's definitely not what they do. They read them pretty much. Clean. I always encourage people to start with the script first, but, you know, I can't I can't force that. But, I tend to just want to start reading the script first, and get a sense of the story as it would, unfold for me as a, as a viewer.

00:25:55:11 - 00:26:13:08 Speaker 1 But no, they're not looking for, you know, different, different types of films are pretty much just fighting for the, the ones that really pop to them and really resonate with them. And that's why we get different advisors every year, and that's why we have industry people. So we'll have three industry people and myself, reading.

00:26:13:08 - 00:26:31:11 Speaker 1 And then I'll bring in, other specific readers if, if and when I think we need them for, different representational reasons. And so, yeah, what my experience is people read and just go, these, these are my top ones, and they can all be quite similar. Or they could be genre, quite different.

00:26:31:11 - 00:26:32:13 Speaker 2 down.

00:26:32:15 - 00:26:37:24 Speaker 1 Oh here we go. Oh, yes. Tom. Hello, Tom. You may have already answered this, but I'm curious about.

00:26:38:01 - 00:26:39:19 QUESTION Speaker 2 Those people who are, a part of the camp and then post, post the camp, the the advisors stay engaged with them for a

period of time. Is it kind of is it like a facilitation process where there's regular chickens or anything like that, or is it kind of just this is the week you've got what you need, go off and write it.

00:26:57:14 - 00:26:59:17 Speaker 1 Not just chickens from us.

00:26:59:19 - 00:27:22:23 Speaker 1 So we, we get hold of the, the cohort and check in how they're going. We're not we're not asking for another, another vision or anything like that. Another draft. Often what happens then is an advisor or a, a participant will reach out and say, actually, I've been talking to you, Vincent. I've been talking to Sophie or whoever, or Cass.

00:27:23:00 - 00:27:40:23 Speaker 1 And I'd love another session with them. And I can then go. Yeah, we've got some budget to pay for their time, to do another session or two. So and that's, that's happened, with, I think two people from last year, and the year before, I think we had about four people, ready to do that.

00:27:40:23 - 00:27:59:01 Speaker 1 And sometimes it's leading up to something like a, a development funding application to the film Commission. So they just want maybe a bit more of support in that space. And other times it's, it's yeah, it's just I want them to read the, the, the draft that come out of the story camp and take it to the next day.

00:27:59:05 - 00:28:21:11 Speaker 1 So. Yeah. So it's it's informal, but it's through us. So yeah, we, we can, we can help facilitate it. And actually, one person from last year, it was a different advisor. So it wasn't the main advisor, it was someone else that hadn't been an advisor for the for the project. But they got to know them over the week and they knew about the project, and they both agreed that, you know, it might be interesting to have their perspective on it.

00:28:21:13 - 00:28:24:06 Speaker 1 Okay, cool. Amazing. Thanks.

00:28:24:06 - 00:28:31:04 QUESTION Speaker 1 with the submission PDF document. Do you want a full page document, images, title colors, etc. with the two preferred?

00:28:31:04 - 00:28:56:05 Speaker 1 Just a simple document instead. That is a good question. I like an image or two. But that's just because I think, you know, I'm a visually, focused person. I don't we don't need a full prop. We really don't need. It's not it's not a production funding. So we're really there will be more words than pictures.

00:28:56:07 - 00:29:14:07 Speaker 1 Unfortunately. I had the stage. But I think, where images are useful is. Yeah. Is in that in that tone, in terms of just even just placing me in the word, even just a, a key image or two is it is enough sometimes.

00:29:14:07 - 00:29:27:23 Speaker 1 Don't go. Don't think you have to do a whole pitch document at all because that's not that's not what it's about. But anything that helps bring the reader into your world and your emotional journey.

00:29:28:00 - 00:29:28:15 Speaker 2 Is really.

00:29:28:15 - 00:29:30:08 Speaker 1 Helpful.

00:29:30:08 - 00:29:49:21 Speaker 1 And this is just a personal thing. I just read a script the other day, not for this, but for, something else. It was a short film, actually. And, this is my personal take. Not everyone has this take, but technical writing doesn't help me. So cut to zoom and close up that, because it takes me out of my heart and into my head.

00:29:49:21 - 00:30:08:21 Speaker 1 So I'm thinking of the camera movement, and I'm not thinking of the character or the moment that you're taking me, the journey you're taking on. And that's just a personal, preference for me. But I was with Brian Graysmith. Great writer, of course. She was leading the workshop, and she, she, TikTok with that comment.

00:30:08:21 - 00:30:30:21 Speaker 1 So I thought, oh, well, I'm not alone. So. And it is just, I just noticed that with myself when I'm reading and if it becomes technical, not so much, you know, the slow fades or those kind of things if we need those for a bit of style. But actually, any camera movements or any kind of camera, direction within a script doesn't it doesn't help me.

00:30:30:21 - 00:31:09:15 Speaker 1 It just puts me in my head. I don't want to be in my head when I'm reading a script. It's not like she's okay. Why? Lame. What is the age range of the adviser's? A question for Gen Z story and or themes. Good question. Well, because it's bespoke, they can be any age or any, range. If you look at our website, you can probably see, the majority, a probably I'd hate to put an age on them, I don't know, they probably are a bit on the older side into 40 plus maybe 50 plus some of them, some of them a bit younger.

00:31:09:17 - 00:31:37:23 Speaker 1 We had some younger ones last year. But once again, we're going to, we're going to find the right advisors for the, for the project. So if Gen Z or, other generations are important, then that's what we'd have to go and find the right people for. What? What I do find is, in terms of writing, craft, structure, different aspects of the writing.

00:31:38:00 - 00:32:05:05 Speaker 1 There are certain people that are really, really good at that, and then there are really good people who are great at the story, the same, and the world, and they're not always the same people. Sometimes they are, but sometimes

they're not. And sometimes you don't know, like last year we had, the amazing. Well, we ended, over a number of projects who's a great filmmaker in his own right and visual, visual artist as well as an amazing academic.

00:32:05:07 - 00:32:29:13 Speaker 1 But actually, what I kind of knew, but didn't know as well as I maybe could have is that he had a personal connection to one of the projects I put on him on. He had the technical craft and the artistic craft for the project, but I didn't have as much of an insight as I maybe should have, that he actually had a lived experience of that project as well, which was huge and hugely insightful for that, for that team.

00:32:29:15 - 00:32:46:24 Speaker 1 So sometimes that happened. Chances can happen. But the instinct was he was right for one aspect of the project. And actually it became, much more influential than I ever expected. So, yeah. I hope that answers your question. Well, but we can find some Z's.

00:32:46:24 - 00:32:59:19 QUESTION Speaker 1 Have any of the realized films through this form being sold to an international market? Well, is that one misinformation?

00:33:03:17 - 00:33:08:22 Speaker 1 Well, I'll have a look. I'll have a look.

00:33:08:24 - 00:33:29:12 Speaker 1 I can think of three that have been sold. Well, I think I can think of actually, most of them have gone to an international market, i.e. festival market. But I can think of three that, at least three that I can think of that have sold and been released theatrically into international markets. But I will check them out.

00:33:30:11 - 00:33:34:00 QUESTION Speaker 4 How many applications do you receive?

00:33:34:02 - 00:33:57:18 Speaker 1 Good question. So up to about 50. I think that's been the kind of 40 to 50, maybe sometimes 60. Last year we ended up I think it was just under 50. We ended up with, it was quite a few that got in touch. And because the dates are slightly shifted, well, it was quicker.

00:33:57:20 - 00:34:08:01 Speaker 1 The turnaround was quicker from the year before, there was quite a few projects that weren't quite ready. I didn't feel ready, but yeah, it was a bit under 50 last last year, but it's normally around around the 50, 50 to 60.

00:34:08:07 - 00:34:16:07 Speaker 4 And and the projects who got who didn't get in. And do you actually sent them a like a feedback or something like that. Like hey why they didn't get in.

00:34:16:09 - 00:34:34:21 Speaker 1 We do we let everyone know, obviously that yeah, if they've been successful or not. We then we take a note of all of the meetings we have, and we've got a high level kind of bullet points. You know, here's, here's a couple of things that came out of the meeting that said the positive, you know, this is what was working for people.

00:34:34:21 - 00:34:58:16 Speaker 1 And he has a couple of areas of, you might want to work on so we can find those out. We can send those out. What I prefer is actually to have a conversation with people because, there's a lot more nuance that goes on in those conversations and the considerations that's possibly more useful for people. So what I did last year was I met with the majority of, I think probably about 30 different applicants.

00:34:58:16 - 00:35:16:23 Speaker 1 I think I just people reached out and I just kind of had meetings with them. And it was quite good for me too, because then I'm finding out more about where the projects come from, where it's at. You know, some people that dusting a project off from, you know, a few years ago and, and it felt a bit like that, you know, it didn't feel as, as current or contemporary at other times.

00:35:17:00 - 00:35:33:13 Speaker 1 You know, it's it's very early in their journey. So. Yeah, but we do we try and give feedback. What what is had I found with feedback is the moment you write it down, people kind of and I'm myself included. I include myself in this. We kind of pull apart all of those words to work out, you know, what really happened.

00:35:33:16 - 00:35:49:13 Speaker 1 And it's you can read all sorts of things into things. And some people have said, oh, that was he hated my project. I'm not. Did you not read the feedback? The feedback is quite positive. So yeah. Well, you know, with sensitive souls I was creative. So, you know, I can't avoid it. So I think it's better to have a conversation.

00:35:49:15 - 00:35:58:12 Speaker 4 And also, how many times a reader, like how many readers read one script, like once one reader per script or how many not.

00:35:58:12 - 00:36:19:19 Speaker 1 So we read them all. So, basically the four of us read all the applications. Yeah. These are the only reason that someone won't is if they have a conflict of interest. So they declare any conflicts as soon as they, see the list of people and projects. There's a way in which we manage those conflicts and they basically say, hang on, I know that person too well.

00:36:19:21 - 00:36:37:13 Speaker 1 Or actually that project I've been involved in a previous life or whatever. And so they, they swap out and often then we'll work out whether we bring someone else in to make sure it's all even the amount of readers we

have, or I will become the default reader of all of those and make sure that I've been across those.

00:36:37:15 - 00:37:00:01 Speaker 1 And then the three externals, fine. But yeah, we read it all. That's why we only read the first 20. Well, I say that 2020 or so pages, but some scripts are great and so you're into it and you're like, oh, I'm into 50 pages, or I might as well just read the whole thing, you know, I did the quite a bit last year, but we only really have the capacity because we don't have a lot of money for our readers, our assessors.

00:37:00:03 - 00:37:20:11 Speaker 1 We only we have the capacity for them to read the shortlist. And we shortlist. Last year I think it was about 16 maybe we went to 18. So just, you know, you got a 5050 chance. Basically if you get shortlisted, but yeah, you know, if we don't get if we don't get 50, if we get 30, then I guess you could read them all.

00:37:20:11 - 00:37:24:14 Speaker 1 But 50 to 60 is quite a lot to read.

00:37:24:16 - 00:37:25:01 Speaker 2 Thank you.

00:37:25:06 - 00:37:26:11 Speaker 1 Oh, thank you.

00:37:26:13 - 00:37:30:15 Speaker 1 Few people have. And here we go. Maybe I missed this,

00:37:30:15 - 00:37:52:23 Speaker 1 if you spoke. Not already, but could you speak to the day to day agenda? Yeah, of course. Now, I didn't really go into that. So the day to day agenda is, it changes across the week, but basically, in short, the 1 to 1 sessions, from memory are an hour and a half, two hours.

00:37:53:00 - 00:38:11:23 Speaker 1 Apart from the acting one, which sometimes is a double, so it becomes a three hour session depending on how we're doing it, because sometimes that can that, that needs a little bit more time. So generally an hour and a half, two hour session with an advisor. And you'll have I'm imagining the, the grid I had to create last year.

00:38:12:00 - 00:38:31:17 Speaker 1 I think you'll have four of those across a day. 3 or 4, depending if we do a group exercise at some point in the day. So the first day, we start with maybe facto welcome and, an opening circle, which is really around, just meeting each other and finding out more about you and your projects.

00:38:31:23 - 00:38:51:24 Speaker 1 So we do a bit of a sharing in that space around the projects themselves. And then in the evening, last year, 3 or 4 teams had their first one to ones and the other teams kind of had an evening, off, if you like. And then the next

day, if by the lunch of the next day, everyone's had the first one to ones with their, main advisor.

00:38:52:01 - 00:39:14:11 Speaker 1 And then you carry on that process throughout the week. So you have these 1.5 hour to, sessions, story sessions with different advisors, and then peppered within that we have these group exercises or group workshops. So last year we did an amazing one with our Kai total who took on the Ahmadi, support person.

00:39:14:16 - 00:39:30:14 Speaker 1 Anahita go there. So she did a session on the connection between the Finola and story, and it was really, really fascinating for people to, you know, it was a two hour session on that and the middle of the Wednesday or something, and then they go back into the one to ones carry on with that. The evening we might do a screening of a film.

00:39:30:14 - 00:39:52:08 Speaker 1 We did a talk as I said, with, with Vincent Ward about, about vigil and his career, really. And then we watched vigil, which is amazing. And then the following night we did a talk around, adaptation from theater to film, and we had, Brian Graysmith, we had Philip Philip a Campbell, and we had John Sheedy, who was one of the advisors who'd done that work as well and come from theater.

00:39:52:10 - 00:40:11:12 Speaker 1 So we do these great things. We do these one, two ones. You'll have, as I said, 3 or 4 advisors across the week last year, some, some projects had 5 or 6 advisors because they really want some bespoke kind of support in different areas. And then we have a wrap up on the final day. Fun morning.

00:40:11:14 - 00:40:30:00 Speaker 1 And because everyone's staying on site, it does allow for evening kind of, you know, we obviously all eat together. We all kind of, spend time together. And the location itself has some great breakout spaces. It's in the middle of the woods. People go for a nice walk in the morning and, and, you know, in the evening and stuff like that.

00:40:30:00 - 00:40:49:22 Speaker 1 So it's a, it's a really amazing environment to do that. But that's pretty much it. So you've got the The Advisor sessions throughout the, throughout the four days and then these, these group sessions, that, that you can join in on some people, because of what they need or whatever may say, actually, I just want to dial off a bit tonight.

00:40:49:22 - 00:41:10:24 Speaker 1 I'm not going to sit in and do the panel, you know, sit in on that panel discussion. I need to actually decompress and and get into quiet space. And that's absolutely fine as well. So yeah, we make it work. We really encourage people to stay on site if they can. Because it does build a really great, incubation, you know, space for everyone.

00:41:11:01 - 00:41:30:22 Speaker 1 But also recognizing the last year we had, you know, we had someone who had a young child and basically said, look, I need to go home each night. I was like, well, okay, we'll make that work. So we did. And someone's reached out actually this year about that as well. So and on that, you know, we've gone to if, if people do have childcare or other access, requirement needs, then just let us know.

00:41:30:22 - 00:41:36:12 Speaker 1 We can we can work out how we can help, you know, financially as well as in terms of the scheduling

00:41:37:20 - 00:41:56:15 QUESTION Speaker 3 So I can I follow on from that. So but more brainstorming and talking about the story structure and everything. It doesn't sound like there's that much time for actual writing. So you're not going to see an assessor, also an advisor, the next time you've gone away at night and done some writing, you show them or something like.

00:41:56:17 - 00:42:20:14 Speaker 1 Some, some, some advisors are like that, a task based and go, okay, here's an exercise and we're going to a writing exercise. And others are more I guess. Yeah. Questioning based advisor. So basically asking a key, a key amount of questions or a key question and that just unlocks all sorts of things, and becomes a conversation.

00:42:20:16 - 00:42:39:04 Speaker 1 Yeah. And it also depends on your style as well. Some writers don't like writing in that kind of, environment. Like it's actually not about the writing. It's actually about the, the story development, and the possibilities of things. And then they go away and others certainly every night, are sitting there at their laptop going, hang on.

00:42:39:04 - 00:42:50:24 Speaker 1 I just, I got to get all this and I'm going to get this done. So it really is up to you and your advisors and, and working out as well. How the advisor works best in you work best as well. That's why the matching is so important.

00:42:51:24 - 00:43:11:05 Speaker 1 And yeah. And, and I'm around the whole time. So we have conversations all the time around. How's it going? You know, is there anything we can tweak, you know, for the final session your your lead advisor, if you like. You'll see at the beginning and at the end of the of the week, I'm looking at whether or not we put another one in the middle.

00:43:11:07 - 00:43:31:20 Speaker 1 It's just not enough time in four days. That's 4 or 5 days. I need to increase the day. But yeah. So, some people have said that to us on reflection on the feedback that it might be good to go deeper with one person for longer. So yeah, we'll, we'll look at whether that's a possibility.

00:43:31:22 - 00:43:32:13 Speaker 3 Oh.

00:43:32:15 - 00:43:35:12 Speaker 2 I sent that. Thank you.

00:43:35:14 - 00:44:03:11 QUESTION Speaker 1 Okay. I've got one here. Okay. So what's the cost? So, well, there's a, admin cost to apply, which is \$30, I think. That's it, that's it. It doesn't cost you anything if you're selected. It's all paid for, so it's paid for by, the film commission, which is lovely. So yes, we will, if you're out of Auckland, will fund your travel to Auckland.

00:44:03:13 - 00:44:17:13 Speaker 1 And the cost of staying at the camp is all paid for. You get great catering with a great caterer, local guy that comes around. She's amazing. Mary. She's amazing. And, Yeah, it's all. It's all covered. So that's the lovely thing about the film version.

00:44:17:13 - 00:44:25:22 Speaker 1 It's not you have your own room, you know, all that stuff. So. Yeah. You don't need to worry about that. You know, staying in tents,

00:44:25:22 - 00:44:39:12 Speaker 1 but some people stay a little bit off site, like some producers, for example, we've put a group of producers in one of the houses, and just down the road, and then we just ferry them back and forth and stuff like that, because there's not quite enough room for everyone.

00:44:39:14 - 00:44:59:21 Speaker 1 It's we have the full eight teams and you know, there's, a writer or. Right, a slash director, producer or two or something. So we have to put people elsewhere. But yeah, most people stand site and we stay on site as well. So two of us from, script to screen stay on site. And then we have a number of volunteers that come in each day.

00:44:59:21 - 00:45:03:00 QUESTION Speaker 1 Oh, here we go. How much do you consider the run is past achievements?

00:45:03:00 - 00:45:05:16 Speaker 2 Curtis Winslet not,

00:45:05:18 - 00:45:49:11 Speaker 1 Not I will definitely not. The last bit. Would not having made a feature before limit your chances? No. Doesn't come into that at all. Truthfully, I yeah. Truthfully, I don't think we really do, consider it that much. I guess in the final mix, when you when I think about the final decision making of the final, like eight films or eight teams, if you like, it comes into it then in the sense that, I guess where we're looking at, we as the project, we as the likely likelihood of it being made at some point, how realistic is that?

00:45:49:13 - 00:46:04:04 Speaker 1 Given the, given the film, given the scale of the film, given the aspirations of the film, how likely is it to get made with those people attached? So that's when it possibly comes into, being relevant

00:46:04:04 - 00:46:08:18 Speaker 1 So, yeah. So I think that's where it comes in, but it doesn't it doesn't rule you out.

00:46:08:20 - 00:46:23:00 Speaker 1 If you haven't, if you've got no credits at all. Because ultimately it's about the script development and softness. If there's a great story there and it's a unique voice and perspective, then I suspect you're gonna you're gonna have a fighting chance to get through.

00:46:23:00 - 00:46:48:08 Speaker 1 But because it's a development layer, honestly, it's about the, it's about the possibility of that project and the perspective and unique voice of the project. First and foremost, sci fi and certainly doesn't, stop you if you haven't made a feature film. That's irrelevant. That's completely irrelevant, because often people haven't made a feature film before and they're coming in, but be aware that you are in I mean, this is why it is competitive.

00:46:48:10 - 00:47:07:24 Speaker 1 You are in the mix with people who have and who have, you know, written feature films before and, and are there for success. Draft of the feature film of this feature film. So, it is competitive in that space, you know, like you are competing against, you know, people who are out there doing it. So but once again, got to be into an.

00:47:08:13 - 00:47:11:21 QUESTION Speaker 3 Like, have you chosen the date and march it?

00:47:11:23 - 00:47:20:06 Speaker 1 Yes, we have, yes. I think it might be on the website now. Yeah. So it's the 16th Monday, the 16th to the 20th of March.

00:47:20:08 - 00:47:21:03 Speaker 2 Okay.

00:47:21:05 - 00:47:39:04 Speaker 1 Two reasons. One, last year it was, I think either the in the feeble the beginning of March, I can't quite remember, but it was roughly a week or two before. It's a little bit tight. The turnaround from like because as we know, New Zealand is a nightmare on Christmas New Year. It's all until the middle of February.

00:47:39:04 - 00:47:56:15 Speaker 1 It's kind of asleep. So getting even, just having conversations with advisers and things. I can have some before Christmas, but and I can lock in some certain certain people, of course, but it's really New Year kind of focus to try and lock people in once they know the diary. So, we just pushed it out a little bit.

00:47:56:15 - 00:48:11:08 Speaker 1 And the second thing is, if we are bringing in Australians, which we often do, I was looking at what else is happening around the country at that time, and modeling is happening the following week in March. So I thought, oh, actually, that might be interesting to bring

00:48:11:08 - 00:48:14:18 Speaker 1 advisors over from Australia, and then they could stay on for modeling if they wanted to.

00:48:14:20 - 00:48:22:20 Speaker 1 So I was just trying to, Thailand with that. So last year, just so you know, we had an Australian team in there. So we actually had nine teams in that

00:48:22:20 - 00:48:29:06 Speaker 1 in the mix. And that, Australian team was sponsored by Vic Screen and Melbourne, the state agency, the

00:48:29:06 - 00:48:39:03 Speaker 1 The idea behind that is to bring Australians in and create some collaboration within the lab itself so we can, creatively connect with, Australian talent.

00:48:39:03 - 00:48:48:17 Speaker 1 But also to get the state agencies to be aware of this lab and the projects that are in it, because a number of your projects might be looking for, I don't know, co-production, finance out of Australia.

00:48:48:19 - 00:49:00:02 Speaker 1 And state agencies in Australia, we don't have the equivalent here. We've just got our, you know, obviously our, our federal government one which is the Film Commission, which operates kind of as a state and, and a nation, I guess, and

00:49:00:04 - 00:49:09:05 Speaker 1 So yeah. Seems to work last year. So they're not taking a New Zealand team away, you know, like a place away. It's always added.

00:49:09:05 - 00:49:11:20 Speaker 1 But yeah, just it worked really well last year.

00:49:11:20 - 00:49:13:21 Speaker 1 Anything else? Any other.

00:49:13:23 - 00:49:17:05 Speaker 2 Questions?

00:49:17:07 - 00:49:44:06 QUESTION Speaker 1 So timeline. We obviously we did 1st September then I can't remember. Probably a month of reading. I think we allow for, the first rate and, so what's there October we would kind of be shortlisting and then it's from October to we try and get it done before Christmas. The, the selection process. So then we can have a meeting with you all, that have been selected kind of the second I think first or second week of December.

00:49:44:08 - 00:50:01:23 Speaker 1 Just so I can get a really good sense of the type of advisers you need, and feedback. My thoughts, because I will have read it twice by then anyway. So I'll, I'll be having some ideas about some advisers we've used before or different people I know. And then and that's a good time. You know, we had it last year.

00:50:01:23 - 00:50:17:11 Speaker 1 I'm sure there was a couple of projects that just said, oh, actually, you know, I've, we've worked with that person before and they're really good. But, you know, I feel like we've got to the end of the road on that, on, on the angle. So maybe we, we want to go in a different direction. So it's really good to have that 1 to 1 time.

00:50:17:13 - 00:50:21:21 Speaker 1 And then as I said, we will come back in March.

00:50:21:21 - 00:50:34:17 Speaker 1 anyone that wants to come in this year that wants to have a specific conversation about something you're worried about or you're not quite sure about, and happy to just drop us an email and, and we'll organize a time to meet that problem.

00:50:34:17 - 00:50:39:04 Speaker 1 great. Thank you very much. Thank you for coming. Really appreciate you.

00:50:40:16 - 00:51:01:02 Speaker 1 Joining the hui and, being interested in the story can, if there are other things that script the screen of doing that you're really interested in, then obviously get in touch. We've got a couple of other programs that are live at the moment. One we developed, we've got a new program for script development for, deaf, disabled and neurodiverse, creatives that we've just, advertised recently.

00:51:01:02 - 00:51:16:05 Speaker 1 We're just raising a little bit more money, more money for that. And planning. But we'll roll that out soon. And yeah, hopefully the next few weeks we'll find out what other programs have been funded and we can let you know. But, we look forward to seeing your applications come in on story camp. So thank you very much.

00:51:16:07 - 00:51:22:12 Speaker 1 Great to see you. Nice to see some smiling faces and, have a great have a great week.

00:51:22:14 - 00:51:24:04 Speaker 2 Marketing.