



**ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA AND THE OTHER FILM FESTIVAL  
APPLAUD SCREEN AUSTRALIA'S ACCESS INITIATIVE**

14 June 2011: Arts Access Victoria and The Other Film Festival welcome the announcement by Screen Australia that all feature films funded by the federal screen agency after 1 July 2011 must now be delivered with audio description in addition to captions.

This announcement is great news for the 600,000 Australians who are blind or experience vision impairment. This initiative is a significant step forward in recognising that people with a disability have the right to enjoy screen culture on an equal basis with all members of the community.

The cost of providing captioning and audio description is under \$8,000 and represents one quarter of one percent of the total cost of an average Australian feature film, placing this requirement well within the reach of all filmmakers.

With an investment of \$8,000 per film, filmmakers will deliver access to a potential new audience of 600,000. If one adds the 4 million Australians who are deaf or hard of hearing and rely on captions to enjoy going to the cinema, this represents extraordinary value to the Australian film industry.

We strongly encourage Screen Australia to expand on this initiative to include documentaries, animation and new media. These productions also deserve the broadest audience possible, as indeed people with sensory impairments also deserve the opportunity to enjoy these productions.

We also encourage Screen Australia to consider how they will support producers and distributors to ensure that back catalogues of past productions are released in accessible formats.

Screen Australia's announcement is particularly timely given the success of the recent national campaign Action on Cinema Access for people with sensory impairments (deaf, hard of hearing, blind and vision impaired).

Three major exhibitors (Village, Hoyts, and Greater Union) announced last year that they were rolling out new equipment ensuring that by 2014 around 20% of all screenings would be accessible and that every complex would have at least one accessible screen.

Australia's only disability film festival, The Other Film Festival is recognised internationally for its commitment to outstanding cinema concerned with the experience of disability. It is equally recognised for providing exemplary levels of cinema access and supporting the aspirations of all people with a disability to participate across all areas of screen culture.

Presented by Arts Access Victoria, The Other Film Festival takes place in August 2012.

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

Catherine Leos

Direct **03 8640 6017** Email [cleos@artsaccess.com.au](mailto:cleos@artsaccess.com.au)

[www.artsaccess.com.au](http://www.artsaccess.com.au)

Arts Access Victoria acknowledges the support of Arts Victoria, Australia Council for the Arts and Department of Human Services

