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SCREEN AUSTRALIA AND SCREEN QUEENSLAND THROW SUPPORT BEHIND SEVEN'S PAUL HOGAN PROJECT

Both Screen Australia and Screen Queensland have confirmed significant funding for the upcoming Paul Hogan biographical project from FremantleMedia Australia (FMA) for Channel Seven.

This funding approval from both federal and state bodies highlights the cultural significance of the project and the commitment of Screen Australia and Screen Queensland to producing high quality, internationally recognised content out of Australia.

This project is the intimate story of how an Aussie tradie from the wrong-side-of-the-tracks evolves into an Oscar-nominated superstar. It will explore the factors that shaped the success of Paul Hogan – and at what cost this success might have come.

Kevin Carlin, whose amazing body of work includes *Wentworth* and Seven's upcoming miniseries *Molly*, will direct the Paul Hogan project. The script is by Keith Thompson (*The Sapphires*) and Marieke Hardy (*Packed To The Rafters*, *The Family Law*). FMA's Director of Drama and Executive Producer, Jo Porter, has assembled an enviable creative team, with shooting set to commence early next year.

Casting of the much-coveted lead role is underway and highly contested.

Seven's Head of Drama, Julie McGauran, said, "From INXS and Milat to Peter Allen and soon Molly, Seven is proud to tell compelling Australian stories. The Paul Hogan project will be a celebration of a beloved icon; an Aussie battler with a larrikin heart who experienced an unexpected, unprecedented rise to international stardom."

FMA's Director of Drama and Executive Producer, Jo Porter, said, "In Kevin, Keith and Marieke we have the perfect combination of creative talent to explore this complex, smart man who helped define Australia's identity, first on our local television screens and then on the world's cinematic stage. It is going to be a revealing, heartwarming story that will really get audiences talking. We are extremely grateful to the support of Screen Australia and Screen Queensland in bringing this to life."

Screen Australia CEO, Graeme Mason, said, "Screen Australia is delighted to be partnering with FremantleMedia Australia and Channel Seven on this project about an Australian legend. Audiences have shown their great support for projects about or inspired by our local icons, and Paul Hogan definitely fits the bill. 2016 is going to be a brilliant year for Australian television."

Screen Queensland CEO, Tracey Vieira, said, "Screen Queensland is thrilled to be to be partnering with FremantleMedia Australia, Channel Seven and Screen Australia and investing in this production which will create jobs for Queensland crew. The cultural significance of Hoges' story, a man who took the brand of Australia international; along with the economic significance with employment and upskilling opportunities being afforded to Queensland talent, makes this an important investment for SQ. We are committed to growing quality domestic production in our state, especially television drama, as well as helping Australian stories get told on screen and this is a true celebration of one of Australia's most beloved and internationally recognised personalities."

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