



## Spada Emerging Filmmakers Resource

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The Spada Emerging Filmmakers Resource has been created to help writers and directors connect with producers for collaborations and screen projects.

If you're looking for a producer, we've highlighted below – **'Working with a Producer'** - a few tips to help you on your way to forming strong and productive partnerships with your producer.

This resource also includes the **Emerging Producers List**. Each of the producers on this list have completed the 2019 and 2022 WIFTNZ / Spada Emerging Producers Intensive, or the 2021 Spada / NZWG 'Creative Collaboration in Action Programme, and has a solid foundation of the skills and knowledge required to bring a screen project to life.

### **'Working with a Producer'**

#### **What does a producer do?**

Understanding everyone's role is key to building a mutually respectful and productive working relationship.

We often hear of people who have got their project so far, and then simply want to find a producer to attach to their submission to satisfy funding requirements. A producer is much more than just attaching someone to your application.

A producer:

- drives the project - it is their job to get the film made
- brings all the various components together (e.g. finance, cast, crew)
- is responsible for the delivery of the film in the agreed style & at the specified running time
- is responsible for the budget and all personnel
- is usually 'first on & last off' - working from development to exhibition/distribution.

Acclaimed Producer Catherine Fitzgerald (ONZM) of [Blueskin Films](#) ((PUNCH, COMING HOME IN THE DARK, THE ORATOR) has kindly compiled a comprehensive document – the [Producers Task Analysis](#) – which details the key areas of responsibilities and duties of the producer from financing through to commercial exploitation. The document also illustrates who takes the lead on those key responsibilities – breaking them down into the Production Company, the Individual Producer and Co-Producer.

We'd like to thank Catherine for all her work compiling this comprehensive document, and for making it readily available to others.

### **Relationships are at the heart of it all**

Creating stories for the screen can be an incredibly demanding undertaking without strong relationships at the heart of it all.

- Is the producer someone you want to work with?
- Will you be able to navigate the highs and the lows of the project together?
- Are you culturally aligned?
- Are you working from different perspectives for the same goal?

The Producer, writer and director must have a close relationship with each other and the subject of the film, plus a passion to make the film.

### **Do your homework**

Before you approach a producer make sure you do a bit of digging and research of your own – this includes talking with your friends, colleagues and other industry practitioners.

- What is their previous work like?
- Is the genre / format / perspective likely to be one that fits with you and your project?
- Are they working at the level you're working at, or is this an opportunity for them to 'step up'?
- What will they bring to your project?
- What will you bring to their slate?

### **Be prepared**

Before your meeting with a producer make sure you know your own slate/project inside and out.

- Practice pitching your project
- Prepare your creative material
- Know what you're looking for - what's your "ask"? Are you looking for a long-term creative partnership or is this a one-off proposition, do you want a co-producer or an Executive Producer?

First impressions count (on both sides) so make sure yours is as strong as possible by having everything in place **before** you set up your meetings.

### **Start the conversation early**

The Producer, writer and director must have a close relationship with each other and the subject of the film, plus a passion to make the film – that takes time to develop so make sure you *start the conversation earlier rather than later*.

Simply finding a producer who you feel would be perfect for the project is no guarantee that they'll *want* to get on board. Finding the right producer is like dating: you need to

spend some time getting to know the other person, and you're not going to like everyone you meet. Nor is everyone going to like you back.

So wherever possible avoid looking for a producer at the 'end' of the submission process. That puts everyone on the back foot. Bringing a producer in early also means they can support the development of the script, introduce the potential for additional funding, and enhance the submission and the likelihood of the project's success.

If you start the conversation early you also get an opportunity to identify a mutual interest in a certain genre or perspective and start together from the beginning; this could bring new ideas and perspective to the work.

However you get started, make sure you connect with your producer **early** and create a partnership around the project.

### **NZWG / Spada 'Best Practice Guide'**

The Best Practice Guide was developed by NZ Writers Guild and Spada as part of the 'Creative Collaboration in Action' Programme. The Guide is an invaluable resource covering various topics that will help producers and writers establish robust and successful creative collaborations.

Topics include:

- How to find a writer... how to find a producer
- Copyright, credits, and ownership
- Professional development tools
- Defining roles in the working relationship

Download the Best Practice Guide to Writer / Producer Relationships [HERE](#)

### **Spada New & Emerging Producers List**

The producers on this list have all participated in either the Spada / NZ Writers Guild 'Creative Collaboration in Action' Programme, or the Spada / WIFT NZ 'Emerging Producers Intensive' and welcome approaches from new and established filmmakers.

View the **Spada New & Emerging Producers List** [HERE](#)

## **Additional Resources**

### **NZFC Guides for New Filmmakers**

Other material that may be useful to look at can be found on the **NZFC's** resource page, which includes:

- Guide for New Filmmakers ([link](#))
- Scriptwriting ([link](#))
- Know How - Film Production ([link](#))
- Know How - Distribution and Marketing ([link](#))
- Develop Your Projects and Skills ([link](#))

- Short Film Budget Template ([link](#))
- Chain of Title Guidelines ([link](#))

### **Spada Masterclass Series**

The Spada Masterclass Series aims to support filmmakers with insights and information about working in the NZ screen sector. You can view the videos online ([link](#)) or listen as a podcast ([link](#)). Some of the Spada Masterclass series supporting material may also be of interest:

- The Three Cs of TV - Irene Gardiner, Spada President
- Top Ten Tips for Documentary Pitches - Irene Gardiner, Spada President
- Writers Approaching A Producer - Alice Shearman, ED, NZ Writers Guild

### **Paerangi Project Video Tutorials**

Script to Screen has developed an online series of tutorials, with resources to support filmmakers as they work their way through a project. You can view the Paerangi Project [HERE](#).

### **Working as a Contractor**

Understanding how to operate as a Contractor can be a little confusing. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment have compiled some tips, tools, templates and case studies that may help, which you can find [HERE](#).



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