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## ABC TV and SCREEN AUSTRALIA GET SERIOUS!

ABC TV and Screen Australia, seeing the potential of games to reach a new market, last night announced the Serious Games Initiative, at the Australian Independent Documentary Conference being held in Adelaide.

The initiative, an Australian first, aims to take games beyond just the pure entertainment factor. Instead, Serious Games is a broad term used to describe games with an educational value, which raise awareness of important contemporary issues by providing an engaging and enlightening gaming experience.

The initiative calls for game ideas that explore their chosen topic in an imaginative, creative, entertaining and innovative way, with strong game play and solid underlying educative features.

ABC TV and Screen Australia are seeking creative collaborations by asking filmmakers to team with games developers or web designers for the initiative.

Three teams will be selected to attend a workshop with development funding on offer. One of these teams will then be selected to go in to full game production. Once completed, the game will be played via ABC online.

Applications close on April 24, 2009. So for more information on the initiative

And how to enter go to [www.abc.net.au/seriousgames](http://www.abc.net.au/seriousgames) or [www.screenaustralia.gov.au/seriousgames](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/seriousgames)

The game selected to go into production will be eligible to be showcased on an international games portal under discussion as part of a broader, multiplatform partnership that exists between the ABC in Australia, the BBC in the UK and CBC in Canada.

Courtney Gibson, ABC TV's Executive Head of Content Creation, said "Games are about play, stories, participation and cleverness. Adding 'serious' to the mix allows us to explore contemporary real-world issues in an interactive and social way. This will make a fantastic learning opportunity, not just for players, but for local program makers to collaborate with local game developers as they create unique game play experiences."



Martha Coleman, Head of Development at Screen Australia said, "Australia is a nation of gamers, and therefore an initiative centred on gaming taps into a leading cultural pursuit of this nation. We're excited about providing opportunities for Australian filmmakers to work with game and web specialists and provide new avenues in creative expression, production, career development, distribution and potential international exposure."

**For further information contact:  
Lesna Thomas  
Head of ABC TV Publicity  
(02) 8333 3845 M: 0407 287 320**

