

Royalty payments

Want to know when you'll be paid Screenrights royalties, how much, and whether you can expect a payment each year? This In Brief sheet outlines Screenrights' payment timetable and the factors that influence the amount a program receives. Also see Screenrights In Brief sheets: How are my royalties calculated?

When will I be paid?

There is usually a 6-18 month delay from when royalties are earned to when they are available for distribution (except international royalties, which are discussed below). The Australian and New Zealand royalty collection services operate on an Australian financial year basis (July to June).

Records of copying, communication and retransmission during that period are collated, audited and researched, with first payments commencing in December of that year. These first payments are generally made to programs that are registered with Screenrights.

International royalties are distributed when they are received from the society overseas. The delay between when the royalties are earned and paid therefore depends on the payment schedule of each international collection society.

How much will I be paid?

It is impossible to calculate in advance how much a program will earn in Screenrights royalties. The amount depends on a number of factors.

For **educational royalties**, the factors include:

- whether the copy is digital or analogue
- the type of program
- the number of minutes copied or communicated
- the type of educational institution that made the copy or communication; and

- whether the educational institution keeps full records of their copying and communication or has this monitored through a survey.

For **government royalties**, the factors include:

- whether the copy is digital or analogue
- the type of program
- the number of minutes copied

For **retransmission royalties**, the factors include:

- the number of minutes retransmitted
- the time of day the program was retransmitted
- ratings of the channel retransmitted.

To find out more about how royalties are calculated, see our In Brief sheet How Are My Royalties Calculated?

Am I guaranteed a payment each year?

No. You may produce or work on new programs for broadcast but this doesn't necessarily mean they will generate Screenrights royalties. Not all programs that are broadcast are identified as having been copied, communicated or retransmitted, earning payment. It's therefore not advisable to budget for potential Screenrights royalties, even if you are convinced that your program will have great appeal to educators.

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An example

A production company, Made-up Films, produced a documentary on copyright called **Copycats**.

Copycats was broadcast on television on 28 January 2009. On January 29, the Executive Producer at Made-up Films contacts the Member Services department wanting to know when the company will receive its royalty cheque. The Member Services officer explains that the film may not necessarily receive payment and even if it does, there will be a 6 to 18 month delay before any payment can be made.

In January 2010, Made-up Films does ultimately receive Screenrights royalties for retransmission and copying. The process that takes place between the broadcast and the subsequent royalty payment is as follows:

- Throughout the financial year, Screenrights receives survey records of copying, communication and retransmission. These records are continuously collated and researched before being audited.
- By 30 June, **Copycats** is identified as having been retransmitted on pay television and as having been copied by a university law school.
- From 1 July, the money collected by Screenrights from universities and from pay television operators is divided across the programs identified by the sampling system and royalties are calculated according to Screenrights distribution policy. (For information on how the royalties are allocated see our In Brief sheets on this topic.)
- From December 2009, Screenrights begins paying royalties to each of the registered programs that were identified as having been copied, communicated or retransmitted. Made-up Films registered **Copycats** as soon as the documentary went into pre-production.
- On 7 January 2010, **Copycats** receives an electronic transfer of retransmission and copying royalties.

More information?

Check out our other In Brief sheets. Our Member Services team is also happy to answer your questions. Email: memberservices@screenrights.org



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