

# EPONA

## DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

### *Methodology & Delivery Plan*

#### **Working Draft**

Prepared by  
VAM Paddock Productions Pty Ltd

Lead Producer, Writer and Director  
LEILA McDOUGALL

First Nations Co Writer and Cultural Creative Lead  
SHANNON GREEN

Dunghutti 1st Nations Community of Walcha

JULY 2026 Version 002

## CONTENTS

|                                                                |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1. DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW .....</b>                           | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>2. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK .....</b>                          | <b>5</b>  |
| 2.1 Development Principles                                     |           |
| 2.2 Development Framework                                      |           |
| 2.3 Three Development Workstreams                              |           |
| 2.4 Integrated Development Model                               |           |
| <b>3. DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY SCHEDULE .....</b>                  | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>4. WORKSTREAM ONE</b>                                       |           |
| <b>Story, Culture &amp; Research .....</b>                     | <b>8</b>  |
| 4.1 Purpose                                                    |           |
| 4.2 Objectives                                                 |           |
| 4.3 Workstream Delivery                                        |           |
| 4.4 Decision Gate                                              |           |
| 4.5 Key Team                                                   |           |
| 4.6 Budget Alignment                                           |           |
| 4.7 Workstream Outcome                                         |           |
| <b>5. WORKSTREAM TWO</b>                                       |           |
| <b>Creative Development &amp; Production Planning .....</b>    | <b>10</b> |
| 5.1 Purpose                                                    |           |
| 5.2 Objectives                                                 |           |
| 5.3 Workstream Delivery                                        |           |
| 5.4 Decision Gate                                              |           |
| 5.5 Key Team                                                   |           |
| 5.6 Budget Alignment                                           |           |
| 5.7 Workstream Outcome                                         |           |
| <b>6. WORKSTREAM THREE</b>                                     |           |
| <b>Audience, Partnerships &amp; Investment Readiness .....</b> | <b>13</b> |
| 6.1 Purpose                                                    |           |
| 6.2 Objectives                                                 |           |
| 6.3 Workstream Delivery                                        |           |
| 6.4 Decision Gate                                              |           |

|                                                   |           |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 6.5 Key Team                                      |           |
| 6.6 Budget Alignment                              |           |
| 6.7 Workstream Outcome                            |           |
| <b>7. GOVERNANCE</b>                              | <b>15</b> |
| 7.1 Project Governance                            |           |
| 7.2 Governance Framework                          |           |
| 7.3 Roles & Responsibilities                      |           |
| 7.4 Decision Making                               |           |
| 7.5 Reporting Structure                           |           |
| 7.6 Risk Management                               |           |
| 7.7 Quality Assurance                             |           |
| 7.8 Governance Outcome                            |           |
| <b>8. DEVELOPMENT DELIVERABLES</b>                | <b>18</b> |
| 8.1 Purpose                                       |           |
| 8.2 Development Deliverables                      |           |
| 8.3 Success Measures                              |           |
| 8.4 Development Completion                        |           |
| <b>9. DEVELOPMENT COMPLETION &amp; NEXT STEPS</b> | <b>20</b> |
| 9.1 Development Completion                        |           |
| 9.2 Production Readiness Checklist                |           |
| 9.3 Next Steps                                    |           |
| 9.4 Proposed Pathway to Production                |           |
| 9.5 Conclusion                                    |           |
| 9.6 Final Development Outcome                     |           |

# DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

## PURPOSE

*EPONA* is entering a structured six month development program designed to transform the project from an emerging feature screenplay into a culturally grounded, creatively refined and production ready feature film package.

The development program extends beyond screenplay development. It integrates First Nations collaboration, historical and mythological research, creative development, production planning and audience readiness within a single, well governed framework. Each workstream informs and strengthens the next, ensuring that creative, cultural and production decisions evolve together.

By the completion of development, *EPONA* will be positioned to progress into production financing with a comprehensive package that supports preproduction, subject to successful funding.

## CURRENT PROJECT STATUS

*EPONA* has progressed beyond the concept stage and established the creative and strategic foundations required to commence comprehensive development.

Development completed to date includes:

- Original feature screenplay developed
- Core producing, writing and creative leadership established
- Initial engagement with the Walcha First Nations community
- Preliminary historical, mythological and cultural research
- Early creative vision, audience positioning and market direction established
- Development budget and financing strategy prepared

The next stage focuses on strengthening the screenplay through structured research, cultural collaboration, production planning and market preparation, ensuring the project is both creatively compelling and production ready.

## DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

The objective of this development program is to deliver a finance ready feature film package that is:

- Creatively compelling and emotionally authentic
- Culturally informed through meaningful First Nations collaboration
- Historically and mythologically grounded
- Production tested through creative and technical feasibility
- Strategically positioned for financing, partnerships and audience engagement

## DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

By April 2027, the development program will have delivered:

- A production ready feature screenplay
- An established First Nations cultural collaboration and governance framework
- Integrated historical, cultural and mythological research supporting the screenplay
- A validated production strategy and creative development framework
- Audience, partnership and investment readiness strategies
- A complete development package prepared to progress into production financing

## DEVELOPMENT TRANSFORMATION

| CURRENT POSITION                                           | DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Feature screenplay in development                          | Production ready feature screenplay                                  |
| Initial First Nations engagement                           | Established cultural collaboration and governance framework          |
| Preliminary historical, cultural and mythological research | Verified research integrated throughout story development            |
| Emerging creative team                                     | Confirmed creative team and specialist collaborators                 |
| Preliminary production planning                            | Validated production strategy and creative feasibility               |
| Initial audience and market positioning                    | Audience, partnership and investment readiness strategy              |
| Development concept                                        | Finance ready feature film package prepared for production financing |

## DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The development of *EPONA* is guided by a structured framework that integrates cultural collaboration, creative development and production planning into a single, connected process. Rather than progressing through isolated stages, each workstream informs and strengthens the next, ensuring that creative decisions are supported by research, cultural knowledge, production feasibility and audience considerations throughout development.

The framework has been designed to establish strong governance, encourage collaborative decision making and deliver a production ready feature film package capable of progressing into financing and preproduction.

### DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide every stage of the development program and provide the foundation for creative, cultural and strategic decision making.

| PRINCIPLE              | APPLICATION                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Story First            | Every creative decision will strengthen the emotional impact, character development and narrative integrity of the screenplay.                     |
| Cultural Collaboration | First Nations collaboration will be embedded throughout development, ensuring cultural knowledge and lived experience inform the creative process. |
| Research Led           | Historical, mythological, cultural and regional research will underpin story development and strengthen authenticity.                              |
| Collaborative Practice | Writers, producers, cultural advisors and specialist consultants will work together through an iterative development process.                      |

|                    |                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Production Focused | Creative decisions will be continuously tested against practical production, scheduling, safety and budget considerations.    |
| Audience Connected | Development will prepare the project for audience engagement, partnerships, investment and future distribution opportunities. |

## DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



## THREE DEVELOPMENT WORKSTREAMS

The development program is delivered through three interconnected workstreams. Each workstream has a distinct purpose while contributing to the overall objective of delivering a finance ready feature film package.

| WORKSTREAM                                                 | PURPOSE                                                                                                                                                               | PRIMARY OUTCOME                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Workstream 1 Story, Culture & Research                     | Establish the creative, cultural and historical foundations of the project through First Nations collaboration, research and screenplay development.                  | A culturally grounded, creatively refined and production ready screenplay.           |
| Workstream 2 Creative Development & Production Planning    | Test creative decisions against production feasibility, refine the visual and technical approach, and establish the production strategy required to deliver the film. | A validated production strategy supported by creative and technical feasibility.     |
| Workstream 3 Audience, Partnerships & Investment Readiness | Prepare the project for financing through audience development, strategic partnerships, investment materials and market positioning.                                  | A finance ready feature film package prepared to progress into production financing. |

## INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Unlike a traditional screenplay development process, these workstreams do not operate independently or sequentially. Cultural collaboration, research, creative development and production planning continue throughout the development period, allowing each workstream to inform and strengthen the others.

This integrated approach ensures that *EPONA* is developed as a complete feature film project rather than solely as a screenplay.

## DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY SCHEDULE

| DEVELOPMENT WORKSTREAM                                             | NOV 2026 | DEC 2026 | JAN 2027 | FEB 2027 | MAR 2027 | APR 2027 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>WORKSTREAM 1 STORY, CULTURE &amp; RESEARCH</b>                  |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Project commencement & governance                                  | ✓        | ✓        |          |          |          |          |
| Cultural governance framework                                      | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |
| First Nations community consultation                               | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Elder & knowledge holder consultation                              | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |          |
| On Country cultural research                                       | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |          |          |
| Historical research                                                | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |          |          |
| Celtic mythology research                                          | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |          |          |
| Horse behaviour & stockman research                                | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |          |
| Writers Room                                                       |          | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |          |
| Screenplay redevelopment                                           |          | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Cultural & creative review                                         |          |          | ✓        | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| <b>WORKSTREAM 2 CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT &amp; PRODUCTION PLANNING</b> |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Script breakdown                                                   |          |          |          | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Production strategy                                                |          |          |          | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Production scheduling                                              |          |          |          | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Budget refinement                                                  |          |          |          | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Location feasibility                                               |          |          |          | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Horse, stunt & animal welfare planning                             |          |          |          | ✓        | ✓        |          |
| Production design development                                      |          |          |          | ✓        | ✓        |          |

|                                                                       |  |  |  |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| Cinematography & visual development                                   |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| Creative feasibility review                                           |  |  |  |   | ✓ |   |
| <b>WORKSTREAM 3 AUDIENCE, PARTNERSHIPS &amp; INVESTMENT READINESS</b> |  |  |  |   |   |   |
| Audience strategy                                                     |  |  |  |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Partnership development                                               |  |  |  |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Distribution pathway refinement                                       |  |  |  |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Impact strategy alignment                                             |  |  |  |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Finance strategy                                                      |  |  |  |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Investment materials                                                  |  |  |  |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Development package completion                                        |  |  |  |   |   | ✓ |

## WORKSTREAM ONE

### STORY, CULTURE & RESEARCH

Building the creative and cultural foundations of EPONA

#### PURPOSE

Workstream One establishes the creative, cultural and research foundations that underpin the development of EPONA. It brings together First Nations collaboration, historical and mythological research, screenplay development and specialist consultation to ensure the story evolves from a foundation of authenticity, cultural integrity and creative excellence.

Rather than treating research and consultation as separate activities, this workstream integrates them directly into the screenplay development process, allowing each stage of consultation and discovery to inform character, story, world building and thematic development.

This workstream forms the foundation upon which all subsequent creative, production and market decisions are built.

#### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Workstream One are to:

- Establish a culturally respectful and collaborative development process.
- Strengthen the screenplay through First Nations knowledge, historical research and mythology.
- Build meaningful relationships with the Walcha First Nations community and Cultural Governance Group.
- Ensure creative decisions are informed by research and lived experience.
- Deliver a production ready screenplay supported by robust cultural and historical foundations.

#### WORKSTREAM DELIVERY

| OBJECTIVE                     | ACTIVITIES                                                                              | DELIVERABLES                                  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Establish Cultural Governance | Form the Cultural Governance Group, confirm consultation protocols and commence ongoing | Cultural Governance Framework established and |



|                                          |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                          | engagement with the Walcha First Nations community.                                                                                      | consultation process implemented.                                                                                |
| Strengthen First Nations Collaboration   | Conduct community consultation, On Country engagement, knowledge sharing and Writers Room collaboration with First Nations participants. | Consultation outcomes integrated throughout story development and screenplay revisions.                          |
| Undertake Historical & Cultural Research | Research regional history, cultural context, mythology, language and historical references relevant to the story world.                  | Comprehensive research archive supporting screenplay authenticity and world building.                            |
| Develop Story & Screenplay               | Writers Room sessions, screenplay redevelopment, structural refinement, character development and thematic exploration.                  | Revised production ready screenplay.                                                                             |
| Strengthen Horse & Rural Authenticity    | Consult horse specialists, stockmen and regional experts to ensure authentic horse behaviour, handling and rural practice.               | Horse behaviour framework and practical reference material supporting screenplay and future production planning. |
| Review & Refine                          | Ongoing cultural review, creative feedback and screenplay refinement throughout development.                                             | Screenplay aligned with creative vision, cultural guidance and research findings.                                |

## DECISION GATE

**Workstream One will be considered complete when:**

- ☐ Cultural Governance Framework is established.
- ☐ Community consultation milestones have been achieved.
- ☐ Historical, cultural and mythological research has been completed and integrated.
- ☐ Writers Room process has been completed.
- ☐ Screenplay has progressed to a production ready development draft.
- ☐ Cultural review confirms the project is ready to progress to Workstream Two.

## KEY TEAM

| ROLE                                        | RESPONSIBILITY                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Leila McDougall</b>                      | Lead Producer, Writer and Creative Lead                               |
| <b>Shannon Green</b>                        | First Nations Co Writer, Cultural Creative Lead and Community Liaison |
| <b>Walcha Cultural Governance Group</b>     | Cultural guidance, knowledge sharing and consultation                 |
| <b>First Nations Community Participants</b> | Cultural collaboration and lived experience                           |
| <b>Writers Room</b>                         | Story development and screenplay refinement                           |
| <b>Research Specialists</b>                 | Historical, mythological and regional research                        |
| <b>Horse &amp; Rural Specialists</b>        | Horse behaviour, rural practice and technical authenticity            |

## BUDGET ALIGNMENT

This workstream represents the primary investment within the development program and aligns directly with the Story, Culture & Research Development allocation in the development budget.

The investment supports:

- First Nations collaboration and cultural governance
- Community consultation and On Country engagement
- Writers Room development
- Historical, cultural and mythological research
- Screenplay development and refinement
- Specialist research and creative consultation

## WORKSTREAM OUTCOME

At the completion of Workstream One, *EPONA* will have established a culturally informed, creatively refined and research based foundation that supports all subsequent production planning, audience development and investment activities.

## WORKSTREAM TWO

### CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT & PRODUCTION PLANNING

Translating the screenplay into a production ready feature film

## PURPOSE

Workstream Two transforms the creative foundations established through story development into a practical, achievable production strategy. Building upon the screenplay, cultural collaboration and research completed in Workstream One, this phase validates the creative vision against the technical, logistical and operational requirements of producing a feature film.

Creative ambition is balanced with production feasibility through collaboration with key department heads, specialist consultants and the producing team. This ensures that the creative intent of *EPONA* remains achievable within the proposed production model while maintaining cultural integrity, visual authenticity and operational readiness.

The outcome of this workstream is a clear production strategy that supports confident progression into financing and preproduction.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Workstream Two are to:

- Validate the screenplay through production planning and technical assessment.
- Develop a practical production strategy aligned with the creative vision.
- Confirm the feasibility of key creative elements including horses, stunts, locations and visual storytelling.
- Strengthen collaboration between creative leadership and production specialists.
- Refine the budget and production methodology in preparation for financing.

## WORKSTREAM DELIVERY

| OBJECTIVE                         | ACTIVITIES                                                                                                                                                    | DELIVERABLES                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Validate Production Feasibility   | Complete screenplay breakdown, identify production requirements and assess creative complexity against available production resources.                        | Production feasibility assessment and screenplay breakdown completed.             |
| Develop Production Strategy       | Prepare preliminary production methodology, scheduling assumptions and logistical planning for principal photography.                                         | Preliminary production strategy and production schedule.                          |
| Refine Budget & Resource Planning | Review production requirements, refine budget assumptions and validate key resource allocations.                                                              | Updated production budget and resource planning framework.                        |
| Confirm Locations & Logistics     | Assess locations, regional logistics, seasonal considerations and operational requirements for filming.                                                       | Location feasibility report and logistical planning framework.                    |
| Develop Creative Vision           | Collaborate with key creative departments including cinematography, production design, costume and post production to refine the visual language of the film. | Creative development framework and updated visual references.                     |
| Validate Specialist Requirements  | Consult horse masters, stunt coordinators, animal welfare specialists and technical advisors to assess production requirements.                               | Horse, stunt and specialist feasibility framework supporting production planning. |
| Integrate Production Readiness    | Align creative, logistical and technical planning into a cohesive production methodology.                                                                     | Production ready development framework supporting financing and preproduction.    |

## DECISION GATE

**Workstream Two will be considered complete when:**

- ☐ Screenplay breakdown has been completed.
- ☐ Production strategy has been validated.
- ☐ Preliminary production schedule has been prepared.
- ☐ Budget assumptions have been reviewed and refined.
- ☐ Creative department consultations have been completed.
- ☐ Horse, stunt and specialist requirements have been assessed.
- ☐ Production feasibility has been confirmed.
- ☐ The project is ready to progress into Workstream Three.

## KEY TEAM

| ROLE                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | RESPONSIBILITY                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Leila McDougall</b>                                                                                                                                                                                               | Lead Producer, Writer and Creative Lead                             |
| <b>Chris Odgers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Production planning, scheduling and operational strategy            |
| <b>David Gregory OAM</b>                                                                                                                                                                                             | Producing oversight, governance and finance strategy                |
| <b>Director of Photography</b><br><i>In talks with</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marden Dean (<i>interested</i>)</li> <li>- Peter McCaffrey (<i>interested</i>)</li> <li>- Katie Milwright</li> </ul> | Visual language, cinematography planning and technical feasibility  |
| <b>Production Designer</b> ( <i>to be confirmed</i> )                                                                                                                                                                | Production design and visual world development                      |
| <b>Horse Master &amp; Animal Welfare Specialists</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ash Barnett</li> <li>- Cody Harris</li> </ul>                                                                          | Horse performance, handling methodology and animal welfare planning |
| <b>Stunt Coordinator</b> ( <i>where required</i> )                                                                                                                                                                   | Assessment of stunt and action requirements                         |
| <b>Creative Department Heads</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     | Department planning and production readiness                        |

## BUDGET ALIGNMENT

This workstream aligns directly with the **Production Strategy & Creative Development** allocation within the development budget.

The investment supports:

- Production planning and scheduling
- Screenplay breakdown and feasibility assessment
- Creative department consultation
- Location research and logistical planning
- Horse, stunt and animal welfare planning
- Budget refinement and production methodology
- Technical and operational development

## WORKSTREAM OUTCOME

At the completion of Workstream Two, *EPONA* will have a validated production strategy that demonstrates the screenplay can be delivered within the proposed production model while maintaining its creative ambition, cultural integrity and technical feasibility.

# WORKSTREAM THREE

## AUDIENCE, PARTNERSHIPS & INVESTMENT READINESS

Positioning EPONA for financing, production and long term audience engagement

### PURPOSE

Workstream Three prepares EPONA to transition from development into production financing by ensuring the project is creatively, strategically and commercially positioned for investment. Building on the screenplay, cultural collaboration and production planning completed through Workstreams One and Two, this phase establishes a clear pathway to audience, strengthens industry partnerships and refines the materials required to support financing.

The work undertaken during this stage demonstrates not only that EPONA is production ready, but that it has a defined audience, a considered distribution pathway and a compelling investment proposition.

The outcome is a comprehensive development package that supports funding applications, investor engagement and progression into preproduction.

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Workstream Three are to:

- Define the primary and secondary audiences for *EPONA*.
- Refine the project's distribution and pathway to audience.
- Strengthen strategic industry, cultural and philanthropic partnerships.
- Prepare investment and financing materials.
- Position the project to confidently transition into production financing.

### WORKSTREAM DELIVERY

| OBJECTIVE                         | ACTIVITIES                                                                                                                                   | DELIVERABLES                                             |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Define Audience Strategy          | Refine audience profiles, market positioning and audience engagement opportunities across Australian and international markets.              | Audience Strategy completed.                             |
| Develop Distribution Pathway      | Refine the proposed theatrical, festival, community, educational and streaming pathway for the completed feature film.                       | Distribution & Pathway to Audience strategy completed.   |
| Strengthen Strategic Partnerships | Continue engagement with First Nations organisations, industry partners, philanthropic organisations and potential production collaborators. | Partnership Strategy and supporting letters of interest. |
| Prepare Investment Materials      | Refine the Pitch Deck, financial presentation materials and supporting development documentation for financing discussions.                  | Investment Package prepared.                             |
| Refine Finance Strategy           | Align development outcomes with the proposed production financing pathway and investment strategy.                                           | Production finance strategy prepared.                    |
| Finalise Development Package      | Consolidate all development outputs into a complete package ready to support production financing applications.                              | Finance Ready Development Package completed.             |

## DECISION GATE

**Workstream Three will be considered complete when:**

- ☐ Audience Strategy has been completed.
- ☐ Distribution & Pathway to Audience has been finalised.
- ☐ Strategic partnerships have been strengthened.
- ☐ Investment materials have been completed.
- ☐ Production finance strategy has been prepared.
- ☐ Development documentation has been finalised.
- ☐ The project is ready to progress into production financing.

## KEY TEAM

| ROLE                                                | RESPONSIBILITY                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leila McDougall                                     | Lead Producer, Writer, Director and Project Lead                            |
| David Gregory OAM                                   | Producing oversight, finance strategy and investment readiness              |
| Chris Odgers                                        | Production planning and transition to preproduction                         |
| Shannon Green                                       | Cultural collaboration, First Nations partnerships and community engagement |
| Marketing & Distribution Advisors (to be confirmed) | Audience development and market positioning                                 |
| Industry Partners                                   | Strategic advice, market engagement and partnership development             |
| Producing Team                                      | Coordination of investment materials and financing preparation              |

## BUDGET ALIGNMENT

This workstream aligns directly with the Audience, Partnerships & Market Readiness allocation within the development budget.

The investment supports:

- Audience research and positioning
- Distribution and pathway to audience planning
- Industry and community partnership development
- Investment presentation materials
- Finance strategy refinement
- Development package preparation

## WORKSTREAM OUTCOME

At the completion of Workstream Three, *EPONA* will have progressed beyond development to become a finance ready feature film project supported by a production ready screenplay, an integrated cultural framework, validated production planning, defined audience pathways and a comprehensive investment package prepared for financing and preproduction.

## GOVERNANCE

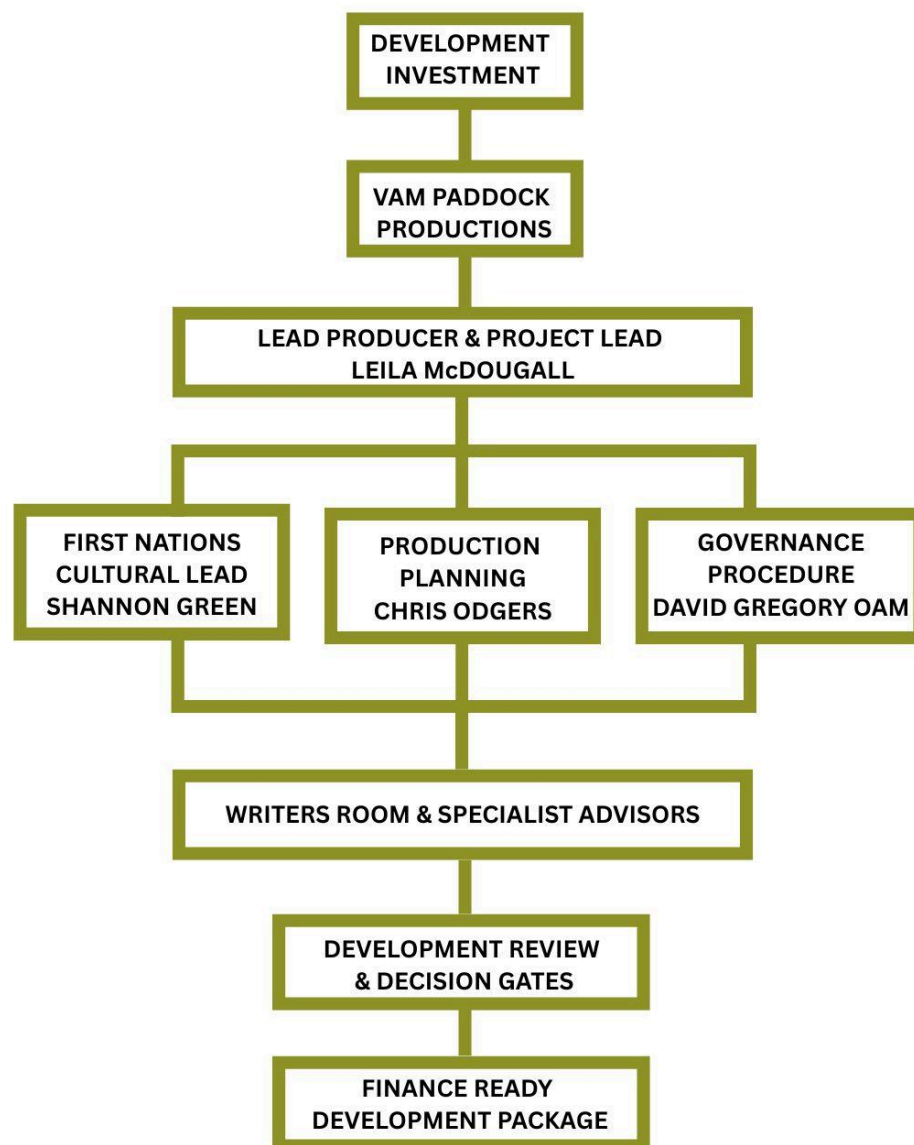
**A governance framework that supports creative excellence, cultural integrity and responsible investment.**

## **PROJECT GOVERNANCE**

The development of *EPONA* will be managed through a governance framework that promotes accountability, collaborative decision making and transparent project oversight. Creative, cultural and production decisions will be guided by clearly defined leadership responsibilities, ensuring that development progresses in accordance with the project's creative vision, cultural commitments and strategic objectives.

Governance has been designed to ensure that the development investment is managed responsibly, with regular review points, defined decision gates and ongoing collaboration between the producing team, creative leadership and First Nations cultural partners.

## **GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**



## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

| RESPONSIBILITY                     | LEAD                             | SUPPORT                                |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Overall project leadership         | Leila McDougall                  | Producing Team                         |
| Creative vision & screenplay       | Leila McDougall                  | Shannon Green, Writers Room            |
| First Nations collaboration        | Shannon Green<br>Leila McDougall | Walcha Cultural Governance Group       |
| Cultural consultation & governance | Shannon Green<br>Leila McDougall | Community Elders and Knowledge Holders |
| Production planning                | Chris Hodges                     | Producing Team                         |
| Production governance              | David Gregory OAM                | Chris Hodges                           |
| Historical & mythology research    | Research Team                    | Writers Room                           |
| Horse & rural authenticity         | Ash Barnett<br>Cody Harris       | Creative Team                          |
| Budget oversight                   | Producing Team                   | David Gregory OAM                      |
| Audience & investment readiness    | Leila McDougall                  | Producing Team                         |

## DECISION MAKING

Major creative, cultural and production decisions will be reviewed collaboratively throughout the development program.

Decision making will be guided by four principles:

- Creative excellence
- Cultural integrity
- Production feasibility
- Audience and investment readiness

Progression between workstreams will occur only once the agreed decision gate for each stage has been achieved.

## REPORTING STRUCTURE

Project progress will be reviewed throughout development to ensure activities remain aligned with the approved methodology, budget and development objectives.

Regular reporting will include:

- Progress against development objectives
- Completion of workstream deliverables
- Budget and resource monitoring
- Cultural consultation outcomes
- Creative review and screenplay progress
- Risk identification and mitigation



## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Potential creative, cultural and production risks will be actively managed throughout development through early identification, collaborative planning and regular review.

Priority areas include:

- Cultural consultation and governance
- Story development and screenplay refinement
- Research integrity
- Production feasibility
- Resource allocation
- Schedule management
- Investment readiness

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Quality assurance is embedded throughout the development program to ensure that every major output is reviewed before progressing to the next stage.

Review mechanisms include:

- Ongoing Writers Room collaboration
- First Nations cultural review
- Creative leadership review
- Production feasibility assessment
- Budget and schedule review
- Development decision gates
- Final development package review

## **GOVERNANCE OUTCOME**

By the completion of development, *EPONA* will have a clearly documented governance framework that demonstrates responsible leadership, cultural collaboration, transparent decision making and disciplined project management, providing confidence to funding partners, investors and future production collaborators.

# DEVELOPMENT DELIVERABLES

## Delivering a complete, finance ready feature film package

### PURPOSE

The development program has been designed to deliver substantially more than a completed screenplay. By April 2027, EPONA will have established the creative, cultural, strategic and production foundations required to confidently progress into production financing.

The following deliverables represent the tangible outcomes of the development investment and collectively form a finance ready feature film package.

### DEVELOPMENT DELIVERABLES

| AREA                               | DELIVERABLE                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Creative Development               | Production ready feature screenplay incorporating all development outcomes.                             |
| Story Development                  | Refined story structure, character development and thematic framework.                                  |
| First Nations Collaboration        | Established cultural partnerships, consultation outcomes and ongoing governance framework.              |
| Cultural Knowledge                 | Cultural guidance integrated throughout story development and creative decision making.                 |
| Historical & Mythological Research | Verified historical, regional and mythological research supporting authenticity and world building.     |
| Horse & Rural Authenticity         | Horse behaviour methodology, rural practices and specialist consultation integrated into development.   |
| Production Strategy                | Validated production methodology supporting creative delivery and operational planning.                 |
| Production Planning                | Preliminary production schedule, logistical planning and production readiness framework.                |
| Creative Development               | Visual language, production design direction and creative department planning.                          |
| Audience Strategy                  | Clearly defined audience positioning and engagement strategy.                                           |
| Distribution & Pathway to Audience | Distribution and market pathway supporting future release planning.                                     |
| Strategic Partnerships             | Strengthened industry, cultural and community partnerships supporting production.                       |
| Investment Readiness               | Finance strategy, investment materials and development documentation prepared for production financing. |
| Governance                         | Documented governance framework, reporting structure and development methodology.                       |
| Development Package                | Complete finance ready feature film package prepared for production financing.                          |

## SUCCESS MEASURES

The development program will be considered successful when the following outcomes have been achieved.

| SUCCESS MEASURE                       | EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Production ready screenplay completed | Final screenplay approved by the producing team.                                                 |
| Cultural collaboration established    | Cultural Governance Framework implemented and consultation milestones achieved.                  |
| Research integrated into development  | Historical, cultural and mythological research reflected throughout the screenplay.              |
| Creative vision validated             | Creative development framework completed with specialist input.                                  |
| Production strategy confirmed         | Production methodology, preliminary schedule and feasibility completed.                          |
| Audience strategy completed           | Audience positioning and engagement strategy finalised.                                          |
| Distribution pathway prepared         | Distribution & Pathway to Audience document completed.                                           |
| Strategic partnerships strengthened   | Partnership discussions and supporting documentation completed.                                  |
| Investment package completed          | Pitch Deck, finance strategy and supporting investment materials prepared.                       |
| Development package completed         | All approved deliverables completed and the project ready to progress into production financing. |

## DEVELOPMENT COMPLETION

The development program will be considered complete when all workstreams have successfully met their respective decision gates and the agreed development deliverables have been achieved.

Completion of the program will provide *EPONA* with a comprehensive and professionally governed development package that supports production financing, preproduction planning and future production, subject to successful investment.

# DEVELOPMENT COMPLETION & NEXT STEPS

## Completing a well governed development program and preparing EPONA for production financing

### DEVELOPMENT COMPLETION

The *EPONA* Development Program concludes with the delivery of a comprehensive, finance ready feature film package that has been strengthened through cultural collaboration, research, creative development, production planning and market preparation.

By the completion of development, the project will have achieved the objectives outlined throughout this methodology and delivered the creative, cultural and strategic foundations required to confidently progress toward production financing.

Development is considered complete when each workstream has met its agreed decision gate and all approved deliverables have been finalised.

### PRODUCTION READINESS CHECKLIST

The project will be considered ready to progress beyond development when the following outcomes have been achieved.

- ☐ Production ready feature screenplay completed
- ☐ First Nations Cultural Governance Framework established
- ☐ Community consultation completed in accordance with the Cultural Framework
- ☐ Historical, cultural and mythological research integrated throughout the screenplay
- ☐ Writers Room process completed
- ☐ Production strategy validated
- ☐ Preliminary production schedule completed
- ☐ Budget refined and aligned with the creative vision
- ☐ Horse, stunt and specialist planning completed
- ☐ Audience Strategy completed
- ☐ Distribution & Pathway to Audience completed
- ☐ Strategic partnerships established
- ☐ Investment Package completed
- ☐ Development deliverables approved by the producing team

### NEXT STEPS

Following the successful completion of development, the project will transition into the production financing stage.

The purpose of this transition is to secure the investment and production partnerships required to commence preproduction and progress toward principal photography.

The proposed timeline below reflects the intended production pathway and remains subject to successful financing.

## PROPOSED PATHWAY TO PRODUCTION

| STAGE                                                         | PROPOSED TIMING          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Development Program Complete                                  | April 2027               |
| Production Financing & Investment                             | May to June 2027         |
| Preproduction (Pending funding progression)                   | July to September 2027   |
| Principal Photography (Pending funding progression)           | October to December 2027 |
| Commencement of Post Production (Pending funding progression) | December 2027            |
| Distribution & Release Planning (Pending funding progression) | 2028                     |

## CONCLUSION

The *EPONA* Development Program has been designed to establish far more than a completed screenplay. Through a structured and well governed methodology, the project will deliver the creative, cultural, strategic and production foundations required to support a confident transition into production financing.

By integrating First Nations collaboration, rigorous research, creative development, production planning and audience readiness within a single development framework, the program reduces creative, cultural and production risk while strengthening the project's long term viability.

The outcome is a finance ready feature film package prepared to progress into preproduction, positioning *EPONA* for the next stage of its production journey.

## FINAL DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

**A culturally grounded, creatively refined and finance ready Australian feature film package, developed through a disciplined and collaborative process that prepares *EPONA* for successful production financing and future production.**