

Guidelines for Radio Eye Freelancers

Radio eye produces documentaries and features examining events, ideas and trends in this country and overseas. The forms of radio range from social documentaries, docu-dramas, cultural features, on-the-road-radio trips, audio essays, radio vérité and other sound excursions we're still thinking up names for. As varied as these forms may be, the emphasis is on evoking experience, emotion and place rather than the delivery of 'information'. Sound is seen as a crucial element in the telling of these stories, particularly when it evokes a strong sense of location.

The Aim: To produce documentary and feature programs which are innovative in their use of sound and form and which are relevant and accessible to an interested and curious general listenership as well as specialist audiences appropriate to specific programs. It is not journalistic or investigative in the approach of current affairs, but uses the tools and techniques of contemporary cultural criticism.

These programs are generally production-intensive and make use of elements which include actuality, music, sound environments, performance and script. Radio Eye also collaborates with composers, performers, artists and institutions in a variety of projects including sound installations and multimedia. It is a major user of freelance program-makers who work through a commissioning process. More rarely, programs are bought 'off-the-shelf' but more likely have been developed from the proposal stage.

The Program : The Radio Eye program consists of a feature or documentary of at least 30 minutes. Some items extend to the full duration of the program. The total duration for the program is 53:25 including front and back announcements.

In addition Radio Eye generates a range of other produced material which may extend or contrast with the themes of the 'main' feature. These items include interviews, fictions, small features, audio 'postcards', monologues and performance. These may be as short as two minutes in length.

Radio Eye has two timeslots on the Radio National network: Saturday afternoons from 2.05 – 3pm, and repeated on Wednesdays at 1.05 p.m. Podcasts of most programs are also available. The program is presented by a regular announcer who provides links and credit information. Radio Eye also attempts to include listeners younger than the Radio National target audience. Its work is sometimes rebroadcast on the Triple J network, and on our sister program broadcast on Sunday nights on Radio National, The Night Air .

Radio Eye exchanges some programs with other public broadcasters overseas and also co-produces programs with these organisations.

I'd like to put in a proposal...

Intending contributors should have heard the program. You can find publicity and audio from many past programs on this site.

Where to begin:

Please give us your program idea in writing. See the headings below which are intended as a guide. It may be worth making initial contact with the EP or a staff producer to sound out a proposal informally before committing to paper.

If you have not freelanced for Radio Eye before we need to have some details of your experience in program-making. It doesn't matter if you have had years of experience or have never made a radio program before, we just need to know beforehand how much time we need to allocate to help you. Please provide an audition cassette or CD of relevant previous work.

Make sure to include phone numbers, address and email so that we can contact you.

Please let us know your areas of specialist knowledge. (languages etc.)

Give us some indication of how you will structure this feature: its narrative style, use of music etc, and, most important; how it will sound. Don't just give us all your background research please.

Also indicate any anticipated additional production costs such as copyright, use of performers, travel, research materials or overseas phone calls. Your formal proposal will be circulated and discussed by the Radio Eye team and you may be advised to rethink aspects of the project prior to approval. Once that approval is given you will receive a letter of agreement which outlines a fee structure, delivery dates, copyright and any other additional terms of your engagement.

Checklist and where to send your proposal:

To help us assess your program idea please use these headings.

1. Program outline:
2. Why would this make a good radio program?
3. Why is this piece suitable for Radio Eye ?
4. Whose voices will be heard? (interviewees, actors?)
5. Why choose these people?
6. What other types of sounds would you use? (Music, sound effects, location recordings)
7. Why?
8. What costs would be involved? (Include any potential copyright expenses)
9. What experience do you have in radio production?

10. Who will be interested in this program? How and where should this program be publicised?

11. Please list your full contact details

Send your proposal to:

Executive Producer, Radio Eye, Level 5 ABC Ultimo Centre, PO Box 9994 Sydney
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