

TROPJR

PRESENTED BY

**THE AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S
TELEVISION FOUNDATION**

TROP TIPS

7 MINUTES OR LESS

Your film needs to go for 7mins or less (including credits). Emphasis on the less! If you have a great idea that goes for 4 minutes, keep it as a great idea that is 4 minutes. Some of the most popular Tropfest films have been only a couple of minutes. Keep it short & succinct.

TROPFEST SIGNATURE ITEM (TSI)

Your film must include the TSI for 2012 – 'JUICE'. Interpret this how you will, but be creative. You don't need to have your film revolve around the TSI, it is a marker or indication that you have made the film specifically for Trop Jr 2012. 'JUICE' can mean a lot of things, just make sure you can justify where it is in your film if we ask.

AGE RESTRICTION

We encourage you to seek adult assistance (if needed) but major crew roles should be filled by kids 15 years or younger. This means the Editor, Writer, Cinematographer etc and especially the director! That doesn't mean adults can't help out or supervise – they can even act in your film – but just make sure that you, the filmmaker, are the boss and have creative control!

PREMIERE

We want Trop Jr to be the biggest premiere possible for your film! Around 8,000 people attended Trop Jr events around the country in 2011, with many more watching it online afterwards. Don't get yourself disqualified by screening to family and friends prior to the event; keep it to cast and crew (crew only if possible). The reward will be great!

EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS

We want your film to be seen by as many people as possible. After the festival we encourage filmmakers to enter other film festivals and we act as a distributor to films who are finalists and shortlisted. Each year companies and individuals approach Tropfest to screen Finalist films and this means more exposure for you as a filmmaker and for your film. But to do this we require exclusive rights to your film for 2 years – it's quite unique from other festivals.

TELL YOUR STORY

Make a story that means something to you. Don't try and emulate your favourite writer or director. And don't think Trop Jr judges are looking for a particular 'type' of film – they're not. We want great stories that are told well.

AVOID

Avoid putting things in your film that don't serve the story. Also, go without long titles & credits at the beginning and end of your film. It's a short film, get to the story and WOW the audience, don't bore them with names.

BUDGET

A big budget doesn't mean a big success. In fact *Carmichael and Shane*, the winning Tropfest film in 2006 was shot with around \$60, and *Mankind is No Island*, the winning film at Tropfest NY 2008 was shot on a mobile phone for \$52. But they were both well developed stories, with unique ideas.

GENRE

Trop Jr is a big event, screened to a lot of people and as such it needs to be entertaining and diverse. The program that gets put together will try and include films from all genres and types from comedy and horror to live action & animation. Make whatever genre you feel the most passionate about.

COPYRIGHT

Make sure you credit work within your film. For example, if you use an image or writing from published or unpublished works, you will need to have either a deed of release or copyright license from the creator/writer/artist. Sometimes all you will need to give in return is a credit in your film. A good suggestion is try to make everything that appears in your film, that is have original works, try and use a new or emerging artist so it can be a springboard for them as much as it is for yourself.

PLANNING

Try to plan your filming before the actual shoot dates. It is great to do storyboarding and work out shot sizes etc. Know what you want from your actors prior to filming. Basically know your story, what it means and what you want to say. And be prepared for your film to change a lot from initial concept to the final product. Go with the flow!

SUCCESS OR FAILURE

A lot of our previous finalists and even winners have experienced a lot of rejection before even being shortlisted in Trop Jr or Tropfest, let alone becoming a finalist. Their advice has been – if it is your passion you will stick with it! Michelle Lehman winner of Tropfest in 2008 said she has spent over \$50,000 making short films before she finally cracked the big time with *Marry Me*. This film has now had nearly 2 million views on You Tube!

For more information please visit www.tropjr.com