

To the wonderful people at the Independent Arts Foundation.

I am writing to you in profound gratitude for the \$1000 grant I was generously given towards my summer directing course studies at the National Film and Television School (NFTS) in the United Kingdom.

This professional development opportunity was genuinely life changing.

To walk through the doors every day past golden BAFTA awards, down the halls Roger Deakins used to walk, and into the studios where international festival nominated films has been made, truly reminds you that anything is possible.

Personally, one of the most significant skills I think I have gained/am gaining, is confidence in myself as a writer/director. I so often undersell myself, and don't give my work enough credit. I'm learning to hold my head up, be clear in my directorial vision, and trust that I can make important and thoughtful work.

Professionally, the most integral part of this opportunity for me was to be able to workshop my current script with industry professionals, and to work with a very knowledgeable cast and crew on a studio based set (without the fear of making mistakes).

My original plan was to return to Australia in early September. It is now the 15th of October, and I am still here.

This is solely due to the contacts I made at the NFTS, which was only possible due to support from the Ian Potter Cultural Trust (IPCT), and the Independent Arts Foundation (IAF).

I was fortunate enough to be offered a place to live in London by an incredible screenwriter (and now, dear friend) so that I could also attend the London Film Festival, one of the biggest film festivals in the world. I have seen many films, met many incredible industry professionals, and walked red carpets (near) some of my idols.

I will be returning home to Australia very soon, where I will be continuing post production on my latest short film, and going into development for my next piece of work. These last few months have certainly changed the way I look at both of these processes, for the better, and have truly deepened my artistic practice.

This professional development opportunity went well above any of my expectations, and I am deeply grateful for the support of both the IPCT and the IAF. Thank you.

With warmth,
Maddie Grammatopoulos

