

London's Reach in the Worldwide Film Finance Market

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The fourth [Film London Production Finance Market](#) (PFM) took place on 20-21 October 2010. The only event of its kind in the UK, the PFM connects international producers and financiers to encourage new film financing relationships.

The PFM benefits from a number of strategic partnerships to help it achieve its goals. In 2008 it teamed up with Rome International Film Festival's New Cinema Network, seeing 3 UK producers from the PFM travelling to Rome's co-production market and in 2009 PFM established a formal link-up with Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF)'s 37° South Market, as an exclusive partner in Australia and New Zealand.

The partnership between PFM and Melbourne's only co-financing market was established to improve access to the international film market for Australasian producers. It allows producers to tap into the financial and co-production potential in the UK, Europe and US, whilst in turn delivering strong Australasian product to international financiers.

Helena Mackenzie, Head of Inward Investment and Business Development at Film London set up the partnership "to act as a conduit to the wealth of talent from that region, which could be filtered via 37° South, an existing and similar set up to the PFM. We felt we had similar aims and objectives and with no language barriers it seemed a natural fit."

For 37° South director Mark Woods, PFM is their flagship alliance. "What we wanted was for the sales agents at MIFF 37°South to be able to select three of the producers at our event and to be able to send them to a similar event in one of the world's great film financing centres, where they could meet an even greater range of financiers again in a more selective environment than the likes of Cannes."

In its pilot year, the partnership supported one producer from the 37° South market to attend the PFM. Following the success of this initial collaboration three Australasian producers were supported to come to the PFM in 2010: Richard Lowenstein, Ghost Pictures; Lisa Shaunessy, Chaotic Pictures; and Robert Connelly, Arenamedia.

Lisa Shaunessy talks of the perception, both locally and internationally, that Australia is disadvantaged by a "tyranny of distance", and thinks that the opportunity to attend markets like the PFM is essential to doing film business in Australia. Shaunessy found her own experience of the PFM "incredibly useful", and believes that several meetings held at PFM will be directly linked to the financing of all three of the projects she brought to the market.

Arenamedia's Robert Connelly also spoke of the "terrific impact" of the PFM on his current slate, specifically leading to finance that will potentially see his next film in production in 2011. He testified to the huge logistical benefits of having a few days of intensive meetings with a wide range of financiers in the short window of opportunity a business trip from Melbourne allows. Connelly also highlighted the particular benefit PFM offered by having financiers from all over the world brought together for a focused event., reducing the need for extensive international travel

The PFM also enjoys a formal alliance with Rome Film Festival's New Cinema Network. Mackenzie explains how "Film London felt it was important to link up with a European network, and with Rome Film Festival ramping up its market activities with the Business Street and New Cinema Network initiatives, it was a good match". She continues, "the partnership with Rome helps PFM improve relations with Europe and explore ways to co-produce and finance outside of the normal channels, and provides much added value to the PFM".

Through the partnership, three producers from the PFM attend the New Cinema Network with their travel and accommodation supported. It is intended specifically for PFM projects with European co-production possibilities. This year the PFM supported Lisa Shaunessy from the Australian cohort, Misha Shprits of Molot Entertainment from Russia and Christine Alderson of

Ipsos Facto, from London.

As Shaunessy attests, the PFM and the New Cinema Network are two very different kinds of markets. The PFM is about direct financing and meeting with financiers on existing projects, whilst Rome is more about meeting other film-makers and potentially collaborating on new and exciting projects. "It was an entirely new experience for us", Shaunessy said. "Discovering the breadth and depth of European financing, meeting with producers and getting to know their taste, instigated ideas for co-productions I would never have considered. And that's really exciting! Not to mention great for the industry on both sides of the world."