



MEDIA RELEASE

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SBS Head of Commissioning John Godfrey to depart after 18 years

SBS Head of Commissioning John Godfrey will depart the broadcaster next month, concluding an 18-year tenure during which he has played a pivotal role in shaping SBS's commissioning strategy and delivering many of the network's most successful, acclaimed and culturally impactful programs.

Across senior leadership roles, including as Head of Commissioning since 2022, Godfrey has been instrumental in bringing landmark SBS series to screen, including *Go Back to Where You Came From*, *Once Upon a Time in Cabramatta*, *Filthy Rich and Homeless*, *First Contact*, *Struggle Street* and *The Australian Wars*.

He has also overseen some of SBS's most recognisable and enduring formats and returning series, including *Mastermind Australia*, *The Cook Up with Adam Liaw*, *Who Do You Think You Are?*, and more recently, *Alone Australia*. His contribution spans some of SBS's most iconic television moments, highest rating hits including *Eurovision*, and many of the programs that have come to define SBS for Australian audiences.

Equally significant has been John's dedication to nurturing the next generation of Australian screen practitioners. Combined with his generous mentorship and strong leadership, this has made a lasting impact on colleagues, creatives and the broader sector.

Special Broadcasting Service

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Godfrey has also championed under-represented voices, helping ensure the diversity of Australia is reflected both on and off screen across SBS's commissioned slate. This includes the implementation of SBS's Commissioning Inclusion Guidelines, strengthening the broadcaster's position as an industry leader in inclusive storytelling.

“After 18 incredible years at SBS, now is the right time for me to step away. I have been fortunate to work alongside so many passionate colleagues, talented creators and production partners who share a belief in backing bold ideas, pushing boundaries and using the power of storytelling to open minds and hearts. I'm proud of the programs I have helped bring to screen, the voices they have elevated, the issues they have brought into focus and the conversations they have sparked in homes across Australia.

“I depart with gratitude for the people and experiences that have defined my time at SBS. I'm especially thankful to those who have trusted us to tell their stories, and to the many collaborators willing to take risks to create impact. It has been a privilege to play a small part in sharing those stories with Australians.”

SBS Managing Director Jane Palfreyman said: “John's legacy extends far beyond the groundbreaking series like *Go Back to Where You Came From* that he commissioned for this network. It is reflected in the profound impact these programs have had on Australia's national conversations – shaping our understanding of identity, culture and community.

“Through landmark productions such as *Filthy Rich and Homeless*, *First Contact* and *The Australian Wars*, John championed storytelling that challenged assumptions, broadened perspectives and encouraged meaningful engagement with our nation's history, public policy and contemporary social issues. We thank him for his vision and leadership and wish him every success as he embarks on this next chapter.”



SBS Director of Television Kathryn Fink added: “SBS’s standing as a broadcaster renowned for bold ideas, fearless documentary-making and distinctive drama is due in no small part to John’s commissioning acumen and creative ambition. Over many years, he helped shape a commissioning strategy that produced innovative, world-class content while remaining deeply connected to SBS’s unique purpose as Australia’s multicultural and First Nations broadcaster.

“John’s passion for ensuring the diversity of Australia is reflected not just in the stories we tell at SBS, but in who tells them, has underpinned our position as a leader in inclusion in the sector. He has driven key initiatives including the launch of SBS’s Commissioning Inclusion Guidelines, and programs that support emerging and under-represented talent, in front and behind the camera. His legacy can be seen not only in the strength of SBS today, but in the broader impact he has had on the Australian screen sector.”

Godfrey will depart SBS mid-July.

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