

This is a public submission from Mr Patrick Murphy

There may be some leverage in co-productions for documentaries, as there are Australian funding sources for such productions. So a co-production with the ABC can mean that instead of the ABC funding all of a documentary, the ABC funds ten per cent, and the co-producers cover the rest of the production costs with investments from commercial entities, and grants from funding bodies. This means that the ABC can stretch resources and end up with ten documentaries rather than one. The risk to the ABC in such ventures is that the ABC surrenders full editorial control. So if, for example, the co-production is a program like the opinion piece on population issues by Dick Smith, it can appear that if you are wealthy in Australia you can pay to have the national broadcaster broadcast your opinions.

This isn't the case with series like The New Inventors.

There isn't any funding available for such series, and no incentive for private investors to become involved as the purpose of these kinds of shows isn't to make money for the producers. So if the ABC decides not to make such programming internally, the only way it will be produced is if the ABC pays an external commercial company to produce such a series. Why would the ABC do this when it is so expensive to fund an external company to produce television? The New Inventors takes in stories and interviews from Australians in every State and Territory. Why would the ABC pay the high cost demanded by an external commercial company to produce this series when it would be so much less expensive to commission a panel show in Sydney or Melbourne?

Closing down internal production capacity means closing down on ongoing and regular interviews and stories with people outside of Sydney and Melbourne.

The ABC is more than these two urban centres. Thank you.