

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP
Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing
Minister for Creative Industries



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VICTORIA STARS ALONGSIDE ROBBIE WILLIAMS IN *BETTER MAN*

As the Melbourne-made feature film *Better Man* lights up screens across the globe, music superstar Robbie Williams has arrived in Melbourne to celebrate the release of his biopic with a special appearance at Fed Square tonight.

Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks today met the British pop icon and one of the film's local producers, Paul Currie, at the Royal Exhibition Building's Dome Promenade to celebrate the release of the feature film – made locally right here in Victoria, backed by the Allan Labor Government.

The free event will start at 5.00pm and no registration is required – it's Robbie's way of thanking the city for helping to bring his epic feature film to life. Williams will share insights about the film and perform some of his biggest hits featured in the movie.

Better Man was directed, co-produced and co-written by Victorian filmmaker Michael Gracey, and follows the rise, fall and resurgence of one of the world's greatest entertainers – ingeniously portrayed on-screen as a monkey thanks to Melbourne's talented visual effects experts.

Now in cinemas, the film's innovative storytelling style and sophisticated visual effects has been critically acclaimed and already garnered it 35 award nominations including a Golden Globe nomination and Academy Award shortlisting for Best Visual Effects and Best Original Song.

Better Man is the largest feature film to be made locally in Victoria and showcases our world-class screen industry on the world stage.

The film was conceived by an all-Victorian team, led by Michael Gracey, co-writers Simon Gleeson and Oliver Cole, and producers Paul Currie, Michael Gracey, Coco Ma, and Craig McMahon.

Better Man created more than 2,900 jobs – including more than 420 in regional Victoria – and engaged more than 840 local businesses like caterers, accommodation providers, metal workers and sign writers, injecting over \$142 million into the state's economy.

The Labor Government's VICSCREEN strategy has supported Victoria's screen industry to be home to a diverse and growing pipeline of local and international projects. Later this month, Liam Neeson will arrive in Victoria to start shooting his latest film *The Mongoose*, which will be filmed in Melbourne and in regional Victoria.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

"Better Man is a Melbourne-made global sensation. This extraordinary film shows the world what Victoria's creative sector can achieve – bolstering our state's reputation as a global screen powerhouse."

"Investing in creative projects like this one pays huge dividends for the state. Better Man injected \$142 million directly into Victoria's economy, employed thousands of people and provided a significant boost for many local businesses who were involved along the way."

"To any producers looking for a location for their next project – let Victoria entertain you!"

Quotes attributable to VicScreen CEO Caroline Pitcher

"Robbie Williams has shown incredible faith in the Victorian screen industry by placing his life story in its hands."

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“Creatively led by the incredibly talented local visionary Michael Gracey and made right here in Melbourne by our genius crews and innovative screen businesses, Better Man is proof that the Victorian screen industry is as good as the best in the world.”

Quotes attributable to *Better Man* Producer Paul Currie

“It was fabulous filming in Victoria once again with its talented crews, superb locations, and state-of-art-facilities. Thanks to the Victorian Government through VicScreen for supporting us to make Better Man here in Melbourne; there’s nowhere I’d rather film.”

Quotes attributable to Robbie Williams

“Australia has the most special place in my heart, and I’m so grateful to Victoria, to Melbourne, the incredibly talented cast and crew, the writers, the producers and Director Michael Gracey. I’m delighted to have had the opportunity to make this extraordinary film here.”