**Hello everyone!** We will begin promptly at 9:30 by watching our first example of an ITVS-funded work sample, "A Fragile Trust" by director/producer Samantha Grant.

- N'Jeri

**Afterwards, the filmmaker will join us for a short Q&A. So make sure to get your questions ready!**

- N'Jeri

**Alright! Let’s begin.**

- N'Jeri

**This is the ten minute work-in-progress sample for "A Fragile Trust."**

- N'Jeri

**You all can see and hear the it, correct?**

- N'Jeri

**Playing fine on my end.**

- samanthagrant

**If it isn’t playing on your computer, press the play button. Also, make sure that you’re using either Firefox or Chrome as your browser**

- N'Jeri

**my browser keeps crashing**

- Anonymous 89KN

**Anonymous 89KN, are you on Firefox? Try that browser. Also, make sure you’re on a computer and not a tablet.**

- N'Jeri

**Sorry, had to pause the video before it went onto the next work sample**

- N'Jeri

**We have Samantha Grant with us, the director/producer of "A Fragile Trust"**

- N'Jeri

**She’s here to answer your questions**

- N'Jeri
HI everyone

- samanthagrant

But while you’re gathering your thoughts, I have a couple of questions first

- N’Jeri

Samantha, can you talk to us about what stage of production you were in when you submitted this sample?

- N’Jeri

This was my third time applying for Open Call

- samanthagrant

I had already shot a lot of footage and have even put together a rough cut of the film

- samanthagrant

Did you make a new trailer each time you submitted?

- Anonymous WA99

That said, I knew I was not heading in the right direction in terms of my vision for the film so I didn’t want to submit the rough cut

- samanthagrant

Ultimately, I started out making a more ’newsy’ documentary but what I really wanted to make was more of a ’film’ documentary

- samanthagrant

So, I decided to cut together what I had and insert text cards for the stuff I hadn’t shot yet - the footage I knew could exist but had not yet created.

- samanthagrant

Yes

- samanthagrant

And did you have an editor or were you cutting the samples yourself?

- N’Jeri

What was the best advice you got for changing your WIP?

- Anonymous 89KN
Its important that there is a sense of forward motion in your progress so you should be re-cutting and re-writing every time - based on the feedback calls

- samanthagrant

I edited myself, but I had friends and colleagues give me feedback because I was so close to the material

- samanthagrant

How did you define the production time line in the application knowing you had stuff you still needed to collect?

- Indu

For my particular film, since it’s a story that many people were already familiar with, I had to remind people of the story. So the advice to include a short ‘teaser’ at the top with footage from the time of the scandal itself was key.

- samanthagrant

I created the timeline on the assumption of what I would do if I got the funding. I obviously was not going to be able to do the shooting if I did not have the funding, but I hoped I would get it so I wrote/budgeted as if I would get the funding. Optimism helps!

- samanthagrant

What’s the best piece of advice you can give to someone doing an ITVS WIP? (what did you learn throughout the process of submitted so many times?)

- Sandra

Since this was the 3rd submission for open called did you specifically cut this version of her work sample for Open Call, or were you using it for other funders as well. If this was a cut specifically for open call what were some of the edit decisions that you made to target what ITVS was looking for?

- Christen

The best advice is simply to keep trying. Persistence pays. I’ve learned that lesson time and again in filmmaking and journalism. That said, be open to really hearing criticism and feedback. Don’t take it personally. Collect trusted advisors along your journey and listen to what they are telling you.

- samanthagrant

This was specifically for Open Call.

- samanthagrant
How did you use written proposal to augment the WIP? Did you include information on how you were going to "fill in the blanks"?

- Robin Lung

The things I wanted to include were 1) A sense of the style of the film 2) A sense of the story and mood of the film 3) A sense of some of the issues that would be raised in the storytelling. 4) A sense of the perspective.

- samanthagrant

will your finished project resemble exactly what we are seeing here? Or is this just to give OpenCall a feel for your WIP?

- Anonymous HHUG

Its been my experience that paying close attention to the goals of each funder is key in shaping each grant proposal.

- samanthagrant

Yes - the written proposal was very visual. I used vivid, descriptive language to describe what I would create.

- samanthagrant

The finished product uses some of the footage you see here, but there’s a lot more than what you see here. I hired 2 animators who did amazing work and brought a whole additional layer of style to the film.

- samanthagrant

How many different WIP were you working on at the same time and how much did they differ funder to funder?

- Anonymous XBS6

I also shot a lot of 'evocative' footage with the 5D and that really helped with bringing in beautiful visuals while cutting down on the talking heads.

- samanthagrant

I had a few 'selected scenes' that I generally used for fundraising applications. Open call was the only one that I cut an entirely new WIP for.

- samanthagrant
how did you balance: 1) introducing themes/characters of your overall project with 2) illustrating what a complete "scene" would look like

That was really tricky. I had to choose carefully who I would include in the WIP because you can’t include everyone. Ultimately I decided that the themes were more important than individual characters.

Thanks so much for joining us, Samantha! Could you end on any last words of advice and an update on the status of your film?

Also, I was conscious of pacing. I didn’t want the WIP to feel really rushed or over packed or frenetic.

Sure. Advice is just to keep going!

Status of the film is that it will air on Indie Lens on May 5, 2014! We are super excited. We will also be doing a limited release in theaters this spring and a nationwide grassroots tour.

Congrats!

Thanks everybody. Good luck!!

Congratulations!

We’re really excited about it as well!

I will chat the link to the website soon.
Let's move on to our next work sample: "Nine to Ninety" by producer Juli Vizza

Thanks N'Jeri!

That work sample gets me every time!

Wow. Beautiful.

:)”}

We have producer Juli Vizza here with us today.

Thank you

Hi

As you guys gather your questions, I have a couple I want to start off with

Juli, what stage of production were you at when you applied with this work sample?

We had a majority of the film shot and had already cut together a few scenes to see what we had.

so this was a cut down and a slight revamp of what we had

You also work as an editor, did you edit the sample?

N'Jeri

- samanthagrant

- Juli V

- Juli V

- Juli V

- N'Jeri

- N'Jeri

- N'Jeri

- Juli V

- N'Jeri
We also applied as a short

- Juli V

I did edit this sample piece. Someone else edited the longer version

- Juli V

We saw the sample, did it make the film as we saw or is changed?

- edarino

Is the music part of the finished piece or something for the WIP submission

- Anonymous HHUG

We got this question from an email: What is the balance between showing that you have a story with "an arc" vs. showing too much plot/info in the sample?

❤️ 1

- N’Jeri

Sorry, I want to address a couple of tech questions. If the next work sample is still playing on your end, press pause on your computer. Also, this is a text chat not an audio chat, so that’s why you aren’t hearing Juli.

- N’Jeri

Oh that’s a good one. We had a few scenes that we LOVED and knew we couldn’t include it all. Plus we didn’t have the film cut together yet and there were still some questions about how things were going to unfold. So Alicia Dwyer, the director, and I sat down and talked about how to construct the piece. Because it was a personal and intimate story, we knew that whoever was watching it had to fall for the characters and relate to what was going on. So we tried to figure out how best to show who our characters were and a sample of some of the arc that it would follow, without giving too much away

❤️ 1

- Juli V

This was just for the WIP. We brought on a composer for the finished piece

- Juli V

All of the elements are there, but it has changed. The structure is the same, but there are scenes in the sample that did not make the final cut

- Juli V

the last scene, was tweaked and is in it though

- Juli V
This sample is just beautiful and given that so much of it’s beauty is in the details and the intimacy you capture, how did you decide when to pick the camera up and where your story would end?

- Nicole

After you were awarded funding with this sample did you get feedback on the direction for the larger piece? If so what kind of feedback did you get at that stage?

- Christen

That is a testament to my team. Michael Dwyer, who is the DP and Alicia, his sister, who are also good friends of mine are just amazing. It helped that we already knew each other and there were times when they struggled with is this too much or is this ok. Ultimately, the grandmother really was the one who let everyone in and so she was the cue we all took

- Juli V

We didn’t get any specific direction. Most of the feedback we got was how much they could relate and a good portion of how the feedback rolled out were in questions of how we planned to do something. ITVS is great that way. They really want to HELP you make the film, not steer the direction

- Juli V

Juli, thanks so much for joining us. Could you end on any last words of advice and a status update?

- N’Jeri

We were nominated for an IDA Award this past month and are waiting to hear about our broadcast date. As for advice, its a process. Give yourself time to work out ideas and try them on people. Feedback helps

- Juli V

Thanks, Juli!

- N’Jeri

Thank you N’Jeri!

- Juli V

Our final work sample is for "Freedom Fighters" by director Jamie Meltzer

- N’Jeri

We have director Jamie Meltzer here to answer your questions.

- N’Jeri
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamie, are you here?</td>
<td>- N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- Jamie Meltzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That was really powerful. I want to see the whole movie.</td>
<td>- Caren McCaleb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great. As you guys are gathering questions for Jamie, I</td>
<td>- N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ll start with a couple</td>
<td>- N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie, what stage of production were you in when you applied?</td>
<td>- N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About on year into production. We spent much if that first year creating this work sample.</td>
<td>- Jamie Meltzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And did you employ an editor to create this trailer or did you edit yourself?</td>
<td>- N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We spent about one year shooting and three months editing.</td>
<td>- Jamie Meltzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a combo of editing ourselves and hiring an editor for 6 weeks- which was really helpful</td>
<td>- Jamie Meltzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wow! You mentioned before that you shot with this work sample in mind.  Can you explain that a bit?</td>
<td>- N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After one year of production how close are you to wrapping production?</td>
<td>- Anonymous HHUG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were the things that the editor brought to this work sample that you weren’t able to do yourself?</td>
<td>- dktwriting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are many post-production elements running throughout the WIP how do you balance an expressed need for additional funds with a clear execution of your polished aesthetic?

- Anonymous 6LSG

well, we really spent the first year focused on getting scenes for this WIP. An example would be the reenactments- we knew the WIP would be much better with them and would demonstrate the style of the film more clearly

- Jamie Meltzer

The editor was able to make connections between scenes- emphasize emotion and make the hole WIP flow better

- Jamie Meltzer

We have another 10 months of following cases they investigate and then about 7 months editing

- Jamie Meltzer

Good q- in this case we just went for it and felt it was worth investing money and time into the WIP. The hard thing to balance is working towards a trailer and working towards a film- two somewhat different aims.

- Jamie Meltzer

This is for all the presenters: When you create your WIP, do you try to make it a stand-alone piece, like a short doc, or do you focus more on presenting the style and pace of the long documentary, making it more a selection of scenes?

- Sonia

In hindsight what would you have done differently?

- Anonymous 9NNT

We only have Jamie left but he can answer this question

- N'Jeri

i tried to make it flow- but NOT to make it to complete - I think the aim is to whet the viewers appetite- not to fulfill it. Ey should want to see more when it’s done

- Jamie Meltzer

A question submitted through email: If there are multiple characters, how many characters is it helpful to introduce? Some? All?

- N'Jeri
we focused on only 3 - even though our film has more characters. We didn’t think the WIP could sustain more than 3

- Jamie Meltzer

nothing ;) we focused on creating this WIP as proof of concept and we have now have full funding and can focus on making the film

- Jamie Meltzer

Thanks so much for joining us, Jamie! Could you end by giving us any last words of advice and a film status update?

- N’Jeri

we should be done editing in 2015! My advice would be to really focus on creating a solid WIP that complements your proposal and leaves the funders wanting more. It may take a year or more to get to that stage and you may have to devote funds to it that you set aside for post- but it’s important to do in the current funding landscape.

- Jamie Meltzer

thanks for having me

- Jamie Meltzer

Thanks again to Jamie, Juli and Samantha for joining us. Please stick around to hear the ITVS perspective on what makes a strong work sample and the Open Call application process.

- N’Jeri

I’m going to turn on my webcam for this

- N’Jeri

Thanks, Jamie!

- Indu

Thanks Jamie, Juli, and Samantha! This was very helpful!

- Estephania

Actually, the webcam is no longer an option now that samples have screened.

- N’Jeri

I’ll just use the chat

- N’Jeri
I wanted to take this time to plug our upcoming Open Call deadline

- N’Jeri

We are now accepting applications for Open Call through January 17th.

- N’Jeri

N’Jeri, I have a question. What would you say is the weighting given to a sample vis a vis the written proposal?

- Indu

And we wanted to have this webinar early because we often get bombarded with questions related to what we’re looking for.

- N’Jeri

Before I take questions, I just wanted to give you the basic info.

- N’Jeri

For Open Call, we accept work samples between 8 and 30 minutes

- N’Jeri

You can submit a trailer, scene selects, a combo of the two or even a rough cut

- N’Jeri

There is a myth out there that if you have a rough cut, you have a better chance at getting funded.

- N’Jeri

That is not necessarily true

- N’Jeri

In this past round of Open Call, not a single one of our projects were at a rough cut

- N’Jeri

There’s also another myth that we only fund projects that are in late production

- N’Jeri

Also not true!

- N’Jeri
Jamie’s film is a perfect example of a film that we funded that was still in early production.  
- N’Jeri

We fund a range of projects  
- N’Jeri

Now, I can start accepting questions  
- N’Jeri

This is a really important question.  
- N’Jeri

Are there any typical problems with most samples you see?  
- Indu

What if we have a full rough cut? Longer than 30 mins.  
- LindaMoroney

It is important to have equally strong treatment and work sample.  
- N’Jeri

They need to complement each other but also be able to stand up on their own.  
- N’Jeri

How important are the filmmaker bios for this application process? Looking at Samantha, Juli, and Jamie’s IMDb profiles, they all seem to have some pretty significant experience under their belts. Can an outstanding work sample supplant that kind of experience?  
- dkfwriting

Don’t assume that the reviewer has read your treatment first and then watched your WIP, and then edit with that assumption in mind.  
- N’Jeri

What are the main criteria you looking for in the WIP.  
- Anonymous 6LSG

That being said, I’ve seen a strong work sample move a project forward despite having a weaker treatment  
- N’Jeri
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But if you have a strong treatment and a weak work sample, you project has less of a chance moving forward</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can submit something longer than 30 minutes as long as it is a rough cut of the film</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But make sure you’re submitting a strong rough cut and not something that could be mistaken for an assembly</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes, people submit a rough cut that is really an assembly. And assemblies are often that engaging to watch</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is a good question, which I deliberately selected so I can talk about some common mistakes I see</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First, if your work sample has foreign language, please subtitle it.</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Especially if you have major scenes that aren’t in English</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve had work samples that have been 10 minutes of Spanish with no translation</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also, make sure to properly follow the uploading procedures</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can we include a transcript of the WIP in application?</td>
<td>Indu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We ask for work samples to be downloadable links. Youtube is not an option</td>
<td>N’Jeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Vimeo okay?</td>
<td>Indu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We’re really looking to see if your sample aligns with what you presented in your treatment: characters, storyline, structure, style, POV, access

- N’Jeri

If you have a film with a nonlinear structure, we expect the WIP to demonstrate that

- N’Jeri

If you are interweaving the story of three characters, we want to see each of those characters

- N’Jeri

We also looking at the broadcast quality of the sample

- N’Jeri

That’s not necessary.

- N’Jeri

What do you mean “broadcast quality”?

- Anonymous HHUG

Yes, vimeo is okay. Just make sure that you make the video downloadable.

- N’Jeri

Simply, does the film look well made. Is it well shot? Is it in standard definition or high definition?

- N’Jeri

There is a basic eligibility requirement. You need to have been a producer/co-producer, director or co-director on a completed work

- N’Jeri

Are SD film automatically disqualified, even if they are well shot?

- Anonymous 586Y

That work could be a doc short, a narrative short, a feature film, etc

- N’Jeri

but aside from that requirement, anyone can apply. We have funded people who are making their first feature films

- N’Jeri
No, SD films are disqualified. But due to new PBS requirements, filmmakers will be required to up-res their footage to HD. And that’s something that we have to take note of and also make sure is clear to the filmmaker

- N’Jeri

What about some HD iphone footage?

- Indu

Sorry, SD films are NOT disqualified

- N’Jeri

It’s fine to use HD iPhone footage.

- N’Jeri

However, unless you’re making "Tarnation." I would use the footage from devices like the iPhone sparingly and where appropriate

- N’Jeri

I have time for one more question.

- N’Jeri

These three work samples seemed like mini-films to me. Would you recommend this, as opposed to showing different scenes from the film, and the different elements (I have historical archive elements, as well as verite scenes)

- Sandra

Until then, here are the links to the projects we saw today

- N’Jeri

http://www.afragiletrust.com/

- N’Jeri

http://www.itvs.org/films/nine-to-ninety

- N’Jeri

http://www.freedomfightersfilm.com/

- N’Jeri
Jamie talked about this earlier but I want to bring this up again.

- N’Jeri

They may seem like a mini-film but they really aren’t

- N’Jeri

These WIPs just did a good job of outlining the overall arc, demonstrated access and characters

- N’Jeri

But, most importantly, it left the viewer wanting more.

- N’Jeri

Don’t submit a WIP that’s like a completed short film. Because a reviewer I’ll think “I just saw the film. What more do I need to see and why should we give them money?”

- N’Jeri

And you don’t want a reviewer thinking that

- N’Jeri

I think some of the most successful WIPs are ones that show the arc, introduce you to the characters and then have a couple of scenes so you can get a real sense of the filmmaker’s storytelling style

- N’Jeri

There were so many great questions that I didn’t get to today.

- N’Jeri

But we will be having an Open Call live chat with myself and Sr. Programming Manager Jorge Trelles next month

- N’Jeri

Wednesday, January 8th

- N’Jeri

I will send out an email soon with the details

- N’Jeri

So if your question wasn’t answered today, you can ask it then

- N’Jeri
Or send me an email at njeri_eaton@itvs.org

- N'Jeri

The transcript for today webinar will be posted on our blog Beyond The Box later this week.

- N'Jeri

Due to rights clearance issues, we won’t be able to post the work samples.

- N'Jeri

Blame Juli and her use of Sigor Ros songs!

- N'Jeri

Not completely true but you get the idea.

- N'Jeri

Thanks for joining us and happy holidays!

- N'Jeri