



WGAW ANIMATION

TIPS AND TALKING POINTS: How to Get Your TV Animation Projects Covered

*Below are some tips on how to push for WGA coverage. The most important thing to remember is to prepare yourself (and your Reps, if you have them) **BEFORE** you pitch. No one will care as much about WGA coverage as you. If we don't bring it up, the studios won't either.*

Get Your Team on Board (Before You Pitch)

Before pitching, talk to your agents/reps and producing partners (if you have any) about your desire for WGA coverage, and send them the WGAW Adult Animation Report Card and Rep handout. Be clear that you will NOT SELL to anyone who will not cover the show under a WGA agreement.

Know Where to Pitch

Talk to your reps about using the Report Card to prioritize pitches, and pitch to more than one place if you can.

The Report Card shows which studios are most open to WGA coverage (the studio, not the network or streamer, determines coverage). If one studio won't agree to WGA coverage but wants your project, try to get other studios interested, and let them know you will take the project to a studio that will agree to WGA coverage.

Remember: the studio will NOT bring up WGA coverage unless you do!

How to Talk About WGA Coverage

Here are some key talking points to say to your reps (or for you, if you are talking directly to the studio):

- Push back if the studio says they *can't* cover it. Many studios have done so for other projects.
 - Some writers have gotten coverage without a big fight, simply by stressing the inability to hire the writers they need to do the show or by talking to the studio as though the show will be WGA-covered as a matter of course.
 - If the studio says they are open to revisiting the WGA issue if the show gets a second season, or is picked up from a pilot, say that isn't good enough—it's almost impossible to get WGA coverage once you have closed a non-Guild deal.

- Don't let the studio say they can only do the show under a TAG deal. They have the ability to hire writers through a WGA signatory and still cover animators under TAG.
- Tell the studio that WGA coverage benefits them by providing a pool of WGA talent to recruit from, along with stronger writer retention and better stability on the project.
 - If the show isn't WGA, it hurts your ability to hire the type of writers you need to make the show a success. Higher turnover—which is bad for the show—is a risk when WGA writers are working on a non-WGA show because they are incentivized to look elsewhere for covered work that offers WGA compensation and benefits.
 - Example: the animated 'Harley Quinn' went through 39 writers in four seasons. All of these writers left for WGA jobs so that they could pay the bills and maintain their WGA benefits and take care of their families in one of the most expensive cities in the country.
 - And if you are pitching an animated drama with continuing storylines (or even a comedy with season-long arcs) you can use the turnover argument about how hard it would be to get new staff up to speed. Turnover is a recipe for failure!
- If you pass on the project because of lack of coverage, make sure the studio knows why.
 - Business Affairs needs to hear that WGA coverage is WGA members' baseline expectation, and that it's a deal breaker for the client to do the project non-WGA.

Get Your Talent Involved

You or someone you know can reach out to them and explain what the WGA contract means to you and the other writers—WGA compensation and benefits, a WGA pool of talent. Don't assume they'll know the issues already.

Let them know stars like Chris Rock, Aubrey Plaza, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Seth Meyers, Andy Samberg, and others stood by their writers so they were able to get WGA compensation and benefits.

Hold Firm and Keep Pushing

Writers willing to walk away from non-WGA deals is how we ensure studios understand they need to agree to WGA coverage.

Contact Info and Links:

- If you have any questions or you are getting ready to pitch, contact TV Animation support staff talbert@wga.org and rdisney@wga.org.
- If you are writing an original animated feature, contact Cathy at CGenovese@wga.org.



WGAW ADULT ANIMATION REPORT CARD

A	   LIONSGATE THE TORNANTE COMPANY
B	  
C	NETFLIX
F	      LEGENDARY 

A = WGA coverage is most likely **B** = WGA coverage is possible

C = Coverage is possible but less likely **F** = No recent WGA coverage