



SHORT FILM POD FUND

GUIDELINES

August 2026

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Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga The New Zealand Film Commission (**NZFC**) invests in talented filmmakers and exciting New Zealand films to be enjoyed in Aotearoa New Zealand, and around the world. Making strong short films is often an important step on the pathway to feature filmmaking.

The Short Film Pod Fund supports experienced filmmakers to administer short film funds (**Pods**) that provide talented developing filmmakers with a clear, well-supported process from pre-production to completed short film.

This reboot of a previous NZFC initiative is intended to produce distinctive short films that accelerate talented filmmakers on their way to a debut feature. It is also intended to strengthen producer-led development, production discipline, and filmmaker capability across Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Pods will each be run by an Executive Producer or Executive Producing team, and must include at least one experienced producer. Each Pod will select a slate of three or more short film projects and guide those projects through call out, selection, production, post-production and delivery. Executive Producers will be expected to bring strong creative judgement, production expertise, cultural competency, networks, and a clear process for supporting filmmakers to make creatively ambitious and achievable short films.

Each Pod will receive:

- a grant of \$50,000 to administer the process and support filmmakers from project selection through to production delivery; and
- \$270,000 of production funding to allocate to at least three short film projects.

Key objectives:

The NZFC will fund up to three short film Pods. Between them, the Pods will:

- Support a diverse range of talented filmmakers to develop and produce high quality short films ;





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- Produce quality short films across a range of forms (including scripted, documentary and animation) and genres that help build a pathway to feature film for talented filmmakers; and
- Support the Executive Producers to develop their skills in creative development support, mentorship and relationship-building.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- Experienced filmmakers or teams (of whom at least one must be an experienced producer) with a strong track record, who want to develop their skills as Executive Producers;
- Proposals that demonstrate clear creative leadership and practical delivery capability to design and manage a fair and transparent process to call for, assess and select short film projects for the Pod; and
- A demonstrated commitment to Te Rautaki Māori, diversity, accessibility and culturally safe practice.

By submitting an Expression of Interest (**EOI**) for our Short Film Pod, you agree to these Funding Guidelines (except to the extent varied or waived by us), and our [Code of Conduct](#).

WHO CAN APPLY

You are eligible for this Fund if you :

- are New Zealand citizen or permanent resident; **and**
- you or one of your team have made at least one feature film that has achieved a recognised release pathway, including theatrical, festival, or platform distribution.

WHAT MATERIALS YOU MUST SUBMIT

Applicants should submit a two-four page EOI that gives us a strong sense of who you and/or your team are, the types of projects and filmmakers you want to champion, and how you would create a supportive, creatively rigorous pod environment. Please address the areas below:

- **Applicant or team profile:** Tell us about your relevant experience, key credits, creative and production strengths, and the capability you would bring to leading a short film pod.
- **Prior work:** Provide links to previous screen work that best demonstrates your creative judgement and production craft.
- **Philosophy:** Describe your approach to developing and supporting talent, including the kinds of filmmakers, genres, forms or communities you are excited to champion.





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- **Personal statement:** Share why you want to run a pod now, what you hope to learn through the process, and how the opportunity would extend your practice.

HOW TO APPLY

- Submit your two-four page Expression of Interest, using the NZFC Portal, Tomo Mai.

There is a two-phase process to apply.

- Phase 1 – Call for Expressions of Interest.
- Phase 2 – If eligible and favourably assessed, a small number of applicants will be invited to submit a more detailed proposal.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

NZFC staff will assess EOI and detailed proposals based on the materials provided, based on the Fund Guidelines, and any other criteria we consider to be relevant. The NZFC may seek additional information from applicants during the assessment process.

We expect to notify shortlisted applicants approximately four-weeks after the EOI deadline. All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application

Funding decisions are at the NZFC's discretion and all decisions are final.

Phase 2 (SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS ONLY)

Detailed proposal requirements

- **Pod model:** proposed structure and creative philosophy to executive produce the slate of short films.
- **Selection approach:** how short film projects will be called for, assessed, shortlisted and selected, including how the Pod will attract and select filmmakers and projects consistent with the filmmakers, genres, forms and communities it proposes to champion.
- **Support model:** how filmmakers will be guided through production and post-production.
- **Health, safety and duty of care:** proposed systems for managing wellbeing, risk, complaints, conflicts and production safety.
- **Timeline:** key milestones from call-out and selection through to delivery of the completed short films.





TIMELINE

Milestone	Date
PHASE 1	
EOI open	19 August
EOI deadline	14 September, 1PM
PHASE 2 -Shortlisted Applicants Only	
Shortlist notified – Request for full proposals	21 September
Proposals deadline	9 October, 1PM
Applicant interviews, if required	26 – 30 October
Final decisions announced	6 November

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will use reasonable efforts to keep the information you provide confidential. Please note that any information you give us can be requested under the Official Information Act 1982. If we get such a request, we can talk to you before responding.

If you have any further questions, please email us at industrysupport@nzfilm.co.nz

