

New Zealand Film Commission

Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

Boost Funding

Guidelines for Applicants

March 2021

You are encouraged to read these guidelines carefully as they set out important eligibility criteria and are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible.

If you have any questions, please e-mail the Devolved Co-ordinator at devolved@nzfilm.co.nz

Deadlines are unable to be extended, so please get in touch well in advance of final submission with queries. You may also refer to the Boost Funding FAQ which is available on the NZFC website.



Introduction

Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga | New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) is here to support the Aotearoa New Zealand screen industry, including the development of sustainable and successful screen businesses.

Your application must be completed online through the NZFC's application portal which is open for applications from March 24 2021 with a deadline of 1pm on Tuesday, April 27 2021. No late or incomplete applications will be accepted. Applicants will be advised of final decisions in June 2021, subject to the number of applications to process, with publication of the final decisions and contract negotiations to follow.

Boost Funding overview

The aim of Boost is to:

- support producers to actively develop their lead project while continuing to progress a slate where possible;
- enhance the business sustainability of producers and screen businesses who have a strategic vision in a fast-changing environment and a plan to deliver on this;
- activate high impact, authentic and culturally significant stories and facilitate dynamic pathways for outstanding people, projects and businesses.

Applicants for schemes like Boost should consider ethnicity and gender diversity that reflects Aotearoa New Zealand society. It is encouraged that applicants have half of their projects with women in key creative roles, and to promote the authentic representation of Māori characters, stories, places, history and culture in New Zealand films (in front of and behind the camera).

Please refer to NZFC's [Rautaki Māori Guidelines](#)

The amount of funding available is up to \$75,000 plus GST (if any) per application, subject to availability of total funds. It is provided as a non-recoupable grant.

Given the likely high number of applications and contestability of funds, applications approved at the highest award level may be limited. The final amount of any successful funding is discretionary and will be determined through the decision process outlined at the end of these guidelines. Decisions are final; the criteria applied may change from time to time, but all decisions will be consistent with the New Zealand Film Commission Act 1978.

Applicants to the current He Ara funding round are eligible to apply for Boost funding, but only one award will be made to any applicant/company.

Rights

You must hold or share the necessary intellectual property rights in relation to all the projects on your slate and if you are successful your funding contract will require you to provide warranties to this effect. You will not be eligible to receive any funding unless you hold the rights to the project(s) and if it transpires that you don't hold the rights to the project(s), the NZFC has the right to be repaid any funding already advanced.



Who can apply

To be eligible for Boost funding, applicants must:

1. Be an Aotearoa New Zealand citizen or permanent resident*; **and**
2. Have a slate with at least one long form project that would be described as being in 'advanced development'. The NZFC will use the following criteria as appropriate to the format to determine whether a project is in advanced development:
 - Director or key creative/s attached (series/feature films/interactive) and;
 - Advanced script, series bible or outline, game design document; and;
 - Project is market-ready/currently being packaged or financed.

and either:

Be an established producer with at least two 'produced by' credits on:

- a dramatic feature film that has been released theatrically or on a premium SVOD service (such as Netflix, Amazon Prime);
- a New Zealand scripted primetime free-to-air TV production;
- a scripted series drama broadcast on a premium SVOD service or primetime free-to-air TV and with an existing slate of projects in development and/or production;

OR

An established successful screen business:

- active for more than five years; and
- with demonstrable production experience in television, commercials, new media, online or gaming and an existing slate of projects in development and/or production.*

*If the application is being made in the name of a company, it must be a New Zealand company; that is, the company must be incorporated and carrying out business in Aotearoa New Zealand, and its central management and control must be held by Aotearoa New Zealand citizens or permanent residents.

What you can apply for

An eligible application can have a maximum of **four** projects on a slate, including your lead project. The lead project should be the project you can make most progress on in the short and immediate term as well as the project you perceive will have the most meaningful impact/benefits on your business and assist your business to innovate and progress. Your lead project does not have to be in advanced development, as long as there is another project in your slate that can be considered advanced under NZFC criteria above.

Applicants may include in their slate more than one format eg. feature film, television, series drama, interactive, gaming. Any existing market interest in the project or slate will also be taken into consideration.



Up to two separate applications only will be accepted from any one legal entity, however there may not be any crossover of projects or personnel.

You should only apply for actual and reasonable costs involved in progressing your project/s and achieving your stated business and project outcomes. Retrospective applications will not be considered; that is, you cannot apply for funding to cover costs you have already incurred.

Boost Funding conditions

This funding is conditional upon the recipient warranting they will comply with any COVID-19 Alert Guidelines for any work undertaken with this funding.

Funding will be provided as a non-recoupable grant. Expenditure must take place over nine months. Any funds not drawn down within nine months from the date you first access funding will no longer be available to you and the offer of the remaining funding will be withdrawn.

- You may allocate up to 50 percent of funding towards producer overhead costs and fees and the rest must be spent on project development costs.

Recipients must provide an interim report at five months, and a final report no later than the end of the nine-month contract. The report will need to include details of how the Boost funding was spent on project development and business outcomes. Payment will be made in tranches to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis and will be based upon the goals and Key Performance Indicators (**KPIs**) indicated in your application.

Relationship to other NZFC funding

You cannot apply for Boost funding if you have any overdue contractual or reporting obligations to the NZFC. You will need to let staff know if you have other projects in active development with the NZFC or have current loans or grants, whether for the projects on your slate or for others.

- If you are already receiving Boost, Boost UP, or He Ara funding and have not yet fulfilled all of your contractual obligations, including approval by NZFC of contracted reports, you are not able to apply for funding.
- Applicants to the current He Ara funding round are eligible to apply for Boost funding, but only one award will be made to any applicant/company.

For projects both within and outside of your Boost slate you are eligible to apply for other NZFC funding including project development and talent development funding, but this must be for other costs.

Elements of your application

This is your opportunity to show assessors that you have a realistic and clear plan for project and business development and how you will measure the success resulting from Boost funding. Your application elements are:

- Strength of the lead project and slate
- Track record and expertise of the key business team
- Business plan (inclusive of detailed budget)
- Other considerations



Your application will be required to include the following:

Strength of the lead project and slate

- Summary details for the project that is considered in advanced development including synopsis, key creatives attached, development history, intended audience, market partners if attached, proposed finance plan and timeline;
- Summary details for the lead project (if different from above) including synopsis, key creatives attached, development history, intended audience, market partners if attached, proposed finance plan and timeline;
- Brief summary of additional existing projects on your current slate in development (for a total slate including the lead and advanced project or no more than four) and any existing market relationships.

Track record and expertise of the key business personnel

- A profile of your company including a history of past performance as well as the present position in the screen industry;
- Your brief biography and recent screen credits;
- Other company partners or team members if appropriate.

Business plan

- A brief overview of your current business model (SWOT analysis);
- An overview of your strategy moving forward, including what will enable you to work in a COVID-19 environment at any alert level;
- The development plan for your lead project to move it into a production-ready state, taking into account COVID-19 alert levels (this must include a development timeline and milestones for the lead project);

A detailed budget

Using the Boost budget template you need to clearly show how the funding will be spent. This needs to include details of any projected income you will receive from other funding sources (e.g. other investors). The costs you must include in your budget (where applicable) are:

- Costs for developing and progressing the lead project, and any other projects in your slate.
- Any relevant COVID-19 related costs for the lead project including but not limited to re-budgeting, rescheduling, re-casting, virtual scouting, Health and Safety consultation, legal, production design and pre-visualisation.
- Any relevant COVID-19 related costs to develop your business in this current environment.
- Writer fees – see *NZWG Guide to Recommended Minimum Writing Rates*
- Extensions to rights or optioning costs
- Script assessment fees
- Project or professional consultant fees
- Producer fees
- Director fees (unless the director is also the writer or script consultant)
- Direct script and project-related overheads (such as printing, couriers, phone, software licenses, server costs, etc).
- Interactive designer, game artist, programmer and/or developers' costs
- Prototype costs (Interactive, Gaming)

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- Project-related research costs.
 - Legal costs

Note that you may allocate up to 50 percent of funding towards producer overhead costs and fees focused on developing your business, the rest must be spent on project development costs.

Other considerations

- Please describe how your proposal will fulfill the NZFC's aim to activate high impact, authentic and culturally significant stories and facilitate dynamic pathways for outstanding people, projects and businesses
- How will Boost enhance diversity in your slate and business?

How is your application assessed?

Boost decision criteria

When considering whether Boost applications are of sufficient quality and promise to attract assistance, the following factors will be taken into account.

The grading system the NZFC staff and external assessors will be using to assess your application can be found in Appendix A at the end of these guidelines.

Strength of the lead project and slate

- How strong are the main ideas of the lead project?
- Does the lead project have a clear destination to Aotearoa New Zealand audiences?
- Does the lead project have a clear route to international audiences?
- What is the likelihood of the lead project being financed?
- How strong are the ideas across the rest of the slate including market appeal or route to audience, experience of the talent attached, and financing prospects?

Track record and expertise of the key business personnel

- What is the experience and ability of the talent attached to the lead project?
- Does the producer or team have the breadth of relevant skills and experience to deliver this, especially in a COVID-19 environment?
- How successful were previous productions (within the last five years), for example gross box office, ratings, A-List festival selections, awards, international sales, platform presence?
- How strong are the applicant's existing business relationships?

Business Model

- Does the applicant or team have an appropriate level of knowledge of the current screen marketplace and finance?
- Does the applicant have a plan with clear steps for how their business will adjust and adapt to a COVID-19 environment, including diversification, and what would enable their business to continue to evolve?
- How will the applicant measure progress and success in a clear and definable way (including, is the development plan for the lead project to move into a production-ready state taking into account COVID-19 alert levels realistic)?

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- Is the budget comprehensive and is it realistic? Does the budget include information on where other money will come from for the project/s and/or the business? Does it take into account the demands of a COVID-19 environment?

Other Considerations

- How will the applicant's proposal fulfill the NZFC's aim to activate high impact, authentic and culturally significant stories and facilitate dynamic pathways for outstanding people, projects and businesses?
- How will Boost enhance diversity in their slate and business? For example:
 - Does the applicant's business and/or lead project/slate include female creative collaborators? Recipients of devolved funding are encouraged to fund half of their projects with female writers, directors and other key creatives
 - Does the applicant's business and/or lead project/slate include Māori creative collaborators?
 - Does the applicant's business and/or lead project/slate involve those from a recognised under-represented community including gender diverse, LGBTQIA+, those with a disability and/or from a diverse background?
 - Do any of the applicant's projects on the slate promote the authentic representation of gender diverse, LGBTQIA+, those with a disability and/or from a diverse background in characters, stories, places, history and culture.

What happens to your proposal

Applications must be completed and submitted via the online portal and are due at **1pm on April 27, 2021**.

Applications will be assessed by a panel comprising of external assessors and representatives of the NZFC. Depending on the number of applications, the NZFC may shortlist the applicants to be presented to the panel. The applications will be assessed against the criteria as outlined in these guidelines.

Any statistical or demographic information provided as part of your application is not available to external assessors. The data collected is aggregated and used only in meeting the NZFC's reporting requirements. Please remember the statistical information is not a compulsory part of your application. If you do not wish to provide this information, please select 'prefer not to disclose'.

You may be contacted with a request to discuss your submission via video conferencing or phone as part of the assessment process, but this will be determined once all submissions are received if required or not. The panel will make recommendations to the Chief Executive of the NZFC who will then make the final decisions.

Unfortunately, feedback on the reason for decisions cannot be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

Next steps

If you are successful, you receive a letter from the NZFC confirming that you are successful and detailing our offer of funding to you. You will then be invited to enter into a funding agreement with the NZFC for your Boost funding. No payments will be made until you have agreed to the terms and conditions in the funding agreement.

A final reminder that If you have any questions, please e-mail the Devolved Co-ordinator as far in advance of the application deadline as possible at devolved@nzfilm.co.nz

Appendix A

STRENGTH OF LEAD PROJECT / SLATE - TOTAL: 30		
1	Lead project Synopsis	How strong are the main ideas of the lead project?
2	Lead project Market Appeal	Does the project have Aotearoa New Zealand market appeal and is there evidence of this?
3	Lead project Market Appeal	Does the project have international market appeal is there evidence of this?
4	Lead project Timeline, Budget & Development plan	Have they provided a realistic timeline, budget and development plan for the project to be production ready, and does it include contingencies for COVID19 disruption?
5	Lead project Finance	What is the likelihood of the lead project being fully financed? Is there evidence of other sources of finance?
6	Strength of Slate	How strong are the ideas of the rest of your slate? What is the Aotearoa New Zealand market appeal? What is the international market appeal? What is the experience of the talent attached? What are the financing prospects for the rest of your slate?

TRACK RECORD & EXPERTISE OF BUSINESS TEAM - TOTAL: 20		
1	Lead project Talent	What is the experience and ability of the key talent attached to the lead project?
2	Key people	What is the calibre of the team and have they demonstrated their business strengths?
3	Marketplace success	How successful were previous productions (within the last five years), for example gross box office, ratings, A-List festival selections, awards, international sales, platform presence?
4	Marketplace knowledge	Does the producer or team have the breadth of relevant skills and experience to deliver this, especially in a COVID-19 environment?

BUSINESS MODEL - TOTAL: 30		
1	Business plan	Does the applicant or team have an appropriate level of knowledge of the current screen marketplace and finance?
2	Business plan	Does the applicant have a plan with clear steps for how their business will adjust and adapt to a COVID-19 environment and what would enable their business to continue to evolve?

3	Progress	How will the applicant measure progress and success in a clear and definable way (including, is the development plan for the lead project to move into a production-ready state taking into account COVID-19 alert levels realistic)?
4	Budget	Is the budget comprehensive and is it realistic? Does the budget include information on where other money will come from for the project/s and/or the business? Does it take into account the demands of a COVID19 environment?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS – TOTAL: 20

1	High impact, authentic and culturally significant stories	<p>How will the applicant's proposal fulfill the NZFC's aim to activate high impact, authentic and culturally significant stories?</p> <p>Does the applicant's business and/or lead project/slate include female creative collaborators? Recipients of devolved funding are encouraged to fund half of their projects with female writers, directors and other key creatives</p> <p>Does the applicant's business and/or lead project/slate include Māori creative collaborators?</p>
2	Dynamic Pathways	<p>How will the applicant's proposal facilitate dynamic pathways for outstanding people, projects and businesses?</p> <p>Does the applicant's business help screen practitioners to build sustainable careers and develop bespoke pathways and opportunities?</p>
3	Enhancing Diversity	<p>How will BOOST enhance diversity in their slate and business? Factors considered:</p> <p>Does the applicant's business and/or lead project/slate involve those from a recognised under-represented community including gender diverse, LGBTQIA+, those with a disability and/or from a diverse background?</p> <p>Do any of the applicant's projects on the slate promote the authentic representation of gender diverse, LGBTQIA+, those with a disability and/or from a diverse background in characters, stories, places, history and culture.</p>