



New Zealand  
FILM COMMISSION



Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

# New Zealand Film Commission

## **Fresh Shorts – Guidelines for Applicants**

May 2017

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We encourage you to read these guidelines carefully as they are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible. Please also read the relevant information sheets on our website.

Please get in touch well before making a formal application for financing, as we can offer helpful advice and guidance.

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## Introduction

As part of our work to support the New Zealand film industry, the New Zealand Film Commission helps filmmakers find pathways to success and build careers.

Short films play an important role in establishing unique creative voices, reflecting New Zealand culture and helping filmmakers develop skills and relationships that contribute to a successful screen industry.

We aim to nurture and inspire up-and-coming talent, so we're interested in your fresh voice and fresh ideas.

## Fresh Shorts overview

Fresh Shorts offers grants of \$10,000 (Fresh 10) or \$30,000 (Fresh 30) towards the cost of making a short narrative film, which may be live action, animation or documentary, with a duration of between four and 25 minutes.

We have \$280,000 a year which we aim to spread across at least 14 projects a year. There are two funding rounds each year. Fresh Shorts is a competitive scheme. We often get hundreds of applications for this limited number of grants. We receive lots of fantastic ideas and we simply do not have the capacity to fund all of them.

Our funding is discretionary – that is, the NZFC chooses where best to apply the limited funding available. Our decisions are final. The criteria we apply may change from time to time, but our decisions will be consistent with the New Zealand Film Commission Act 1978.





## We are here to help

At each section of the online application there are two buttons you can hover your cursor over to assist you – the icon D, indicates the definition of what is required in the section and a question mark icon? gives you some pointers about what the assessors are looking for in that section.

These guidelines are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible. You are welcome to discuss your project with our Talent Pathways Manager as you work on your application. To contact us email [talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz) or phone 0800 659 754.

For queries about the Fresh Shorts application form, please email [funding@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:funding@nzfilm.co.nz) (hours: Mon-Fri 8.30-5.30)

## Who can apply

In order to be eligible for Fresh Shorts, the writer, director and producer must be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents and your film must have significant New Zealand content.

Read the *New Zealand Content information sheet* for more detail.





You must hold or share intellectual property rights in relation to your project. Read the *Chain of Title information sheet* to ensure you have the necessary rights. Please contact Talent Pathways Manager if you have any questions about this.

Writer, producer and director must be available to attend the Fresh Shorts Development Lab to be eligible for funding (see dates on NZFC website).

You must have a director attached to your project. Because Fresh Shorts is for up-and-coming talent, we will not accept applications involving a director who has already directed a feature film which has received production funding from NZFC.

If your application is unsuccessful you can re-apply up to a total of three times, provided you can show us how you have acted on feedback from the last round and progressed your project. You would set this out in the producer's statement in your application.

## Which funding level to apply for

### Fresh 10 - \$10,000 per film

- For filmmakers with some directing or other relevant experience (for example in the film industry in roles other than directing, or directing theatre).
- Applications from first-time directors who can demonstrate their potential through exceptional visual treatments and storyboarding may also be accepted. **Fresh 30 - \$30,000 per film**
- For filmmakers with directing experience. Directing experience includes short films, music videos, TV commercials, 48HOUR films, Trop Fest (where the filmmaker is the director) or similar.

A project may only be submitted to one funding level, so please make sure you consider your experience level as a director before applying.





## How to apply

Applications are accepted in two rounds a year. Find the deadline dates on the fresh shorts page on our website. Applications must be received by **5pm** on the deadline day.

All applicants must register a **User Account** to complete the Fresh Shorts online application. To register please go to <https://funding.nzfilm.co.nz> and follow the registration instructions. You can access it using the URL, or through the NZFC website. It will also be posted on the Fresh shorts Facebook page.

The welcome page will ask you for an email and to select a password. You will get a verification email, and then be directed to the NZFC account form to fill in more information.

Once you have completed setting up your account, you can login and your dashboard will show the Fresh Shorts round (when it is open).

When you start an application, you can invite other team members in via email to collaborate on the application but they must have first signed up and created an account.

It's important you provide as much information as you can to help us make a full and fair assessment. Most the online application is mandatory to fill out and incomplete applications will not be accepted by the online system. Any optional sections are clearly indicated.

## What to include in your application

Your application must make it easy for us to see and understand your ideas and your film- making aspirations.

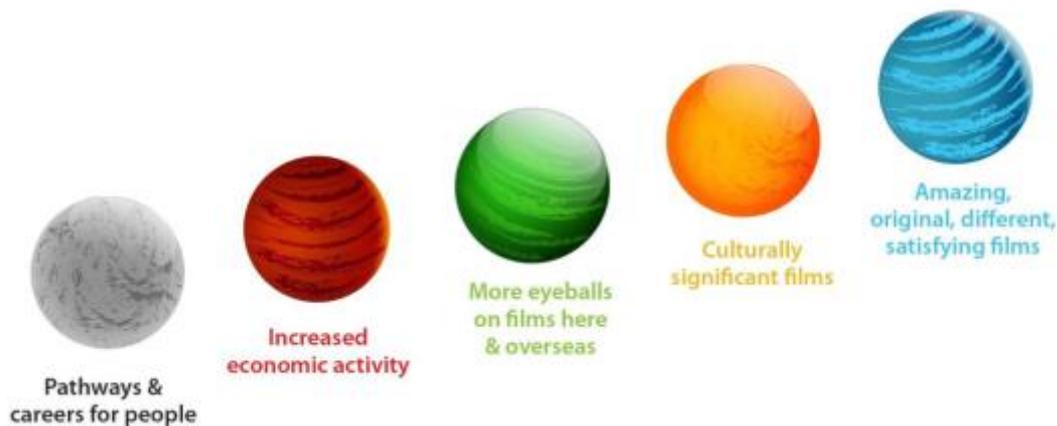
When the NZFC considers any funding application, we think about how it fits into the bigger picture of our vision of a successful New Zealand film industry. To describe what a successful film industry would look like, we use the metaphor of 'lining up the planets' (see





image below). Each planet represents an essential aspect of our vision, when the planets are aligned, we're getting it right. The 'planets' are not 'tick-boxes' – you don't have to reference every one of them in your application, but we think it's helpful for you to be aware where we're coming from.

You may want to think about what kind of films you want to make and where you want your film-making career to go. You can set out your thoughts about the big picture in your producer's or director's statement in your application.



Keep in mind we read hundreds of applications every year. Your application needs to make the best case for your project.

## What we are looking for

We are looking for:

- fresh directorial voices with distinctive, original styles;
- fresh ideas not seen before in short film, or new and original takes on familiar ideas;
- big screen potential – story and visual ideas that will work in cinematic release;



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- narrative films with impact. They could be emotional, humorous or political, or designed to scare an audience. You should aim to reach audiences and move them;
  - films that take risks, provoke and challenge audiences; and
  - films that have something to say

We will be assessing your application against the following criteria:

- quality of the script;
- the idea and strength of the project;
- point of difference;
- director's voice/vision;
- filmmaking talent involved; and
- ability to deliver the project.

## What to provide

For both Fresh 10 and Fresh 30 your application will include the following sections:

**Story:** Genre, logline, synopsis, script, writer's notes;

**Vision:** Director's vision, director's treatment, director's best work, locations (optional) visual reference;

**Producer:** Producer's statement, Stunts/VFX/SFX (optional), Health and Safety plan, marketing plan, festival strategy, schedule overview;

**Budget:** Budget, budget notes, Financial plan;

**Team:** Key people's bios, mentors and support.





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All applications will be filled out online and read electronically.

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## **Story**

### **Genre**

Indicate the genre of your film. A genre: Identifiable types, categories, classifications or groups of films that have similar, familiar or instantly-recognizable patterns, filmic techniques or conventions.

### **Logline**

The logline is a statement, in 35 words or less, that reflects the narrative ‘hook’, premise or essential dramatic dilemma inherent in the proposed film.

genre.

### **Synopsis**

The synopsis is a highly-condensed story outline that clearly reflects the dramatic spine of the film. It must touch on the film’s tone, genre, emotional journey and key characters, and must include the film’s ending. It should not be more than 200 words.





## Script

A script outlines what a reader and audience will see and hear. Using visual imagery, character behavior, dialogue and sound to tell a compelling story.

Writers should present scripts in 12-point courier font, which is standard for the film industry. We recommend you use screenwriting software that formats your work to industry standard, such as Final Draft or Celtx.

Documentary: If your application is for a documentary you will need to provide a 'documentary outline' or thorough treatment. You also need to submit proof (for example an email or letter) that the subject of your documentary is committed to the project.

## Writer's Notes

A brief outline from the writer of what could be further developed after this draft, how the writer intends to develop specific sections of the script and why.

If the script is being submitted for the second or third time the writer needs to indicate what feedback has been taken on board and what changes have been made since the last submission.

## Vision





## Directors Vision

Indicate why this film matters to you and why you think an audience will relate to it. Tell us a bit about who you and what story you want to tell. Explain how this film relates to previous work you have made and how it fits your vision of your future in filmmaking?

## Director's Treatment

The techniques and details the director intends to employ through casting, shooting, art department, music, editing etc. that will bring this script or story to life as a cinematic piece. This is essential for demonstrating your visual flair and distinctive director's style.

## Director's Best Work

A **Vimeo** link with password to maximum 10minutes of the *director's best* work to date. Only a Vimeo link will be accepted.

## Locations (optional)

Directors can indicate ideas and planning for any locations that are essential to tell their story, particularly if the location is a character in the story. Written indication of willingness to participate from location owners can be helpful. Visual reference materials – photographs, sketch plans or story boards etc. can be saved as a PDF and uploaded.

## Visual Reference





Visual references are a major aspect of a film's planning stages, and where the director can convey unique vision, aesthetic 'voice' and directing style. The references should be uploaded as a PDF document. Reference links can be saved in the appropriate sections.

## **Producer**

### **Producer's Statement**

This is an overview from the producer —the film and the intended outcomes of the production, post production and delivery. Are there any specific challenges you foresee for this project? How do you intend to address them? How is this reflected in your budget? How will you work with your team to achieve your intended outcomes?

For Fresh 10 applications, this information must be provided by the director or another appropriate team member if a producer is not yet attached.

If you have applied for a Fresh Shorts grant for this project before, your producer's statement should set out what progress you have made since then.

### **Stunts and VFX/SFX (Optional)**

If your film has stunt sequences or fight scenes explain how you will achieve this - the logistics and safety. Story boards can be used to indicate how a stunt is intended to be filmed. Likewise, with VFX or





Special FX, story boards can be used to show how the sequence or sequences will be achieved. Indicate estimated timeline and approach to any animation or VFX work. Story boards can be saved as a PDF document and uploaded.

## **Health and Safety Plan**

Intended plans for any aspect of your production that may have Health & Safety requirements. Please consult the Screensafe Website to further understand what your role and responsibilities are and what is required by best practice.

## **Marketing plan**

What is your marketing plan to attract people and get them to share information about your film? What content/collateral/materials/assets will you collect and create. What's your roll out timeline? Have a look at our *Short Film Marketing Guide* and the *Marketing Materials Guide*.

## **Festival Strategy**

Distribution for short film initially means being invited to screen at International Film Festivals. What is your festival strategy? Which festivals do you think your film is most suited to. Have a look at our *Festival Strategy Guide* and *NZFC Recommended Short Film Festival list*. Research will be required to get an understanding of the festival landscape.

## **Schedule Overview Plan**





Use the schedule template provided to show an *estimated* schedule for the preproduction, shoot, post production and delivery of your film based on breaking down the script to estimate shoot days and post as well as your festival strategy. Download the Excel Schedule Overview resource and populate the categories and timeline as required for your specific project. Upload as a PDF document.

## Budget

### Budget

The budget sets out how and where you intend to spend the grant. Be realistic – for the assessors, how realistic your budget is will be one of the main determining factors as to whether your application is successful.

Include in-kind deals and negotiated discounts within the budget to give assessors an overall picture of all the other resources you are calling upon to complete the project.

Your budget will need to include the delivery of the finished product. Check the Fresh 10 and Fresh 30 *Fresh Short Delivery Schedules* for details of deliverables. You may also wish to include submission fees for festivals within this budget. Download the budget Excel Template, populate and upload as a PDF.

### Budget Notes





Indicate if there are specific fees and costs related to the challenges of making-film. They may include things like safety, location fees, VFX, large cast, hero props, travel and accommodation etc. Once the budget figures have been entered, then complete budget notes so that assessors know you have a plan on how to make your film within the resources you have.

If there are deals and agreements made please include these in the budget notes.

## **Finance Plan**

Indicate if any additional financial contributions to the production above the grant are being sought, or have been donated. It may be an additional grant, donation, crowd funding or in kind resources that assist the production to be made. Letters of commitment from contributors on the proviso of the project being funded are useful. Upload letters or quotes as a PDFs.

If there is an intention to crowd fund show a brief plan for this. It may be that the team simply plans to utilise the grant this is perfectly acceptable and no notes would be required if this is the case.

## **Team**

### **Key People Bios**

Film/ on screen focused bios and transferable skills, no more than one page per person of those holding the creative triangle roles: writer, director, producer. Additional CV's of other key creative collaborators





can be uploaded as PDFs or entered as short text Bio e.g. DoP, Art Department, Editor, VFX etc.

## **Mentors and Support**

If any of those in the role of writer, director or producer are experienced in some areas but not in others indicate how you will ensure they are supported across the board? Specify possible mentors, workshops or plans and contingencies. You can also upload any PDFs of industry or creative collaborators letters of support.

## **Other NZFC financing or support**

Please list any other projects you as the applicant have in active development with the NZFC. If there are any outstanding reports or deliverables relating to those other projects or any other NZFC grants, loans or equity, they should be delivered before, or alongside, this application. Note that you may be considered ineligible for funding if you have outstanding reports or deliverables or you are in breach of any contract with the NZFC.

To be accountable for the taxpayers' money entrusted to us, we must be able to verify what has happened as a result of any loan or grant.

## **What happens to your application**

Your application will be assessed by external industry readers as well as NZFC staff. These assessors will draw up a shortlist of projects that fit the criteria and best reflect the intentions of the scheme.

Applications are assessed by external industry readers, as well as the NZFC, to create a shortlist of projects that fit the criteria and best





reflect the intentions of the scheme.

All shortlisted teams are notified and invited to a three-day, fully funded residential Fresh Shorts Development Lab.

Applicants are required to be available to attend the three-day lab to be eligible for funding.

Following the lab, applicants are mentored by experienced industry members over a one- month period to further develop scripts, budgets and applications.

After this period, revised applications are resubmitted. Industry mentors make recommendations for funding to the Talent Development team.

A final assessment is made by an NZFC panel and up to seven final films are selected for funding at each round.

## Next steps

If you are successful we will be in touch to discuss details.

Whether you are successful or not, you will receive an email letting you know. You will also get feedback from the assessors. The timeframe for this will depend on the number of applications we receive. We will give a clearer indication of the timeframe when we let you know about our decision.

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A final reminder that if you have any questions please contact our Talent Pathways Manager by email [talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz) or phone 0800 659 754.

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