



**New Zealand
FILM COMMISSION**



Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

New Zealand Film Commission He Ara; Māori and Pasifika film pathways – Guidelines for Applicants

May 2017

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.



Introduction

Our mission at the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) is to champion the film industry of Aotearoa New Zealand. Māori and Pasifika stories are at the heart of New Zealand's identity and Māori and Pasifika films are amongst our most celebrated.

We want to assist established New Zealand writers, producers and directors of Māori and/or Pasifika heritage to bring their perspectives to screen through their chosen development framework.

He Ara Plus - Māori and Pasifika Pathways

The NZFC invites existing He Ara funded teams to apply for a new development opportunity.

We will select up to three (3) existing projects for an additional development grant to move their script to an advanced development stage, with the aim that they are **market ready*** by the end of 2017.

Only teams that have already received a grant through the existing He Ara scheme are eligible to apply.

Selection is based on a competitive submission round. Applications will be assessed by a panel of NZFC Development and Production staff and external assessors, and final decisions made by the Head of Development and Production and Head of Talent Development.

If selected, you will be required to attend a workshop (date to be advised). The aim of this is to provide advanced script and market support for the selected projects as they move into advanced development.

**Market ready means that the film script or documentary treatment is ready to be taken to finance markets (both local and international), equity investors, distributors and/or sales agents for production investment, and to cast and other key attachments.*


He Ara kaupapa

He Ara acknowledges Māori as tangata whenua (the indigenous people of NZ) unique to Aotearoa NZ and recognises the pioneering Māori filmmakers who helped create a national and international indigenous filmscape.

He Ara attests to the shared historical and cultural relationship with Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, the great South Pacific Ocean that joins all the peoples of the Oceania region.

He Ara celebrates these connections and in this spirit we welcome applications from teams including Māori filmmakers, Pasifika filmmakers or both.





He Ara Plus funding is intended to support Māori and/or Pasifika filmmakers to further create a diverse range of quality New Zealand films using their own way of working. This programme supports:

1. increased development of culturally diverse, outstanding New Zealand projects and talent
2. using a traditional Māori and/or Pasifika knowledge base to develop projects using diverse development processes
3. Māori and/or Pasifika screen professionals forging stronger ties with the international marketplace.

Relationship to other NZFC funding

You may apply for He Ara Plus funding in relation to projects that have had prior NZFC funding (such as development loans, NZWG Seed funding or Te Paepae Ataata funding) provided you have completed the work funded and delivered your report. However, projects that have previously been unsuccessful in securing Early Development Fund (EDF) support are ineligible for He Ara Plus unless significant changes have been made since the previous application.

What we are looking for

Your project should engage with Māori and/or Pasifika stories, themes and experiences. 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 it's helpful for you to be aware of where we're coming from.

What you can apply for

Teams can apply for up to \$20,000 per project which will be provided as a grant. The NZFC will separately cover the costs of attending the workshop for applicants.

Your project should be a feature film narrative or documentary, suitable for cinema release, although we are open to considering creative approaches to distribution, relevant to the project.





You should only apply for actual and reasonable costs involved in progressing your project. You must provide a detailed budget of intended costs. It is expected that the majority of the grant will be spent on script work.





What you cannot apply for

- initial option payments;
- treatments;
- short film development;
- television programme development or production;
- development or production of any film intended to run at a duration of less than 90 minutes;
- capital works or acquisitions;
- equipment purchases; or
- projects that are part of formal academic assessment.
- We will not consider retrospective applications; you cannot apply for financing to cover costs you have already incurred.

Who can apply

Applications must be on behalf of either a team or a company that has already been a successful applicant and recipient of He Ara funding.

In order to be eligible for funding, you must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.


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 New Zealand, and its central management and control must be held by New Zealand citizens or permanent residents.

You must hold intellectual property rights in relation to your projects. If you do not yet hold the rights, you will need to set out clearly how you will acquire the rights, with written support from the current copyright holders. Please refer to the *Chain of Title information sheet* for more information.

What happens to your application

When we receive your application, we will check you are eligible and that all relevant information is included. Once your application is confirmed by us as being eligible, you will be advised of our decision within 6 weeks of the application deadline.





Applications will be assessed by a panel of NZFC Development and Production staff and external assessors, and final decisions made by the Head of Development and Production and Head of Talent Development.

Our investment is discretionary and our decisions are final. The criteria we apply when making financing decisions may change from time to time, but our decisions will be consistent with the New Zealand Film Commission Act 1978.

Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the NZFC prior to receiving the grant. This agreement will outline the terms and conditions of the grant, including reporting deadlines and deliverables. Make sure you read and understand this agreement.

Funding payments will only be made after a fully executed agreement is in place and a valid tax invoice has been received. Any work undertaken or commissioned by an approved applicant prior to a fully executed agreement being signed is the responsibility of the applicant and the NZFC will not be held liable for such work or costs.

While receiving a He Are Plus grant recognises the potential of your project, it does not imply an ongoing commitment to future NZFC funding. Projects that receive a grant cannot count on further funding and each application is considered on its own merits.

Successful applicants will also be required to attend a script development workshop. Details and timing of this workshop will be advised at a later date.

How to apply

The deadline for applications is 13 February 2017. Applications must be received by **9 am** on the deadline day. It's important that you provide as much information as you can to help us make a full and fair assessment. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Applications will be assessed by a panel of NZFC Development and Production staff and external assessors, and final decisions made by the Head of Development and Production and Head of Talent Development.

Send your application electronically to development@nzfilm.co.nz. The application form and checklist is a PDF file so you will need to have the Adobe Acrobat software loaded on your computer. Please download the PDF before filling it in, and double-check that is not just a 'review' version.





What to include

Along with a correctly filled out NZFC He Ara Plus **Application Form** (which we will send to you), your application must include the following sections **for each project** as set out in the Application Form's checklist:

1. Creative material
2. Team vision
3. Background
4. Budget and timeline
5. Key personnel
6. Rights

1. Creative material

Logline

You have to put your logline on the application coversheet. 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. This is not a tagline for a movie poster, but rather a one or two-line summary of the film's essential storyline.



Keep in mind that we always publish the title and sometimes the logline of all projects we fund. If you want to keep any details confidential please let us know, and provide us with another version we can publish.

Synopsis

The synopsis is a highly condensed story outline of no more than one page 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.

EITHER a draft script, OR a treatment.

The reality is that you will have done a certain amount of 'spec' work before making this application. We expect your script or treatment to demonstrate that your great idea is already well on the way to becoming a compelling feature length story suitable for the big screen.





Draft script

Your draft script of the proposed film should be about 90 to 120 pages in industry standard 12 pt courier.

Treatment and screenwriting sample

Alternatively, you can provide a treatment, of five to 15 pages in industry standard 12 pt courier. This should deliver an outline of the core narrative story, including a beginning, middle and an end. The treatment should also convey the emotional journey, structure and genre, as well as something of the tone and characters. Shorter treatments must be just as compelling as those taking more pages.

Remember to tell us who wrote the treatment.

The treatment must be supported by a screenwriting sample (80-plus pages). The screenwriting sample should be the best example of the writer's feature-length screenwriting. The screenwriting sample might be a produced or un-produced feature-film screenplay written by the writer alone – that is, not co-written. We require the full draft of such a writing sample (in electronic PDF format). The producer's overview (see Team Vision) should include a note about the choice of the screenwriting sample, outlining why the writer is suited to the project and referring us to the strongest or most relevant sections or scenes (for example, the first act pp. 1-15).

You are welcome to include some scenes from the proposed project but this does not replace the need for the feature screenwriting sample.

What we are looking for in your creative material

We will be assessing ALL your creative material (logline, synopsis and script or treatment) against the following questions:

- Is the premise strong, distinct and original?
- Does the story convey an emotional journey?
- Does this project have the potential to become something that is amazing, original, different, satisfying?
- Does it have the potential to be culturally significant?
- Does it have the potential to achieve critical acclaim?
- Does it have the potential to achieve commercial success, attracting more eyeballs to New Zealand films?





Script OR treatment and screenwriting sample

- Recognising that some projects will be at the early stage of script development, we are looking for the draft script to deliver a convincing narrative idea, characters with distinctive voices, and show the potential for a compelling cinematic experience.
- We will be assessing whether there is a high quality of writing in the script and treatment.

