



**New Zealand**  
FILM COMMISSION



Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

# Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga New Zealand Film Commission **Whakawhanake Te Ao Niko | Interactive Development Fund**

## **Guidelines for Applicants**

November 2021

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You are encouraged to read these guidelines carefully as they are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible. Note, these guidelines have been revised since the last submission round.

Please feel free to get in touch before making an application, as we can offer helpful advice and guidance. You may email [talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz).

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**Please also refer to the NZFC COVID-19 Policy**



## Introduction

Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) champions exceptional storytellers to create enduring taonga for Aotearoa. As part of this vision, we facilitate dynamic pathways for outstanding people, projects and businesses, and support storytellers to find pathways to progress and build their careers.

## Whakawhanake Te Ao Niko | Interactive Development Fund overview

Whakawhanake Te Ao Niko | Interactive Development Fund is designed to enable the development of interactive content with significant New Zealand creative and cultural outcomes.

The fund will encourage collaboration between sectors, developing new skills and synergies. Through the development of new, innovative, interactive stories and content, it is intended that potential new markets and audiences will be identified, developed and engaged.





## What is supported?

The fund supports concept development of original interactive and games content with strong narrative development, whether scripted and directed or more emergent in nature from player agency. Projects can be for delivery on any platform, including but not limited to: mobile, online, console, PC as well as virtual reality and mixed or augmented reality.

Funding is provided to develop the concept, including creative material such as game design, world building, concept art, technical development and narrative that may form the basis of a playable prototype. There will be clear outcomes and objectives, such as development of a demo and materials to access the appropriate marketplace to seek project financing.

This fund supports the development of the original IP of the applicant. It does not support projects that have been commissioned as service work for a third party or where a third party ultimately holds a controlling share of the rights.

The NZFC may consider the development of companion pieces or extensions to other existing, completed, original content for which the applicant has the rights. In this case, the application will be evaluated based on the strength of both the existing content **and** the proposed companion piece or extension.

The NZFC will endeavour to support a diverse range of project types, styles and scales.

## What is not supported?

Corporate gamification for training purposes, any games or interactive experiences for pornographic or marketing purposes, the purchase of IP rights, gambling content, non-digital games or commissioned products. The purchase of hardware or software is not permitted with the special exception of console developer kits.





## How much is available?

Through this fund, the NZFC will look to fund the development of projects with grants of between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per project. The amount applicants request will need to be commensurate with the scope and nature of the work undertaken, as well as the ambition and level of complexity of the project and the type of delivery platform and technology used. All funding will be treated as a non-recoupable grant.

## Who can apply?

Applicants can be either games companies or screen-based companies who are looking to develop interactive works that have significant New Zealand creative and cultural content. In the case of games with player-driven narratives that are created as the game is played, the world building must be compelling and immersive enough to fuel the player's own narrative effectively. The NZFC encourages relationship building across sectors.

The applicant must be:

- a New Zealand company;
- the originator or majority owner of the IP or the rights upon which the work is based; and
- able to demonstrate the capacity and level of expertise to be able to deliver the project.

Please note, if you have a project that has received Whakawhanake Te Ao Niko | Interactive Development Fund in the previous round, you are eligible to apply for additional funding. However you will only be eligible once all your previous funding reporting and delivery requirements have been met.

## Key Criteria

- Creative Merit: Including originality, strength of creative material to find a market and strong New Zealand cultural significance.
  - Realistic Budget, Timeline and Forward Planning: The ability to deliver the project phase on budget in a timely manner, and the forward planning to finance the rest of the project.
  - Key Personnel: Whether the staff on the project have the necessary skills and abilities to finish the proposed work.
  - Outcomes: Clearly identified goals and outcomes for the proposed work.
  - Te Rautaki Māori considerations: Clear partnerships and consultation are in place to ensure authentic representation.
  - Diversity and Inclusion considerations: Clear partnerships and consultation are in place to ensure authentic representation.
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## Te Rautaki Māori

The NZFC's commitment to Tangata Whenua under Te Rautaki [\[Link\]](#) is to work in partnership with Māori to better support the development and progression of Māori talent. Te Rautaki Māori Strategy is in place to ensure that responsible cultural representation is held by Māori with relevant experience or authority for the Māori content within a story or project, to have clear accountability, permission and leadership of the protocols, inclusion of cultural practice or tikanga elements in the project or story; and to elevate the capacity and capability of Māori creatives, cast, crew and advisors as an asset and critical to making great projects with Māori content.

Māori content is anything sourced and generated from a Māori world view, Te Ao Māori - including but not limited to:

- Māori kupu, proverbs, expression of language, dialect, geneological information, naming conventions
- Reference to or inclusion of Māori names, people, places, characters, protocols
- Anything based on Māori history, stories, myths and legends, songs, dance, cultural expressions that may or may not be in public domain
- Toi Māori – art, carving, tā moko, raranga, visual arts, games, both traditional and modern cultural expressions
- Taonga Māori - te reo, landmarks, whakapapa, photographs, heirlooms, tribal landmarks, museum artefacts, flora and fauna – native trees, birds, taonga species
- Use of or reference to specific whānau, hapu, Iwi tribal land, waterways, mountains, social systems and structures
- Mātauranga Māori - anything that is sourced in the wide context of Māori knowledge, its expression and cultural practice.

Projects that include Māori content are required to demonstrate clear, established involvement of Māori in the elements or content in the project.

## Diversity and inclusion

The NZFC is committed to providing opportunities and support for underrepresented communities. The NZFC has identified the following groups as underrepresented: Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian communities, MELAA (Middle Eastern, Latin American and African), women, gender diverse, LGBTQIA+ communities, people with a disability, regional communities (defined for the purposes of the New Zealand screen sector as those outside of Auckland and Wellington), people below the age of 30 and people above the age of 60.

Projects which include content or themes within it's characters, stories, places, history and culture that relate to underrepresented communities, will be assessed on authentic representation of this content. It would be expected that the organisation is lead by creatives from within these underrepresented communities, or evidence is provided to demonstrate there are partnerships in place and a consultation process that will ensure authentic representation.

Funding decisions through Whakawhanake Te Ao Niko | Interactive Development Fund will reflect these commitments.





## How to apply

Apply through the online application portal at <https://funding.nzfilm.co.nz>

Please allow time to complete your application.

It is important that you provide as much information as you can to help the NZFC make a full and fair assessment. Late applications will not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances such as a technical difficulty with the application portal and you notify the NZFC immediately by emailing [funding@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:funding@nzfilm.co.nz).

Whakawhanake Te Ao Niko | Interactive Development Fund deadlines and decision dates are listed on our [website](#).

## Submission Material

### What to include

1. Creative material: Logline, synopsis, gameplay/interactivity summary, art and animation section including concept art and/or screenshots, sound design summary and video pitch. You can also include an electronic proof of concept (EPOC) or other creative material should you wish.
2. Budget and timeline: [Use the standard form provided](#). Make sure to include “in kind” valuations as well as co-investment and a summary of forward planning on how the game will be funded to completion.
3. Key personnel: One-page resumes of all key staff showing competencies and career milestones.
4. Outcomes: Clear goals and objectives of what you want to achieve and what you will deliver upon completion of funding.
5. Te Rautaki Māori considerations: If the project contains Māori content, evidence that there are partnerships in place and a consultation process that will ensure authentic representation.
6. Diversity and Inclusion considerations: If the project contains content relating to underrepresented communities, evidence that there are partnerships in place and a consultation process that will ensure authentic representation.





# 1. Creative material

## Logline

The logline is a statement, in 35 words or less, that reflects the intended experience, including the core narrative and/or setting, premise, and primary interactive activity.

## Synopsis

The synopsis is a highly-condensed outline of no more than one page that clearly reflects the narrative, the setting, and a concise description of the interactive features and/or gameplay. It must touch on its tone, genre, emotional journey and key characters.

## Gameplay/Interactivity Summary

A concise description of the major gameplay loops, systems and key user experience. Include a description of the moment-by-moment experience as well as any major systems.

## Art and Animation

Provide samples of art-style targets, concept art, or any screenshots you may have. If the project is early, using sample “inspiration” shots from other games to describe the art targets and inspiration is acceptable as long as they are credited.

## Sound and Music

Include a description of the moods and inspirations for the sound and music design. Describe how this will influence the delivery of the final product.

## Video pitch

Please provide a simple talk-to-camera ‘video pitch’ via a vimeo link of no more than three minutes, where the key personnel present their vision for the project and give a sense of they want to achieve with this funding. This should include any detail on the target audience for the project and how they will interact with the content, and could include clips of early stage animation or footage of the game

## Electronic Proof of Concept (EPOC) or other creative material (optional)

You might also choose to submit samples of concept art, an Electronic Proof of Concept (EPOC), or any other creative material relevant to your application – though this is not a requirement.

If you choose to submit an EPOC, this would ideally be a playable prototype and/or an animated trailer that demonstrates the core world, interactivity and/or game mechanic. The material submitted should give a clear understanding of the narrative aspects, a sense of the world, and how the user interacts with it.





## What the NZFC looks for in your creative material

- Logline and synopsis: Is the premise strong, distinct and original? Does the experience convey an emotional journey?
- Video pitch: Is a clear vision presented for the project?
- Gameplay/Interactivity Summary: How do the interactive mechanics engage the user and support the experience?
- Art and Animation: Do the art, design, aesthetic and references convey a clear vision for this project?
- Sound and Music: How will the sound design and music influence the final product?

## 2. Budget and timeline

### Detailed development budget

You must provide a budget breakdown for the development funding you are applying for. The funding should be used to cover the actual costs of your project. Your budget is where you set out what you expect these costs to be. Please remember that you cannot apply for funding to cover costs you have already incurred.

On the template provided, make sure you break down your costs for the current phase of development (prototyping, production, launch readiness etc.). Break down each section into line items. "In kind" represents a valuation of your own time you have spent on the project working unpaid. Consult an appropriate industry valuation of your own time spent at at least minimum wage or above to derive this figure. Make sure you include any other coinvestment you have raised, be that coming from friends and family, crowdfunding or any other source.

Include quotes for any services you will have to commission for this phase of work. e.g. Money for sound design contractors.

### Proposed development timeline

You must include a detailed concept development plan that sets out your proposed timeline including the start and finish dates of the development work you are seeking support for, and appropriate milestones. You can also include a development history of the project to date.





## Forward plans

An idea about your plans for the project beyond development is required. An indication of the production timeline, investor marketing plans and release would be ideal. Some questions you could answer in this section include (but are not limited to):

- What is the anticipated overall cost of the project should it progress into production? How will the project be financed beyond the development phase? Has this project received any other non-NZFC funding?
- What is your proposed production schedule?
- How do you plan to market and distribute/publish/release the project?
- Who is the intended audience for your project?
- How will this project contribute to and/or help you build your business? Are there any plans to exploit IP such as technology, franchises, spinoffs, and merchandising as a result?
- For any commercial partnerships, include appropriate paperwork demonstrating the scope of such agreements. e.g. Publishing or platform holder agreements, MOUs for further investment etc.

## What the NZFC looks for in your budget and timeline

- Is the development budget realistic?
  - Is the development timeline realistic and achievable?
  - Are the forward plans for the project realistic and achievable?
  - Is there pathway to market? Are there any coinvestment pathways?
  - Is there a clearly identified target audience?
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## 3. Key personnel

### CVs or bios of key people

Please provide a one-page CV (with LinkedIn or IMDB reference) and 200-word bio for key personnel mentioned in the application.

If you mention any individual as providing support or advice, you must demonstrate what they will bring to the project, how they intend to work with you, and provide their letter of interest or a copy of their notes.

#### What the NZFC looks for in your key personnel

- Track record and experience of the team
- Potential of the team to deliver the creative material as proposed
- Existing relationships or partnerships to the wider content market

## 4. Outcomes

You must identify clear outcomes and goals of what you want to achieve through this funding. On completion of the proposed work, what would you deliver to the NZFC?

#### What the NZFC looks for in your outcomes

- Are there clearly defined goals and objectives for this funding, and are the goals realistic and achievable?
- Is there a clear set of proposed deliverables?
- Does the proposal fulfil the NZFC's aim to activate high impact, authentic and culturally significant stories?
- Does the proposal fulfil the NZFC's aim to facilitate dynamic pathways for outstanding people, projects and businesses.





## 5. Te Rautaki Māori considerations

If your project includes Māori content, you need to provide evidence to demonstrate clear established involvement of Māori in the elements or content in the project:

- You have engaged with early and secured advisor/s and/or creatives with the cultural competency, te reo me ona tikanga, and authority to lead and assure the content as part of, or alongside the creative team.
- The expectation to reflect Māori representation in the creative team, should be commensurate to the level of Māori content and capacity required for the production.
- Demonstrate as a production a clear partnership of engagement with, or inclusion of, Māori creative/s, Māori advisor/s and where applicable, hapū and/or Iwi across the production to ensure genuine consultation and where necessary, permission for use.

### What the NZFC looks for in your Te Rautaki Māori considerations

- Does the project contain Māori themes or content?
- Is the organisation lead by Māori creatives?
- If not, are there partnerships in place and a cultural consultation process that will ensure authentic representation?

## 6. Diversity and Inclusion considerations

If your project includes content or themes within it's characters, stories, places, history and culture that relate to underrepresented communities, you need to provide evidence to demonstrate partnerships are in place and consultation process that will ensure authentic representation of that community.

### What the NZFC looks for in your Diversity and Inclusion considerations

- Does the project include themes/content from underrepresented communities?
- Is the organisation lead by creatives from within these underrepresented communities?
- If not, are the partnerships in place and the consultation process that will ensure authentic representation?





## What happens to your application

Applications will be assessed by a panel comprising industry professionals and NZFC staff. The panel will make recommendations to the NZFC Head of Talent Development and the Chief Executive who will make a final decision.

The NZFC will use reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided in your application. Please note that any information you provide to the NZFC is subject to Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) requests. In processing a request under the OIA, the NZFC will consult with the relevant applicant prior to making a decision to release or withhold any information.

## Successful applicants

All applicants will be notified of the decisions via the portal. If your application is successful, you will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the NZFC. You will receive a letter from the NZFC detailing our offer for funding and outlining any conditions. No payments will be made until you have entered into a funding agreement.

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.



## Assessment scoring criteria

<b>Creative Material</b>	<b>25</b>
· Logline and synopsis	5
· Video pitch	5
· Gameplay/Interactivity Summary	5
· Art and animation	5
· Sound and music design	5
<b>Budget, Timeline and Forward Plans</b>	<b>25</b>
· Realistic development budget	5
· Realistic development timeline	5
· Realistic forward plans	5
· Pathway to market	5
· Identified target audience	5
<b>Key Personnel</b>	<b>25</b>
· Track record and experience of the team	10
· Potential to deliver the creative material as proposed	10
· Existing relationships or partnerships to the wider content market	5
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>25</b>
· Clearly identified goals	5
· Goals are realistic and achievable	5
· Proposed deliverables to NZFC	5
· Fulfils the NZFC's aim to activate high impact, authentic and culturally significant stories	5
· Fulfils the NZFC's aim to facilitate dynamic pathways for outstanding people, projects and businesses	5
<b>Te Rautaki Māori</b>	<b>10</b>
· Does the project contain Māori themes or content	5
· Is the organisation lead by Māori creatives	5
· If not, are there partnerships in place and a cultural consultation process that will ensure authentic representation	
<b>Diversity and Inclusion</b>	<b>10</b>
· Does the project include themes/content from diverse and/or underrepresented communities	5
· Is the organisation lead by creatives from within these diverse and/or underrepresented communities	5
· If not, are the partnerships in place and the consultation process that will ensure authentic representation	0
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>120</b>

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