



**New Zealand**  
FILM COMMISSION



Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

# New Zealand Film Commission Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

## CATALYST HE KAUAHI Guidelines for Applicants

August 2020

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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 for [Catalyst He Kauahi](#) on our website.

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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## Introduction

As part of our work to support the New Zealand film industry, the New Zealand Film Commission - Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga (NZFC) helps filmmakers find pathways to progress and build their careers.

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

The NZFC aims to support New Zealand talent to make exceptional short films to help them progress into feature films and/or long form content and beyond, helping to build a sustainable career.

**Your application must be completed online [through our application portal](#). Please see the NZFC website for application and decision deadlines.**

## Catalyst He Kauahi overview

Catalyst (*noun*) - the cause of significant change; He kauahi (*noun*) – firestick that ignites the flame.

Catalyst He Kauahi aims to support New Zealand filmmakers to progress their talents to the next stage and make exceptional, high end narrative short films that will ignite the flame and be the catalyst for change in their career.

***This fund is open to narrative drama and animation short films, not documentary.***

Catalyst He Kauahi is about:

- igniting the flame within New Zealand filmmaking talent
- creative excellence
- talent progression into features and/or long form content
- creating international recognition for exceptional New Zealand filmmaking talent

This initiative is focused on the progression of New Zealand talent (*writers, directors, producers*) through the creation of world class shorts. Films that showcase the filmmaking teams' original, unique voices and skills, helping to profile them on the world stage.

All short films will have to be linked thematically or tonally to feature films and/or long form content the attached talent is committed to making. The feature and long form content can be at any stage from concept, synopsis or script.

For clarity, Catalyst He Kauahi is NOT for proof of concept films. It is for 'stand-alone' short films that will showcase talent at top tier international festivals and markets. The link to the feature or long form content could be through tone, theme and/or genre.





## We are here to help

These guidelines are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible. You are welcome to discuss your project with the NZFC Talent Development team as you work on your application. Please note we cannot read your scripts or applications prior to submission. Contact us via email [talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz)

## Who can apply

Catalyst He Kauahi is open to filmmaking teams (*writers, directors, producers*) where the majority of the team are emerging or mid-career level (*as per [NZFC talent eligibility criteria definition](#)*).

The lead applicant must be the producer, who must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident. The lead producer cannot also assume the role of director.

The film must have significant New Zealand content. Please read the [New Zealand content information](#) sheet for more detail

## Relationship to other NZFC funding

You cannot apply for Catalyst He Kauahi if you have any overdue contractual or reporting obligations to the NZFC.

## What you can apply for

Applicants may apply for a grant of up to \$90,000 for the development and production of the Catalyst He Kauahi short film. An additional grant of \$10,000 will be awarded to each successful team for development work linked to their feature film and/or long form projects. Please note this \$10,000 is a grant and will not be counted as part of the development funding limits allocated to feature films and/or long form content through the NZFC.

There are two funding rounds each year. *Please see the [NZFC website for application and decision deadlines](#).* Retrospective applications will not be considered; that is, you cannot apply for funding to cover costs you have already incurred.

## Rights

You must hold or share intellectual property rights for the short film.

Read the [NZFC Chain of Title information sheet](#) to ensure you have the necessary rights. Please contact the Talent Development team if you have any questions about this.





# Catalyst He Kauahi application checklist

The checklist below sets out what must be included in your application:

## Short Film

- Genre
- Log line
- Synopsis
- A developed short film screenplay
- Director's vision for the proposed short film and how it is linked to the feature films and/or long form content
- Director's treatment for the proposed short film
- Vimeo link to Director's best work
- Director's summary with five inspirational images
- Producer's statement for the proposed short film and how this links to the feature film and/or long form content
- Producer's summary
- Evidence of chain of title including, where appropriate, copies of any signed agreements

## Feature Film / Long Form content

- Genre
- Logline(s) (*if available*)
- Short synopsis (*if available*)
- Concepts for the feature film(s) and/or long form content (*max 3*) the team are committed to making
- Narrative outlining what stage the feature film(s) and/or long form content are at including how they are linked with the short, and how the creation of the short will help with the feature film and/or long form content both in development and plans for progressing it towards production.

## Audience engagement

- A festival strategy and audience engagement plan for the short film
- An outline of the target audience for the proposed feature and/or long form content

## Budget and schedule

- A production budget top-sheet and full production budget for the short film including provision for legal costs for chain of title of the short film
- A production schedule for all relevant stages leading up to and including delivery of the short film
- A budget, schedule and narrative outlining how the \$10,000 grant will be used for development of the feature(s) and/or long form content

## Other NZFC projects

- If applicable, provide details of any projects in active development with NZFC (project title and NZFC involvement)
- If applicable, provide details of any outstanding reports/deliverables due on current NZFC loans, grants or equity that are being delivered alongside this application

## Key personnel

- Details of key personnel attached to the short film with evidence of talent level (*as per NZFC talent eligibility criteria definition*), including one-page CVs and links to previous work
- Details of any key cast if attached to the short film, or an outline of the plans to confirm any possible key cast
- Details of key personnel attached to the feature film and/ or long form content including one-page CVs and links to previous work





## Catalyst He Kauahi assessment

What the NZFC is looking for:

- Unique directorial voices with distinctive, original styles;
- Excellence from creative teams who push and challenge boundaries;
- Projects that have the potential to showcase talent for future long form content including feature films;
- Narrative short films with impact that through the story and vision demand a big screen;
- Films that take risks, entertain, provoke and challenge audiences;
- A clear plan for how this short film will spark the change in the talent's career pathway;
- Films that reflect who we are in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Aotearoa.

## Assessment Criteria

Your application will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Quality of the script and the ability for the short film to stand out on the world stage;
- The idea and strength of the project including the developmental plans for the feature(s) and/or long form content;
- Point of difference;
- Director's voice/vision;
- Filmmaking talent involved;
- Ability to deliver a world class short film.

The NZFC has a commitment under our [Te Rautaki Māori Strategy](#) to work in partnership with the Māori filmmaking community to achieve mutually agreed aspirations. We are very keen to receive films with a strong Māori narrative from Māori creative teams and/ or films in te reo Māori.

The NZFC also has a commitment to gender equality across the industry and to supporting a diverse range of talent to further their careers; including those who identify as LGBTQIA+, gender diverse, disabled and/or those from an ethnically diverse background.

*Catalyst He Kauahi funding decisions will reflect these commitments.*

The NZFC often receives high volumes of applications for a limited number of grants. As Catalyst He Kauahi is a competitive process, please be advised that the NZFC will receive lots of fantastic applications that we simply will not have the capacity to fund.

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





## What happens to your proposal

Once a complete application is received, applications will be assessed in two stages. The first stage is a panel comprising of at least two external assessors led by the Head of Talent Development.

Recommendations from this panel will be put forward to a Decision Panel comprising of the NZFC Head of Talent Development, Head of Development and Production, Pou Whakahaere, Head of Marketing and the Chief Executive.

**Final decisions will be made within ten weeks from the closing date.**

**The NZFC will use reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided by the applicant. 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.**

## Next steps

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.

The NZFC will work closely with successful Catalyst He Kauahi teams on the development and production of the short films. This close working relationship will help progress the talent.

To better support the successful teams, the NZFC may encourage the attachment of a more experienced Executive Producer to some or all of the projects. This will be done in consultation with the teams and will be funded through an additional grant from the NZFC.

## Repeat Applications

If your application is unsuccessful, you will be notified via the online application portal.

Unsuccessful teams will have the opportunity to receive verbal feedback on their application. The lead applicant may email [talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz) to arrange a feedback session.

If your application is unsuccessful, you may re-apply for Catalyst He Kauahi six months after you submitted your first application, provided the project has substantially changed, developed or has been reworked and you can show that you have acted on the feedback provided from the previous funding decision. If you have reapplied and have been unsuccessful twice with the same project, you can not apply to Catalyst He Kauahi for that same project.

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If you have any questions please contact our Talent Development team by email [talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:talentdev@nzfilm.co.nz).

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