



New Zealand
FILM COMMISSION



Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

New Zealand Film Commission Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

Feature Film Finishing Grant Guidelines for Applicants

July 2020

We encourage you to read these guidelines carefully as they are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines and your application, please email investment@nzfilm.co.nz.

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

Please also refer to the NZFC COVID-19 Policy.

Introduction

The New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) is committed to ensuring New Zealand has a successful screen industry.

We want to empower and attract distinctive and diverse screen productions for all audiences and support screen stories that are high impact, authentic and culturally significant.

Feature Film Finishing Grant overview

The Feature Film Finishing Grant is designed to help independent filmmakers take their feature film (fiction or documentary) through the final stages of post-production and onto cinema screens.

For the purposes of this fund, independent films are those made without prior NZFC or New Zealand On Air (NZOA) funding. This grant is therefore not available to films that have received NZFC funding or NZOA funding in the past.

The Feature Film Finishing Grant is available for feature-length fiction films or documentaries (at least 80 minutes) requiring a theatrical digital finish (full HD or higher resolution).

The NZFC has \$300,000 of funding available for this grant in the current funding year (until 30 June 2021) and will provide grants of up to \$60,000 per project until the available funding has been used. The NZFC will advise on the website when there are no funds available, and any applications in progress will be required to withdraw.

The NZFC will consider the size of the grant in relation to the experience of your team, how the film aligns with the NZFC's goals, your distribution plans and prospects for the film.

Funding is discretionary – that is, the NZFC chooses where best to apply the limited funding available.

All decisions are final. The criteria applied may change from time to time, but decisions will be consistent with the New Zealand Film Commission Act 1978.

We are here to help

These guidelines are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible. If you have any questions, please contact us via email at investment@nzfilm.co.nz.

Who can apply

This grant is available for New Zealand filmmakers or companies with a project that:

- is an independently produced feature length fiction film or documentary;
- has no NZFC or NZOA funding;
- has a credible distribution plan for getting the film in front of audiences involving an established company with a strong record of releases into the market; and/or selection for NZIFF or a prestigious international film festival combined with a comprehensive self-distribution plan; and
- they hold intellectual property rights for. Please refer to the NZFC [*Chain of Title Information Sheet*](#) for further detail. To be eligible for funding, the applicant must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident and the film must have significant New Zealand content. Please read the NZFC [*New Zealand Content Information Sheet*](#) for more detail.

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.

What you can apply for

You can apply for a Feature Film Finishing Grant to cover:

- online edit/title creation;
- colour grade;
- sound editing e.g. tracklaying;
- final sound mixing;
- music composition by New Zealand composers;
- mastering, output time and materials;
- master copies and a modest number of screening formats including hard drives (as appropriate to the project); or
- other costs (which must be pre-approved at the NZFC's discretion only).

You should only apply for actual and reasonable third party costs involved in the final stages of post-production for your film. You must provide a detailed budget of intended costs. See page 9 for the items you may include in your budget.

What you cannot apply for

You cannot apply for a Feature Film Finishing Grant to cover:

- legal fees, accounting fees, re-shoots, stock footage, visual effects (SFX), music licensing, picture editing costs, cast and crew screenings;
- DVD or Blu-ray copies for cast and crew;
- website creation and maintenance costs;
- publicity and advertising costs;
- film festival submission costs or screening fees;
- travel to attend film festivals; or
- costs not listed as qualifying costs in the “What you can apply for” section, or as otherwise pre-approved by the NZFC.

The NZFC will not consider retrospective applications; that is, you cannot apply for funding to cover costs you have already incurred on the project.

Please 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.

Other funding options

If your film requires substantial post-production work beyond the amount of funding available from the Feature Finishing Film Grant (more than \$60,000), or involves categories of spend that do not qualify for the grant (such as further shooting, offline editing, extensive sound editing, visual effects or music licensing/ overseas composer, EPK or trailer creation), you may be eligible for NZFC Post-Production Funding. Please visit www.nzfilm.co.nz/funding/feature-films/post-production-funding for more information on this fund.

If you are looking for funding for publicity and advertising costs, your distributor should consider applying for a Publicity and Advertising Grant. Please visit www.nzfilm.co.nz/distribution/new-zealand/film-distribution-grants for more information on this grant.

How to apply

The producer of the film must be the lead applicant.

Please apply via the NZFC online application portal at <https://funding.nzfilm.co.nz/>. You must provide all relevant information asked for, as set out in the application form.

It is important you provide as much information as possible to help the NZFC make a full and fair assessment. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

What we are looking for

Please note we read hundreds of applications every year. Your application needs to make the best case for your project.

The NZFC encourages projects that consider ethnicity and gender diversity that reflects Aotearoa New Zealand society. The NZFC supports 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 for guidance](#).

What to include in your application

The table below sets out what you need to provide in your application and what the NZFC will consider when assessing your application. Any statistical or demographic information provided as part of your application will be aggregated and used only in meeting the NZFC's reporting requirements. Please remember the statistical or demographical information is not a compulsory part of your application. If you do not wish to provide this information, please select 'prefer' not to disclose.

What you need to provide	What the NZFC is looking for
<p>Creative material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full fine cut edit of the film as a downloadable screener or H264 QuickTime file. • Evidence that you have considered NZFC Te Rautaki and allowance for those considerations. • Material reflecting any diversity and inclusion factors the production has considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the edit show the film has potential to be high impact and authentic? • Is the film culturally significant? • Does the story have cinematic appeal? • What is the visual quality? • Is the film likely to achieve commercial success, attracting more eyeballs to New Zealand film? • Confirmation that any cultural considerations, protocols and personnel relating to Māori interests have been actioned or reflected.
<p>Key personnel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of key cast and personnel attached to the film, including one-page CVs and a short bio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the track record and experience of the producer, director, writer and editor? • Are they able to support the film into the market? • What are the team's future plans; do they have other feature films in development?
<p>Rights and contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm you have secured the necessary rights. See our <i>Chain of Title information sheet</i>. • Confirm you have appropriate contracts with all relevant cast and crew. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are all the necessary legal requirements in place? • Do you have confirmation of investment to date? (Finance plan)

<p>Distribution plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed arrangements with recognised distributors in New Zealand and potentially overseas (Deal Memo (unsigned) including any terms and commitment to number of screens, minimum guarantees or release costs (publicity and advertising), materials required to be delivered, materials to be covered by them); OR • A comprehensive self-distribution plan (including cinema bookings and festival invitations); AND selection for NZIFF OR a prestigious international film festival (Please supply confirmation emails or Letters of Intent). • If attached, confirmed arrangements with a sales agent overseas (Deal Memo (unsigned) or Letter of Commitment to include terms and delivery requirements). • Audience Engagement Plan for New Zealand and overseas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the plan reach a wide New Zealand audience? The wider the distribution of your film, the more likely you are to receive the full amount you have applied for. • The level of funding you apply for should reflect the potential audience for your film and your Audience Engagement Plan should outline this. • If you have been accepted into the New Zealand International Film Festival (NZIFF) the NZFC will consider other elements of your plan including reaching further audiences in New Zealand and internationally. The NZFC will consider your theatrical release schedule and publicity and advertising support for this whether self-released or with a recognised distributor. • You will have a recognised New Zealand distributor attached <i>and/or</i> be accepted into Official Selection for the NZIFF and/or equivalent offshore prestigious film festival. • Is the theatrical release credible? To be considered a general theatrical release, the film would be programmed for at least one session a day for seven consecutive days at any one cinema location (minimum of five locations in at least two main centres). • Does the film have potential for overseas distribution?
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<p>Budget and Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of costs to date (at the time of application). • Estimated costs to complete and estimated final cost of the film. • You may apply for all costs associated with finishing the film so that it's able to be distributed, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ online edit/title creation ○ colour grade ○ sound editing e.g. tracklaying ○ final sound mixing ○ music composition by New Zealand composers ○ mastering, output time and materials ○ master copies and a modest number of screening formats including hard drives (as appropriate to the project). • Provide post-production quotes that show the film can be delivered within the budget and evidence that delivery will be achieved within the anticipated release. • Post-production and Delivery Schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the budget relative to the likely size of the audience for the film? • Is the budget realistic? • Does the budget allow for all the costs for completing the film? • Do you have the rights to fully exploit the film as anticipated? • Do you have a plan to produce all the supporting marketing materials required for the anticipated release? • Do you have a realistic schedule to delivery?
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What happens to your application after it has been submitted

Once all relevant information is provided and the application is confirmed by NZFC as being eligible, you will be advised of the outcome of your application within six weeks of the date we receive your application.

Applications will be assessed against the criteria as outlined in these guidelines.

The NZFC engages a range of local and international individuals who have various specialisations across the areas of development, finance, production and/or film licencing of content (External Assessors). While some of these individuals specialise in specific areas (for example documentary, animation, interactive projects), all External Assessors provide a useful and independent perspective on funding applications to NZFC staff.

Where relevant, an additional assessor with appropriate cultural knowledge and/or experience associated with an under-represented community may be engaged to provide valuable objective insight (Cultural Assessor). For example, if your project has Māori content or characters, the NZFC will seek an independent perspective considering our Rautaki Māori guidelines.

Please note that by submitting your application to the NZFC, you acknowledge and agree that your application may be reviewed by an External Assessor, and you also accept that the identity of any particular assessor(s) used to assess your application will be kept strictly confidential to the NZFC and will not be released.

For the current list of External Assessors, please visit the NZFC [website](#) and declare any Conflicts of Interest you may have in your application form.

Final funding decisions will be made by Head of Development and Production and the Chief Executive Officer, with input from the Marketing team.

Next steps

If your application is unsuccessful, you will be notified via email.

If your application is successful, you will be notified via email or phone. You will then be invited to enter a funding agreement with the NZFC, which will include (but will not be limited to) the following conditions set out below:

Releases

You will warrant that you have all the necessary underlying rights in the film and that there are contracts in place with all relevant cast, crew and rights owners sufficient to allow for theatrical release of the film.

Credits

NZFC assistance must be acknowledged where possible and appropriate at screenings and in the media. You will also need to credit the NZFC in the end credits of the film as follows:

“Completed with the assistance of a Feature Film Finishing Grant from the New Zealand Film Commission.”

We may also require the combined NZFC and Lotteries still logo at the end of your credits. If we do require this, we will set out this requirement out in the funding agreement.

Reporting

You must deliver a short report within six months of the film’s release detailing how the funding was spent and details regarding the film’s release. Details of this report will be set out in the funding agreement. Please note that if you don’t meet your commitment to this report, you may be ineligible for further funding from the NZFC.

Archive copies

Your budgeted deliverables must include an H264 QuickTime or Pro Res QuickTime file of the completed film for NZFC archival purposes. This needs to be delivered to the NZFC on completion of post-production.

Please be aware that no funding payments will be made until you have agreed to the terms and conditions in the funding agreement and the funding agreement has been fully executed.

A final reminder that if you have any questions please contact us by email at investment@nzfilm.co.nz

Change Log: These guidelines were updated July 2020 from the Guidelines dated May 2017.