



New Zealand
FILM COMMISSION



Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

New Zealand Film Commission Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga International Co- Development Fund Guidelines for Applicants

March
2023

You are encouraged 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 the NZFC website.

All applicants are required to register their intention to apply via the application portal, prior to completing a full application. You are encouraged to get in touch as early as possible ahead of registration with any questions about the fund or your application.

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the International Co-Development Fund and welcome to our guidelines.

The New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) helps ensure New Zealand has a successful screen industry. It is important that New Zealand's screen industry succeeds internationally as well as at home and the NZFC acknowledges that working with colleagues from overseas benefits screen practitioners.

The NZFC recognises there are opportunities artistically, culturally and commercially for New Zealand creative teams and businesses to develop and market IP for official feature film co-productions and high-end long-form series drama. Increasing the number of these productions and the variety of New Zealand participants is desirable for New Zealand's screen industry.

International Co-Development Fund overview

The International Co-Development Fund (ICF) supports New Zealand screen practitioners who are working with an overseas partner on developing feature films and series drama.

It supports two separate development strands:

- 1. ICF – Series Drama Matched Funding (Series Drama Market Partnerships); and,**
- 2. ICF – Feature Film (Official Feature Film Co-Productions).**

It is anticipated that projects applying to either strand will be structured to qualify for the New Zealand Screen Production Grant (NZSPG) for New Zealand Productions either as:

- a) containing significant New Zealand content, or
- b) an official co-production.

A written agreement and confirmed financial commitment for the proposed development project will need to be in place between you and your international partner(s) to be eligible to apply.

You must hold or share intellectual property rights in relation to your project and, if requested, be able to provide written confirmation of this at the point of applying.

Confirmed matched development funding is available in proportion to the project's intended country financing splits (if the percentage split is already known), whether the project is a market partnership or official co-production. If the percentage split is not yet defined, then the application should reflect a 50/50 split, with clear attribution of the relevant development funding sources.

Please note the ICF will:

- provide a maximum of *up to* \$50,000 in ICF grants per New Zealand production entity and/or individual New Zealand producer per NZFC financial year;
- provide a maximum of *up to* \$50,000 per project;
- fund a maximum of *up to* three projects per year with a solely Australia-based

market partnership and/or official co-production partner.

This funding is provided as a non-recoupable grant.

Recipients are encouraged to consider ethnicity and gender diversity and reflect Aotearoa New Zealand society. Applications with women in key creative roles are encouraged as are those that promote the authentic representation of Māori characters, stories, places, history and culture and support high quality films led by Māori creatives. Progress towards the NZFC's goals will be tracked and reported on an annual basis¹.

The NZFC chooses where best to apply the limited funding available. Decisions are final. The criteria applied may change from time to time, but all 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. All applicants are required to register their intention to apply via the NZFC application portal. It is recommended you discuss your project with the Development & Production Team as you work on your application. To contact them email Investment@nzfilm.co.nz or phone 0800 659 754.

¹ See NZFC Statement of Performance Expectations

STRAND ONE: Series Drama Matched Funding

Who can apply

To be eligible to apply to the ICF, you must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident. The writer(s) funded by the ICF grant must also 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.

Applications must be made by a producer, who must have suitable relevant credits and multi-party closing experience. The applicant is required to have at least one lead producer credit on a feature film (which screened theatrically) or series drama (which was broadcast) of substantial contractual scale, whether an official co-production or involving a multi-party production financing agreement.

You may only apply for the development of a first season. Second or subsequent seasons are not eligible under the Series Drama Matched Funding strand.

N.B. Children's (12 years and under), animation and documentary/factual projects are **not** included as eligible formats for Series Drama Matched Funding.

What you can apply for

You can apply for a grant of *up to* \$50,000 per application for development costs only.

You should only apply for actual and reasonable development costs involved in progressing your project. You must provide a detailed budget of intended costs. Your budget should also set out the matched contribution from your international partner(s) and how this will be spent.

Retrospective applications will not be considered; that is, you cannot apply for funding to cover costs you and/or the project have already incurred.

Some of the funds can be spent overseas on elements relating to the international partner, but you must clearly identify this in your budget. In general, ICF support is intended to be spent on New Zealand-based development costs and/or New Zealanders working in New Zealand or internationally.

How to apply

Apply using the online application portal at <https://funding.nzfilm.co.nz/>. Search for the International Co-Development Fund – Series Drama and click 'New Application'.

The first step is to register your intention to apply, following which you will be contacted to approve the submission of a full application.

If you are using the online application portal for the first time you will need to sign up for a new account. Be aware there can be up to a 24-hour wait while we approve this, however, in most cases the wait will be much shorter than this.

It's important you provide as much information as you can to help make a full and fair assessment. Incomplete applications cannot be considered.

What we are looking for

Decision Criteria – Series Drama Matched Funding

Application checklist:

- you are a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident;
- your writer(s) must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident;
- your production company is incorporated and carrying out business in New Zealand;
- you must have at least one lead producer credit on a feature film (which screened theatrically) or series drama (which was broadcast) of substantial contractual scale, whether an official co-production or involving a multi-party production financing agreement;
- you warrant you have secured the rights to your project unexpired for at least one year with the right to renew for a further two years;
- you don't have any outstanding reports or deliverables with the NZFC;
- you have a written agreement and confirmed match funding commitment with your overseas partner;
- it is expected that your partner will be a major international company with significant credits in high-end long-form series drama which:
 - is based outside New Zealand and which can commission high-end long-form series drama projects across any platform and/or has its own transmission platform; or
 - has a track record as a key financing partner (i.e. producing credit) on previous projects at least one of which was a drama series at US\$3m+ per episode.
- the partner may be an international sales agent, broadcaster, global streamer or a production entity; and
- you warrant that a Māori consultant or creative will be included in the development where there is Māori content (please refer to our [Te Rautaki Māori documentation](#)).

The following factors may then be considered in assessing the quality and promise of the project:

- your plan for addressing any specific challenges of the proposed official co-production and how support from the ICF will enable significant and tangible progress towards production of the project;
- strength of the project's main idea(s) or treatment(s) and, if applicable, the quality of the script(s);
- ability of associated talent;
- likelihood of the project being financed; and
- strength and standing of the overseas partner(s) and their proposed finance and distribution plan.

What to include in your application

Producer's Statement

The producer's statement should make it very clear that your partner meets the criteria previously outlined. You should outline your history of engagement with your overseas partner and include a clear description of how you hold or share the rights to the project.

Creative Material

The creative material you supply will help assess whether you meet the eligibility criteria for ICF Series Drama Market Partnerships.

You must include:

- Genre
- Logline (up to 50 words)
- Synopsis of the story (up to 500 words)
- Story documents
 - Series drama: at a minimum a concept and story outline are required. A series bible and a pilot script for episode one (length of script will be determined by the genre and intended platform) could also be supplied.

Budget, Timeline and Financing

In this section you need to provide a breakdown of all development investment to date and a detailed global development budget that clearly shows the amount to be spent in New Zealand and any amounts to be spent offshore by you and your partner. All amounts, including offshore currencies, must be provided in New Zealand Dollars (NZD).

Items you can include in your development budget from which the NZFC is financing are:

- New Zealand writer fees – the [New Zealand Writers Guild rates](#) are a good guide;
- script consultant fees;
- New Zealand producer fees;
- script assessment and/or consultant fees (this person does not have to be a New Zealander);
- New Zealand director fees (unless the director is also the writer or script consultant);
- designer fees for pitch materials (including a film deck, pitch bible);
- workshop and brainstorming costs;
- travel costs for the New Zealand producer (and writer if necessary) to the location of your overseas partner and/or to attend a (maximum of one) key series drama market internationally;
- legal costs;
- extensions to rights costs;
- linguistic support (if overseas partner is non-English speaking); and
- direct script and project-related overheads (e.g. printing, couriers, phone etc.).

You must also set out a proposal for the drawdown of funds (no more than \$25,000 per drawdown) and list the reports you will provide to the NZFC to show that funds are being used

responsibly and for their intended purpose, and the report-back dates.

Rights

You must provide an acknowledgement that you hold the necessary rights (or can exercise an option to obtain such rights) in any underlying material on which the project is to be based. Once the project has received \$60,000 or more of NZFC development funding you must provide evidence that you hold or share intellectual property rights in relation to the project. You can find out more in our Chain of Title information sheet.

Key Personnel

Provide details of your production company and the key creatives involved in the project (both New Zealand and overseas personnel) including CVs and bios.

Eligibility Check

The eligibility check qualifies your eligibility for this fund.

You will be considered ineligible for funding if you have outstanding reports or deliverables, or you are in breach of any contract with the NZFC.

If you have applied and been unsuccessful twice with the same project for any NZFC development funding (e.g. Ara ki Te Puna Kairangi Premium Development Fund, Raupapa Whakaari Fund), you cannot apply to the ICF for that project.

What happens to your application

Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. The Fund aims to evenly balance the award between the two format strands (i.e., Feature Film or Matched Series Drama) however, the NZFC retains the discretion to award one strand higher than the other. This would typically occur towards the end of the financial year.

Decisions will be made by a panel made up of the Head of International Relations, Head of Development and Production, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer.

You may be asked to speak to the proposal in person or via video conference.

Once all relevant information is provided and the application is **confirmed** by NZFC as being eligible, you will be advised of the decision within six weeks.

Next steps

Applicants will be contacted via the online portal as soon as possible after a decision is made.

If your application is not successful, you will be advised by decision letter. Decision letters are viewable within the online portal.

If your application is successful a drawdown schedule will be negotiated with you, based on your proposed cash flow. You will be sent a Letter of Agreement which you will have to electronically sign in the online portal before you receive the first payment.

You will be expected to credit the New Zealand Film Commission International Co-

Development Fund on scripts and other significant materials. If funded to production, you will be expected to credit the New Zealand Film Commission International Co- Development Fund in a form and position no less favourable than other similar funders.

Successful applicants must agree that the NZFC is able to publicly disclose their name, company, title of the project and amount of funding should the applicant be offered funding under the New Zealand Film Commission International Co-Development Fund.

A final reminder that if you have any questions, please contact the Development & Production Team by email Investment@nzfilm.co.nz or phone 0800 659 754.

STRAND TWO: Feature Film Co-productions

Official co-productions are film projects made in accordance with treaties or other formal agreements between New Zealand and other countries. Co-production status enables filmmakers to access funding and incentives programmes from New Zealand and the overseas partner, and also means the project is regarded as a domestic film of both. The co-production agreements between the governments of New Zealand and its overseas partners are available on the NZFC website at [Co-Productions \(nzfilm.co.nz\)](http://nzfilm.co.nz).

A written agreement and confirmed commitment (co-development MOU or similar) for the proposed project will need to be in place between the producers to be eligible to apply.

Who can apply

To be eligible to apply to the ICF, you must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident. The writer(s) funded by the ICF grant must also 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.

Applications must be made by a producer, who must have suitable relevant credits and multi-party closing experience. The applicant is required to have at least one lead producer credit on a feature film (which screened theatrically) or series drama (which was broadcast) of substantial contractual scale, whether an official co-production or involving a multi-party production financing agreement.

You may only apply for support from the ICF if your feature film is structured to qualify as an official New Zealand co-production with one/more overseas partners in countries with which New Zealand has official co-production arrangements.

N.B. Children's (12 years and under), animation and documentary feature films do remain eligible for funding.

What you can apply for

You can apply for a grant of *up to* \$50,000 per application for development costs only.

You should only apply for actual and reasonable development costs involved in progressing your project. You must provide a detailed budget of intended costs. Your budget should also set out the matched contribution from your international partner(s) and how this will be spent.

Retrospective applications will not be considered; that is, you cannot apply for funding to cover costs you and/or the project have already incurred.

Some of the funds can be spent overseas on elements relating to the international partner, but you must clearly identify this in your budget. In general, ICF support is intended to be spent on New Zealand-based development costs and/or New Zealanders working in New Zealand or internationally.

How to apply

Apply using the online application portal at <https://funding.nzfilm.co.nz/>. Search for the International Co-Development Fund – Feature Film and click ‘New Application’.

The first step is to register your intention to apply, following which you will be contacted to approve the submission of a full application by.

If you are using the online application portal for the first time you will need to sign up for a new account. Be aware there can be up to a 24-hour wait while we approve this, however, in most cases the wait will be much shorter than this.

It's important you provide as much information as you can to help make a full and fair assessment.

Incomplete applications cannot be considered.

What we are looking for

Application checklist:

- you are a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident;
- your writer(s) must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident;
- your production company is incorporated and carrying out business in New Zealand;
- you have at least one lead producer credit on a feature film (which screened theatrically) or series drama (which was broadcast) of substantial contractual scale, whether an official co-production or involving a multi-party production financing agreement;
- you warrant you have secured the rights to your project unexpired for at least one year with the right to renew for a further two years;
- you don't have any outstanding reports or deliverables with the NZFC;
- your project is likely to qualify as an official New Zealand feature film co-production;
- you have a written agreement and confirmed commitment (co-development MOU or similar) with your overseas partner(s);
- you have evidence of financial commitment from your producing partner, government funding agency, sales agent or other entity;
- your project must comply with NZFC aggregate funding development caps; and
- you warrant that a Māori consultant or creative will be included in the development where there is Māori content (please refer to our [Te Rautaki Māori documentation](#)).

The following factors may then be considered in assessing the quality and promise of the project:

- your plan for addressing any specific challenges of the proposed official co-production and how support from the ICF will enable significant and tangible progress towards production of the project;
- strength of the project's main idea(s);
- quality of the script(s) or treatment(s);
- ability of associated talent;
- likelihood of the project being financed; and
- strength and standing of the overseas partner(s) and their proposed finance and distribution plan.

What to include in your application

Producer's Statement

The producer's statement is your opportunity to convince assessors that you have what it takes to deliver a successful international production. Your statement is broken into two parts:

- a) **Project History** – This must inform us about your history of engagement with your overseas partner and include a clear description of how you hold or share the rights to the project; and
- b) **Producer's Approach** – In this section you must outline how you plan to approach any specific challenges arising from the proposed international production.

Creative Material

The creative material you provide will help assess whether your project is of sufficient quality and promise to justify assistance.

You must include:

- Genre
- Logline (up to 50 words)
- Synopsis of the story (up to 500 words)
- Story documents
 - o Feature film: Draft script (80-120 pages for feature film) or documentary treatment (2-15 pages)

Budget, Timeline and Financing

In this section you need to provide a breakdown of all development investment to date and a detailed global development budget that clearly shows the amount to be spent in New Zealand and any amounts to be spent offshore by you and your partner. All amounts, including offshore currencies, must be provided in New Zealand Dollars (NZD).

Items you can include in your development budget are:

- New Zealand writer fees – the [New Zealand Writers Guild rates](#) are a good guide;
- script consultant fees;
- New Zealand producer fees;
- script assessment and/or consultant fees (this person does not have to be a New Zealander);
- New Zealand director fees (unless the director is also the writer or script consultant);
- project-related research costs including location recce and initial casting;
- designer fees for pitch materials (including a film deck);
- workshop and brainstorming costs;
- travel costs to the location of your overseas partner;
- legal costs;
- extensions to rights costs;
- linguistic support (if overseas partner is non-English speaking); and
- direct script and project-related overheads (e.g. printing, couriers, phone etc.).

You must also set out a proposal for the drawdown of funds (no more than \$25,000 per drawdown) and list the reports you will provide to the NZFC to show that funds are being used responsibly and for their intended purpose, and the report-back dates.

Rights

You must provide an acknowledgement that you hold the necessary rights (or can exercise an option to obtain such rights) in any underlying material on which the project is to be based. Once the project has received \$60,000 or more of NZFC development funding you must provide documentation as evidence that you hold or share intellectual property rights in relation to the

project. You can find out more in our Chain of Title information sheet².

Key Personnel

Provide details of your production company and the key creatives involved in the project (both New Zealand and overseas personnel) including CVs and bios.

Eligibility Check

The eligibility check qualifies your eligibility for this fund.

You will be considered ineligible for funding if you have outstanding reports or deliverables or you are in breach of any contract with the NZFC.

If you have applied and been unsuccessful twice with the same project for any NZFC development funding (e.g. EDF, ADF, Ara ki Te Puna Kairangi Premium Development Fund), you cannot apply to the ICF for that project.

What happens to your application

Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. The fund aims to evenly balance the award between the two format strands, (Feature Film or Matched Series Drama) however, the NZFC retains the discretion to award one strand higher than the other. This would typically occur toward the end of the financial year.

Decisions will be made by a panel made up of the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Head of International Relations and Head of Development and Production. You may be asked to speak to the proposal in person or via video conference.

In addition, the NZFC may call on the knowledge and expertise of external industry professionals to provide independent assessments on applications.

Please note that by submitting your application for funding from the NZFC, you acknowledge and agree that your application may be reviewed by external assessors, and you also accept that the identify of any particular assessor(s) used to assess your application will be kept strictly confidential to the NZFC and will not be released.

Once all relevant information is provided and the application is **confirmed** by NZFC as being eligible, you will be advised of the decision within six weeks.

Next steps

Applicants will be contacted via the online portal as soon as possible after a decision is made.

If your application is not successful, you will be advised by decision letter. Decision letters are viewable within the online portal.

If your application is successful a drawdown schedule will be negotiated with you, based on your proposed cash flow. You will be sent a Letter of Agreement which you will have to electronically sign in the online portal before you receive the first payment.

² See [Chain of Title Information Sheet \(nzfilm.co.nz\)](https://nzfilm.co.nz)

You will be expected to credit the New Zealand Film Commission International Co-Development Fund on scripts and other significant materials. If funded to production, you will be expected to credit the New Zealand Film Commission International Co- Development Fund in a form and position no less favourable than other similar funders.

Successful applicants must agree that the NZFC is able to publicly disclose their name, company, title of the project and amount of funding should the applicant be offered funding under the New Zealand Film Commission International Co-Development Fund.

If you have any questions, please contact the Development & Production Team by email Investment@nzfilm.co.nz or phone 0800 659 754.

CHANGE LOG: Updated 15 March 2023:

- *ICF Budget per financial year reference removed.*
- *Set amount allocated to ICF strands removed.*
- *Additional information about award allocations across the format strands.*
- *Clarification of qualitative assessment criteria for Matched Series Drama Strand.*

CHANGE LOG: Updated 29 July 2021:

- *Total ICF budget per financial year decreased to \$150,000.*
- *Amount allocated to ICF – Series Drama Matched Funding decreased to up to \$75,000.*