



# International Co-Development Fund

He Aratohu mā ngā Kaitono  
Guidelines for Applicants

[Īmēra mai, mēnā he pātai āu.](#)

If you have any questions, please e-mail the fund  
[development@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:development@nzfilm.co.nz)

September 2024

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You are encouraged to read these guidelines carefully as they set out important eligibility criteria and are intended to help you deliver the strongest application possible. Please also read the information resources ([Audience Engagement](#), [New Zealand Content](#), [Acceptable Private Investor Terms](#), [NZFC Te Rautaki](#)) referred to in these guidelines and the [Terms of Trade](#) found on the NZFC website.

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If you have any accessibility requirements or require this information in a different format, please contact: [diversity.inclusion@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:diversity.inclusion@nzfilm.co.nz)

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## KUPU WHAKATAKI - INTRODUCTION

**The International Co-Development Fund (ICF) supports New Zealand screen practitioners who are working with an overseas partner on developing a feature film as an official co-production.**

Increasing the number of these productions and the variety of New Zealand participants is desirable for New Zealand's screen industry.

To be eligible for consideration for this Fund, the project must be intended to qualify as an official New Zealand co-production with one or more overseas partners in countries with which New Zealand has official co-production arrangements. You are also required to have a written agreement and confirmed financial commitment for the proposed development project from your international partner(s).

It is anticipated that projects applying will be structured to qualify for the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate (NZSPR) for New Zealand Productions.

You can apply for non-recoupable grants of:

- *up to* \$50,000 in ICF grants per New Zealand production entity and/or individual New Zealand producer per NZFC financial year; and
- *up to* \$50,000 per project;

In the interest of supporting a diversity of co-production activity, the ICF fund will limit the fund to award *up to* three projects per year in total that are intended as official co-productions with Australia.

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 these guidelines and the New Zealand Film Commission Act 1978.

All applicants must apply through the NZFC application portal. 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.

For portal support please contact email [funding@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:funding@nzfilm.co.nz).

## KO WAI KA ĀHEI KI TE TONO - WHO CAN APPLY?

To be eligible to apply, you must:

- be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, and the writer(s) funded by the ICF grant must also be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.  
In addition:
  - If applying as an individual, you must be the lead New Zealand producer for the film (this person cannot also assume the role of writer or director unless pre-approved);
  - If applying as 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.
- have suitable relevant credits and multi-party closing experience. You must have at least one lead producer credit on a feature film (which screened theatrically), whether an official co-production or involving a multi-party production financing agreement.
- qualify as an official New Zealand co-production with one or more overseas partners in countries with which New Zealand has official co-production arrangements.
- have all, or the ability to obtain all, necessary rights to develop, produce and distribute the film;
- have a written agreement and confirmed commitment (co-development MOU or similar) with your overseas partner;
- have evidence of financial commitment from your producing partner;
- have no outstanding reports nor be in breach of contracts with NZFC;
- comply with NZFC aggregate development funding cap;
- have Māori consultant(s) or creative(s) included in the development where there is Māori content (see Glossary and Te Rautaki Māori);
- have provided all necessary documentation requested in these guidelines.

## NGĀ ĀHEINGA KAUPAPA – KEY CONDITIONS

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 NZFC International Co-Development Fund.

The NZFC will use reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided by the applicant, unless specified. 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 may consult with the relevant applicant prior to issuing a response to the request.

Any statistical or demographic information provided as part of your application is not made available to external assessors. The data collected is aggregated and used only in meeting the NZFC's reporting requirements.

If your project is intending to be an official co-production, it must have an experienced producer who is a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident. Find out more about official co-productions on our website <https://www.nzfilm.co.nz/incentives-co-productions/co-productions>.

If your application is successful, you will be required to warrant that the production will comply with all current health and safety laws, regulations, and protocols.

If the project has been declined twice (including from any NZFC development fund) it cannot be resubmitted unless the applicant is different from the original lead applicant and all rights reassigned. All resubmissions must demonstrate that the project has been substantially reworked.

While receiving NZFC development funding recognises the potential of your project, it does not commit NZFC to any future financing. Your project does not have to have been awarded NZFC development funding for it to be eligible for NZFC production financing.

Should your project go into production, the NZFC allows development funding to constitute producer or individual equity in the finance plan.

## RAUTAKI MĀORI

Productions that include **Māori content** (see Glossary) must demonstrate involvement of Māori in the project and provide details of this in the application.

Productions with Māori content will be required to:

- have engaged early with secured advisor/s and or creatives with the cultural competency, te reo me ona tikanga (Māori language and cultural practices), and authority to lead and assure the Māori content as part of or alongside the creative team
- reflect Māori representation in the creative team 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
- demonstrate how the production will benefit the Māori filmmaking industry or local communities through the narrative or production in those regions or local tribal communities

As a consideration, projects with significant Māori content would have a **higher proportion of key creative roles** leading the project (e.g. producer, director, script writer, animation director).

As part of partnership arrangements that reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi, NZFC will consider intellectual property ('IP') sharing structures which speak to demonstrating a commitment to capacity and capability building to achieve mutually agreed aspirations as informed by the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori.

For queries regarding Te Rautaki Māori contact [rautaki@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:rautaki@nzfilm.co.nz).

## NGĀ MEA KA TAEA E KOE TE TONO – WHAT CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

You can apply for a grant of *up to* \$50,000 per application for development costs only, and up to a total NZFC development funding of \$60,000 per project. You must provide a detailed budget of intended costs.

The \$60,000 cap includes all NZFC funded development to date, such as Boost project funding, Seed and Seed Advanced, Early Development Grants or Early Development Loans, previous International Co-Development Funding, Premium Fund Development and Blacklist New Zealand funding.

**You should only apply for actual and reasonable development costs involved in progressing your project – the following are a guide.**

- Writer/s fees (New Zealand writers only) see the New Zealand Writers Guild rates for a guide
- New Zealand Producer or lead applicant fees (typically no more than 10% of the award)
- New Zealand director fees (on projects where the writer is the director you should not include separate fees) related to development
- Project related consultancy such as story or cultural consultants
- Project-related research and market costs including location recces, initial casting, travel to the location of your overseas partner, pitch materials and market travel
- Legal costs including extensions to rights and options
- Direct script and project related overheads

**What you cannot apply for:**

- Non-New Zealander key creative (producer, writer, director) fees
- Initial option payments
- Retrospective costs
- Short film or television development
- Capital works or acquisitions or equipment purchases
- Costs covered by other NZFC funding programmes

## NGĀ MEA HEI WHAKAURU ATU KI TŌ TONO – WHAT TO INCLUDE

### **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:

**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

**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 (deck, visual treatment/references, etc)
- 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).

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.

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.

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.

Market travel is included as allowable costs, but this must be pre-approved and supported by an up-to-date plan including meetings and opportunities intended outcomes. You are not able to apply for Producer International Travel Fund for the same market.

### **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.

Applicants 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.

## TIKANGA AROMATAWAI - ASSESSMENT

Applications will be assessed against the applicant and content eligibility criteria (as outlined in these Guidelines and the relevant provisions of the [NZFC Terms of Trade](#) as applicable). Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

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.

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 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.

Funding is limited. NZFC will only receive applications and award funds until funding is exhausted.

## TE HUARAHĪ WHAKAMUA - NEXT STEPS

### **Funding Decision and Contracting**

Decisions will be made by a panel made up of the Chief Executive Officer, Head of Co-Production and Incentives and Head of Funding.

Decisions will be consistent with these guidelines and the New Zealand Film Commission Act 1978 (NZFC Act). Funding is discretionary and all decisions are final.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email or decision letter.

If your application is successful, you will be invited to enter a Grant Funding Agreement (Agreement) with the NZFC.

The Agreement will outline the obligations and conditions of the grant, including regular reporting deadlines and deliverables. No payments will be made until you have agreed to the terms and conditions and the Agreement has been fully executed.

You must submit deliverables required under the Agreement in accordance with the Agreement. This is usually within six months from the date the Agreement is signed.

Deliverables may include revised script, revised logline and synopsis, a cost report on expenditure, and a lead applicant report including your next stage development plan.

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.

If you are GST registered, GST will be added to the grant when it is paid.

## KUPUTAKA - GLOSSARY

**Culturally Significant Content (as defined in NZFC’s Statement of Performance Expectations 2024-25)** Culturally significant films and screen stories are those that New Zealand audiences will recognise as reflecting New Zealand identity and culture. Minority co-productions set in another country are unlikely to meet these criteria. The NZFC has a target of 80% of all long form screen stories funded over a three-year timeframe being culturally significant.

**International Co-productions** A co-production is a joint project with someone in another country or ‘territory’ covered by a film treaty or agreement. The NZFC is responsible for administering and approving official co-production certification for New Zealand productions. Find out more about co-productions on the [NZFC website](#).

**Key creatives** These are defined as writer, director and producer. For all short films, feature films or series drama that receive NZFC development and/ or production funding. The NZFC has a 20% target for Māori practitioners in at least two key creative roles, and 50% with woman or gender diverse director attached (NZFC Statement of Performance Expectations 2024-2025).

**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, genealogical information, naming conventions;
- reference to or inclusion of Māori names, people, places, characters, protocols;
- anything based on Māori history, stories, myths & 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.

Applications that involve a Māori content should reflect Māori representation in the creative team, that is commensurate to the level of Māori content and capacity required for the production.

For more information or assistance please contact [rautaki@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:rautaki@nzfilm.co.nz)

**New Zealand Screen Production Rebate (NZSPR)** The NZSPR is administered by a separate team within the NZFC on behalf of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. The NZSPR details can be found on the [NZFC website](#) and enquiries can be directed to [nzspr@nzfilm.co.nz](mailto:nzspr@nzfilm.co.nz), or to the Incentives Executive on +64 4 382 7680.

**Significant New Zealand Content** For NZFC production investment decisions please refer to the definition in the New Zealand Film Commission Act 1978. Read the [New Zealand Content Information Sheet](#) for more details.

*CHANGE LOG: Updated September 2024:*

- Removal of Documentary genre from ineligible materials

*CHANGE LOG: Updated August 2024:*

- Update to reflect the Statement of Intent 2024-25 and Statement of Performance Indicators 2024-28.

*CHANGE LOG: Updated April 2024:*

- *Removal of Series Drama funding strand.*
- *Reorganisation and addition of sections for clarity, including contents section and glossary of key terms.*
- *Additional information about Rautaki Māori considerations*
- *Market travel and attendance for NZ producers now eligible for funding.*

*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.*