

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## CO-PRODUCTION CERTIFICATION

*These FAQs should be read alongside the New Zealand Film Commission's (NZFC's) [Co-production guidelines](#). If you require any additional assistance or would like to talk to someone about your project, please contact the NZFC's [Co-production and Incentives team](#).*

### General questions

#### **What is a co-production, and what are the benefits?**

A co-production is a film or television project jointly developed by two or more production companies, involving shared creative, financial, and technical resources.

Benefits of co-productions include:

- Pooling financial resources to support larger-scale projects.
- Sharing financial risk.
- Accessing international talent, expertise, and production capabilities.
- Increasing market reach and global audience exposure.

#### **What is an official co-production?**

A film or television project becomes an official co-production when it is certified as such by the NZFC under one or more of New Zealand's 18 co-production arrangements.

#### **What territories does New Zealand have co-production arrangements with?**

New Zealand has co-production treaties or memorandums of understanding with Australia, Canada, China, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Poland, The Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain and the UK. A treaty with Brazil is close to being finalised.

#### **I want New Zealand to negotiate a new co-production treaty with a country we don't currently have an agreement with. How can I advocate for this?**

In New Zealand, co-production treaty negotiations are managed by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Any requests for the Government to pursue new arrangements must be directed to the Ministry.

However, entering into a new treaty is a complex and lengthy process with many factors to consider before negotiations can begin. It is important to note that a single proposed film is unlikely to be sufficient grounds for initiating a new agreement.

#### **What's the difference between an official co-production and an unofficial co-production?**

An officially certified co-production is granted domestic status in each co-producing territory. This recognition allows the project to access funding, incentives, and distribution support available only to domestic productions.

In New Zealand, official co-productions also benefit when applying for the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate (NZSPR-NZ) 40% cash rebate for domestic productions. They do not need to pass the NZSPR-NZ's Significant New Zealand Content Test and can use their Total Production Expenditure (TPE), rather than Qualifying New Zealand Production Expenditure (QNZPE), to meet the minimum expenditure threshold.

By contrast, an unofficial co-production does not receive domestic status and may not be eligible for the same funding or incentives. For example, to qualify for the 40% Rebate for domestic productions, an unofficial co-production must pass the Significant New Zealand Content Test, in addition to meeting all other relevant criteria.

**What formats or types of screen projects are eligible to be recognised as official co-productions?**

The types of screen projects that can be certified as official co-productions vary depending on the specific treaty or agreement. Applicants should refer to the relevant treaty or agreement for detailed format requirements. Generally, most of New Zealand's co-production treaties allow for the certification of both film and television projects.

**Are there any requirements regarding the subject matter or setting of an official co-production?**

No. There are no rules about what an official co-production can be about, nor any requirement for it to be set in a particular place such as New Zealand. Subject matter and setting are not factors in determining eligibility for co-production certification.

**If my project is certified as an official co-production, am I eligible to apply to NZ On Air for development and production funding?**

Yes. An official co-production is eligible to apply for NZ On Air development (excluding feature films) and production funding in one of its three annual funding rounds, provided the project meets NZ On Air's General Guidelines including having confirmed distribution support from a local platform. The level of funding requested from NZ On Air must be proportionate to the level of onscreen Aotearoa New Zealand cultural representation the project will deliver.

**If my project is certified as an official co-production, am I eligible to apply to the NZFC for development and production funding?**

Yes. Official co-productions are eligible to apply to the NZFC for both development and production funding. However, NZFC funding is contestable, and each application is assessed on its individual merits and circumstances, using the same criteria applied to all other funding applications. You will need a pre-application meeting with the Funding team if you intend to apply for either development or production funding. For more information, please contact the NZFC's [Funding team](#).

**Does the NZFC have any dedicated funding specifically for official co-productions?**

No. However, as noted above, official co-productions are eligible to apply for development or production funding through the NZFC's standard funding processes.

**If my project is certified as an official co-production, do I need to pass the Significant New Zealand Content Test to qualify for the 40% New Zealand Screen Production Rebate?**

No. As noted earlier, feature films and television series recognised as official co-productions are exempt from the requirement to pass the Significant New Zealand Content Test. You therefore do not need to complete this section when filling out the Rebate application form.

The only exception is when an official co-production is applying for the Additional Rebate. In that case, the project must meet or exceed the minimum points required in the Significant Cultural Benefits Test and demonstrate cultural benefits to New Zealand that are commensurate with the value of the Additional Rebate being sought.

**Can a project be recognised as an official co-production in the absence of a co-production treaty?**

No. The recognition of a project as an official co-production is based solely on a treaty or a memorandum of understanding between New Zealand and another co-producing State.

**Does New Zealand have a co-production treaty with the US?**

No. There is no arrangement with the US (and the US does not have co-production arrangements with any countries, for that matter).

**How can I co-produce with the US?**

You can't through a treaty. But you can through a joint venture or via an unofficial co-production.

**How can I co-produce with a country that New Zealand doesn't have a treaty with?**

There are two possible pathways:

- Through a joint venture or unofficial co-production structure; or
- Through an official co-production structure involving one of New Zealand's treaty partners that has a co-production arrangement with the country that New Zealand doesn't have a treaty with. This is known as a multipartite official co-production. For more information, see the NZFC's [factsheet](#) on multipartite co-productions.

**What if one of the competent authorities refuses to approve the project as an official co-production?**

All co-producing states must jointly recognise the project as an official co-production. If one of the competent authorities refuses to approve a project as an official co-production, the NZFC is unable to issue a provisional or final co-production certificate. In such cases, the project in question would likely be ineligible for a final certificate for the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate.

**How do I find a New Zealand co-production partner?**

We recommend checking online directories. For example, the New Zealand Screen Production and Development Association (Spada) maintains an [online directory](#) of New Zealand producers. [The co-production section of the NZFC website](#) also lists all certified New Zealand official co-productions and the New Zealand production companies/special purpose vehicles that have made them since 1988. This list is updated regularly.

**How do I find a foreign co-production partner?**

You are welcome to contact the relevant competent authority, screen agency or producers' association in the country or countries you intend to co-produce with. You can also reach out to the NZFC's Co-Production and Incentives team for suggestions of foreign producers who have previously co-produced or collaborated with New Zealand, or who have expressed interest in doing so.

Additionally, the NZFC hosts producer speed meeting events at key international markets (e.g. Cannes), and occasionally online, usually in partnership with the relevant sister agency or competent authority. These events offer a valuable opportunity to connect with multiple foreign co-producers from a specific country in a single setting.

**What are the main things I should consider when choosing a co-production partner?**

Your co-production partner should be experienced in the format of your project (e.g. film or television), ideally with prior co-production experience or if not that, equivalent multi-party financing experience. They should also be a reputable production entity in the co-producing territory, with a good working relationship with the relevant competent authority. Most importantly, ensure your co-producing partner has the capacity and resources to deliver on the project in question.

Co-producers must not be directly or indirectly linked through legal entities with common management, ownership or control. This means that producers from the same company operating in

different countries—or from different companies owned by the same parent company— cannot enter into official co-productions together.

### **How do co-production structures typically affect revenue sharing and copyright ownership?**

In official co-productions, ownership of the intellectual property (IP) in the finished project is generally shared in proportion to the co-production “split.” Revenue is typically divided along the same lines. For specific requirements regarding revenue-sharing and copyright ownership, please refer to the individual co-production treaty or treaties relevant to your project.

## **The application process**

### **Who can apply?**

Applications for official co-production approval must be submitted to the NZFC by an experienced New Zealand producer using the relevant applicant form (provisional or final).

The New Zealand producer must be either a New Zealand citizen or a New Zealand permanent resident.

Your co-producing partner(s) must apply to the competent authority in their territory for the same project.

All applicants must demonstrate that they have the capacity and resources to carry out the proposed project.

### **Our production company has offices in multiple countries. Can two of our subsidiaries produce a project together as an official co-production?**

No. Projects cannot qualify as official co-productions if the co-producers are part of the same company, even if they are based in different countries or operate as subsidiaries under common ownership or control.

### **When you say an “experienced” producer, what level of experience is acceptable?**

The New Zealand producer should have experience that matches the scale and complexity of the proposed co-production. For example, if the project is a feature film, the producer should have at least one producer credit on a feature film that involved a multi-party production financing agreement – meaning the film was financed through contributions from multiple entities such as broadcasters, distributors, funding agencies, private investors and/or international partners. While this prior experience does not need to be on an official co-production, it should be on a project of comparable contractual scale.

In exceptional circumstances, a lesser level of experience may be considered. However, the NZFC may, at its discretion, require the attachment of an experienced New Zealand-based executive producer or the involvement of an experienced entertainment lawyer to the project. This person would lead the relationship with the NZFC throughout the co-production approval process.

### **At what stage of my project should I submit a provisional application for co-production certification?**

Producers should apply for provisional approval when they can substantiate the finance plan – at a minimum, with letters of interest – and have a draft co-producers’ agreement in place. Ideally, the application for a provisional certificate should be submitted before principal photography begins, as some of New Zealand’s co-production arrangements require provisional certification to have been received prior to the start of principal photography.

**My finance plan isn't 100% confirmed – can I still apply for co-production certification?**

A finance plan included in a provisional co-production application cannot be speculative. The NZFC is unable to process your application until funding is confirmed, or you can substantiate your finance plan with at least letters of interest.

You must provide documentary evidence to support every element of your finance plan, including proof of registration or application for any incentives that form part of your financing. If you submit an application without this supporting documentation, it will be placed on hold until a viable finance plan is confirmed.

**Can I apply for co-production certification after I've started principal photography?**

It is strongly recommended that you have a viable co-production structure in place and receive provisional certification before principal photography begins. Some of New Zealand's co-production arrangements require that provisional certification be granted prior to the start of principal photography.

If this requirement applies to the arrangement you are using, the NZFC will be unable to issue a provisional certificate if you apply after principal photography has commenced. Be sure to consult the relevant co-production arrangement(s) to confirm specific requirements.

**If I'm unable to provide all the required documentation when I apply for co-production certification, will my project still be assessed?**

No. Your application will be placed on hold until all of the required documentation has been received. Once the NZFC has all the necessary materials to complete the assessment, you will be sent an application acknowledgement letter.

**Do I need to supply a fully executed co-production agreement or contract with my co-producing partner with my provisional application?**

No. A draft co-production agreement or a deal memo is sufficient for a provisional application. However, you should provide the finalised co-production agreement as soon as it becomes available.

**What information needs to be included in the co-production agreement or contract with my co-producing partner?**

The specific requirements for co-production agreements vary depending on the relevant treaty or treaties. However, the agreement should generally include:

- A reference to the applicable co-production treaty or treaties
- The financial split
- The budget and finance plan
- The cash-flow schedule
- Copyright and revenue sharing arrangements
- Contingencies in case the application is not approved by a competent authority
- Mechanisms for dispute resolution
- On-screen credit requirements

**What are the onscreen credit requirements for an official co-production?**

The NZFC requires the following on-screen credits:

- A 'producer' or 'produced by' credit for the New Zealand co-producer (not a 'co-producer' or 'co-produced by' credit); and

- A credit in the form of ‘A New Zealand-[Country] Co-Production’ or similar, with the majority co-producing partner country placed first.

**My documentary includes animation sequences in addition to live action. What type of work should this “hybrid” project be submitted as?**

The type of work and positions recognised will be those of the predominant technique.

**Do I have to apply for provisional certification? Can’t I just apply for final certification?**

In most cases, you must apply for both provisional and final certification for your project to be recognised as an official co-production. While some co-production arrangements allow for final certification only, this is rare. Please review the relevant co-production arrangement(s) carefully and take note of any requirements regarding provisional approval.

**When should my co-producer submit their application?**

Applications should be submitted at the same time in each jurisdiction. Once an application is received by the NZFC we will contact the competent authority in the other territory/territories involved to verify that the information provided matches. If the figures or details in your co-producer’s application differ from those in your application to the NZFC, this will cause delays in the assessment of your project. It is therefore important to work with a trustworthy and reliable co-producing partner.

**How long are provisional co-production certificates valid for?**

12 months from the date of issue.

**When should I submit my final co-production certification application?**

You should submit your application for final co-production certification once the project is completed – that is, when it is ready to be shown to the general public. This allows the NZFC to confirm that the project was made in accordance with the provisional approval.

**If I’m also applying for the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate (NZSPR), which application should I submit first? Co-production or Rebate?**

If you are submitting a final application for the NZSPR, you may apply at the same time as your final co-production certification.

However, please note that the NZFC cannot process the final approval for the Rebate until the project’s final co-production status has been approved by the NZFC and the other competent authority/authorities concerned.

**Do I need to have received my provisional co-production certificate before applying for a provisional certificate for the NZSPR?**

No. However, you should note on your provisional application form for the Rebate that you have applied for a provisional co-production certificate.

**How long does it typically take for the NZFC to process a co-production application?**

The NZFC aims to process applications within six weeks. However, this timeframe may be extended if information is missing from your application, or if the project is a multipartite co-production, as these are typically more complex.

Approvals will only be issued once all competent authorities involved have agreed. Countries with a high volume of applications may take longer to issue approvals – sometimes up to 12 weeks.

For final applications, you should also factor in the time required to audit expenditure statements, if this is a requirement of the other competent authority.

Please note that the NZFC cannot approve a project unilaterally. A co-production certificate will only be issued once both/all the competent authorities involved have agreed to approve the project.

### **How are official co-production certification applications assessed?**

The guiding principle for all official co-productions is to ensure a balance of creative, financial, and expenditure contributions from each partner country. Your application will therefore be assessed across four key areas:

- **Financial Contribution**  
Whether each co-producer has met the minimum financial contribution required under the relevant agreement(s).
- **Expenditure**  
The extent of the project's spend on New Zealand elements such as cast, crew, and New Zealand goods and services
- **Creative Contribution**  
The personnel involved and the creative input of each side, assessed using a points test.
- **Treaty and Guideline Compliance**  
Whether the project meets the requirements of the relevant agreement(s) and the NZFC's Official Co-Production Guidelines.

For more information about the assessment process, please refer to our separate [fact sheet](#).

## **Updates to a project post-provisional approval**

### **Should I advise the NZFC if anything changes to my project after a Provisional Certificate is issued?**

Yes. You must advise us if there are any material changes to your project particularly if you want to add non-party nationals to your cast or crew, or if there are changes to your financing or New Zealand spend. This allows us to ensure your co-production structure remains viable and is compliant with the relevant co-production treaty or treaties. Failure to inform us of changes may jeopardise your ability to obtain Final Co-production Certification and your eligibility for the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate. If we determine that the changes are "material," we may require you to submit a new Provisional Application for re-assessment.

### **What is considered a "material change" requiring notification to the NZFC?**

Material changes include, but are not limited to:

- A change in the corporate status of one of the production companies involved, or the involvement of a new production company.
- Bankruptcy of one or more of the production companies involved.
- A change in one of the co-producing countries.
- A shift from a bipartite to a multipartite co-production (or vice versa).
- A change in format (e.g. from film to television, or vice versa).
- A revised finance plan that affects the co-production split.
- A substantive change in the New Zealand spend.
- The addition of non-party spend or substantial increase in non-party spend.
- A substantive change in New Zealand's creative contribution to the project.
- Shooting now taking place in a non-co-producing country.
- Post-production now occurring in a non-co-producing country.
- The intention to hire non-party crew.
- The intention to attach non-party cast.

- Sub-contracting of animation work.

If you're unsure whether a change is material, we strongly recommend you err on the side of caution and inform us. This helps avoid any unexpected issues during final certification of your project.

## Finance and Expenditure

### What is a “co-production split”?

The co-production split refers to the proportion of finance contributed by each co-producer to the project.

### How is the “co-production split” determined?

The split is not determined solely at your discretion. Certain elements of the finance plan must be attributed to the co-producer of a given nationality. For example, any pre-sales, licence fees, or distribution guarantees for a co-producer's home territory should be recorded as that co-producer's contribution in the finance plan.

Similarly, any equity or financial support provided by a national or regional screen body must be allocated to the co-producer from that territory. The same applies to tax rebates and other incentives. All remaining finance can be allocated or shared according to the co-producers' agreement.

### **In the case of a New Zealand–Australia co-production where distribution in both territories is being handled by a single distributor, does the distributor's finance (e.g. minimum guarantee) need to be split between the two co-producers and countries?**

Yes, in principle, best practice is to split the distribution finance 50/50 between the New Zealand and Australian co-producers for the purposes of the finance plan and co-production split. However, a deviation from this 50/50 apportionment may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the competent authorities if the co-producers—together with the distributor—make a case for a different split (by way of a request in writing). For example, if a substantially larger theatrical release is planned in New Zealand than in Australia, or vice versa.

### **Can I have finance from an investor from a non-co-producing State in my finance plan if I want to be certified as an official co-production?**

Yes, subject to the applicable treaty, investment from non-co-producing States is generally permitted.

However, if the funding comes from a government source in a non-party country such as a screen agency, your co-production structure as proposed may not be viable. This is because such funding often carries conditions that may conflict with the requirements of the co-production treaty or treaties under which your project is being certified.

In such a scenario, you may need to add the non-producing State as a co-producing country to the structure—if a co-production arrangement exists with New Zealand and/or your co-producing country—for the project to be viable as an official co-production.

We strongly recommend contacting the NZFC's [Co-Production and Incentives team](#) if you plan on including government funding from a non-party country in your finance plan, so that staff can advise you on the project's viability as an official co-production.

**What is the minimum financial contribution required on the part of a co-producer to a co-production project?**

In general, the minimum financial contribution required from a co-producer to an official co-production is 20%. However, some co-production arrangements such as New Zealand's Co-Production Treaty with Canada specify different minimums. For example, under the Canada Treaty, the minimum is 15% for a two-country co-production and 10% for a co-production involving three or more countries. It is best practice to refer to the relevant co-production treaty or treaties when submitting for co-production certification to confirm the applicable minimum requirements.

**Can I make a finance-only contribution to a project and still have it recognised as an official co-production?**

Only a few of New Zealand's co-production treaties allow a finance only contribution. Refer to the specific treaty or arrangement you intend to use to check whether this is permitted.

**What do you mean by expenditure on "New Zealand elements"?**

Expenditure on New Zealand elements refers to costs incurred in New Zealand by the New Zealand producer, as well as costs related to New Zealand creative and technical personnel incurred in another territory and paid for by the New Zealand producer during production.

**Is the spend on "New Zealand elements" the same as QNZPE for the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate?**

No, these are unlikely to be the same. For example, costs related to services provided by New Zealanders overseas during pre-production do not count as New Zealand production expenditure for the purposes of the Rebate, but do count as New Zealand expenditure for the purposes of co-production.

Please refer to the NZSPR-NZ Criteria for more detailed information on what qualifies as New Zealand production expenditure for the purposes of the Rebate.

**What do you mean by "non-party spend"?**

Non-party spend refers to any expenditure that is not made on New Zealanders or New Zealand goods and services, or on personnel, goods and services from your co-production partner country. Examples include U.S. legal or financing costs, archival fees paid to Getty Images (U.S.), and software licences paid to U.S.-based companies. If your project includes non-party cast approved by the competent authorities (e.g. a U.S. actor), or local crew hired for a location shoot in a non-party country, the associated fees and expenses will also be considered non-party spend.

**Can the same expense be claimed under both the NZ Screen Production Rebate and a co-producing partner's incentive scheme?**

No. This is considered double-dipping and is not permitted. For example, in a New Zealand–Australia co-production, an expense such as New Zealand crew working in Australia that is claimed as Qualifying New Zealand Production Expenditure (QNZPE) cannot also be claimed as Qualifying Australian Production Expenditure (QAPE) for the same production.

**How should fees and expenses be treated for creative personnel with dual citizenship in official co-productions?**

If a dual national (e.g. New Zealand/Australian) is designated as a New Zealander for the purposes of the creative points test, then their fees and all related expenses should be treated as New Zealand expenditure for co-production certification purposes. As a general principle, applicants must ensure consistency in how the individual is treated across the entire application, including their nationality designation and the categorisation of their associated costs.

## Personnel and Creative Contribution

### How is my creative contribution to an official co-production project assessed?

Your creative contribution is assessed based on the nationalities of the personnel involved and the creative input from each co-producing country using a points test. You can find a copy of the creative contribution points test in the [NZFC's Fact Sheet on The Assessment Process](#) and in the application form.

### What does “non-party” mean in the context of official co-productions?

“Non-party” refers to any country—or nationals of a country—that is not a signatory to the co-production treaty (or treaties) under which your project is being certified.

Under many of New Zealand’s co-production treaties, the participation of non-party nationals is not permitted. However, there are limited exceptions to this rule. It is essential to check the relevant treaty arrangements for specific details.

Please note: the involvement of any non-party nationals outside the exceptions explicitly outlined in the applicable arrangement(s) will render the project ineligible for official co-production certification. In addition, approval for their inclusion must be sought from the competent authorities ideally before principal photography gets underway and the provisional certificate is issued.

### Can I involve US personnel or other non-party cast and crew in my official co-production?

All personnel working on an official co-production must be nationals or permanent residents of one of the co-producing countries. Since New Zealand does not have a co-production treaty with the United States, US cast and crew are generally not permitted to work on official co-productions.

However, in exceptional circumstances, where the script or financing requires it, a limited number of cast and crew from non-party countries may be approved by the competent authorities. For example:

- If location shooting outside the co-producing territories is approved, some local personnel may be permitted.
- If a non-party actor is approved, it may also be reasonable to approve a non-party casting agent.
- Entourage members who are non-party nationals may be permitted if they are a contractual requirement of an approved non-party cast member.

If you wish to hire non-party cast for script or financing reasons (e.g. a Hollywood actor), this is typically interpreted to mean one or two non-party cast members. The New Zealand–Canada treaty also allows for one or two non-party nationals, including US nationals, to fill key creative roles such as Director or Writer, without requiring the express approval of the NZFC and Telefilm Canada.

You must **declare all non-party nationals** involved in your project at the time you apply for official co-production certification.

### Can I have a US Executive Producer on my official co-production?

Yes. This is because an executive producer on a co-production is not considered to be part of the making of the project as their role is usually financial, not creative. However, this does not apply if ‘Executive Producer’ is the credit given to the creative producer, as is the case with some television projects.

For New Zealand-Canadian official co-productions, please see the [list of courtesy credit exemptions for non-party producer-related personnel](#) published by Telefilm Canada.

**Are Australian cast and crew treated as New Zealanders for official co-productions?**

Yes. For co-production certification purposes, Australians and New Zealanders are interchangeable. This means Australian cast and crew qualify as New Zealanders (and vice versa). Provided Australian cast members are contracted by the New Zealand co-producer, their fees and associated costs will count as New Zealand spend. The exception is for projects under the Australia-New Zealand Memorandum of Understanding. In these cases, the actual citizenship or permanent residency of the participants, either New Zealand or Australian, is used for the creative points and expenditure tests.

**Can a non-party national, such as a US screenwriter, write the screenplay for my co-production?**

No. The screenplay must be written by one or more nationals or permanent residents of the co-producing territories. A non-party national such as a US writer cannot be credited as a screenwriter on an official co-production. However, a non-party writer *may* contribute to the screenplay, provided they are not credited as a writer of the screenplay.

The only exception is under the New Zealand Canada Co-Production Treaty, which permits a non-party individual to be hired in a key creative role, including screenwriter. This means that on a New Zealand-Canada co-production a US writer can be credited as the screenwriter.

**Under the New Zealand-Canada Treaty it says one of the key positions can be filled by a non-party national. Is it possible to fill two different half key roles with two nationals of a State other than the co-producing States?**

No, that is not possible.

**I see that for certain key positions under the New Zealand-Canada Treaty, there is a choice of two positions (e.g. music composer *or* sound designer for animation projects) for the creative points test. Who decides what position is counted?**

The co-producers have to agree on the key positions that will be used for the creative points test. Only one of the two positions will be counted, and it will be counted jointly for the two States as part of their respective certification assessments, i.e. it will not be possible to count the music composer in one and the sound designer in the other co-producing State for assessment purposes.

**In the case of dual citizenship (or where an individual holds multiple citizenships), which State should their creative participation be attributed to?**

This is a decision for the project's co-producers to make. Once a nationality is assigned, it must be maintained consistently throughout the entire application. A dual citizen cannot be treated as two different nationalities within the same application. For example, a New Zealand/French writer-director must be designated as either a New Zealand or French national for both roles. Their nationality cannot differ between roles or across different parts of the application.

**I haven't appointed someone to a key creative position yet, can I still claim a point for that role if it's my intention to appoint someone from New Zealand?**

Yes, where a cast or crew position has not yet been filled at the time you fill out the provisional application form, just put TBC in the 'Name' column and note the relevant point/s in the 'NZ points' column. Details for the appointee must be provided to the NZFC as soon as they are available, however, and ideally before shooting commences.

**Can I split or share points in the creative points test between two territories for the one role?**

Yes, splitting of points is permissible on a case-by-case basis, but only in circumstances where each person is sharing the role equally. For example, we may approve the sharing of points where you have two credited writers on a project. If you wish to split points, please speak to the NZFC's Co-Production and Incentives team first before submitting your application.

**What if my creative contribution doesn't align with my expenditure or financial contribution?**

Your creative contribution to a co-production project (with the exception of an official co-production with Canada) must be reasonably aligned with your expenditure and financial contribution. While there may be some flexibility in determining what constitutes a "reasonable" creative contribution in a New Zealand majority co-production, in most cases the relevant co-production treaty dictates what is considered acceptable. If it appears that your creative contribution may not align with your financial contribution to the project or your New Zealand expenditure, please speak to the NZFC's Co-Production and Incentives team first before submitting your application.

**If my project is a New Zealand majority co-production, does principal photography have to take place in New Zealand? Can it take place in the minority co-producing country?**

As a general principle, most of New Zealand's co-production treaties require that the majority of the work takes place in the country of the co-producer who has made the major financial contribution. In exceptional circumstances, and where prior approval is sought, the competent authorities may approve a departure from this requirement, particularly if the script necessitates location shooting in a non-party country (see below).

## Location shooting

**Can I undertake location filming in a non-party country?**

Yes, but this requires prior approval from the competent authorities which must be satisfied that the setting or subject matter necessitates filming in a specific location outside the co-producing territories.

**If a location shoot is approved outside the co-producing territories, can I hire local crew?**

Yes, some specified local personnel may be engaged if location shooting outside the co-producing territories is approved. These roles will typically be technical, below the line crew, and will generally not include above the line or head of department roles.

## Animation

**Can my animated project be made in a studio outside one of the co-producing territories?**

No, not if you want your production to be certified as an official co-production. The exception regarding setting or subject matter mentioned above applies only to live-action shoots—that is, not to content created within an animation studio.

Additionally, under most of our treaties, only a *restricted number* of technical personnel from non-co-producing territories may be engaged in an official co-production, and only with prior approval of the competent authorities. Approval is granted in *exceptional circumstances*, such as when the required personnel are not available in either New Zealand or the other co-producing country or countries.

## Post-production

### Can post-production activity take place outside one of the co-producing territories?

Typically no, not if you want your production to be certified as an official co-production. As noted earlier, under most of our treaties, only a *restricted number* of technical personnel from non-co-producing territories may be engaged in an official co-production, and only with prior approval of the competent authorities. Approval is granted in *exceptional circumstances*, such as when the required personnel are not available in either New Zealand or the other co-producing country or countries. Given the many excellent post-production houses and facilities in New Zealand—as well as those in the relevant co-producing country or countries—it is unlikely that this “exceptional circumstances” criteria would be met.

In order for most official co-production structures to work, principal photography will generally (but not always) take place in the majority co-producing country and post-production in the minority co-producing country.

## Multipartite Co-productions

### What is a multipartite co-production?

A multipartite co-production involves more than two co-producing partner countries. You can only make a multipartite co-production where co-production arrangements connect all the participating countries. The countries do not all need to have treaties with one another, but each must have a formal co-production arrangement with at least one of the other partner countries.

### What is a “pivot” country in a co-production structure?

A “pivot” country is the country in a multipartite co-production structure whose bilateral co-production arrangements are used to link all other participating countries.

For example, in a New Zealand/Canada/UK co-production, if only the NZ–Canada and NZ–UK treaties are used, New Zealand is considered the pivot country. The pivot country is often—but not always—the majority co-producing country. The choice depends on the specific structure and needs of the project.

### Which co-production treaties are used if three countries are involved in a co-production project? All three? Or just two?

If all three (or more) countries involved in a co-production are linked by bilateral co-production arrangements, producers may choose to structure the project using just two of those arrangements.

For instance, in a New Zealand/Canada/UK co-production, where each country has a treaty with the others, producers could use either:

- the NZ–Canada and NZ–UK arrangements (making New Zealand the pivot), or
- the Canada–UK and Canada–NZ arrangements (making Canada the pivot).

Producers may select the pivot country based on what makes the most sense for the project, as well as any factors linked to incompatibilities between specific treaties. The pivot country links the others through its arrangements. In all cases, the terms of the specific treaties used must be met.

Refer to the NZFC's [Multipartite Co-Production Factsheet](#) for more information. We also strongly recommend contacting the NZFC's [Co-Production and Incentives team](#) before submitting your application, as multipartite co-productions can be complex.

**What happens if the terms of two co-production treaties are incompatible? Do all the terms of the co-production arrangements have to be compatible for an official co-production to work?**

If there are incompatibilities between the terms of the co-production treaties being used, the general approach is that the most stringent treaty will apply when assessing the project.