

19 March 2025

21 FEBRUARY 2025: OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

In your email dated 21 February 2025 you requested information from the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Responses to your specific questions are set out below.


In the closing credits of "The Suicide Squad", a 2021 American "superhero" film distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, it is obvious that it received funding from The New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC).

- 1. It seems than NONE of the key production members (Director, Writer & Producer) OR lead actors are New Zealanders (Citizens or Permanent Residents) at the time of production. Is this true or false? If false, please name the Kiwis at the time of production & their role/ part they played (Don't bother if they are not in the first minute of the closing credits - just state "True".). Interesting to note, given the criteria for NZ film funding published online...***

The Suicide Squad received the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate (NZSPR) for International Productions. The NZSPR is not NZFC feature film funding. It is a rebate scheme administered by the NZFC on behalf of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

All productions applying for the NZSPR are required to credit the scheme and include the NZFC's logo as acknowledgment of the scheme's administrator. The current approved wording is: "The filmmakers acknowledge the assistance of the New Zealand Government's Screen Production Rebate".

This page on the NZFC website provides an overview of the Rebate, including criteria for international productions: [New Zealand Screen Production Rebate for International Productions](https://www.nzfilm.co.nz/en/production-rebate).



A list of international productions that have received screen incentives is also available on our website and updated on a quarterly basis: nzfilm.co.nz/resources/lbsp-g-nzspg-international-grants-approved. The next update will be published in early April 2025.

- 2. What percentage of the NZFCs feature film production budget comes from the NZ Government? (Taxpayer money).**
- 3. How much money did the NZFC receive from the NZ government for both feature films AND in total for each of the years: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024?**

In response to parts 2 and 3 of your request, the NZFC is funded to deliver on its purpose as set out in the NZ Film Commission Act 1978. It is broader than "feature film production"

Non-targeted funding comes from the Ministry of Culture and Heritage and from the Lottery Grants Board. This excludes targeted funds for international attractions and international rebate administration.



NZFC funding information can be found in our Annual Reports, available on the NZFC website here: [Corporate Documents](#)

- 4. What was the reasoning for the NZFC to invest in "The Suicide Squad" & how much was invested in total in NZD?**
- 5. How much has the NZFC actually got back from it's investment in THIS single film to date? (Round to the nearest 1,000NZD). And hence, what is the profit or loss from this American Investment?**
- 6. What is the return on investment (ROI) from "The Suicide Squad" for the NZFC in percentage terms?**
- 7. Was there a lack of NZ feature films to invest in at the time - so money was allocated to this film this instead of being rolled over for following years?**

In response to questions 4-7, the NZSPR is not NZFC feature film funding investment. It is a Rebate on qualifying expenditure, assessed under separate published criteria.

- 8. How many NZ applications for feature film financing did the NZFC receive in: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024?**

Between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2024, the NZFC received 169 applications for Feature Film Production Investment funding.



9. Who/ which entities (and in what percentage split) is/are the owner(s) to the copyright of "The Suicide Squad" film?

The NZFC does not hold this information, therefore we are refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the OIA as this information is not held by the NZFC and there are no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department subject to the OIA.

10. If the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) fully funded a NZ made feature film for \$1,000,000, which people (duties: e.g., producer, director, screenwriter, executive producer(s) [signal if they likely are NZFC contractors/ employees/ affiliates], 1st lead actor, 2nd lead actor etc.)/ entities (e.g., production company, NZFC) are the the owner(s) to the copyright of that film (and what percentage of the copyright do each hold)? [Calculate based on the averages of the last ten NZ feature films the NZFC fully funded.]

11. If that same hypothetical 1 million dollar funded NZ film, then went on to receive 5 million dollars in profits after cinemas & distributors etc.; how would that 5 million dollars be split between copyright holders and other entities in percentage terms? How much (in dollar amounts) would each of the aforementioned people with specific duties & entities receive in this situation? [Again, calculate based on the averages of the last ten NZ feature films the NZFC fully funded.]

12. Keeping with this same hypothetical NZ film, would the NZFC likely require first recouping the production budget from profits before any distributions? So it was like a loan all along...? Out of the last 10 NZ feature films the NZFC fully funded, on how many occasions did this happen? (Include partial recuperation too, if profits were less than the production budget).

In response to questions 10-12, every feature film has different arrangements, and different parties will share copyright of the film. This is dependent on multiple factors including contractual arrangements and financial structure of the project.

Please note the NZFC does not 'fully fund' a film. For NZFC Feature Film Production Investment, the NZFC is one of multiple investors.

While the OIA allows New Zealanders to ask government agencies for information, there is no requirement to create new information or respond to hypothetical questions. The NZFC is therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the OIA as this information is not held by the NZFC and there are no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department subject to the OIA.

13. What was the average amount (in NZD) that the NZFC gave to produce a New Zealand made feature film (with the criteria online requiring NZ citizenship or Permanent residency for key duties etc.) that was fully funded by the NZFC? Again,



calculated by averaging the last 10 feature films (with a run time of over 80 minutes & screened in at least one cinema).

Just to be perfectly clear, please exclude any Documentaries from the calculations or responses.

Please note the NZFC does not 'fully fund' a film. For NZFC Feature Film Production Investment, the NZFC is one of multiple investors.

All NZFC funding decisions are published on our website. You may find this information here: <https://www.nzfilm.co.nz/funding-and-support/funding-overview/past-funding-decisions>.

We will be publishing this letter (with your personal information removed) on the NZFC website.

Please be aware that you have the right, by way of complaint to an Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek an investigation and review of our response.

Yours sincerely

Tayla Hancock

Tayla Hancock
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New Zealand Film Commission

