

# Project Development Fund

Guidelines 2026/27



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## Project Development Fund Guidelines 2026/27

The Project Development Fund will provide funding for the development of independent film and television productions that have received financial commitments from an eligible triggering agent (the “Triggering Agent”) to advance funds for the development of a specific project toward broad streaming.

Applications will be evaluated on a first come, first served basis until the budget has been fully committed for the fiscal year.

**Program Requirements:** Financial commitment from an eligible triggering agent towards development activity of the project.

**Eligible Applicants:** Incorporated B.C.-based company with its head office in B.C. (Note: Companies extra-provincially registered in B.C. are not eligible.)

**Eligible Project Types:** Scripted feature length films, television movies, pilots, television series and mini-series, documentaries, factual series, web series, and short films.

### Funding Per Production Type:

Production Type	Funding Per Project
Feature Films, Documentary One-Offs, Web Series, and Short Films	Up to \$10,000 (50% of financial contribution towards development from an eligible triggering agent.)
Series (Documentary, Factual, or Scripted)	Up to \$20,000 (50% of financial contribution towards development from an eligible triggering agent.)

**Application Fee:** A non-refundable \$105 fee (includes GST) is due with each submission.

**Decision Process:** Applications are evaluated on a first come, first served basis until budgeted funds are committed for the current fiscal year. The review and analysis of each application is based on program eligibility and does not include a creative evaluation.

**2026/27 Program Updates:** Please note that financial commitments for recipients of the Telefilm Canada Feature Film (TCFF) Development Program are capped at \$5,000 per project. Applicants are now required to provide written confirmation that Telefilm is aware of the project's application to Creative BC for additional funding during this phase of development.

In addition, the list of eligible triggering agents has been updated for this fiscal year. Details on page 5.

## Aims + Objectives

- The Project Development Fund enables B.C. owned and controlled production companies to build on development commitments secured from broadcasters, distributors and select funding agencies that actively advance the project toward broad steaming.
- The fund encourages support for existing and emerging domestic companies and provides financing in the form of non-recoupable advances<sup>1</sup> for feature film script development, dramatic or animated TV projects, or documentaries.
- The fund supports projects where B.C. companies have partnered with production companies from other countries.

## Applicant Eligibility

Applications will only be accepted from production companies. Companies applying must:

- Be an audiovisual company incorporated in British Columbia or Canada with its head office in British Columbia. (Note: Companies extra-provincially registered in B.C. are not eligible.)
- The majority of the common interest voting shares of the company must be held by B.C. residents<sup>2</sup>.
- The principals, directors, officers and shareholders of the applicant company are in good standing (i.e. not in default) with Creative BC.
- The applicant company may own 10% or less of the shares of a broadcaster and may have 10% or less of its shares owned by a broadcaster or by a distributor.

In the case of an **inter-provincial** co-production:

- A minimum of 51% of the project must be owned by the B.C. applicant.
- Should a project be co-owned by two B.C. companies, it will count as 100% ownership and is eligible. Kindly note that if successful, the application becomes a joint application, and the contract must be addressed to and signed by both B.C. companies.

In the case of an **international treaty** co-production:

- The applicant is in active development with an international partner, engaging in a treaty co-production agreement<sup>3</sup>.
- Creative BC will follow the minimum guidelines laid out in the governing international treaty.
- The B.C. applicants' creative and financial control must be commensurate with their copyright or ownership of the project.

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<sup>1</sup> For projects that meet the eligibility criteria of the [FIBC](#) program, the Project Development Fund is considered a grant that will “grind” or be deducted from the total cost of production when calculating the BC labour cap.

<sup>2</sup>B.C. residency is defined as either a Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident who has resided in B.C. for at least 200 of the 365 days prior to application and have filed income tax returns in B.C. for the taxation year prior to the application.

<sup>3</sup> Projects that have co-production agreements in place with a partner who has an agreement with an international equivalent to Telefilm Canada may be eligible for Project Development funding and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Previously funded applicants must have submitted all required final deliverables for any open files (as applicable to the project delivery date) to be considered.

## Project Eligibility

Eligible projects must have attached to them a “Triggering Agent” that is arm’s length from the applicant company and cannot be a related or associated company.

In the event that a project is intended for coproduction, it must be associated with an independent “Triggering Agent,” which is not related to or affiliated with the applicant company or co-producing partner.

Eligible projects may include British Columbia owned and/or controlled:

- Scripted feature length films – including (but not limited to) live action or animation (minimum 75 minutes in length).
- Documentary one-offs (minimum 25 minutes in length).
- Documentary or factual series (minimum 25 minutes per episode).
- Scripted television series, pilots, and mini-series (dramatic, comedy, or animation).
- “Movies of the Week” (MOWs).
- Web series.
- Short films.

Eligible projects must:

- Be 100% owned and controlled / optioned (or *intended to be optioned* should the application be successful), by the applicant for a minimum of 12 months.
- Exceptions regarding copyright may be granted for inter-provincial or international treaty co-productions. In these cases, the B.C. applicant must retain the copyright interest as per the terms of the applicable treaty for international treaty co-productions and demonstrate that the copyright ownership is equal to the B.C. applicant’s financial, technical and creative contribution and control as specified in the co-production agreement entered into between the parties.
- The applicant must obtain the prior written consent of Creative BC if they plan to sell, assign, transfer, option or otherwise dispose of or encumber any right, interest or property of the applicant in the project, in any materials created during the development of the project or in the underlying rights agreements.
- If the eligible project is produced, the production must be produced in British Columbia by the applicant unless the applicant has entered an interprovincial co-production, co-venture or international treaty co-production as specified under Applicant Eligibility.
- A production that contains any elements of serious or gratuitous sexual violence or exploitation, obscene, indecent or pornographic content within the meaning of the Criminal Code, or elements which are libelous or in any other way unlawful, are ineligible.

## Triggering Agents

Eligible applicants may apply to Creative BC for a non-recoupable development advance of up to 50% of the committed cash advance intended for the development of the eligible project from one or more of the following *Triggering Agents*:

### Distribution entity or public/private broadcaster:

- An arm's length bona fide distribution entity (Canadian and international distributors)<sup>4</sup>.
- A licensed public or private broadcaster (Canadian and international broadcasters)<sup>5</sup>.
- National Film Board of Canada (NFB co-productions only; 100% owned and controlled NFB productions are not eligible).
- TELUS Originals (development costs only).
- TELUS independent (development costs only).

### Over the top (OTT) subscription-based services:

- Netflix, Crave, Amazon, Hulu, Vimeo On-Demand originals, etc.<sup>6</sup>;

### Select funding agencies:

- Independent Production Fund (IPF) Web Series Development Packaging Program;
- Bell Fund Slate Development;
- Telefilm Canada Feature Film Fund (CFFF) Development Program<sup>7</sup>;
- Canada Media Fund (CMF) Indigenous Development and Predevelopment; and
- Indigenous Screen Office (ISO) Development Program.

Advances by the Triggering Agent must be relevant to the current phase of development.

Private companies or private investment **do not** qualify as an eligible triggering agent.

## Financial Participation

- The total development funding available to an eligible feature film, documentary one-off, web-series, or short film project for the fiscal year 2026/27 is capped at \$10,000.
- The total development funding available to an eligible television series, which include dramatic, animated, lifestyle or documentary, are capped at \$20,000.
- The total development funding available to each eligible applicant (including affiliated and related companies) may not exceed \$50,000 in the fiscal year 2026/27.
- The maximum cumulative funding an eligible project may receive over its full development history is \$40,000 for feature films, documentary one-offs, web series, and shorts; and \$60,000 for all other project types.

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<sup>4</sup> Examples of a distribution entity include, but are not limited to: Boat Rocker Studios, Lionsgate Canada, Mongrel Media, Omnifilm Releasing, Studio TF1 America (formerly Reel One Entertainment), Wild Brain, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Examples of a licensed public or private broadcaster include, but are not limited to: Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), Bell Media, Blue Ant Media, Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC), Corus Entertainment, Hollywood Suite, Knowledge Network, OUTtv, Rogers Media, TV5 Quebec Canada, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Please refer to CAVCO for comprehensive list of streaming and VOD platforms

<sup>7</sup> Telefilm top-ups are capped at \$5,000 per project.

- Applications must be submitted to Creative BC no later than 60 days after the date that the B.C. applicant receives the letter of commitment or long-form development agreement with the Triggering Agent.

## Eligible Costs

The following eligible costs must be bona fide third-party costs directly related to the film or television project in development:

- Acquisitions of rights including option payments and license fees for platforms or formats;
- Research including the creation of a report, bible, outline and/or treatment;
- Photo and audio digitization/preservation;
- Writing of a script stage including editing and various breakdowns (i.e. outline, treatment, first draft, second draft, final draft and polish and applicable fringes);
- Production of a demo tape including, but not limited to, creation of a sizzle reel, presentation pilot, webisode or storyboards;
- Creation of a character model pack (for animated projects);
- Pre-production planning, finance packaging and/or casting including creation of a casting reel;
- Travel costs necessary for creative work (e.g. interviewing, demo taping and travel by/to/from the director);
- Audience Development and Community Outreach Plan;
- Producer fees and corporate overhead can be calculated as a combined maximum 40% of the above approved direct development costs (the base budget);
- Business affairs and legal services associated with the above activities;

Inflated, excessive, and/or unreasonable allocation of expenditures may be deemed ineligible and deducted from the proposed development budget.

## Application Procedures

Applications are evaluated on a first come, first served basis until budgeted funds are committed for the current fiscal year. The processing time for a complete application is approximately 6 - 10 weeks.

Applicants must apply through the online submission form.

A non-refundable \$105 fee (includes GST) is due with each submission and payments are preferred by direct deposit. Please attach a screenshot of the payment to your application. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

## Use of Artificial Intelligence Technology

Applicants using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology should refer to the Province of British Columbia's [Draft artificial intelligence responsible use principles](#). Particularly the principles of **transparency**, **accountability** and **fairness** in how they relate to this program.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology must be disclosed and outlined in the application.

This applies to:

- The use of AI to prepare the application form and all supporting materials; and
- The use of AI in the creation of content or otherwise, for projects supported by Creative BC.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all applications and projects have access to all underlying rights including content that is created with the assistance of AI technology.

Creative BC views emerging technologies as potential tools to empower practitioners, not replace them, while remaining aware of their evolving legal, ethical, and cultural implications. Disclosure around the use of AI technology is required to understand how these technologies are being used and how they align with the Province of British Columbia’s principles of use. Applicants will not be penalized for disclosing the use of AI technology.

Creative BC does not use AI technology to evaluate applications and supporting materials.

## Program Evaluation

The review and analysis of each application is based on program eligibility and does not include a creative evaluation. Successful applicants are notified in writing of the amount of the non-recoupable development advance awarded and will subsequently be forwarded a Non-recoupable Development Advance Agreement (the “Agreement”) that, upon execution, shall be binding upon the eligible applicant and Creative BC.

Following analysis, if a project or applicant is deemed ineligible, the applicant will be notified via telephone or email of the reasons.

## Terms of Funding

### Advance of Funds

The advance of funds (the “Advance”) is non recoupable (except as noted below under Forfeiture and Default and within the Agreement) and will be released over two drawdowns (75% and 25% of the Advance, respectively), according to the conditions laid out in the Agreement.

## Respectful Workplace + Client and Partner Code of Conduct

As a catalyst for, and investor in B.C.’s creative industries, Creative BC is committed to supporting a healthy ecosystem that thrives in a culture of mutual respect, dignity and inclusivity that is free from any form of harassment, discrimination, and violence. All companies that work with, or seek funding from, Creative BC are expected to adhere to [Creative BC’s Code of Conduct for Clients, Partners, and Stakeholders](#), implement policies and procedures for a harassment-free workplace, and comply with relevant laws. Creative BC is a signatory of the [Creative Industries Code](#) and expects all applicants, recipients, and partners to also adhere to this Code of Conduct. [Learn more.](#)

## On Screen Protocols & Pathways

It is a requirement that all filmmakers read and adhere to the guidance provided in [ON SCREEN PROTOCOLS & PATHWAYS](#): A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities, Cultures, Concepts and Stories.

## Being Seen | Black Screen Office

Creative BC supported the [Black Screen Office’s “Being Seen – Directives for creating authentic and inclusive content”](#) study conducted to provide directives to everyone in the film, television and interactive digital media industries to help them commission, create and assess authentic content. We

urge applicants to read and utilize this study as a tool to educate themselves, develop strategies for change, and enact real, systemic and long-lasting transformation.

## Reel Green™

Sustainable production efforts in British Columbia were formalized in 2006 through the [Reel Green™ initiative](#), a resource centre with a collection of best practices to help productions reduce their environmental impacts and improve their overall environmental footprint.

Successful applicants to the Slate Development Program must adhere to sustainable practices throughout the development process of their project and beyond. We also require successful applicants to take the [Climate and Sustainable Production Training course](#).

In alignment with the Government of Canada's commitment to net-zero emissions by, or before, 2050, successful applicants to this program will also be required to use industry level Carbon Calculators such as the [Green Production Guide Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) and/or the [albert Carbon Footprint Calculator](#).

## Forfeiture and Default

A completion date is noted on the Agreement by which all deliverables will be submitted. Should all materials not be provided by the completion date, the eligible applicant forfeits any outstanding drawdown amounts and the commitment will be reduced by this amount.

Should an eligible applicant be placed in default- according to the terms of the Agreement, this limits the applicant, its principals and any parent or subsidiary companies from accessing further funding from Creative BC. In addition, Creative BC reserves the right to request immediate repayment of any funds advanced.

## Questions?

Make sure to review the FAQ and Application Checklist on our website. If you still have any questions about eligibility, or require additional supports to submit your application, please contact:

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