Film Incentive BC (FIBC)

Program Summary

Film Incentive BC (FIBC) is an economic initiative designed to encourage Canadian live action and animated film and television production work in British Columbia. Eligible applicants are Canadian owned and controlled film, television and animation production corporations with a permanent establishment in B.C. that have incurred qualifying B.C. labour expenditures.

How FIBC Works

FIBC is a refundable corporate income tax credit. When filing tax returns, production corporations can claim a specified percentage of labour costs incurred in relation to the production. The credits are applied to reduce tax payable, and any remaining balance is paid to the corporation.

A production corporation must apply to Creative BC to receive an eligibility certificate and a completion certificate for the production. While these are generally applied for separately, the production corporation can apply for both certificates together after the production is complete if it is within the required time frames.

For an eligibility certificate, Creative BC strongly recommends applications be submitted at least 9 months before the filing deadline to avoid the risk of losing tax credits. Applicants must apply for a completion certificate promptly after the completion of the production. We strongly recommend applications be submitted at least 9 months before the program's 30-month completion certificate deadline. Creative BC's service standard for processing applications is 120 days from the date a complete application is received, 90% of the time. We cannot guarantee that applications filed later will be processed in time for the production corporation to file with the CRA before the deadline, which may result in denied claims.

To claim the tax credits, the eligible production corporation must file a corporate income tax return, along with the eligibility certificate, to the Canada Revenue Agency within 36 months (for tax years ending on or after August 17, 2024) or 18 months (for taxation years beginning on or after February 19, 2020 and ending before August 17, 2024).

General Eligibility Rules

Production corporations and their productions must meet the following minimum conditions to qualify (*Note:* there are different requirements for co-productions):

- The production corporation claiming the tax credit must be a B.C.-based Canadian-controlled taxable Canadian corporation;
- The "producer" of the production, i.e. the person(s) with creative and financial control of the production, must be a Canadian, B.C.-based individual;
- Non-B.C. individuals cannot receive a "producer" or "co-producer" credit;
- The production must meet the minimum key creative point requirements for Canadian content;
- More than 50% of the copyright in the production must be owned by the production corporation ;
- The production corporation (or a related eligible corporation - a B.C.-based Canadian-controlled related corporation) must control the initial licensing of the commercial exploitation of the production;
- At least 75% of:

- the principal photography days or key animation must be done in British Columbia (n/a for documentaries);
- the total production costs must be paid to B.C.-based individuals or corporations for work done in B.C. (for documentaries, at least 75% of total production costs must be paid to B.C.-based individuals or corporations);
- the cost of post-production work (excluding stock footage rights) must be carried out in B.C.;

- There must be a written agreement with a Canadian-controlled distributor or broadcaster to have the production shown in Canada within 24 months of completion;
- There can be no distribution in Canada by a non-Canadian distributor or broadcaster within 24 months of completion;
- Principal photography or key animation on the production has begun;
- The production must be completed within 24 months after the end of the taxation year in which principal photography or key animation began;
- The production corporation must apply for and receive a completion certificate within 30 months after the end of the taxation year in which principal photography or key animation began;
- Some genres are excluded including, but not limited to, talk shows, news, live sports, game shows, and advertising.

Calculating the Tax Credit Amount

The program includes six initiatives: Basic, Regional, Distant Location, DAVE (Digital Animation, Visual Effects and Post-Production) , Film Training and Scriptwriting. The tax credit amounts are calculated on the qualified B.C. labour expenditure (QBCLE) of the corporation. The table below sets out the tax credit rates for productions with a principal photography or key animation start date after December 31, 2024. For principal photography or key animation start date before January 1, 2025, please contact Creative BC for applicable tax credit rates and eligibility requirements.

TAX CREDIT	VALUE	TAX CREDIT AMOUNT CALCULATED ON …
Basic	**40%**	Qualified B.C. labour expenditure (QBCLE) to maximum of 60% of the total cost of production (excluding assistance) incurred from after the final script stage to the end of post-production.
Regional*	**12.5%**	For **live action** productions, QBCLE prorated by the number of principal photography ("PP") days in British Columbia outside of the designated Vancouver area ("DVA") to the total days of PP in B.C. Note that to be eligible for the Regional TC, the production must have at least 5 PP days outside the DVA and over 50% of the B.C. PP days must be outside the DVA. For a television series, this double threshold applies for a minimum of 3 episodes as a group (the “qualifying episodes”) and the Regional TC is further pro-rated by the number of qualifying episodes to the total number of episodes. For **animated** productions with a key animation start date after December 31, 2024, the Regional TC is based on B.C. labour expenditure in respect of services rendered by B.C.-based individuals who, for at least 50% of their time spent on the production, render the services in a “physical office”, that is not a dwelling unit, in B.C. outside the DVA.

TAX CREDIT	VALUE	TAX CREDIT AMOUNT CALCULATED ON …
Distant Location*	**6%**	For **live action** productions, QBCLE prorated by the number of days of PP in British Columbia within a prescribed area to the total days of PP in B.C. To be eligible for the Distant Location TC, the production must be eligible for the Regional TC and have at least 1 PP day in a distant location. For a television series, this requirement applies to the qualifying episodes and the Distant Location TC is further pro-rated by the number of qualifying episodes to the total number of episodes. For **animated** productions with a key animation start date after December 31, 2024, the Distant Location TC is based on B.C. labour expenditure in respect of services rendered by B.C.-based individuals who, for at least 50% of their time spent on the production, render the services in a "physical office", that is not a dwelling unit, in B.C. in a distant location.
DAVE*	**16%**	B.C. labour directly attributable to digital animation, visual effects and post-production activities.
Film Training*	**30%**	The amount paid to a B.C.-based individual registered in an approved training program. This TC is capped at 3% of the corporation's QBCLE.
Scriptwriting*	**35%**	The labour expenditure paid to a B.C.-based scriptwriter(s) that are directly attributable to the development of script material of a production, incurred within 2 years before the principal photography or key animation start date and before the end of the final script stage of the production.

* The production and production corporation must be eligible for the Basic tax credit before being able to access any of the bonuses.

Resources and Forms

Available at creativebc.com

- FIBC Eligibility Application Checklist
- Template – Schedule of BC/Non-BC Costs
- Online Application
- BC Legislation and Regulation
- Canadian Audio-Visual Certification Office (CAVCO) – for federal tax credit information
- FIBC Completion Application Checklist
- Regional + Distant Location Map
- FIBC Tax Credit Calculator
- DAVE Tax Credit
- Scriptwriting Tax Credit
- FIBC Deadline Calculator

Note: This document is intended as a general overview. It is not exhaustive and should not be relied upon to determine eligibility or the final amount of an anticipated tax credit. In case of any discrepancies between this document and the Income Tax Act (B.C.) and Regulation (collectively the "Act"), the provisions of the Act prevail.