
Canada Feature Film Fund

Programme d'aide à l'écriture de scénarios French-language productions

Guidelines



1. CANADA FEATURE FILM FUND

1.1. Guidelines

These Guidelines pertain to the Programme d'aide à l'écriture de scénarios (the Program) for French-language productions. Guidelines specific to Development, Production and Marketing programs for French and English-language productions are available on Telefilm Canada's (Telefilm) website at www.telefilm.gc.ca.

The guidelines for the programs managed by Telefilm are developed in consultation with the Canada Feature Film Fund (CFFF) Working Group, taking into account the distinct realities of Canada's English- and French-language markets. The differences between these two markets have resulted in asymmetrical policies designed to meet their particular needs and objectives.

While compliance with the Program guidelines is a prerequisite to eligibility for funding, compliance does not guarantee entitlement to Telefilm funds.

Telefilm may make adjustments to its guidelines and application forms from time to time as required. Telefilm has full discretion in the application of, or exception to, these Program guidelines to ensure that its funding is provided to those projects that meet its spirit and intent. In all questions of interpretation of either these Program guidelines, or the spirit and intent of this Program, Telefilm's interpretation shall prevail.

1.2. Objective and Intent of the Program

In keeping with the overall goal of the CFFF, the spirit and intent of the *Programme d'aide à l'écriture de scénarios* is to develop and retain a pool of creative, talented and experienced screenwriters as well as a bank of Canadian feature film screenplays that have high box office potential. To this end, Telefilm also promotes the development of partnerships among producers and screenwriters.

The financial assistance provided through this program contributes to the overall growth, and professional and economic development of the Canadian film industry. Financial support is available for the writing of both:

- Stage 1: A first treatment for a feature film screenplay based on an outline, and;
- Stage 2: A first draft feature film screenplay based on a treatment.

2. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The applicant must be a Canadian citizen as defined in the [Citizenship Act](#), or permanent resident of Canada as defined in the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#) (Canada). The applicant can be eligible through a Canadian-owned and controlled corporation, as determined by the [Investment Canada Act](#), with its head office based in Canada, if he is a shareholder of the corporation.

The applicant must not be in default of any of his/her obligations to Telefilm, on any project or contract.

The applicant must be a professional screenwriter, professional writer/director, or professional playwright and be actively working in the Canadian film, television or performing arts industry meeting the professional requirements as detailed below.

Telefilm will also accept projects involving two co-applicants. However, at least one of the applicants must meet the professional requirements as detailed below.

Telefilm considers the following to be the minimum credit requirements to be eligible to the program. Co-writing credits can be used towards the minimum credit requirements as long as the applicant received an on-screen credit as a writer on the production. In all cases, these writing credits must have been received within the last five years in order to be counted towards the minimum credit requirements.

Applicants must meet the following minimum credit requirements:

- a) Writing credits of produced drama totalling at least 60 minutes in length, which may include any combination of the following:
 - One feature film or one television movie;
 - One 60-minute episode of dramatic, comedy (narrative) or animated television;
 - Two 30-minute episodes of dramatic, comedy (narrative) or animated television;
 - A minimum of three short films (the total length of these productions may be used in calculating the minimum 60-minute eligibility requirement).
- b) Writing credits on at least one point of view (“POV”) documentary that has been produced, and that is at least 60 minutes in length (or one television hour).¹
- c) Writing credits on a full-length stage play (no less than 60 minutes) professionally produced within the last five years by a professional French-language theatre company, or by an accredited English-language theatre company member of the [Professional Association of Canadian Theatres](#) (PACT).
- d) Writing credits on a minimum of two produced short dramatic films totalling not less than 20 minutes in cumulative length, each of which must have been selected for presentation at a minimum of one of the recognized festivals, or nominated for a recognized award listed in Annex I.

Writing credits to be considered as part of the eligibility requirements must be: film, television or theatre projects professionally produced and exhibited in cinemas, broadcast on television, or performed in a professional theatre company, prior to the application deadline. Student films (including shorts) will not be considered towards eligibility requirements.

¹ POV documentaries tell a story from a particular point of view, typically that of the writer-director. In this regard they are unlike journalistic documentaries that strive for objectivity and tend to be formulaic in their approach.

3. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

To be eligible, a project must be:

- a) a feature length fictional film proposal based on an original idea developed by the applicant, or a proposal for adaptation of the applicant's own previously produced or published work, accompanied by all necessary permissions or releases;
- b) suitable for development into a dramatic feature film, of at least 75 minutes in duration; and
- c) suitable for development and production as a Canadian theatrical feature film eligible for certification by the Canadian Audio-visual Certification Office in accordance with the regulations of the [Income Tax Act](#) or under the definition of a Canadian program set out by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission.

Treatments submitted for Stage 2 financing by eligible applicants need not have previously received the support of this Program for Stage 1.

The following is **not** an eligible project:

- A project that was previously refused financing by Telefilm cannot be resubmitted for reconsideration for the same stage of financing.
- A proposal for an adaptation of an existing cinematographic, literary, theatrical or other work that does not originate with the applicant.

4. NATURE AND TERMS OF PARTICIPATION

4.1. Financial Participation

Financial assistance is available in the form of a reimbursable, non-interest-bearing advance, in the following amounts:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| • Stage 1: Outline to Treatment | \$ 15,750 |
| • Stage 2: Treatment to First Draft | \$ 13,250 |

4.2. Story Editor Option

Telefilm encourages the involvement of professional Story Editors.

A story editor (or story consultant) is someone whose duties include analysis, consultation, research and editorial advice regarding script material. Story Editors are not necessarily writers. The applicant may indicate his/her interest in employing the services of a professional story editor, either:

- Upon submission of the application;

- Or, following the successful acceptance of the application;
- Or, following the recommendation of the adjudication panel.

In order to be eligible, the story editor must be a Canadian citizen as defined in the [Citizenship Act](#), or permanent resident of Canada as defined in the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#), and maintain a permanent residence in Canada.

The applicant may wish to contact the [Writer's Guild of Canada](#) or [SARTEC](#) for recommendations on professional story editors.

For successful applications, Telefilm will pay to the applicant the following amounts (in the form of a non-interest-bearing advance) for the services of the story editor:

- Treatment \$2,000
- First Draft \$3,000

It will be the applicant's sole responsibility to pay the story editor for services rendered. Telefilm cannot be held responsible for non payment of the story editor.

4.3. Terms of Participation

Successful applicants, pursuant to a determined deadline, will be required to complete and deliver the creative material within a specific period of time, as detailed in the contract (approx. six months), as well as the contract duly signed between the writer and the story editor (as applicable).

Should the creative material be optioned within the six (6) months following delivery of contracted items, or anytime thereafter, the applicant will submit a project status report and a copy of the option agreement.

Terms of reimbursement – disposition of the creative material

Any and all advances received by the applicant for the writing of a project, as well as any advances to story editors, are repayable in full by the applicant on the earlier of:

- The first day of principal photography or taping of any cinematographic, video or audio-visual work based in whole, or in part, upon the creative materials or any other use of the creative materials; or
- The sale, transfer, assignment or other disposition of the creative materials (i.e. Telefilm will require full and immediate repayment of all advances if the rights to the project are sold, transferred, assigned, or otherwise disposed by any other means).

Terms of reimbursement - optioning

The optioning of the creative materials does not trigger the immediate full repayment of the Program's advance. However, any option fees received must be used to repay Telefilm. If the option fees received by the applicant are not sufficient to repay the full advance amount, the applicant will nevertheless remain responsible to Telefilm for repayment of the outstanding amount upon exercise of the option (or other sale or disposition of, the creative materials). Consequently, the applicant must ensure that the option agreement adequately provides for the applicant to be repaid the full

amount of the Telefilm advance upon exercise of the option, so that the applicant will have sufficient funds to repay Telefilm Canada. Telefilm consent to such optioning is not required; however, Telefilm recommends that the applicant consult with Telefilm prior to signing any optioning agreement.

4.4. Restrictions

An applicant may only submit one application per deadline.

Applicants who have received Stage 1 financing for a particular project may only submit that project for Stage 2 financing after all previously financed work related to that particular project has been delivered.

Applicants may submit one new project per deadline, whether or not they have completed another project previously funded by the Program.

5. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

5.1. Evaluation Method

Financial support is awarded pursuant to an assessment and final decision rendered by a national independent third-party adjudication panel that is appointed by Telefilm Canada. The adjudication panel consists of peers.

Telefilm's Quebec office will review applications to confirm their completeness and the eligibility of both the applicant and the project prior to forwarding applications to the adjudication panels for deliberation.

Curriculum vitae, filmographies and any other information provided as part of the application that may identify the applicant or otherwise compromise anonymity will not be circulated to jurors.

The adjudication panels assess applications based on the overall creative merit of each project relative to all other projects that have been submitted for consideration and in light of the funds available before issuing recommendations to Telefilm. **Telefilm's decisions are final.**

Applicants are advised that Telefilm's participation in one stage of financing should not be considered a guarantee of Telefilm Canada's future participation in screenwriting, development or production. Each application is subject to separate analysis.

5.2. Evaluation Criteria

Projects are evaluated based on their overall creative merit which includes elements such as: concept and story; characters; dialogue; structure; tone; pacing; originality; and their potential as successful theatrical feature films.

6. HOW TO APPLY

The application form and all supporting material must be sent to the Telefilm office in your region to the attention of the *Programme d'aide à l'écriture de scénarios* Coordinator. [Application form](#) for the Program and Telefilm's [Service Charter](#) are available at on Telefilm's [website](#).

6.1 Application Deadlines and Completeness of Application Requirements

Please visit Telefilm's [Website](#) for the specific application deadline.

It is the applicant(s)'s responsibility to include all material that gives evidence of their eligibility as applicants as well as their project's eligibility. Applicants must submit all requested application material. Only applications meeting the minimum completeness requirements at the deadline date will be evaluated. The following documents will be used to determine completeness of application and eligibility to the program:

Minimum completeness requirements (all applicants)

All creative materials must be submitted in five (5) copies. It is recommended to use 1.5 line spacing, with text in a 12-point font, and to not bind your documents when submitting your application. Note that creative materials submitted beyond those requested below will not be advanced to the adjudication panel. **Information that may identify the applicant or otherwise compromise anonymity must be removed for submission.**

- a) A completed and signed application form (two writers: two signatures), indicating the applicant(s)'s eligibility;
- b) Curriculum vitae of the applicant(s) to a maximum length of three pages each;
- c) The applicant(s)'s filmography (dated), including running times for each production, screening dates, where screened, who distributed or broadcast. Applicants with unsubstantiated producing credits will be notified by phone or email and will have a reasonable period, from the time of notification, to produce adequate proof of eligibility.
- d) Proof of festival participation or award nomination (for applicants with two short film writing credits). In this regard, the applicant(s) must provide:
 - The name of the festival or award for which each of the short dramas was selected;
 - An affidavit or copy of the festival or award program for each film;
 - The year of the festival or award for each film; and,
 - The name of the section or category in which the short drama was selected, for each film.
- e) Proof of professional production of a stage play (for playwrights). In this regard the applicant(s) must provide:
 - Name of the theatre where the play was presented;
 - Date of presentation, and;

- An affidavit or copy of the theatre program.

Minimum completeness requirements (Stage 1)

- f) Outline: the document not to exceed five pages,
- g) Synopsis: not exceeding 10 lines, and clearly indicating the genre of the proposed work;
- h) Two Key Dramatic Sample Scenes: including dialogue and direction (combined length not to exceed five pages in standard screenplay format);

Minimum completeness requirements (Stage 2)

- i) Synopsis: not exceeding 10 lines and clearly indicating the genre of the proposed work;
- j) Two Key Dramatic Sample Scenes: including dialogue and direction (combined length not to exceed five pages in standard screenplay format);
- k) Treatment: a document not to exceed 25 pages (at 1.5 line spacing, with text in 12-point font), incorporating scene-by-scene development and structuring of a story in screen terms to provide a schematic of the feature film script to be written from it, consisting of the basic narrative, idea, or theme, and integrating character development and action suitable for use in, or representing a substantial contribution to, a final script.

Note: Jurors are not required to read creative materials submitted that exceed the specified page length.

Additional completeness requirements (all applicants)

The following information is also required for a complete application.

- l) If the project is based on previously published work by the applicant, a written summary of the chain of title is required, accompanied by all contracts and documentation evidencing that the applicant owns the necessary rights to adapt her/his own work. In this case, an alternative title for the project is required from the applicant in order to ensure the anonymity of the project;
- m) Curriculum vitae of the proposed story editor(s) (if applicable).

Telefilm reserves the right to request additional documentation or material to confirm the applicant's eligibility.

Material submitted with the application will be retained by Telefilm. Telefilm is not responsible for the loss or damage, whatever the cause, of support material.

Applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible to ensure that all required documentation has been received by Telefilm, and that the application is complete. Applications that are not complete at the time of the deadline will be rejected.

6.2 Notification of Decision

Applicants will receive written notification of the results of their application. Every effort is made to advise applicants of results with the least possible delay.

If the application is successful, Telefilm will issue a decision letter and a contract outlining the terms and conditions of the financing agreement will have to be signed by Telefilm and the applicant(s).

ANNEX I : Short Films – Recognized Festivals and Awards

Telefilm may make adjustments to this list from time to time as required, without notice.

International Festivals

- Anney International Animated Film Festival
- Aspen Short Festival
- Berlin International Film Festival
- Bilbao International Festival of Documentary and Short Films
- Cannes Film Festival
- Cinequest Film Festival, San Jose
- Chicago International Film Festival
- Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival
- Edinburgh International Film Festival
- Festival de Cine de Huesca
- Flickerfest International Short Film Festival, Sydney
- Gijon International Film Festival
- Hamptons International Film Festival
- Krakow Film Festival
- London Film Festival
- Locarno International Film Festival
- Melbourne International Film Festival
- New Directors /New Films, New York
- Oberhausen International Short Film Festival
- Palm Springs International ShortFest
- Rio de Janeiro International Short Film Festival
- Rotterdam International Film Festival
- San Francisco International Film Festival
- Slamdance, Park City
- South by Southwest Conferences and Festivals, Austin
- Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film
- Sundance Film Festival
- Tampere Film Festival
- Turin International Film Festival of Young Cinema
- Uppsala International Short Film Festival
- Venice International Film Festival
- Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films

Canadian Festivals

- Atlantic Film Festival
- Banff Television Festival
- Cinémental
- Fantasia
- Festival du cinéma international en Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- Festival du film de l'Outaouais
- Festival international du cinéma francophone en Acadie
- Festival PanAfrica international Vues d'Afrique
- Montreal First Peoples Festival
- Montreal World Film Festival

- Montreal Festival of New Cinema
- NSI FilmExchange: Canadian Film Festival
- Regard sur le court au Saguenay
- Ottawa International Animation Festival
- Les Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois
- Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal
- Toronto International Film Festival
- Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival
- Vancouver International Film Festival
- Yorkton Short Film Showcase

Canadian Awards

- Prix Gémeaux
- Gemini Awards
- Genie Awards
- Prix Jutra