



# **Creative Clusters Challenge Fund**

## **Guidelines for applicants**

**Closing date for applications: Friday 23 September, 2016**

The BFI reserves the right to amend these guidelines from time to time or to withdraw the Fund.

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## Background

The Government has a target to double inward investment and exports by 2020. The growth of the screen industries in the UK suggests that they should be able to contribute to meeting this target.

Whilst London will continue to draw projects of all scales, the reality is that its scope for growth is limited by both costs and space.

The Creative Clusters Challenge Fund is designed to facilitate the identification and growth of internationally renowned 'clusters' of screen industry expertise outside of London and the South East, and to help create a blueprint for growth of capacity, capability and talent development in the chosen region.

This second call for applications follows our award to the Screen Yorkshire led *Yorkshire Screen Hub* earlier this year.

The creative industries are the UK's fastest growing industrial sector, generating nearly £10m per hour for the economy. Within this broad bracket the UK's screen industries stand as an international phenomenon – with *Star Wars*, *Suffragette* and *45 Years* being made alongside the *Luther* and *Downton Abbey*, as well as the world leading video games, *Grand Theft Auto* and *Little Big Planet*.

## Purpose of the Fund

The purpose of this Fund is to support regions with the vision and leadership to succeed internationally, and to foster indigenous, local, diverse creative talent across all screen sectors – film, TV, video games and animation.

The BFI's support will be by way of an award **to assist the development of a business case or investment plan** to highlight both the growth potential of the screen cluster and the likely contribution to the continued success of the UK screen industries. Once complete it is envisaged that this business case and associated activities would help to lure significant companies and entrepreneurs to establish a presence in the region, to retain talent to develop their ideas and create their own diverse 'regional' IP, and to increase the region's visibility and brand at international level. As such, the BFI Award could be used to:

- undertake an audit of existing creative, cultural and educational infrastructure and identify future needs and means to realise these;
- identify the skills needs of the local creative workforce and development of strategies to improve this;
- create or augment overseas partnerships that may yield opportunities for inward investment and exports;
- facilitate small pilot/proof of concept trials of activities which may help grow the existing sector, or sub-sectors within it;
- deliver initiatives which support the emergence and retention of diverse creative talent in all aspects of the screen industries – a commitment to the notion that “talent is everywhere, opportunity isn't”;
- develop market research which identifies the growth potential of the sector and region, including impacts on employment and economic spillovers;
- research the commercial opportunities, strengths and unique selling points for the cluster or region including scale, skills, innovation, infrastructure and talent;

- facilitate further opportunities for knowledge sharing within the cluster or region.

Successful applicants will have the support of the BFI in testing and building the plan. We would also expect applicants to forge strong, two-way relationships with our partners, in the UK's nations and regions, to ensure that strategies are joined up and are adding value. Our partners include the British Film Commission, Creative England, Creative Scotland, Creative Skillset, Ffilm Cymru Wales and Northern Ireland Screen.

## Who can apply?

Applications should be made by working consortia from distinct areas of the UK that can demonstrate the existence of a screen industry/media sector with potential for growth. These consortia **MUST** be based in areas of the UK outside Greater London, or be applying on behalf of a project whose benefits will accrue outside the Greater London region.

Each consortium should nominate a lead applicant to co-ordinate their application. This lead applicant must be a registered company, charity, university, local authority or similar (not an individual).

Consortia may be drawn from a combination of public, private and third sector organisations with an interest in the screen industries or creative media sector. These are likely to include universities and colleges and national or local funding agencies other than the BFI but **MUST** include the following:

- In England, at least one Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) based in the region of interest;
- Where such bodies exist, representatives of the Local Combined Authority or a City Region Deal or, where there is no such body, representatives of regional Local Authorities and City Councils; and
- At least two partners with significant experience of either the screen and media industries or delivering major cultural programmes, with a preference that both spheres are covered.

Each consortium must also demonstrate firm links to existing firms in the private sector (e.g. production companies, studios, broadcasters) over and above those who are partner organisations.

To be eligible a consortium **MUST** demonstrate match cash funding for the project costs (on a 50/50 basis) with the funding requested from BFI. In-kind support will not count towards such match amount, but will be acknowledged as contributing to the strength of potential partnerships.

Potential applicants who wish to discuss their eligibility should contact [clusterfund@bfi.org.uk](mailto:clusterfund@bfi.org.uk) in the first instance.

## How to apply

To apply you must complete an online application form for the Cluster Fund. If you have problems completing or submitting the application please email [clusterfund@bfi.org.uk](mailto:clusterfund@bfi.org.uk) for assistance.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2016.

The application should contain at a minimum the information set out below:

- A. A suggested outline for the proposed business case which demonstrates:
  - strength and quality of the partnership between the lead partner, local arts/cultural organisation/s, local authority/authorities, LEP/s and private sector partners;
  - project management, budget allocation, timetabling and staff allocation;
  - previous experience and credentials of lead contact in the applicant organisation and principal partner/s;
  - activities, research and outputs to be undertaken with BFI funding;
  - demonstration of how these activities will deliver strong additionality and outcomes, whilst demonstrating good value for money eg an estimate of the potential number of jobs created or gross value added (GVA);
  - timescales and milestones;
  - how the activity will be evaluated.
- B. Written confirmation that the match funding has been secured from within the region.
- C. Demonstration of how the activities to be undertaken, and the final business case, will meet the criteria in the BFI's Diversity Standards:  
<http://www.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/bfi-film-fund-diversity-standards-2015-11-27.pdf>
- D. A detailed assessment of the current scope and potential of the creative cluster.

Applications should seek to fulfil the assessment criteria included at Annex A of these Guidelines.

## What happens next?

Once you have submitted your application, the BFI will confirm by email that it has been received and a unique ID number will be assigned to the application. You should receive this acknowledgement within 24 hours of submission if submitted on a business day. If you have not received the acknowledgement please email [clusterfund@bfi.org.uk](mailto:clusterfund@bfi.org.uk).

On receipt of the application the BFI will review the eligibility of the application (taking account of the requirements set out in 'Who Can Apply' above) and may request submission of further written material as evidence of eligibility. Where an application is ineligible the applicant will be notified in writing.

All eligible applications will initially be assessed against the criteria contained at Annex A, by a panel comprised of BFI staff and external experts. The panel retains the right to request further information from applicants at this stage and may reconvene to discuss the application after receipt of such information. The panel will make recommendations as to which application it wishes to support to the BFI's internal Lottery Finance Committee which will take the final decision as to which applications to support. All other applications will be declined (unless the application is on hold while further information is being submitted).

It is intended that all applicants will be informed of the BFI's decision no later than 30 November, 2016.

The decision of the BFI as to whether it wishes to support the application is final. Not all applications will be successful. All applicants will be informed in writing of the decision on their application.

The BFI reserves the right to make no award if no application is considered sufficiently viable.

## Offer of funding

If an application is successful the applicant will be sent an Offer of Funding setting out the terms and conditions attaching to the award. This Offer of Funding must be counter-signed and returned to the BFI within 21 days of issue or it will automatically lapse.

The terms and conditions of funding will include the following:

### Use of the award

The award can only be used towards the costs associated with preparing the business case/investment plan and associated activities as outlined in the budget in the application.

### Partnership funding

The provision of BFI funding will be conditional upon the award recipient having secured match funding (in cash not in kind) for the costs of business case/investment plan and activities. BFI funding will be advanced alongside such match funding.

### BFI requirements

The BFI will require a copy of the business case/investment plan in both a confidential form and a publishable form (redacting any confidential information) and the applicant will need to acknowledge the award and source (being National Lottery) through provision of branding in relation to the business case and activities.

### Procurement

Where the BFI funding is to be allocated towards procurement of services, the successful applicant must ensure that competitive tendering is applied in compliance with EU procurement rules.

### Payment of the award

The award will be cashflowed in instalments against a timeline for completion of the business case/investment plan as prepared by the successful applicant. Funding will be cashflowed alongside the match funding and final payment will be subject to receipt by the BFI of a copy of the business case/investment plan and a cost statement setting out actual expenditure against budget.

### Other conditions

The Offer of Funding may be terminated and any funding already advanced may be required to be repaid in the event that any of the requirements set out in these guidelines are breached.

## Annex A – Assessment Criteria

### Strength of Outline Business Plan

Weighting: 50%

The application should demonstrate:

- An outstanding long-term vision for the region's or locality's screen and wider creative industries and a clear plan to help fulfil this vision
- Strong evidence of how this plan will deliver on the Fund's purpose and aims and a clear demonstration of how the activities undertaken and final business case will deliver significant additionality
- appropriate partnerships with clear roles and responsibilities
- thoughtful, innovative and structured activities, outputs and outcomes which show significant potential to benefit both the existing Cluster and its future success
- evidence that the process will help secure long-term partnerships between LEPs, private and third sector bodies and the local screen/cultural sector
- evidence of how the final business plan will help to leverage in further investment, either public or private, local or international
- evidence of how the applicant intends to embrace the creative opportunities of diversity, and to support the emergence and retention of local talent. This should include an assessment of how the project will meet the BFI Diversity Standards

### Leadership and Potential

Weighting: 25%

The application should demonstrate:

- A genuine long-term leadership commitment to the screen industries amongst members of the consortium
- the existence of an emerging screen/media cluster in the region or locality, in reference to common policy definitions, including through reference to:
  - Strategic opportunities to drive significant increases in productivity and job creation with the benefits of economies of scale
  - A strong local cultural core
  - Existing access to a broad skilled taskforce and knowledge base
  - Existing creative infrastructure including cultural venues, shared working spaces, studios and high speed broadband
  - Potential for local knowledge spillovers, particularly through links with local universities and institutions delivering further education (especially those with a Creative Skillset 'Tick')
  - Potential for spillover benefits to other parts of a regional or local economy – e.g. the service sector
- An assessment of why this is the 'right' cluster, framed by local geography and economy and in relation to the economic potential of neighbouring cities, conurbations and regions

- That the lead applicant, and partners, have significant expertise in delivering plans and activities of scale and an innovative, big picture vision for their region or locality
- An awareness for how the region or locality can contribute to the growth of the UK creative industries, including through forging of links with international creative cities and clusters to catalyse trade opportunities and wider investment potential

### **Financial viability and Deliverability**

Weighting: 25%

The application should demonstrate:

- project management, budget allocation, timetabling and staff allocation
- Appropriate skills and capacity of lead applicant, and partners, to deliver the proposed programme
- in relation to the lead applicant: financial stability, appropriate governance and an ability to accept, administer and account for the grant
- financial viability of the applicant and of the project
- appropriateness of proposed budget, including value for money for each constituent activity or piece of research intended to contribute to the final product
- evidence of 50:50 match funding
- evidence of other support, including in-kind support through way of resources, work spaces and time
- Plans to evaluate impact and outcomes and a realistic estimate of potential return on investment

## BFI Lottery Funding General Conditions

1. The information in these guidelines can change. The law and Government regulations on distributing National Lottery funds may also change. The BFI therefore reserves the right to review this funding scheme and/or change its policies, procedures and assessment criteria.
2. The application form does not necessarily cover all the information the BFI uses to decide which applications to fund. The BFI can ask applicants for extra information.
3. All applications are made at the applicant's own risk. The BFI will not be liable for loss, damage or costs arising directly or indirectly from:
  - the application process;
  - the BFI's decision not to provide an award to an applicant; or
  - dealing with the application.
4. Please check your application form carefully. The BFI will not process applications which are incomplete or which do not comply with these guidelines.
5. The BFI's decisions on applications are final.
6. The BFI will not pay any funding until it has received a fully executed copy of the funding agreement and any conditions precedent to that agreement have been satisfied or waived by the BFI..
7. The BFI will publicise information on the number of applications it receives and the awards made. This information will include the name of the successful applicant, award amount, project name and project details.
8. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives members of the public the right to request certain information held by the BFI. This includes information held in relation to applications to the BFI's Lottery funding programmes or schemes. Therefore if you choose to apply to the BFI you should be aware that the information you supply, either in whole or in part, may be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act.
9. Sometimes the BFI's Governors or members of staff may be involved in some way with applicants. This interest has to be declared in applications from such applicants. The relevant Governor or staff member will not be involved in assessing the application or the decision to make an award. Applicants are advised not to try to influence the success of their application by approaching a Governor or staff member.
10. It is important that applicants carefully check the information given in the application form. The BFI standard terms and conditions entitle it to withhold or reclaim an award in the following circumstances:
  - If the application was filled in dishonestly or with incorrect or misleading information about the organisation or the project whether deliberately or accidentally; and
  - If the award recipient acts dishonestly or negligently to the disadvantage of the project.The BFI will follow up cases of suspected fraud and will pass information to the police.
11. The BFI requires that any measures taken by applicants to address underrepresentation are fully in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 – see more at [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com),
12. **Complaints and Appeals:** The BFI's decision is final. Inevitably, applications will be turned down and applicants may be disappointed by this result. Formal appeals against the final decision will not be considered unless the applicant has good cause to believe that the procedures for processing the applications were not adhered to, or applied in such a way as to prejudice the outcome of the application. A copy of the BFI's Complaints and Appeals procedure can be obtained on request from the BFI's Communications Office.