



# FILM EXPORT FUND GUIDELINES

Making an application for

## **FILM EXPORT FUNDING**



Awarding funds from  
**THE NATIONAL LOTTERY®**

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# INTRODUCTION

The BFI's Film Export Fund aims to enhance the export opportunities for British films where they have been selected to appear at important international film festivals.

Festivals can provide a powerful platform to launch international sales campaigns, but taking full advantage of these opportunities can present a level of financial risk for sales companies. This Fund aims to help sales agents maximise a festival selection through enhanced publicity and/or marketing activity as well as assisting with the technical and logistical costs involved with a high profile festival appearance.

Through supporting individual British films that are selected for festivals the Fund aims to:

- increase opportunities for international sales and distribution of British films; and
- promote UK film and talent internationally

Any queries about the Fund or the application should be directed to [fef@bfi.org.uk](mailto:fef@bfi.org.uk).

# CAN I APPLY?

Applications can only be made for the promotion of an Eligible Film placed in an official category/competition at an Eligible Festival. Applications must be for either the International, North American or European premiere.

The current list of Eligible Festivals is set out in Appendix A of these Guidelines. Applications submitted in respect of any other festivals or for the general promotion of a film (e.g. at a market screening) will not be accepted. Applicants may be required to provide written confirmation from the Eligible Festival that the Eligible Film has been officially selected.

An Eligible Film is one that:

- is wholly capable of qualifying for certification as a British film through:
  - | The Cultural Test\*; or
  - | One of the UK's official co-production treaties; or
  - | The European Convention on Co-Production
- has a production budget of £8,000,000 or less;
- is feature-length with a running time exceeding 60 minutes; and
- is intended for theatrical release

An Eligible Film can only receive a maximum of two awards from the Fund.

Applications should be made by the **sales agent** representing the Eligible Film, who must also be in attendance at the Eligible Festival promoting the film. The sales agent must be employed by a legally registered company (which should make the application) with a core business of selling films in the international market.

\* A summary of how points for the Cultural Test for film are allocated and full guidance on British certification and tax relief can be found on the BFI website at: [bfi.org.uk/supporting-uk-film/british-certification-tax-relief](https://www.bfi.org.uk/supporting-uk-film/british-certification-tax-relief).

Applications may be made by the film's producer (through their production company), provided that they have attached a formal sales representative to their film and the representative will be in attendance at the Eligible Festival. The sales representative must have a demonstrable and established track record in selling relevant film sales rights and must be contractually attached to the film (we will require a copy of that contract to verify that the application is eligible). The sales representative must also, at a minimum, be selling the North American rights to the film and/or any other major unsold territories.

Applicants will be required to provide written evidence in respect of all the above points.

# WHAT CAN I APPLY FOR?

The maximum award per Eligible Film is £15,000. After assessing the application we will confirm the amount of funding to be awarded.

Film Export Fund support may not exceed 50% of the total anticipated Eligible Costs to be incurred directly by the applicant.

For example, if the total Eligible Costs are £10,000 and Third Party Funding sources contribute £4,000, the Film Export Award may support up to £3,000 (which is 50% of the remaining £6,000 of Eligible Costs).

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

An Award from the Fund can be used towards, but is not limited to, one or more of the following costs:

- subtitling costs and/or production costs of subtitled prints or digital cinema packages for use at the Eligible Festival;
- DCP transport costs;
- a contribution to reasonable travel and accommodation costs to the Eligible Festival for key talent essential to the promotion of the film (e.g lead cast, director etc.) – where these costs are not covered by the Eligible Festival;
- public relations activities at the Eligible Festival (including press kits, the appointment of an international or local publicist and associated PR costs); or
- marketing and promotional items specific to the Eligible Film's inclusion at the Eligible Festival (including posters, brochures, flyers, screeners, trade advertisements and digital campaigns – all festival specific to the Eligible Film)

## INELIGIBLE COSTS

Examples of ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- costs relating to the sales agent's own attendance at the Eligible Festival;
- per diems;
- trailers and/or general company promotional materials – even if related to company attendance at the festival; or
- events (drinks, dinners, etc.)

Where talent is representing more than one film at the Eligible Festival we will determine how much to contribute towards their travel and accommodation, taking into account potential other sources of funding (e.g. another sales agent), and may request further information in relation to this.

## THIRD PARTY FUNDING SOURCES

The applicant may receive financial support from the Eligible Festival, a local distributor or from other public agencies for some or all of the above items. For the avoidance of doubt, while the BFI may co-fund alongside such support, requests to cover expenditure already being met/reimbursed by such co-funding will be not be permitted and will result in any offer of funding being withdrawn by the BFI.

# HOW DO I MAKE AN APPLICATION?

## Checklist before you apply

**THE FILM IS INTENDED FOR THEATRICAL RELEASE**

**THE FILM IS AT LEAST 60 MINUTES IN LENGTH**

**THE FILM HAS A PRODUCTION BUDGET OF £8,000,000 OR LESS**

**THE FILM IS CAPABLE OF QUALIFYING FOR CERTIFICATION AS A BRITISH FILM**

**THE FILM HAS BEEN PLACED IN AN OFFICIAL CATEGORY/COMPETITION AT AN ELIGIBLE FESTIVAL – WHICH WILL CONSTITUTE AN INTERNATIONAL, NORTH AMERICAN OR EUROPEAN PREMIERE – AND I CAN PROVIDE WRITTEN CONFIRMATION OF THIS**

**MY APPLICATION IS BEING MADE BY THE SALES AGENT REPRESENTING THE FILM OR I AM THE PRODUCER OF THE FILM AND HAVE ATTACHED A FORMAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE**

**THE SALES AGENT REPRESENTING THE FILM WILL BE ATTENDING THE FESTIVAL**

Please check that you meet the above criteria, and any other specifications made in these Guidelines, before submitting an application for funding.



## MAKING AN APPLICATION ONLINE

To apply for funding you will need to complete an application [online](#).

When first using the online application tool you will need to create an account; this allows your applications to be saved and reviewed before submission. Once the account is set up, future applications will be pre-populated with your contact details. You will be able to access all your past online applications and in-progress applications at any point by logging into [your account](#).

If you need additional support using the application form please contact us on [fef@bfi.org.uk](mailto:fef@bfi.org.uk).

## CONTENTS OF THE APPLICATION

The information to be submitted will include:

- details of the Eligible Film and Eligible Festival;
- the Eligible Film's duration and production budget;
- details of the anticipated eligible expenditure incurred while promoting the Eligible Film at the Eligible Festival;

- details of all anticipated subsidies, grants and other funding provided to the Eligible Film at the Eligible Festival including any costs to be met by the Eligible Festival;
- details of the proposed marketing and promotion plan for the Eligible Film at the Eligible Festival; and
- a copy of the sales representative's agreement in relation to the Eligible Film if there is no sales agent attached and the application is being submitted by the Eligible Film's producer

### **Applications should be submitted no later than 20 working days before the official start date of the Eligible Festival.**

The BFI may, at its sole discretion, accept applications made later than that only if the applicant receives confirmation of the film's selection after expiry of the deadline or where the attachment of a sales agent to an Eligible Film occurred after expiry of the deadline. In such a situation, please contact us as soon as possible for us to review your eligibility.

Incomplete applications will not be processed.

If you have problems completing or submitting an application please contact [fef@bfi.org.uk](mailto:fef@bfi.org.uk).

# WHAT HAPPENS TO MY APPLICATION?

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 acknowledgment within two weeks of submission.

## A. ELIGIBILITY

We will check that your application is eligible for funding, using the criteria identified previously. Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible. If it is ineligible, we will send you an email to inform you that your application will not be progressing further. We do not normally allow applicants to resubmit, but we may at this stage allow you to rectify an error on your application, if this is the sole reason that it is ineligible.

If your application is eligible, it will progress to the assessment stage.

## B. ASSESSMENT

The BFI's assessment of your application will take into account the following criteria:

- the quality of the marketing and sales strategy for the Eligible Film at the Eligible Festival, demonstrating how participation in the Festival will generate sales;
- the proposed expenditure for the Eligible Film at the Eligible Festival – whether this represents value for money and is commensurate to the benefits to be derived by participation of the Eligible Film in the Eligible Festival;
- the source, availability and extent of other income to meet the budget;
- sales to date; and
- the degree to which the above activity contributes to the aims of the Fund, as detailed in the introduction to these Guidelines

The assessment process will also take into account how you have managed any previous BFI funding you have received.

## C. DECISION

The BFI's Film Fund will make recommendations to the BFI's Lottery Finance Committee as to which applications it wishes to support.

The BFI may undertake a due diligence assessment of the applicant.

### **Lottery Finance Committee Consideration**

The Lottery Finance Committee will decide whether to support the application.

The decision of the BFI as to whether it wishes to support the application is final.

Due to the competitive nature of this Fund, not all applications will be successful.

All applicants will be informed in writing of the decision on their application.

# FEEDBACK

We aim to make the application process as transparent as possible, but as a result of the volume of applications we receive, we do not have the resources to provide feedback on projects where we are not requesting further material or a meeting.

In these circumstances, we will send you a standard rejection email and the documentation held on file for the assessment of these projects will simply state 'pass'.

On projects that have received further consideration or that we have met to talk about, we will try to provide some feedback, if requested and if we have some constructive advice to offer beyond the meeting.

We welcome constructive feedback from you on our application process so we can continue to improve.

# RESUBMISSION

No resubmissions can be made to the Film Fund for film export projects that it declines.

# SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

If your application is successful, you will be made an **offer of funding**. This offer of funding must be countersigned and returned to the BFI within 14 days of issue or it will automatically lapse. You will be required to enter into an agreement with the BFI that sets out the terms and conditions of our funding. These conditions will include the following:

## USE OF THE AWARD

Any award must be used exclusively for the purpose for which it was requested as set out in your application.

## BFI REQUIREMENTS

The BFI will require:

- **acknowledgement** of the award through display of the BFI and National Lottery logo (as supplied by the BFI) on certain promotional materials produced for the Eligible Film at the Eligible Festival;
- a minimum of two **invitations** to the main official screening of the Eligible Film at the Eligible Festival and to associated receptions or other events or press conferences;
- completion and submission of a **Post Participation Form** (see below)

## PAYMENT OF THE AWARD

75% of the award will be paid on the later of receipt by the BFI of the countersigned offer of funding, a draw-down request for the payment and a copy of the film still referred to above.

The final 25% of the award will be paid on receipt of the BFI of a draw-down request for the payment together with a copy of the fully completed Post Participation Form (no earlier than three months after the start date of the Eligible Festival). We may also require evidence of expenditure by way of copy receipts/invoices.

The award must be claimed in full no later than seven months from the start date of the Eligible Festival. Any outstanding balance of the award after this date will be automatically withdrawn.

## POST PARTICIPATION FORM

This form must be completed no earlier than three months after the start date of the Eligible Festival and submitted to BFI no later than six months after that date. The information to be supplied to BFI will include:

### ■ sales data

- | name and contact details of all distributors purchasing the film in each international territory;
- | rights sold; and
- | sales price

The BFI requires this data to increase knowledge about the performance of British films in the worldwide marketplace. This data will be used for statistical analysis, and will only be published in an anonymised and aggregate form in order to preserve its confidential nature.

### ■ an analysis of expenditure against budget for the Eligible Festival

If expenditure is less than anticipated budget the BFI may proportionately reduce the amount of the award payable.

### ■ promotion data

- | a list of international press coverage achieved through the Eligible Film's participation at the Eligible Festival;
- | a list of the promotional tools produced to support the Eligible Film's participation at the Eligible Festival; and examples of all marketing and advertising materials to which Film Export Funding contributed e.g. copies of trade advertising, festival-specific posters, etc.

## 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.

# 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 offer of funding 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 [equalityhumanrights.com](http://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.

**13** Recognition of the National Lottery:

The BFI distributes 'good cause' National Lottery Funding. We ask all of our partners and award recipients to increase the visibility of the National Lottery by:

- promoting and proudly displaying the National Lottery logo; and
- warmly and energetically finding ways to get all beneficiaries to spread the word.

It is therefore an important condition of BFI funding that the source of the funding (being the National Lottery) is prominently acknowledged through conspicuous use of the BFI/National Lottery lock up logo and through agreed verbal and written acknowledgment. Also that partners and beneficiaries take frequent opportunities to highlight not just the fact of the funding but why it is funded and therefore the good work that is possible through the National Lottery.

# APPENDIX A: ELIGIBLE FESTIVALS

Applications should be submitted no later than 20 working days before the official start date of the Eligible Festival. Please ensure you have checked the relevant festival's website for deadlines.

**AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL  
DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL**

**ANNECY INTERNATIONAL  
ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL**

**BEIJING INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**BERLIN INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**BUSAN INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**CANNES FILM FESTIVAL**

**FANTASTIC FEST**

**HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL**

**BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL**

**ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**SAN SEBASTIAN FILM FESTIVAL**

**SITGES INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**SXSW FILM FESTIVAL**

**SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL**

**TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL**

**TORONTO INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL**

**VENICE FILM FESTIVAL**