

# **REEL FOCUS BC PRODUCTION PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2021-22**

**PART OF THE \$2 MILLION DOMESTIC MOTION PICTURE FUND**

# PRODUCTION PROGRAM

## *PART OF THE DOMESTIC MOTION PICTURE FUND*

### BRIEF

The Reel Focus BC Production Program will provide financial support to B.C. based independent creators in the production of commercially ready and market viable longer form motion picture projects that reflect and enhance the cultural diversity of the province.

**Eligible Project Types:** Scripted feature length films, and documentary or factual one-offs or series.

**Funding Per Project:** \$50,000 - \$150,000 per project, depending on budget level.

**Overall Funding Envelope Available:** Up to \$800,000, for this first intake (a second intake will follow in Spring 2022).

**Targeted Funding:** A minimum 30% of the available funding will be dedicated to projects owned and controlled by applicants that are emerging or are from key equity seeking groups, including Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+ and people with disabilities.

**Decision Process:** Competitive, informed by an external advisory panel.

**Deadline to Apply:** July 26, 2021, at 11:59pm PT.

### AIMS + OBJECTIVES

- Kickstart the production of B.C. owned and controlled IP in the province.
- Act as a catalyst for independent producers accessing national and federal funding sources.
- Support the creation of content that speaks to and is engaging to Canadian and international audiences, and contributes to cultural excellence in B.C.
- Support new or diverse voices that are historically under-represented and critical to a vibrant and equitable industry.

# APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be accepted from either individuals or production companies.

Individuals applying must:

- Be a B.C. resident – either a Canadian citizen or a Permanent Resident – who has resided in British Columbia for at least 200 of the 365 days prior to the application.
- Have filed income tax returns in B.C. for the taxation year prior to the application.

Companies applying must:

- Be an audiovisual company incorporated in British Columbia or Canada with its head office in British Columbia.
- The primary owner / majority common voting shareholder(s) of the applicant company must meet the individual criteria.

Whether applying as an individual or company:

- 100% of the copyright of the project must be owned, controlled, or optioned by the applicant (except for inter-provincial or international treaty co-productions).<sup>1</sup>
- You must be in good standing with Creative BC.

## TARGETED EQUITY FUNDING

Creative BC acknowledges that there have been historical barriers to access, and that supporting new and diverse talent is crucial to a vibrant and thriving industry. Therefore, a minimum (30%) of the available envelope will be dedicated for projects from emerging

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of an inter-provincial co-production, a minimum of 51% of the project must be owned by the B.C. applicant. In the case of an International Treaty Co-Production, Creative BC will follow the minimum guidelines laid out in the governing treaty, but generally, cannot be less than 20% of the ownership of the project. In either case, the B.C. applicants' creative and financial control must be commensurate to their copyright or ownership in the project.

Should a project be co-owned by two B.C. companies or individuals, it will count as 100% ownership and is eligible.

filmmakers and/or from one of the following equity seeking groups: Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+, or people with disabilities.

In order to be considered for this targeted funding the following additional conditions apply:

- The applicant must be an individual, or company where a majority of the company's ownership / controlling shares are held by individuals, who are emerging or from one of our targeted equity seeking groups.
- Real creative and financial control of the project must rest with this individual or company.
- At least two-thirds or 65% of the key creative team (anyone in the roles of writer, director, producer) must also qualify as the primary applicant does – either emerging or equity.

To confirm you are from an equity seeking group, during the application process you must actively self-declare within one or more of the following groups: Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+ or people with disabilities.

To confirm you are an emerging filmmaker, during the application process you must declare that you have **a maximum of** one (1) previous professional credit in the key role you hold in the project: director, writer and/or producer.

For the purposes of this program, a professional credit means a writer, director or producer credit on a longer form released project that:

- Was completed outside of film school or an industry training opportunity;
- Was financed using mainstream funding sources (such as Telefilm Canada, the CMF, broadcaster or online subscription services licensing etc.); and
- Subsequently either played on a broadcaster or online subscription service, was released theatrically, or toured extensively through major film festivals.

Short films (under a broadcast ½ hour), web series and projects that were primarily self-financed (credit, loans, crowdfunding sources etc.) do not need to be counted as a professional credit.

# PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be accepted for the following project types:

- Scripted feature length films – including (but not limited to) drama, comedy or animation (minimum 75 minutes in length).
- Documentary one-offs (minimum 25 minutes in length).
- Documentary or factual series (minimum 25 minutes per episode).

The following projects are NOT eligible to apply:

- Scripted series (dramatic, comedy or animation).
- Web series.
- Excluded productions as defined by the Film & Television Tax Credit Regulations including, but not limited to: pornography, talk shows, news, live sports events, game shows, reality television, and advertising.

Eligible projects must be:

- Intended for theatrical release, television broadcast or VOD streaming services in Canada within 24 months of completion (exceptions allowed for projects at the ultra low budget level<sup>2</sup>).
- Financially and creatively owned and controlled by the eligible applicant.
- Awarded (upon completion) a minimum of 6/10 in Canadian content certification.
- Submitted before principal photography has completed (and ideally before it has commenced).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For projects with a budget of \$250,000 or less, a robust festival and online release strategy will be acceptable, though applicants are encouraged to still pursue broadcast or distribution opportunities.

<sup>3</sup> Re-takes or pick-ups do not count as principal photography.

# FUNDING AVAILABLE

Maximum funding that can be requested is dependent on the project budget level:

<b>BUDGET LEVEL (CAD)</b>	<b>CAN REQUEST UP TO</b>
Projects with a budget \$1 million and over	\$150,000
Projects with a budget \$250,001 - \$999,999	\$75,000
Projects \$250,000 and under (Ultra Low Budget)	\$50,000

Funding will be provided in the form of a non-recoupable grant.<sup>4</sup>

At the ultra low budget level, the Creative BC contribution cannot represent more than 75% of the budget.

A reminder that the Production Program will ultimately have two intake periods. Applicants should consider which intake best suits the needs and timing of their project. These guidelines cover the summer 2021 intake.

<b>INTAKE PERIOD</b>	<b>OVERALL ENVELOPE AVAILABLE</b>
<b>SUMMER 2021</b> (DEADLINE: JULY 26, 2021)	\$800,000
<b>SPRING 2022</b> (EXACT DATE TBD)	\$600,000

# ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible activities for production costs will follow industry standards as set out by both the Canada Media Fund and Telefilm Canada, depending on the production type.

A minimum of 75% of the production expenditures must be incurred in B.C., and paid to B.C. resident individuals and/or B.C. owned and controlled companies for services rendered in B.C. (Exceptions allowed for inter-provincial or international treaty co-productions and

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<sup>4</sup> Receiving a grant from Creative BC may affect the amount of federal or provincial tax credits that the producer is eligible to receive in connection with the production. It is recommended that potential applicants discuss this with a tax account professional and make sure receiving this grant is beneficial to their project.

documentary productions).<sup>5</sup>

Proposed project expenses must be new costs, incurred after the date of application is received at Creative BC.

A maximum 10% of the budget can be allocated for each of producer fees and overheads.

## MARKET SUPPORT / THIRD PARTY FINANCING

NO confirmed third-party financing or market trigger is required at the time of application.

However, the evaluation process will take any confirmed financing into account when assessing the viability and readiness of a project.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants will be asked to complete an online application form that includes:

- Basic information on your project.
- Financing plan and budget top sheet.
- A short creative package (max 5 pages), including director's vision.
- A copy of the script (if scripted).
- An audience, marketing and distribution plan (max 2 pages).
- Information on key creative team members (writer, director and producer)
  - This will include declaration forms for each key personnel.

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<sup>5</sup> Allowable costs for inter-provincial and international treaty co-productions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; generally allowable cost minimums will relate to the creative and financial control of the B.C. applicant. Contact Creative BC to discuss if this impacts you.

Exception for documentary productions only: A minimum of 75% of the production expenditures must be paid to B.C. resident individuals and/or B.C. owned and controlled companies for services rendered. It is not required that those expenditures be incurred in B.C.

- A Community Engagement Plan (max 2 pages) and/or Letter of Support for projects that intend to shoot in or collaborate with under-represented communities, especially Indigenous communities.
- Link to a project demo or previous work (if applicable).

A full checklist is available on our website to guide you through the application process.

Applications are due by **Monday July 26, 2021 at 11:59pm PT.**

If you are a person with a disability who requires accommodations or additional supports in the application process, we are here to help. Please contact the Project Manager.

## EVALUATION + SELECTION

We anticipate it will take a minimum of 10 weeks to finalize decisions.

### ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

An initial review for eligibility and missing documentation will be conducted by Creative BC staff. If documentation is missing, applicants will be informed and given a short period (maximum 5 days) to submit anything outstanding. Following this, incomplete or ineligible applications will be withdrawn.

### CREATIVE EVALUATION

The review process will be selective and competitive, based on several factors that consider:

- the background and experience of the key creative team (or potential, in the case of emerging applicants).
- the creative package.
- project viability and readiness to proceed to production.
- the potential audience or commercial success and impact to B.C. owned and controlled IP production spend in the province.



- Weighted criteria (outside of the targeted funding set aside) will factor in the composition of any key creative team members from equity seeking groups such as women, non-binary, Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+ and people with disabilities. It will also factor in language and regional representation.

The evaluation criteria will be slightly different for emerging applicants and applications within the ultra low budget level (under \$250,000), recognizing the different needs and ideal pathways for projects in those categories.

See the evaluation matrix on our website for a full breakdown.

## ADVISORY PANELS

Advisory panels composed of external and internal experts will provide a score and rank each project based on the evaluation matrix. There will be at minimum two advisory panels – one for scripted feature length content, and one for documentary or factual content. More may be added depending on the needs and volume of submissions, including the possibility of external readers for an initial assessment to compile a shortlist for the advisory panels.

Advisory panelists and any external readers will be industry professionals that represent a cross-section of the key demographics of the province and the equity groups this program is targeting.

Additional documentation may be required during the evaluation period if a shortlist process is employed, including confirmation of chain of title, details on company structure and ownership, any confirmed financing or sales agent/distribution interest, full budget and links to previous work. Creative BC will reach out if any of this information is needed.

## FUNDING DECISIONS

From the advisory panel recommendations, Creative BC will ensure an equitable distribution of funds is met before finalizing decisions.

A minimum of 30% of the allocation available will be targeted to projects owned and controlled by emerging filmmakers or individuals from our target equity seeking groups: Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+ and people with disabilities.

Further, Creative BC will also apply an intersectional framework in the decision process that ensures a balance in the selected recipients of other equity factors such as gender, language and regional representation.

All decisions will be confirmed via email. When a project is unsuccessful in its application, a brief explanation can be provided, upon request.

## TERMS OF FUNDING

### CLOSING FINANCING

Committed projects will have an initial 6 months from the date of commitment to close financing or risk the commitment expiring. Projects that can demonstrate within those 6 months that at least one additional third party financier has confirmed (that are not tax credits), will receive an extension of a further 12 months to close financing. Any funds from expired commitments will be released and rolled into the envelope for future intake periods.

### CONTRACTING AND DRAWDOWNS

Applicants who apply as an individual will need to incorporate an eligible B.C. owned and controlled production company to produce the project by the time financing is locked and before contracting with Creative BC. The applicant will need to be the majority owner/common voting shareholder of this incorporated company.

Projects awarded funding will not move forward to contract until all chain of title, committed financing and a detailed production schedule is verified. Projects that cannot provide sufficient materials may not be able to move forward to contracting, and therefore may have their commitment expire.

Contracts will include a production timeline, payment schedule and specific deliverables, according to the specifics of the project. Generally, the payment schedule will be 75% on commencement of principal photography and 25% on final cost report and confirmation of project completion.

Final cost reports will follow industry best practices as established by Telefilm and the Canada Media Fund.

## 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.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Successful recipients are required to publicly acknowledge the financial support of Creative BC by placing the logo in all marketing materials and the tail credits of the completed production, wherever other financiers are acknowledged. Projects are also encouraged to acknowledge support on social media where possible.

## DEFAULT STATUS

Should an applicant be placed in default – according to the terms of the contract – this may limit the applicant 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:

**JANINE STEELE**

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