



PRODUCTION GRANTS

Guidelines for Applicants

Issued: 14th February 2018

THESE GUIDELINES MUST BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GENERAL MALTA FILM FUND GUIDELINES FOUND ON THE MALTA FILM FUND / MALTA FILM COMMISSION WEBSITE.

The Malta Film Fund administrator/s reserves the right to request further information or clarification on any aspect of any application.

THE SCHEMES - ACTION 2 – PRODUCTION GRANTS

Production grants awarded are intended to stimulate the realisation of projects. Support for production may only be awarded to applicants for projects which are fully developed. The following schemes aim to provide production support to qualifying productions:

- Short Film Production - New Talent Grant (maximum grant €2,500)
- Short Film Production (maximum grant €20,000)
- Production (maximum grant €120,000, not exceeding 50% of the budget)

The application must come from the producer on behalf of a team including a writer and director, or a writer/director. The period of eligibility of costs begins from the date of the result notification and ends 12 months after the signing of contract. VAT registration is obligatory for applicants applying for this scheme. Beneficiaries awarded Grants over €20,000 will be expected to set up a Company with established standard accounting procedures. The application must indicate the other sources and amounts of finance that have been obtained or are being sought for the project (where applicable).

The Fund Administrator reserves the right to grant a recipient a smaller amount of funding than applied for; subject to the number of projects recommended for support and the quality of the applications received, prospects for the film and the budget provided. Eligibility and compliance with award criteria alone does not guarantee receipt of funding if demand for funding exceeds available resources or if the proposed projects do not reach the required level in terms of the fund criteria. The Fund Administrator is not required to make any minimum number of awards. Awarding of previous funds does not bind the fund administrators to support further funding of the project.

There are three production schemes, which aim to provide support for eligible productions:

The Short Film Production – NEW TALENT grant may award grants up to €2,500. This grant is intended to help NEW TALENT produce short films (live action, documentary, animation, virtual reality) and will provide them with a platform for showcasing their talent at local and international film festivals. Support for production may only be awarded to applicants for projects which are fully developed. There is no upper limit on the experience of the teams, although applicants should be aware that the intention of this grant is to develop emerging creative teams. The film must be longer than eight minutes and not exceed 10 minutes including credits. For ANIMATION projects, the film must be longer than three minutes and not exceed 10 minutes including credits.

The Short Film Production grant may award grants up to €20,000. This grant is intended to help creative teams produce short films (live action, documentary, animation, virtual reality) and will provide them with a platform for showcasing their talent at local and international film festivals. Support for production may only be awarded to applicants for projects which are fully developed.

The Production Grant is aimed towards a production company that has audiovisual production as its main purpose and activity and a company that is duly registered as an audiovisual production company. Support for production may only be awarded to applicants for projects which are fully developed. Production grants

awarded may amount up to 50% of the entire production budget, however, not exceeding €120,000; and are intended to stimulate the realisation of projects. The application must indicate the other sources and amounts of finance that have been obtained or are being sought for the project.

WHO CAN APPLY?

According to the relevant Grant, applications may be made by an individual or through a Independent Audiovisual Company that has audiovisual production as its main purpose and activity and a company that is duly registered as an audiovisual production company in Malta/Europe, having at least one director or a major shareholder of the company who is a Maltese/European citizen.

Applicants must satisfy at least **ONE** of the following eligible criteria:

- 1) Producer/s is a Maltese citizen or holds a permanent residence status in Malta;
- 2) Writer/s is a Maltese citizen or holds a permanent residence status in Malta;
- 3) Director/s is a Maltese citizen or holds a permanent residence status in Malta;

And **ONE** of the following criteria:

- 1) Content and location of story is based completely or partially in Malta;
- 2) Language to be used is Maltese;
- 3) Likely location of the development, production and/or post production is Malta.

ELIGIBLE QUALIFYING PRODUCTIONS

We welcome applications for the following eligible qualifying productions aimed for local and international distribution:

- Feature Films of a total duration of minimum 80 minutes.
- Short Films (live action, documentary, animation, virtual reality) having a screening time of less than 25 minutes (if applying for Short Film Production – New Talent screening time must be of minimum 8 minutes and not exceeding 10 minutes including credits; for ANIMATION projects, the film must be longer than three minutes and not exceed 10 minutes including credits).
- Creative Documentaries of a total duration of minimum 60 minutes.
- High Quality International TV Series aimed for an international market.

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Ineligible Activities means the following types of funding are not eligible for any support:

- **NO TELEVISION PROGRAMS OR SERIES** including reality shows, magazine and lifestyle programmes, discussion programmes, quizzes and game shows, serials/soap operas, advertorials, light entertainment.

NOTE FOLLOWING EXCEPTION: High Quality International television series aimed for an International market are eligible.

- Corporate communications, training and/or promotional films.
- Projects promoting violence, racism and pornographic content. The contents of the proposed audiovisual work may not violate the Maltese Constitution.

MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM AMOUNTS GRANTED

Type of Support	Maximum Grant	The fund may cover up to the following % of the total project costs not exceeding the maximum grant:
Short Film Production - New Talent Grant	€2,500	Up to 100%
Short Film Production Grant	€20,000	Up to 100%
Production Grant	€120,000	Up to 50%

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The Malta Film Fund is a competitive process and **PRODUCTION** eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of following criteria:

1. **The quality of the creative team previous work/s, the relevant experience and potential to undertake and manage the proposed project.**
 - The relevant previous experience of the creative team in development, production and distribution on a National and International level.
 - The creative team's potential to undertake and manage the proposed project.
 - Performance on previous projects developed and / or produced by the creative team which were granted funding and and the creative team's ability to deliver the proposed project in a timely manner.
 - Financial reputation of the creative team based on a due diligence exercise on all qualifying applicants.

2. **The strength and originality of the script and the potential to reach both a national and international audience as cultural products.**
 - Script shows originality (theme, adaptation, perspective, visual approach) and is fully developed;
 - Strong proposal with potential to reach both a national and international audience as a cultural product;
 - Storyline or underlying material deals with contemporary or historical Maltese, Mediterranean or European issues of political and socio-cultural relevance;
 - Project features a Maltese or a Maltese related story and/or setting or Maltese characters, contemporary and/or historical personalities or Malta's diverse urban and rural heritage and landscapes or makes use of the Maltese language to reflect the Maltese cultural context.

3. **The quality, viability and professional, industry standard treatment of the proposed budget, the financing plan and strategy, and implementation plan (production schedule and shooting schedule).**
 - Realistic production budget
 - Financing plan
 - Overall quality and viability of the financing strategy*;
 - Level of confirmed financing (evidenced by signed agreements or letters of intent) already in place*;
 - Letter(s) of interest of co-development, co-production, or other agreement(s), if available.
 - Realistic production schedules (implementation and shooting);

** financing strategy and level of confirmed financing does not apply for SHORT FILM - NEW TALENT GRANT and SHORT FILM PRODUCTION GRANT.*

4. Potential for local and international distribution, as well as the potential to stimulate interest from sales agents, distributors and/or broadcasters.

- Distribution Strategy (local and international) including:
 - Audience Research and Strategy
 - Screening, Festival and Market Strategy

DELIVERABLES, ELIGIBLE COSTS, INELIGIBLE COSTS

The beneficiary will be required to enter into an agreement with the Malta Film Fund. The contract will set out the full terms and conditions tied to the funding of the project. Below is a brief overview of the expected deliverables, eligible and ineligible costs for production grant schemes:

Deliverables

- Finished film
- Photos, footage of behind-the-scenes, clips from the actual shoot
- Evaluation Report of the Production Process
- Copies of Production documents i.e. call sheets, final cast and crew lists, shooting schedules, etc.
- Distribution Strategy (local and international) including: Audience Research and Strategy and Screening, Festival and Distribution Strategy

Indicative List of Eligible Costs

1. Set (design, construction, rental and/or location)
2. Hire of equipment and technology (for CGI Animation/VR this can include services of a render farm; rental of custom-build animation and all paraphernalia such as light boxes, scanners, cameras, tablets etc)
3. Acquisition of rights (e.g. music clearance)
4. Travel and transportation expenses (excluding Fuel)
5. Salaries/fees: production crew, director's staff and crew, technicians, other crew, actors, musicians
6. Film material and post-production
7. Insurance costs
8. Final completion costs
9. Financing and Legal fees related to project

Ineligible Costs

1. Purchase of equipment of any kind.
2. Development costs are not eligible for production supported projects.
3. VAT and other taxes and charges.
4. Contributions in kind.
5. Interest owed and doubtful debts.
6. Any costs paid outside the eligible period of the operation, including costs paid prior to the official date of approval for assistance through the Scheme.
7. Any costs which have been claimed under a previous grant or is considered as 'double dipping'.

8. Service charges arising on leases, hire purchase agreements, depreciation, loan charges, debit interest, charges for financial transactions, foreign exchange commissions and losses, fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation, bad debts and other purely financial expenses
9. The purchase of land and real estate.
10. Fuel Expenses.
11. Office overheads.
12. Telecommunications (i.e. mobile, phone and internet expenses).
13. Food (other than catering and craft services provided on set for cast and crew).
14. Production costs relating to the EPK.
15. Production of Trailer/s (as required by sales agent or distributor).
16. Sub-titling.
17. Cost of Virtual Print Fee (VPF).
18. Costs relating to censorship – rating.
19. DCP despatch/tracking costs.
20. Creative and production costs of marketing material (i.e. posters, adverts, dedicated website).
21. Media costs (TV, press, radio, print, online).
22. Costs relating to the engagement of a Marketing Executive/Marketing Company.
23. Costs including accreditation fees and stand fees relating to film markets or trade fairs.
24. Fees for International Film Festivals.
25. Rental of a screening room and equipment to organise dedicated screenings.

Grants awarded under the Malta Film Fund cannot be accumulated with any other government funded scheme for same costs. Should it become apparent that any project has been awarded separate funds for same costs, i.e. double dipping, this will result in funds having to be reimbursed. Cumulative state aid is only possible for approved schemes and that abides and is in accordance to the aid intensities set out in the rules attached to such schemes.

All costs eligible for funding under the Film Fund must be necessary and reasonable for the completion of the project and consistent with the principles of sound financial management and accounting practices.

MANDATORY DOCUMENTATION

Applications are to be made online and are to be submitted before the given deadline, as outlined in the general guidelines. The documents below are mandatory and are necessary for the evaluation panel to assess your application for a funding grant. Failure to present any of these documents may render your application as non-compliant and ineligible.

- Completed official **application E-form**
- A copy of your **Maltese ID card** or your Maltese residence permit or your Maltese citizenship certificate or your Maltese passport.
- A copy of your **VAT Certificate**.
- **Application Declaration**: Completed and signed (to be printed, signed, scanned and uploaded).
- **Annexe Form 1**: Completed and signed 'DeMinimis' Declaration Form (**even if NIL**) (to be printed, signed, scanned and uploaded).
- **Annexe Form 2**: Financial Details Form
- **Annexe Form 3**: Othe Information (to be printed, signed, scanned and uploaded).
- **List of team members** (together with profile, filmography, CV (one page) – detailing previous experience and previous works in the role listed for this application – include title of works, type

- of works, duration (running time), year of completion, evidence of distribution i.e. proof of cinema release or broadcast, proof of exhibition at festivals etc).
- **Company Industry Profile** and track record (last year) [applies for Co-Production partners], if applicable. Not more than 1 page long.
 - **Author's statement of intent**
 - **Producer's Statement** – Please submit an overview/strategy from the Producer on the project, the team and the intended outcomes of the project.
 - **Director's Statement** for the final production/project (why this production/project matters and why will an audience relate to it) and an outline how you will treat this particular production/project (i.e in terms of techniques, casting etc. – this will help evaluators to understand your visual approach and style).
 - Example(s)/samples of **previous work/s** on DVD or provide a URL link to show reel /previous works which can be assessed for each creative team member. **Evidence** of any distribution of works.
 - **Writers' / Producers' Agreement**
 - **Synopsis** – One page
 - **TREATMENT** (Feature Film: max 15-20 pages; Creative Documentary: max 10 pages; Short Film: max 5 pages; High Quality International TV Series : max 15 pages. *NOTES: Page numbers must be on all pages. A three line logline noting the central conflict must be on the front page. All written work must be in 12 point 1.5 space).*
 - **FULLY DEVELOPED SHOOTING SCRIPT** (*NOTES: If script is in Maltese, please provide an English translated version; Screenplay for full length feature films must not exceed 120 pages; Page numbers must be on all pages. A three line logline noting the central conflict must be on the front page. All written work must be in 12 point 1.5 space. If script is an adaptation of a novel or play (and option rights are in place or a letter of intent is available), **one copy of the novel and/or play** should be included in the application (it is understood that this will not necessarily be able to be provided in digital format this then should be delivered to the Malta Film Commission, before given deadline).*
 - **Visual Style References** (that convey the look and feel of the film you wish to develop or produce)
 - **Crew list**
 - **Cast list**
 - **Location List**
 - **Story board** and other visual material i.e mood boards, if available.
 - **Teaser Trailer**, for feature films and High Quality International TV Series productions, if available.
 - For animation projects:
 - **Animation Bible** which will include amongst other things a visual treatment, style development/design (drawn examples), character/s model sheets (drawing – at least one page per character); pose and expression concept artwork of character/s (at least 6 poses and 6 facial expressions); setting and character concept art (drawn); additional concept art – props, secondary characters, etc (optional); storyboard (reproduction in a size that fits in the notebook);
 - 3 to 5 minute **teaser sequence** for Animation projects (FINAL visualisation of concept) as a detailed animatic [i.e. animated storyboard, typically used to establish key element such as posing, timing, composition, style, mood and concept] or block test or sequences that can illustrate component parts of the film);
 - **Samples** of previous animation work.

- For Creative Documentary projects:
 - **Research Material** should be provided (research footage and materials concerning the main characters of the film or at least photos).
 - 3 to 5 minute **teaser trailer** (that demonstrates style and treatment).
- For High Quality International TV Series projects:
 - **Series Bible** (*NOTES: Must be in English; Page numbers must be on all pages; A three line logline must be on the front page. All written work must be in 12 point 1.5 space*).
- **FULL BUDGET** breakdown (*with at least one supporting quote will need to be provided with your application*).
- **Financing Plan**
- **Finance Strategy** (*does not apply for SHORT FILM PRODUCTION NEW TALENT GRANT AND SHORT FILM PRODUCTION GRANT*)
- **Level of confirmed financing** (i.e.: Letters of intent from financial partners, if available; Pre-sale/distribution or other agreements, if available. *Does not apply for SHORT FILM PRODUCTION NEW TALENT GRANT AND SHORT FILM PRODUCTION GRANT*).
- **Letter(s) of interest** for co-production or other agreement(s), if available.
- Realistic **production schedules** (implementation and shooting).
- **Distribution Strategy** (local and international) including:
 - Audience Research and Strategy
 - Screening, Festival and Market Strategy

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR SHORT FILM PRODUCTION - NEW TALENT GRANT, PLEASE PROVIDE:

Minimum 3 minutes digital rough copy/extract of the short film that you intend to shoot (can be shot on mobile or DSLR camera) in advance. Does not apply for Animation.

In respect of Animation projects under this scheme, please provide:

- **Animation Bible** which will include amongst other things a visual treatment, style development/design (drawn examples), character/s model sheets (drawing – at least one page per character); pose and expression concept artwork of character/s (at least 6 poses and 6 facial expressions); setting and character concept art (drawn); additional concept art – props, secondary characters, etc (optional); storyboard (reproduction in a size that fits in the notebook).
- 3 to 5 minute **teaser sequence** for Animation projects (FINAL visualisation of concept) as a detailed **animatic** [i.e. animated storyboard, typically used to establish key element such as posing, timing, composition, style, mood and concept] or block test or sequences that can illustrate component parts of the film.
- Samples of previous animation work.

The Malta Film Fund administrator/s reserves the right to request further information or clarification on any aspect of the above.

