



LIVERPOOL CITY REGION FILM & TV DEVELOPMENT FUND

GUIDELINES



**LIVERPOOL
CITY REGION**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

METROMAYOR
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

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Liverpool City Council, acting through its department the Liverpool Film Office, reserves the right to change these guidelines from time to time. Please ensure that you have downloaded the latest version from our website.

Please also ensure that you have downloaded and read the latest version of any FAQs.

OVERVIEW & AIMS

Liverpool City Region Film & TV Development Fund was created in response to the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis. It has two key aims:

- Provide targeted, fast-tracked support to producers, writers and other creative talent based in the Liverpool City Region (“LCR”)¹ by investing in the development of ambitious and distinctive content across all feature film and TV genres including scripted and factual.
- Boost the post-COVID19 recovery of the wider regional production sector by supporting high-quality projects that, once developed, can progress swiftly into production via the attachment of a broadcaster, commissioning platform, financier, sales agent and/or distributor.

The Fund has an initial capitalisation of £250,000. It is managed by the Liverpool Film Office, a department of Liverpool City Council, and supported by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority through its Strategic Investment Fund.

WHO CAN APPLY?

We invite applications from:

- production companies who already have a substantive business and production base in the Liverpool City Region².
- start up production companies whose senior personnel are based in the Liverpool City Region.
- production companies who do not have a substantive base in the Liverpool City Region but are looking to meaningfully co-produce with a LCR-based producer/production company and/or to work with LCR-based creative talent during development.

In all instances, the applicant company (or its senior personnel in the event that it is a start-up business) should have a relevant track record in film/TV production.

Whilst applications need to be made by an eligible company, we want this Fund to support the widest possible range of regionally based creative talent, both established and emerging. We

¹ Liverpool City Region covers the local authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. You can find out if a particular postcode is in these areas at <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

² The latest OFCOM definition of “substantive base” in relation to regional production applies to this guidance. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/152155/annex-1-updated-guidance.pdf

therefore strongly encourage writers, directors and producers to forge new collaborations in bringing forward their ideas.

WHAT CAN I APPLY FOR?

We can support the development of feature films and TV programming of all genres for all platforms - cinema, free-to-air TV (BBC, ITV, C4), pay TV (Sky), SVOD (Netflix, Amazon, Hulu etc).³

You can apply for funding to support whatever development activity is most appropriate for your project. This may include but not be limited to the reasonable costs of:

- Option/rights/access fees.
- Treatment, script drafts, series bible.
- Script/story editing.
- Research.
- Look books, concept art, storyboards, pitch materials.
- Taster/sizzle reels.
- Budgeting and scheduling.
- Casting.
- Location finding.
- Other specialist consultancy (finance, marketing etc).
- Mentors.
- External legal costs necessarily and directly associated with the development activity (but not the cost of negotiating the development funding agreement)
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs of those directly involved in the development activity (see COVID-19 note below)
- Producer fees and a contribution to the production company's O/H that is commensurate with the overall development budget and the level of work undertaken.

All development activity must be carried out in full compliance with the UK Government's most up-to-date COVID-19 guidance.⁴

We can support projects at any stage of development from early proof of concept through to advanced packaging. This means that we can support projects that may have already undergone some development but we cannot retrospectively fund activity or costs that have been incurred prior to our decision to award funding.

You can request funding towards the full costs of your development activity but be aware that we may support one or two stages initially and retain a right to cut-off in accordance with standard industry practice and/or any relevant collective agreements.

For the avoidance of doubt, we are unable to provide production, completion, distribution or general company development financing through this Fund.

³ While we are open to applications for the development of web-based series for AVOD platforms such as YouTube, applicants will need to evidence that there is a credible route to financing the production of their proposed project as well as a robust plan to reach their intended audience/market.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

You should have secured or be able to acquire or licence all the rights necessary to produce and exploit your project. You will be asked to produce satisfactory evidence of this before any award is confirmed.

We will give priority to projects:

- that have strong creative and commercial elements.
- that have the potential to engage and entertain audiences.
- that can demonstrate a clear route to production and distribution.
- that evidence a commitment to diversity, inclusion and broader representation.
- that will spend at least 70% of their development budget within Liverpool City Region.
- that are ultimately intended for production in the Liverpool City Region.

Although there is no requirement for your project to have secured a broadcaster, commissioning platform or other market partner before applying, it will strengthen your application to do so. We would also encourage applicants to consider how the support of the Fund could leverage a commitment to co-fund development from such third parties.

We regret that we are unable to support the development of one-off short films or games through this Fund.

HOW MUCH CAN I APPLY FOR?

We can invest up to £25,000 per project, with the minimum investment being £2,500.

In exceptional circumstances, such as a project offering outstanding potential, we may vary this maximum following discussion with our funding partners.

Investments will be in the form of a recoupable advance which will be repaid from the production budget if and when a project proceeds to production. The Fund will also be entitled to a net profit share of up to a maximum 3% of net profits from the project supported.

Whilst there is no limit to the number of applications you can make to the Fund, we can only fund a maximum of 3 projects per production company, with each expected to have a different creative team in order to ensure that the widest range of LCR-based talent is being supported.

WHEN CAN I APPLY?

This is a rolling fund so there are no deadlines for applications.

HOW DO I APPLY?

We want this Fund to offer fast-tracked support given the current situation. Decisions will be made as quickly as possible from the date we receive your application and all the necessary supporting information required to allow a full assessment. As a guide, we will endeavour to reach a decision within 10 business days of receiving such information.

You will need to complete and submit a short application form online. This can be accessed via the 'Development Funding' tab at <https://www.liverpoolfilmoffice.tv/development-fund/apply/>. We regret that we cannot accept applications by email, disc, fax or post, except by prior arrangement.

As well as basic information about your company, project and creative team, the application form will ask you to provide the following:

- **Project logline**, being 3 to 4 sentences (max. 50 words) which best sell/market the core concept of your project.
- **Project pitch**, being a statement (max. 750 words) that covers the key creative and strategic elements of your project such as:
 - A clear, concise summary of your idea (story, themes, characters).
 - A short history of the project, the motivations that lie behind it and the development stage it's currently at.
 - The track record and relevant previous work of you and the creative team that you've assembled. How do you plan to work together?
 - The audience you're aiming to appeal to. Why they might want to see it and how they'll find and engage with your project.
 - An estimate of the total production budget for your project and how you plan to cast, package and raise the necessary finance, once it has been developed.
 - Your preferred or actual market partners – broadcaster, platform, sales agent, distributor(s), other financiers – and why they would be/are the right fit.
 - Where and when you're hoping to film the project once it moves into production.
 - How your project might contribute to wider diversity, inclusion and representation both on- and off-screen.
- **An outline** of the actual development work/activity to be undertaken, key milestones, deliverables and timeline.
- **A few sentences** about the impacts that your project could have on the Liverpool City Region screen production sector and on the Region generally, both at its development and production stages.

In addition to your application form, you will need to upload various supporting information including a development budget in the form of our scripted or unscripted template available for download at <https://www.liverpoolfilmoffice.tv/development-fund/downloads/>. A copy of the scripted budget template is also included as Appendix 2.

Following submission, you will receive an email confirming that we have safely received your application, together with a tracking number to be used in all correspondence.

All applications are checked for completeness and eligibility against the guidelines. If your application is incomplete or ineligible, we will send you an email telling you why. We regret that we are unable to progress incomplete or ineligible applications.

ASSESSMENT & DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Your application and supporting materials will be assessed by the Liverpool Film Office team and their external advisors against the aims, criteria and priorities outlined in these guidelines.

We may request a call with you or seek additional information in order to complete our assessment and to carry out the necessary due diligence. We will inform you if these steps have a material impact on our decision-making timescales.

Following assessment and recommendations, the final decision on awards up to £5,000 will be taken by the Head of the Liverpool Film Office and Liverpool City Council Director of Culture. The final decision on awards over £5,000 will be taken by the Head of the Liverpool Film Office, Liverpool City Council Director of Culture and an external member of the Investment Advisory Panel.

You will be informed by email of the outcome as soon as possible after the relevant decision is made. We will always offer feedback to unsuccessful applicants if requested.

We expect a high demand for this Fund and expect to be only able to fund a proportion of the applications we receive.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

If your application is successful, we will send you our standard development funding agreement, together with any specific conditions relating to your award. We will also ask for your bank details and agree a payment schedule with you that is responsive both to the project's needs and to your current economic circumstances.

Once you return a signed copy of the funding agreement, we will release the first instalment of our funding.

Appendix 1 sets out the Fund's standard terms and conditions.

FEEDBACK

We endeavour to make the application, assessment and decision-making processes as fair and transparent as possible. We welcome constructive feedback on any of our processes and procedures.

RETENTION OF APPLICATION MATERIALS

In order to comply with our audit processes, we will retain copies of the application form and supporting materials for declined applications up until 31st March 2021 and for successful applications for a further 10 years after which time they will be destroyed. Original materials will only be returned to you if a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed with them.

RESUBMISSION

We can only accept re-submissions for projects that have previously been declined if there have been significant and substantial changes or major new elements have been secured since the last application. All re-submissions must be discussed and agreed with us in advance.

SPECULATIVE SUBMISSIONS

We regret that we are unable to consider projects that have not been formally submitted through our application process.

COMPLAINTS

Our funding is discretionary and our decision in all matters concerning the assessment and selection of projects for investment is final.

You can make a complaint if you have good cause to believe that the correct procedures, as published in these guidelines, have not been followed or have been applied in such a way as to prejudice the outcome of your application.

A copy of our complaints procedure is available on request from the Head of the Liverpool Film Office.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

As a public body, we may be required to publicly disclose certain information concerning your application in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. During the process of deciding whether or not to publicly release some or all information requested by a third party, we may contact you and ask you to comment on the proposed release. Your comments will be taken into account in the decision on whether to publicly release, or withhold information, but the decision on whether to release the information ultimately rests with Liverpool City Council.

DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY STATEMENT

We require some personal information about you/your company in order to consider your application for investment. If you would like to see a breakdown of the personal information we require, why it is required, what we do with that information and how long we keep it, please refer to the Liverpool City Region Film & TV Development Fund Privacy Notice available online [here](#).

We may share your personal information with third parties to comply with the law and/or for our legitimate interests and/or the third parties concerned.

Where the personal information you have provided to us belongs to other individuals, please refer to the above Privacy Notice. You must share this Privacy Statement and Privacy Notice with the respective individuals.

You have some rights in relation to the personal information that we hold about you under the General Data Protection Regulation. Information on how to exercise these rights is contained in the Privacy Notice.

If you have any concerns about how we process your personal information, you should contact the Head of the Liverpool Film Office in the first instance. If you are still dissatisfied, you can submit a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Whilst the information and advice in these guidelines is at the time of going to press believed to be accurate, Liverpool City Council reserves the right to make changes at any time at its discretion. Neither Liverpool City Council nor any of its partners shall be responsible for any loss attributable to errors, omissions or other inaccuracies in the information contained in these guidelines.

APPENDIX 1

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION FILM & TV DEVELOPMENT FUND

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

If you are successful in securing funding from the Liverpool City Region Film & TV Development Fund, you will be required to enter into a standard development funding agreement with Liverpool City Council (“LCC”) that sets out the Terms and Conditions of its investment. These will include amongst others:

1. You will need to establish a clear chain of title and demonstrate that you have or can acquire or licence all rights necessary to produce and exploit your project.
2. LCC will pay its funding to a limited company (or other body corporate) registered in UK or incorporated in the European Union or European Economic Area and registered as a branch in the UK.
3. LCC will require certain approvals over your project including all chain of title and clearance documents, and the sources and amounts of other development funding. LCC will also be entitled on reasonable request to review any contributor agreements and to approve such agreements where there is a material variation from the relevant collective agreements and/or normal practice within the film and TV production sectors.
4. LCC’s funding is recoupable. You may be required to assign a share of all rights including copyright to LCC. These will be reassigned to you on, and subject to, repayment of the funding prior to production of the project. LCC shall also be entitled to a share of net profits from any project that goes into production.
5. You will need to complete the development work by the agreed dates or the funding may have to be repaid.
6. You will be expected to ensure that your project is developed in accordance with the requirements of all unions and guilds having appropriate jurisdiction and all legislative requirements, both UK and EU, including those concerning National Minimum Wage.
7. You will be expected to warrant your and your project’s compliance with EU State aid rules including but not limited to Article 54 of the European Commission’s General Block Exemption Regulation (No 651/2014) of 17 June 2014.
8. You will be expected to comply with LCC’s reasonable requirements as regards procurement, equalities, diversity, environmental impacts and document retention.
9. You will need to provide certain delivery materials to LCC. The cost of these must be included in your development budget.
10. You will be expected to deliver against any undertakings made in your application in relation to the Liverpool City Region. You will need to comply with LCC’s monitoring and reporting requirements in order to evidence such. You will also be required to provide on-going monitoring information as may be reasonably required by LCC and its relevant funding partners in order to measure the impact and outcomes of LCC’s funding.

11. You will be expected to comply with LCC's branding guidelines. These include providing LCC and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority with an appropriate credit. You will also be expected to co-operate with LCC and its relevant funding partners in any PR and press activity relating to your project and LCC's funding of it, as reasonably required.

APPENDIX 2

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION FILM & TV DEVELOPMENT FUND

SCRIPTED DEVELOPMENT BUDGET TEMPLATE

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION FILM & TV DEVELOPMENT FUND
 SCRIPTED DEVELOPMENT BUDGET TEMPLATE

PROJ. COMPANY: _____
 PROJECT TITLE: _____
 EXEC PRODUCER: _____
 PRODUCER: _____
 WRITER: _____
 DIRECTOR: _____
 SCRIPT EDITOR: _____

LIVERPOOL FILM OFFICE

DEVELOPMENT WORK TO BE COMPLETED/DELIVERED
 [i.e. 2 drafts x 2 sets of revisions, pitch deck, production budget]

Liverpool City Council

	STAGE 1 [1st Draft]	STAGE 2 [2nd Draft]	STAGE 3 [3rd Draft]	STAGE 4	STAGE 5	TOTALS	EST. LCR SPEND	BUDGET NOTES (Please provide a brief notes on activity/scope of work, any individuals involved and how costs/fees are calculated (ie. fixed fee or daily rate). Spend guidance is given by clicking cells below.
1. Option fee						50		
2. Writer fees						50		
3. Director fees						50		
4. Production Office (if any)						50		
5. Script/Sync Editor fees						50		
6. Other consultancy						50		
7. Mentor fees						50		
8. Look Book/Visuals/Fish Deck						50		
9. Storyboard/Trailer/Reaser						50		
10. Casting						50		
11. Location Scouting						50		
12. Travel / Accom/ Subsistence						50		
13. Budget/ Schedule Prep						50		
14. Legal Fees						50		
15. Producer Fees						50		
16. Company Overhead						50		
TOTALS	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	

NOTES:

1) Each script stage is intended to cover one draft and one set of revisions.
 2) The activity/cost headings, above are suggested. Please adapt as required to reflect the particular circumstances of your project.
 3) Please estimate where indicated how much of your development budget will be spent on labour and services based in the Liverpool City Region (LCR). The definition of LCR is included in the Fund Guidelines.