PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
Tips for putting together a compelling application:

We receive a large volume of applications to this program so competition for funding is high. To ensure you make a compelling case for support, we encourage you to consider carefully how your project and application aligns with the program's aims and assessment criteria, which are listed in the guidelines.

Application materials

The pitch
This is an opportunity for the panel to learn more about the creative team, your vision for the project and your passion for telling this story.

Tell us about:

/ What inspired you to tell this story

/ Why you think this story needs to be told now

/ Why you are well-placed to tell this story – what is your special connection to the material or subjects?

/ What the story is really about – the major themes

/ The elements that will make your project stand out in the market

Our preferred format is a 3-minute pitch to camera. Here are some tips for crafting a compelling video:

/ The pitch video is not a sizzle reel, although you can use images or clips to help communicate your project's tone or look

/ Production quality is less important – you can shoot it on your mobile and edit it on a laptop

/ The pitch video does not have to be done in a single take – feel free to edit as you see fit

/ You don't have to be in the pitch video but it's worth considering that you're probably the best advocate for your project and what the panel might miss by not hearing directly from you

/ Use your three minutes strategically – do not rehash the synopsis or other written materials submitted as part of your application

We recommend that you start working on your pitch video well ahead of the deadline so that you have enough time to work through any tech issues, should they arise.

Your project sample
In the sample we're looking for strong ideas as well as your ability to execute on the page.

This is the reason we ask for a pitch bible and a script sample for fiction series projects. If you have an episode script available, then you should include this as your sample. If not, then you should submit 10-15 script pages that demonstrate how the idea will be realised. This might be the first act of your pilot but it might also be a key sequence that sets up the world or characters.

In the first instance, we will read up to 30 pages of the project sample. If your application is shortlisted, we will read your project sample in full.

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Next stage development notes

These notes are a critical analysis of the creative materials that identify the challenges present in the current draft and articulate strategies to address these issues in the next stage/s of development.

Strong notes:

/ Are specific rather than general

/ Describe solutions to story issues – how will you "deepen the characters" or "rework the structure".

/ Demonstrate that the team has a good handle on all aspects of the storytelling – genre, structure, tone, characterisation, plot, story arcs, dialogue, theme etc.

/ Are informed by the creative vision for the project

/ Consider the project within the wider context of the genre and marketplace that it occupies

All about budgets

The application form will ask you to outline the development activities you propose to undertake with the funding you are applying for.

In the budget section, you'll be asked to itemise the costs of these activities. Here are some examples of development costs:

/ Fees for writers, producers, directors, script editors, researchers or consultants

/ Workshopping/writers' room costs

/ Reader's reports

/ Teaser reels for documentary projects

/ Legal fees

Funding is not provided for office overheads, option fees and pre-preproduction activities such as budgeting, scheduling and casting.

Your budget should be reasonable and strategic in relation to both the proposed activities and the overall production budget of the project.

Film Victoria funding is a partial contribution to the development stage. We expect that applicants will supplement this funding with their own or third party contributions.

There are overall program caps depending on the type of project as well as caps on particular items.

Refer to Film Victoria's Budget Guide for more information.

Total production budget

The application form will also ask you to estimate the total production budget for the project. We understand that as your project is only in development that this figure will most likely change over time. However, this figure should be aligned with your creative materials, development budget and your financing/distribution strategies.

Got questions?

Contact the Program Managers:

/ Fiction, Erin Bretherton 03 9660 3232

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