

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FAQs

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ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to apply for Project Development funding?

Producers, Writers and Writer/Directors.

I'm a Writer or Writer/Director. Do I need to have a Producer attached to my project to apply for funding?

- For documentary - yes.
- For fiction - not for your first application. But after your first successful application, you will.

Do I have to be Victorian?

- Yes. The actual Applicant needs to be Victorian, either an individual or a company
- All members of the key creative team (Producer, Writer and/or Writer/Director) must be Victorian.

For the purposes of Film Victoria funding, what classifies me as 'Victorian'?

As an individual, you need to:

- Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- Be living in Victoria when you apply and for at least the last 12 months

As a company:

- You need to have been based in and operating out of Victoria for at least the last 12 months
- If you are newly registered, you may still qualify if at least one of the company principals and/or parent entity have been based in and operating out of Victoria for at least the last 12 months

Do I need screen credits to apply?

No, but you do need to demonstrate that you have the ability to perform the role on the proposed development stage, for example perhaps you have experience in a similar role in a related area such as theatre, advertising or print media. We are looking to see that your proposal clearly shows that you know what you need to do to move the project forward and how you will do it.

Do I need an ABN to apply?

Yes.

What if I don't have an ABN?

You'll need to obtain one before applying. You can do this through the [ABR website](#)

How many applications can I submit each round?

An applicant may submit one application per round.

Can I submit one fiction application and one documentary application each round?

No, there is a limit of one application per applicant each round.

FUNDING

Information for first time applicants

What is the difference between funding and budget?

Funding is the amount of money Film Victoria may contribute to this stage of development.

Budget is the total cost of this stage of development - the total amount of money you need to be able to deliver the next stage and the breakdown of who is paid how much.

Production Budget is what you estimate the final film will cost to make.

For example:

- Funding from Film Victoria for this stage of development \$10,000
- Budget for this stage of development \$20,000
- Production Budget \$1,200,000

Will Film Victoria fund the entire budget of a project?

No.

What is partial funding?

That is the part of the budget that Film Victoria can contribute. Generally you need to make a contribution and you may be able to find a co-contribution from a third party. The amounts from each contributor don't have to be equal.

What can my own contribution be?

It can be in-kind (i.e. part of your Producer fee), cash, equipment, or the like. It needs to be included in the budget as a \$ amount and be realistic (e.g. a Producer fee of \$2,000 in the budget with \$1,000 asked of FV and \$1,000 being your own contribution).

What is a third party contribution?

It's someone other than you or Film Victoria. This may be another member of the creative team, Screen Australia, a private investor, etc.

What requested amount is appropriate?

Check the [Budget Guide](#) for detail. This includes caps (maximum amounts you can ask for) on the total budget and on individual line items.

How do I work out my budget?

- Be realistic about who needs to be involved in this stage of development and understand what their contribution is worth. For example, a budget may include Producer, Writer, Script Editor and legal fees
- Take a look at our Budget Guide and you will see what we are able to contribute to each item
- You need to agree with your team what their fee will be and how much they expect in cash and how much they are willing to contribute in kind or defer (e.g. a Writer may be asking \$30,000 for a draft, Film Victoria can only contribute up to \$25,000, and it would need to be a highly experienced Writer at that level, so who contributes the balance?)
- You may like to consult the relevant guilds for minimum recommended rates (e.g. Australian Writers Guild, Directors Guild of Australia)

What is a deferral?

An amount of money that is not paid until a later date, e.g. paid from the production budget once financed.

Fiction projects

If I have a fiction feature project but don't have a full script, can I be funded for treatment to draft funding?

No.

What stage do I need to be at before I can apply for funding?

- For a feature film – draft script
- For TV and online series – pitch bible
- For a web series – series treatment or pitch bible
- For VR – draft treatment or script or preliminary proof of concept

Can I seek funding for proof of concept?

Yes, but only for VR projects.

Can I seek funding for a video teaser?

No.

Documentary projects

What stage do I need to be at before I can apply for funding?

- For a feature film – detailed outline or draft treatment
- For TV and online series – detailed outline
- For a web series – series treatment or pitch bible
- For VR projects – draft treatment or script or preliminary proof of concept

Can I seek funding for a sizzle reel?

Yes.

Can I seek funding for strategic shooting and editing?

Yes.

Web series

What does Film Victoria consider a web series?

A series where episodes are less than a commercial half hour in length.

Is there a minimum duration I need to apply for funding?

Yes, the series must have a minimum duration of a commercial half hour (so 25 minutes is okay, allowing for the advertisements included in a commercial half hour), e.g. 6 x 5 minute episodes.

How much can I ask for?

- \$5,000 without marketplace interest (i.e. from a recognised commissioning platform or distributor, such as ABC iView)
- Up to \$15,000 with a letter of interest from the marketplace
- Up to \$20,000 if your marketplace contributes development funding toward the budget

What's the difference between an online series and a web series?

- An online series has episodes of minimum duration of a commercial half hour. These may end up on Stan, Netflix, ABC iView, SBS on Demand or similar

- A web series tends to be shorter, with episodes under a commercial half hour in length. These may end up on ABC iView, YouTube or similar.

VR projects

Is there a minimum length for VR projects?

Yes, the project needs to have a minimum experience length of seven minutes.

What is an appropriate budget level for a VR Project?

Check the [Budget Guide](#) for details.

How much can I ask for?

- \$5,000 without marketplace interest (i.e. from a recognised commissioning platform or distributor, such as Jaunt)
- Up to \$15,000 with a letter of interest from the marketplace
- Up to \$20,000 if your marketplace contributes development funding toward the budget

Can I be funded for pre-visualisation activities like a proof of concept teaser or prototyping?

Yes.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

About the application process

- Access to the application form is through the website [here](#)
- All applications for Stage 1 are due by close of business Monday 1 October 2018
- There are two stages in the application process, Stage 1 & Stage 2
- You'll be advised of the outcome of Stage 1 within eight weeks of the deadline via email
- If you are successful at Stage 1, you will be asked to provide additional materials for Stage 2 within 5 days
- The outcome of Stage 2 will be within 6-8 weeks of the notification.

Materials to provide for Stage 1

- A completed application form submitted through the [Film Victoria website](#)
- A pitch detailing the core idea, story engine or argument for the project, as well as the experience of the project team and their vision for the project. This can be supplied as either written text or a pitch to camera (this is the preferred format) of no more than three minutes long and supplied as a video web link
- An extract/sample of the proposed project (maximum of 15 pages).

The video pitch

Do I have to do this?

This is recommended but not compulsory. You can do a video or a written pitch.

Why do you want this?

It's a great way for the panel to learn more about the project while having your personality and passion shine through.

I haven't done something like this before, what do you suggest?

- Production quality is less important. You can shoot it on your mobile phone and edit it on your laptop or on a computer at your local library.
- You need to provide a link. You can upload and password protect your video a number of ways, including [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo](#)

What needs to be in the video?

- The project's core idea, story engine or argument
- What the project is about; the central driving narrative; major themes?
- The project team's experience and their vision for the project. Tell us about you, your prior experience and what you hope for the project.

How long should the video be?

No longer than three minutes.

Do I have to be in the video?

No. This video can be done in any way you see fit to help get across the ideas mentioned above. But it's worth considering that you are probably the best advocate for your project and what we might miss by not seeing and hearing directly from you. Additionally, pitching is a key part of the ultimate process and this video is a great way to practice.

If I don't want to do a video, what can I do instead?

You can submit written text on the application form that covers the key ideas as above.

What materials do you need me to provide?

- **For fiction feature films** – up to 15 pages of the draft screenplay of the intended project
- **For documentary features or one-offs** – 5-10 pages of a pitch document and/or a link to sample footage of the intended project
- **For television or online series projects** (fiction or documentary) – up to 15 pages of a series treatment or pitch bible or script of the intended project
- **For VR projects** – up to 15 pages of a draft treatment or script and preliminary proof of concept of the intended project

Why do I need to provide this?

This gives us a look at the project as well as a sample of your work.

How long will shortlisting take?

You will be notified of the outcome of Stage 1 within eight weeks of the deadline.

Would it be a good idea for me to have to have all materials ready in case I am shortlisted for Stage 2?

Yes! You will be asked to submit the materials within five days of receiving the notification that you have been shortlisted.

About Stage 2

How will I find out whether I have been selected for Stage 2?

Film Victoria anticipates advising applicants of the outcome of their application within 6-8 weeks of receiving their materials (depending on the number of applications received).

How much time will I have to submit additional materials for Stage 2?

Shortlisted applicants will be asked to submit further materials within five business days of notification.

What are the additional materials I'll need to submit for Stage 2?

Next stage development notes and;

- **For fiction feature films** – the draft screenplay for the intended project
- **For documentary features or one-offs** – a full outline or treatment for the intended project
- **For television, online and web series projects (fiction or documentary)** – a series treatment or pitch bible or script for the intended project
- **For VR projects** – a draft treatment or script and preliminary proof of concept for the intended project

What if I don't have all the materials ready to submit for Stage 2?

It is expected when you apply for Stage 1 that you have the materials ready to submit for Stage 2.

Will I be contacted by the program manager about my application during the application process?

You may be contacted in Stage 2, if additional information is needed.

Will I need to attend an interview and when will I find this out?

If Film Victoria requires further information to consider a shortlisted project for funding, applicants may be invited to meet with the Project Development assessment panel to discuss their project.

Can my video pitch be in a language other than English?

Yes, but we need to be able to understand the story so subtitling it may be necessary.

What considerations can be made for Disability Access?

Film Victoria encourages applications requiring disability access, please contact the relevant program manager to discuss what options are best suited to your needs

If I have no access to a computer, can I still submit an application via hard copy?

Please contact the relevant program manager to discuss

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

What criteria will my project be assessed on?

All projects will be assessed on the following criteria:

- **Story** - The strength and distinctiveness of the narrative story, with an emphasis on bold, innovative and fresh storytelling concepts. The execution and quality of the submitted materials
- **Talent** – The ability of the individual or team to develop the project and execute the vision
- **Diversity** - How the content/storylines and creative team (confirmed or planned) promote and support gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness.
- **Development Plan** - The degree to which the development plan identifies and articulates the challenges in the current material while also offering strategies to address them in the next phase(s) of development

- **Audience and Budget** - The applicant's demonstration of a clear pathway to audience appropriate to the project's budget size and financing strategy

What do you mean by narrative?

The narrative is the central driving story of the project.

What is Film Victoria's diversity statement and where can I find it?

Film Victoria's Gender and Diversity statement can be found [here](#).

What do I put in my development plan?

Detail the steps that will be undertaken in the next stage of development. Identify the challenges in the material while also explaining intended strategies to address them.

What do I need to provide about my target and pathway to audience?

On the application form for Stage 1, we will ask you to write about who the specific target audience is for project. We want you to be thinking about reaching your audience right from the inception and build this into the development process.

Questions to consider are:

- Who is the target audience for your project and why will this audience want to see your project?
- How will you build this audience and raise awareness of the project?
- How will the audience find and engage with your project initially and then in the longer term?

What is a financing strategy and what may I need to provide?

On the application form for Stage 1, we will ask you to write about the financing strategies for production. As you develop your story, it's important to think about how much it will cost to produce, how you will raise the monies to make it and how the project will earn revenue for the team/individual/production company?

If my application is unsuccessful, can I receive feedback on my application?

Unfortunately due to the volume of applications we receive it is not possible to provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.

Additional information

What is a development investment and if my application is successful, do I have re-pay the money?

The funding is an investment that is repaid when the project goes into production, usually from the production budget of the project. If you are successful, the development investment agreement will lay out all of the terms and conditions. Refer to [Film Victoria's Terms of Trade](#) for more details.

What is a commissioning platform?

A free-to-air broadcaster, subscription television service, VOD platform, or similar.

Are there certain things that Film Victoria does not fund?

Yes. We do not fund options or office overheads. Also, for fiction projects, we do not fund pre-production activities such as budgeting, scheduling and casting. For factual projects, we only fund documentaries, not reality, lifestyle or magazine programs.

Got questions?

Email us or speak with one of Film Victoria's Program Managers or Program Services Officers:

Contacts:

For **initial queries**, contact the Program Services Officers

- / Fiction, [Sarah Pratt](#) 03 9660 3229
- / Documentary, [Steven Griffin](#) 03 9660 3220

To **discuss the project**, contact the program managers:

- / Fiction, [Erin Bretherton](#) 03 9660 3232
- / Documentary, [Andrew Wiseman](#) 03 9660 3281