

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, you may have experience 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. [Key Creatives](#) may only be attached to 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 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 development budget of a project?

No. Film Victoria funding is a partial contribution to the next stage of development. 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

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

- Feature film – draft screenplay
- Television or short-form series – pitch bible and script sample
- VR project – draft treatment or script or preliminary proof of concept

If I have a fiction feature project, can I apply for treatment to draft funding?

No. You must have completed a draft screenplay to apply with a feature film project.

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?

- Documentary feature film, one-off, television or short-form series – outline or draft treatment
- VR project – 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.

Short-form series

What does Film Victoria consider a short form 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, overall 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?

- For fiction projects up to \$15,000 without marketplace interest
- For documentary projects up to \$10,000 without marketplace interest

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?

- \$15,000 without marketplace interest (i.e. from a recognised commissioning platform or distributor, such as Jaunt)
- Up to \$20,000 with a letter of interest from the marketplace
- Up to \$30,000 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 are due by 11pm on the advertised deadline
- There are two stages in the assessment process - shortlisting and selection
- Film Victoria anticipates shortlisting applications within eight weeks of the deadline date. At this stage, Film Victoria will advise all applicants, including those who were not shortlisted of the outcome of their application
- Shortlisted applicants may be contacted by Film Victoria and/or invited to meet with the assessment panel to discuss their project, if further information is required to consider a shortlisted project for funding
- Film Victoria anticipates advising successful and unsuccessful shortlisted applicants of the outcome of their application within 6-8 weeks of notification of shortlisting

Materials to provide

- A completed application form submitted through the [Film Victoria website](#)
- A pitch. 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
- Next stage development notes
- A sample of the proposed project

What project sample do you need me to provide?

- [For fiction feature films](#) – draft screenplay
- [For fiction television or short-form series](#) – pitch bible and script sample
- [For documentary features, one-offs, television or online series](#) – outline or draft treatment
- [For VR projects](#) – draft treatment or script and preliminary proof of concept

Why do I need to provide this?

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

The video pitch

Do I have to do a video pitch?

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 creative team, your vision for the project and your passion for telling this story.

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?

See the [Project Development Tips](#) for more information on what to include in your pitch.

How long should the video be?

No more 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.

About shortlisting & selection

When will I find out if I have been shortlisted?

Film Victoria anticipates shortlisting within 6-8 weeks of the deadline (depending on the number of applications received). At this stage, Film Victoria will advise all applicants, including those who were not shortlisted of the outcome of their application.

Will I need to submit additional materials for shortlisting?

Shortlisted applicants may be asked to submit further materials within five business days of notification, however it is not mandatory.

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

You may be contacted if we require additional information and/or materials.

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 next stage development notes?

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 put in my market overview?

On the application form, 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?

In this section, we will ask you to write about the production financing and distribution strategies. 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 short films, option fees or office overheads. Also, for fiction projects, we do not fund pre-preproduction 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, [Katherine Slattery](#) 03 9660 3232
- / Documentary, [Andrew Wiseman](#) 03 9660 3281