

## Indie TV and Film Development Fund

### Purpose

Leeds City Region has developed an outstanding reputation as a competitive base for TV and Film production and is receiving due recognition of its creative expertise. The success of this dynamic hub is one of the reasons for Channel 4 moving their National HQ to Leeds, which has triggered relocations and new investments in the region's creative sector.

It is increasingly clear that many of the independent TV and Film production companies within the Leeds City Region have been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The nationwide "lockdown" has led to a large number of commissioned programmes and films being delayed or cancelled and this will continue to have a significant impact on a wide range of creative companies, which are so crucial to the well-being of a vital and vibrant sector in this region, even after producers are able to resume filming, subject to strict new safety guidelines.

We have been considering a number of ways in which we can provide practical help and support to these companies – and their workers - and after detailed consultations with key partners, we have decided to set up the Indie TV and Film Development Fund, to offer flexible financial support to independent production companies, with the following aims:

- Target funds where they're most needed, by supporting a range of new Film and TV projects through the development stage, so they have a new generation of programmes ready to go into production, as soon as the nationwide "lockdown" is lifted;
- Provide the companies with strategic financial support as they navigate their way through a difficult and uncertain transition period until they can resume their creative activities;
- Ensure the companies are well-placed to continue to make high-quality, innovative content across all genres – and to employ a talented, versatile and diverse workforce when the crisis is over.

The fund has an overall value of £200,000 and is funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) through the Creative Catalyst programme.

Screen Yorkshire has offered advice and practical support to the LEP in setting up the Fund and will lead the application and assessment process, in collaboration with representatives from the WYCA/LEP. The WYCA/LEP will lead on contracting and releasing of grants.

### Who can apply?

We are inviting applications from:

- Independent Film and TV production companies which have a substantive base in Leeds City Region (this means a registered office in the Leeds City Region and at least one senior member of staff). This covers the districts of Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Craven, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds, Selby, Wakefield and York. Click [here](#) to check that your business sits within one of these districts;

- Applicants must have a proven track record of Film and/or TV productions which have been broadcast (nationally or internationally) and/or commercially distributed. Alternatively, the companies' senior executive(s) must have an individual track record of having produced Film and TV content at an equivalent level.
- We would usually expect that the business is operating from commercial premises in the City region (i.e. not home based).

If you are not sure if your company qualifies, please contact Caroline Cooper Charles at Screen Yorkshire for clarification: [caroline@screenyorkshire.co.uk](mailto:caroline@screenyorkshire.co.uk) or 07903 943605

To be clear, all projects which meet the eligibility criteria above will be assessed on a like-for-like basis by a panel of experienced individuals, but this is a limited fund and there is no guarantee that companies submitting proposals which meet the criteria will be successful, or that they will receive the full amount requested.

### What kind of projects are eligible?

We can support companies to develop feature films and TV programmes of all genres, for UK and international platforms, including Free-to-air TV (BBC, ITV, C4, C5 etc), SVODs (Netflix, Amazon, Apple), pay TV (Sky, MTV, Discovery, National Geographic, A&E etc) and projects intended for theatrical release.

We welcome a wide variety of projects, but priority may be given to proposals which can demonstrate the following:

- Initial interest from broadcasters, commissioners, financiers, sales companies or distributors;
- Evidence of a commitment to diversity and inclusivity;
- Brings benefit to Leeds City Region – this could include a significant part of the development budget being spent within Leeds City Region, talent development and location filming with the Leeds City Region.

### This fund will be unable to support

- Projects in such a late stage of development that there is a limited or no value to additional funding by the LEP;
- Short-form content/ Short Films;
- Gaming projects;
- Applications from broadcasters based in the Leeds City Region;
- Applications from individual writers, directors or producers for projects where no production company is yet attached;
- Production, completion or distribution costs;
- General company overheads other than those related to the project development (please see below).
- Commercials and corporate content

### How much can you apply for?

Grants of between £2,500 and £25,000 will be available to eligible businesses. Each company will be limited to three separate project applications and the total value of funds awarded to any company will not exceed £25,000, regardless of the number of projects supported. Please therefore ensure that you are not applying for more than £25,000 in total.

We will pay between 80% and 100% of the funding upfront, and we will seek evidence of the money being spent in line with your submitted development budget. This will be detailed in the grant funding agreement.

We will not look to offer more than £25,000 to any individual business, but we have the right to amend this decision if special circumstances arise on a case-by-case basis.

### What can you apply for?

We will aim to support whatever development activity is relevant for your project – which can include, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- Research
- Treatment, script drafts, series or format bible
- Budgeting and scheduling
- Option/rights/access fees
- Taster/sizzle reels, including editing costs
- Development of a marketing plan
- Casting
- External legal costs necessary and directly related with the development activity
- Costs associated with compliance issues
- Producer fees
- Costs associated with advice and consultancy on how the proposed project can adhere to current or evolving physical production protocols
- A contribution to the production company's overheads – up to a maximum of 20% of labour costs. A simple calculation of this will be automatically generated for you in the budget template.

We will support projects which are already in development, but we cannot retrospectively fund activities or costs which have been incurred prior to our decision to award funding. Where appropriate, we would encourage all applicants to provide evidence of your rights/IP in the project for which you are seeking support.

### How will the application process work?

The fund will open for applications from Thursday May 14th, 2020. The deadline for applications is 12 noon on Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

All applications must be supported by a completed form – available [here](#). Within this document, you will need to include some brief details of the target broadcaster or financiers, a budget detailing proposed spending and a short overview of why the development funding is important to your business at this



time.

### What happens next

Given the nature and scale of the problems facing the industry, we will aim to assess applications within a week of the deadline and will let you know the outcome as quickly as possible. This is a limited fund and we cannot guarantee that we will be able to support every eligible application.