

Introduction

The Screenwriters Development Fund (SDF) invests in Nova Scotian production companies to develop scripts by Nova Scotian writers for film and television.

Funding Objectives

The objectives of the Screenwriters Development Fund are as follows:

- Supports the creation and development of film and TV script projects by **Nova Scotian filmmakers**.
- Strengthens the film and TV industry by developing Nova Scotia **filmmakers, writers, and producers**.
- Advances **diversity, inclusion, and gender parity**.

Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage's Commitment to EDIA

- Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage supports our communities to thrive by promoting active living, tourism, and Nova Scotia's diverse culture, heritage, and languages. We pride ourselves in helping to grow communities and organizations by providing programs and services that support these areas.
- We are committed to ensuring that our programs and services are free of discrimination and barriers, and value equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA). By applying this lens, and ensuring it is a core value in our programs and decision-making processes, we are taking steps to address the long-standing systemic barriers that impact many communities in our province.
- Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage is committed to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility across Nova Scotia, and we support partners who share in this commitment

How To Apply

Step 1: Determine Your Eligibility

The following are required to apply to the Screenwriters Development Fund:

- Applicant is a Nova Scotian Producer/Production company registered with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies
- Projects must have both a Nova Scotian producer and a Nova Scotian writer (who has maintained their primary residence in Nova Scotia for at least 12 months prior to the application submission)
- Eligible Projects must be a new screen production of at least 30 broadcast minutes in length

Step 2: Contact Program Officer

Prior to applying, all new applicants to the program are required to contact the Program Officer to ensure their proposal is eligible to be considered within the Screenwriters Development Fund.

Contact the Program Officer by sending an email to creativeindustries@novascotia.ca.

Step 3: Apply to the Fund

After receiving confirmation of your project's eligibility by the Program Officer, you may apply to the fund. Ensure that the application form, budget and any accompanying supporting documentation is submitted to creativeindustries@novascotia.ca prior to the deadline you are applying for.

Note that all applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of their application materials within 2 business days. Applicants who have not received confirmation should contact the program officer directly at creativeindustries@novascotia.ca. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their applications have been received.

Application Deadlines

The Screenwriters Development Fund has two intakes annually in June and October. Refer to the current year's deadline dates on our website.

Level of Investment

Successful applicants can receive an investment of up to 50% of eligible project costs through the fund.

- The Department's investment generally will not exceed \$20,000 per project, per intake
- Projects are generally limited to a maximum of \$50,000 in total investment over the various development stages of the project
- A production company may only receive investment toward one project per intake

Note that certain individual eligible costs are capped based on the activity (Refer to the Budget Template on website for details)

Eligibility

As noted in the 'How to Apply' section, the general eligibility requirements are as follows:

- **Nova Scotian Production Company.** The applicant is a Nova Scotian production company registered with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies;
- **Nova Scotian Writer and Producer.** Projects must have both a Nova Scotian producer and a Nova Scotian writer who has maintained their primary residence in Nova Scotia for at least 12 months prior to the application submission;
- **Project Run-Time.** Eligible Projects must be new screen productions of at least 30 broadcast minutes in length.

Eligible Costs

- Writer's fees (maximum eligible amount \$25,000)
- Producer fees (maximum eligible amount 20% of total eligible costs)
- Option fees for literary material
- Research or travel expenses
- Story editors
- Script consultants, including equity, diversity and inclusion consultants where applicable
- Screenplay workshopping
- Demo reels and relevant pitching materials

Ineligible Costs

- Non-scriptwriting related travel expenses
- Living expenses
- Ongoing annual operational expenses
- Capital expenses
- Ineligible project/productions include: news, current events or public affairs programming; talk shows; sports event or activity; reality tv; pornography/adult entertainment; advertising; console or online video games; software programming platforms; video distribution platforms.

Application Details

An application can only be submitted after you have received approval from the Program Officer that your project is eligible (please reference [How to Apply](#) section).

Requirements

Applicants are required to submit the following:

- Screenwriters Development Fund Application Form
- Screenwriters Development Fund Budget Template
- All applicable supporting documents (letters of support, distribution/licensing agreements, additional funding agreements)

Applications will be accepted according to the deadlines of the current year you are applying for. These deadlines are subject to change year-over-year. For the deadlines for the current year reference our website.

Your application should clearly address the following:

Concept and Project Plan

- Demonstrate that the project reflects a viable NS film property with original and well-developed concept and vision
- Explain your projects market and commercial readiness and demonstrate potential for market and cultural impact (include critical path, target market, comparables and research)
- State committed financial support or other programs and/or demonstrated interest from investors/ financiers, broadcasters or distributors
 - Include any supplementary information confirming any listed investments or interest

Key Creative Personnel

- Demonstrate capacity to fulfill the proposed project. Including relevant experience and expertise and a record of past achievement in the industry
- Explain how the project team possesses the demonstrated cultural knowledge and capacity to advance the project as proposed

Alignment with Fund Objectives

- Explain how the project supports creation and development of film and/or TV projects by Nova Scotian filmmakers
- State opportunities this project provides for underrepresented and/or emerging writers, producers, contractors, cultural workers coinciding with the prioritization of the fund (reference [Prioritization](#) section)
- Demonstrate presence of policies and initiatives that support practices of equity, diversity and inclusion within the project/organization

Financial Capacity

- The application demonstrates financial capacity to undertake the project as proposed
- The application includes a budget that is clearly defined and provides sufficient justification for all listed expenses, and is in accordance with the stated eligible costs under the fund
- The application clearly identifies other funding sources either confirmed or pending to achieve the balance of funding required
 - Include any supplementary information (funding source confirmation)

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed after each deadline by an internal panel of evaluators. Reference [Appendix A: Evaluation Criteria](#) for additional details on scoring.

Prioritization

Within the assessment framework outlined above, the Screenwriters Development Fund will prioritize investment in projects that:

- Demonstrate significant and meaningful contributions to the project from members of Diverse Communities*
- Reflect gender parity amongst the key creative personnel of this phase of the project—Producer(s), Screenwriter and Directors (where applicable and determined)
- Provide equitable access to key creatives from the varied geographic areas and communities within Nova Scotia
- Support the efforts of emerging screenwriters and first-time recipients of the fund

**For the purposes of evaluation, the Screenwriter's Development Fund applies the definition of Diverse Community as set out in the guidelines of the [Canada Media Fund](#).*

A minimum 50% of the Screenwriter's Development Fund will be targeted toward qualifying applicants whose proposals meet the inclusion and gender-parity objectives of the Fund.

Notification of Results

Applicants are informed of funding decisions by email, often within 70 days of applying.

Payment Conditions of Investment

Applicants who are approved for funding receive a letter outlining the terms and conditions of funding.

Funding recipients must meet the following conditions:

- If the project is not undertaken after payment of the grant has been made, the recipient must return the funds to the Department
- Non-repayable contributions must be used for the activity as described in the application
- The Department must be notified in advance of any changes in the activity, including start and end dates, location, or any other significant changes
- Successful applicants must submit a Final Report by the date indicated in the terms and conditions document.

Final Reporting and Measurement

Final Reports are **required** from all successful applicants **within 60 days** of their project end date. Information (data/results) should directly relate to the program objectives identified in your proposal. You can find the Final Report Template on our website.

Measuring the success of this investment is crucial for our Department's analysis, which informs the continued development of this program. The program's overall success is measured by the return on our shared investment.

Overdue Final Reports

If your organization has received investment through any of the Culture and Heritage Development Division's or Arts Nova Scotia's project investment programs for which the Final Report is overdue, no funds can be released until the overdue report has been received.

Submission

Send completed applications to:

Creative Industries, creativeindustries@novascotia.ca

Note that applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of their application materials within 2 business days. Applicants who have not received confirmation should contact the program officer directly. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application has been received.

For further information:

Email: creativeindustries@novascotia.ca Web: cch.novascotia.ca

The Creative Industries office maintains regular office hours from 8:30AM - 4:30PM Monday to Friday. Inquiries will receive responses within 2-4 business days.

Appendix A: Evaluation Criteria

Applications to the Screenwriters Development Fund will be assessed according to the following framework:

Concept and Project Plan (30pts)

Provide a detailed project plan that reflects the quality, marketability and commercial readiness of the product. Provide details regarding the following:

- Demonstrate that the project reflects a viable NS film property with an original and well-developed concept (provide plot summary, project outline, pitch bible and/or treatment where applicable)

- Explain market and commercial readiness and demonstrate potential for market and cultural impact (include critical path, target market, comparables and any applicable research)
- State committed financial support or other programs and/or demonstrated interest from investors, broadcasters or distributors

Key Creative Personnel (25pts)

Explain how the project team demonstrates capacity to fulfill the proposed project, including relevant experience and expertise and a record of past achievement in the industry. Demonstrate the cultural knowledge and capacity to advance the project as proposed. Provide details regarding the following:

- Include details regarding the production team, writer and other core members of the project. Provide record of past successes and information that supports the applicant's overall ability to execute the project
- List any collaborators in the project and provide a short description of their involvement
- Clearly identify key project partners and contributors who advance the Fund's equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and gender parity objectives through meaningful and supported involvement in the project as proposed.
- Letters of support confirming collaborator participation may be included with supplementary material submitted with your application

Alignment with Fund Objectives (25pts)

Demonstrate how your project aligns with the goals of the Screenwriters Development Fund. Provide details regarding the following:

- Explain how the project supports creation and development of film and/or TV projects by Nova Scotian filmmakers
- State opportunities this project provides for underrepresented or emerging writers, producers, contractors, cultural workers coinciding with the prioritization of the fund (reference **Prioritization** section)
- Demonstrate presence of policies and initiatives that support practices of equity, diversity and inclusion within the project/organization

Financial Capacity (20pts)

Demonstrate how that balance of project costs will be financed. Include any confirmed or pending funding sources and provide verification in support material. Provide details regarding the following:

- Demonstrate financial capacity to undertake the project as proposed
- Include a budget that is clearly defined and adequately justifies all costs in accordance with the eligible costs of the fund
- Clearly identify other funding sources either confirmed or pending to achieve the balance of funding required
 - Include any supplementary information (funding source confirmation)