

MICRO-BUDGET PRODUCTION PROGRAM

Frequently-Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the main objective of the program?

The main goal of this program is to stimulate the use of new digital distribution platforms by emerging filmmakers and to allow these filmmakers to develop an expertise in digital marketing and promotion of audiovisual projects.

Therefore, during the projects' evaluation process, Telefilm will place a high degree of emphasis on the projects' promotion and distribution strategy on digital platforms.

2. What types of projects qualify as narrative-based web projects?

These projects must be fictional or documentary audiovisual projects produced in English, French or an Aboriginal language. They must be in narrative form (as opposed, for example, to “How to”, lifestyle, or reality videos) and must be intended to be viewed via digital platforms. These projects can be divided in one or more segments which, in total, must be longer than 10 minutes.

3. What is the contribution amount my project is eligible for and how is Telefilm's contribution allocated?

The contribution amount for which each project is eligible will depend on the format of the project (feature film or narrative-based web project) and on the total length of the project. The maximum contribution amount for feature films or for narrative-based web projects of 75 minutes and more in total length is \$127,500. The maximum contribution amount for narrative-based web projects under 75 minutes in total length is \$112,500, each full 10-minute segment giving access to a contribution amount of \$15,000.

The table below illustrates the total Telefilm contribution that is available per project, based on the project's length, as well as how this contribution is allocated:

Total Number of Minutes	Telefilm Base Contribution Amount (excluding digital marketing expert fee)	Allocation of the Telefilm Base Contribution		Digital Marketing Expert Fee	Total Maximum Telefilm Contribution
		Production Expenses	Promotion and Distribution Expenses (15% of the base contribution amount)		
10-19	\$15 000	\$12 750	\$2 250	\$7 500	\$22 500
20-29	\$30 000	\$25 500	\$4 500	\$7 500	\$37 500
30-39	\$45 000	\$38 250	\$6 750	\$7 500	\$52 500
40-49	\$60 000	\$51 000	\$9 000	\$7 500	\$67 500
50-59	\$75 000	\$63 750	\$11 250	\$7 500	\$82 500
60-69	\$90 000	\$76 500	\$13 500	\$7 500	\$97 500
70-74	\$105 000	\$89 250	\$15 750	\$7 500	\$112 500
≥75	\$120 000	\$102 000	\$18 000	\$7 500	\$127 500

4. Is there a minimum length for narrative-based web projects?

Yes. The total length of these projects cannot be shorter than 10 minutes. Note that projects can be divided into segments which are, individually, shorter than 10 minutes.

5. What happens if my narrative-based web project is longer or shorter than the time that was estimated at application?

If your project's final total length is longer than the duration estimated at application, your contribution amount will remain the same. However, if your project is shorter than the estimated duration at application, Telefilm reserves the right to reduce its contribution to the amount that corresponds to the final length of your project.

6. What is the role of a digital marketing expert?

A digital marketing expert must be engaged to assist your team to formulate a detailed promotion and distribution plan including a digital marketing and social media strategy. This plan should include a schedule identifying the timing of planned promotional activities such as the launch of a teaser, trailer or value-added materials; identification of target audiences and platforms where they can be reached; interaction with the targeted groups on specified social media platforms; and a budget and timeline for each action item.

7. Can I hire the digital expert of my choice?

Yes, as long as the expert is Canadian and can demonstrate, to Telefilm's satisfaction, previous experience in digital marketing of audiovisual projects.

8. Is there a regional or linguistic allocation component to this program?

No, there is not. However, during its selection process, Telefilm will seek to support projects from different regions and will make sure that official language minority communities' (OLMC) reflections and issues are taken into account. For these reasons, Telefilm will work with established industry partners from across the country in order to ensure the presence of regional and OLMC talent in the competitive roster. Note that, in addition to the main component of the program, this program has an OLMC component as well as an Indigenous component.

9. How did Telefilm select its partners for this program?

The partners are recognized training institutions with a film training program and a strong connection to emerging talent. The partners were also selected in a manner ensuring regional/provincial representation.

The list of selected partners is available on the program's website. Note that this list may change from year to year.

10. How does a creative team approach an industry partner in order to obtain a letter of recommendation?

Each partner is responsible for establishing its own selection process in order to provide a recommendation under this program. Creative teams should contact the partners directly, through the contact information provided on the program's website, in order to obtain information on the partners' selection process.

Partners should recommend projects that best meet the evaluation criteria established in the Program's Guidelines.

11. What is Telefilm’s decision-making timeline?

In order to start its review process, Telefilm must first receive recommendations from the program’s partners through Telefilm’s online application service. In their recommendations, the partners must state the name of the project that they wish to recommend, identify the key creative team, the format and applicable component for the project, as well as add a link to the microsite containing the elements set out in section 1.1.3 of the guidelines.

Telefilm’s selection committee will review the recommended projects and will inform the partners whether the projects that they have recommended are eligible to advance to the application stage.

The creative teams of the selected projects must then submit a formal application through Telefilm’s online application service using their incorporated company with all the required documents listed in the invitation letter sent to partners. Note that an applicant’s failure to submit a complete application to Telefilm within the time period specified in the invitation letter will result in the application being removed from the evaluation process.

12. The guidelines state that, for projects of equal quality, Telefilm will prioritize projects whose key creatives reflect the diversity of the country. What does this mean?

Telefilm has given itself the objective that, by 2020, it would have a representative and diversified feature film portfolio that better reflects gender, cultural diversity and Canada’s Indigenous communities.

In order to meet this objective, Telefilm will collaborate and exchange information with the audiovisual industry to identify the areas where our collective efforts should be placed in priority. Based on our consultations, for 2017, our first goal will be to favor projects directed or written by women, while continuing to champion and support the works of Indigenous creators and members of communities representing Canada’s cultural diversity. By 2020, we aim to have reached a portfolio that reflects gender parity in each of the key roles of director, writer and producer.

Based on the information that we will collect, we will re-evaluate each year what our priorities should be in order to reach our global diversity objective.

13. What is the timeline for delivery and release of a completed project?

Micro-Budget projects must be completed and delivered to Telefilm no later than 18 months after Telefilm’s invitation to apply. The projects must be made available to the public through a digital platform no later than 3 months after completion.

While Telefilm recognizes that traditional distribution platforms such as festivals, broadcast or theatrical releases are appropriate to be included in the overall release strategy of the projects, the main goal of the Micro-Budget program is to stimulate the use of new digital distribution platforms by emerging filmmakers. In order to strike a balance between these different release strategies, the release on a digital platform may be delayed for an additional maximum period of 6 months in the event that a project is selected at one or more festivals or in the event of a confirmed theatrical release or broadcast.

All projects must also be made available to the public through Telefilm’s channel on the National Film Board of Canada (“NFB”)’s revenue sharing platform at the latest 18 months after completion. Note that a project that fails to be released on a digital platform within 3 months of its completion (or 9 months in the case of a festival, theatrical or broadcast release) will have to be released on the NFB platform at the expiry of that period.

Finally, applicants will be required to submit periodic audience reports that will measure audience viewership and accessibility of projects across various platforms. This will help both Telefilm and applicants gather intelligence on the best practices regarding digital distribution and marketing of audiovisual projects.

14. Can partners be involved in the projects that they recommend?

Partners can provide support to the projects that they recommend through non-remunerated mentorship or in-kind services. However, in no case can partners acquire rights in the recommended project nor can they benefit from the financing provided by Telefilm to the applicant or from revenues generated by the project.

15. Are documentaries or animated films eligible for financing under this program?

Yes they are.

16. Do I have to have my project encoded by Technicolor?

No. However, applicants who wish to have their projects encoded elsewhere must reserve sufficient funds for encoding out of their budget and must make sure that their projects are encoded at a quality level that allows distribution on the widest variety of digital platforms (iTunes, NFB platform, etc.).

17. Is there a particular digital platform that I should use to submit the elements required at the recommendation stage?

Yes. The elements listed in section 1.1.3 of the program's guidelines must be submitted through a microsite.

Industry partners must include a functional link to the microsite in their recommendation to Telefilm with all passwords necessary for Telefilm to access this platform. All of the documents required at the recommendation stage must be submitted through this microsite. **Documents should not be submitted separately to Telefilm.**

The links to the microsites should remain active until receipt of a notice from Telefilm that the project has not been retained to proceed to the application stage or signature of the Telefilm financing agreement, as the case may be.

18. Are completion projects eligible to apply?

No they are not.

19. The guidelines state that the key members of all recommended projects must not have produced, directed or written a feature length film before. Can they have previously produced, directed or written a narrative-based web project?

Applicants must have produced, directed or written a short film of under 30 minutes that may have been made available on a digital platform. However, applicants who wish to apply for a narrative-based web project cannot have produced, directed or written a web series.