

Guidelines

Career Development Initiatives Program

Applicable for activities
starting on or after
October 1, 2026

Ce document est également disponible en français

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Program Intentions and Outcomes

Aligned with Telefilm Canada’s (“**Telefilm**”) [Strategic Orientation Framework](#), Telefilm’s Career Development Initiatives Program (the “**Program**”) advances the goal of strengthening Canada’s audiovisual industry by supporting the career progression of Canadian and Indigenous professionals nationwide.

The Program provides targeted financial support for capacity-building activities that strengthen the talent pipeline for Canadian and Indigenous creators and professional workers in the audiovisual sector—prioritizing mentorship, professional development, skills enhancement and career advancement.

The Program aims to:

- Strengthen the industry by supporting activities that address current and emerging gaps in Canadian content, talent, and professional development;
- Create opportunities for industry professionals to build expertise, gain hands-on experience and advance their careers;
- Support the growth of the Canadian audiovisual industry nationally and its expansion internationally;
- Encourage collaboration among career development organizations and other expert partners; and
- Support an equitable¹ and balanced portfolio of activities, reflecting regional and diverse representation.

In support of Telefilm’s broader commitments, the Program focuses on national activities and integrates equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and environmental sustainability, helping build an industry that is representative of, and accountable to, communities across Canada.

These guidelines set out the Program’s eligibility requirements and funding conditions.

How will we influence and measure program outcomes?

Telefilm is introducing new datasets for this Program to measure **Industry Growth** and **Career Advancement**. Additionally, key performance indicators will ensure we are advancing our commitments as set out in our Plans for Official Languages (including OLMC), EDIA and Reconciliation, as well as our Regional Strategies. These indicators will guide decisions and allow Telefilm to monitor and measure important data that will be shared with the industry yearly. Measured results will influence targeted actions and strategies when required.

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|---|---|
| • # of trainees accessing development, production, marketing or international programs | • Industry professionals demonstrating increased readiness and more successful applications |
| • Growth in % of EDIA, OLMC and Regionally owned companies accessing development, production, marketing or international programs | • Data being used to inform all Telefilm programs and shared with the industry |

¹ Telefilm seeks to achieve resource equity (the distribution of resources across the portfolio in order to close equity gaps) and representation equity (the proportional participation within the portfolio) in its funding decisions.

NOTE: As identified in consultations with the industry and by the Black Screen Office (BSO), there is a demonstrable need to standardize career/talent stage definitions within the Canadian audiovisual industry. In partnership with the Canada Media Fund (CMF), Telefilm is proposing the adoption of standardized definitions, drawing on [those outlined by the BSO](#), through the relaunch of this Program. These definitions will be further refined through structured insight meetings and industry engagement. A shared approach will enable Telefilm and the CMF to monitor program reach across career stages, identify underserved groups, and capture clearer data on the skills and knowledge addressed through, among others, development, production, marketing, and international promotion programs, thereby informing future program design and investment priorities. Please see the Essential Information Guide on the Program's [webpage](#) for a list and definitions of the career stages for the purposes of this Program.

Presentation of the Program Streams

Funding under this Program is provided under two separate streams:

- **Prequalified Stream:** Accelerated funding for prequalified applicants who meet the eligibility criteria as described below. All eligible applicants in this stream will be notified prior to the opening of the Program of their eligibility status and the amount of funding they are eligible to apply for (as set out in section 4.3. below). The Prequalified Stream is intended to provide funding to national training institutes whose main mandate is to operate career development activities in the audiovisual sector, and who have a track record of prior Telefilm funding. Accelerated funding under this stream is not automatic and activities must continue to meet the criteria and intentions of the Program.
- **Selective Stream:** All other applications will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria and process indicated below.

1 Eligibility Criteria for Applicants

1.1. Criteria Applicable to All Streams

To be eligible, the applicant must be an organization that meets all the following eligibility criteria:

- have its head office in Canada and carry out its activities in Canada;
- be a Canadian-controlled corporation, as defined in sections 26 to 28 of the [Investment Canada Act](#), working in the film, television or digital media sectors; and
- the applicant may not be an elementary school, middle school, high school, college, or university.

1.2. Criteria Applicable to the Prequalified Stream

In addition to meeting the above criteria, applicants must meet the following to be eligible for the Prequalified Stream of the Program:

- be a national training institute whose mandate is career development in the audiovisual sector; and
- have received a minimum of **\$100,000** per fiscal year in Telefilm funding for career development activities in the two most recent fiscal years, respectively.

Note that applicants that are eligible to the Prequalified Stream may not apply to the Selective Stream.

2 Eligibility Criteria for Activities

2.1. Criteria Applicable to All Streams

To be eligible, activities must meet all the following eligibility criteria:

- the activity's purpose must be to provide mentorship, professional development, career advancement and/or skills development for Canadian and Indigenous professional workers in the audiovisual industry²; and
- each edition of an activity may be submitted only once per fiscal year.

2.2. Criteria Applicable to the Selective Stream

In addition to meeting the above criteria, activities must meet the following to be eligible for the Selective Stream of the Program:

- have been held in its current format at least once before in the last 5 years (**Previous Edition**);
- have had a minimum total activity final cost of **\$7,500** in their Previous Edition;
- have a minimum total activity budget of **\$10,000** for the current edition for which funding is requested; and
- applicants will be subject to a maximum of **2 applications** per fiscal year within this Program.

2.3. Criteria Applicable to the Prequalified Stream

- Eligible applicants in the Prequalified Stream will be subject to a maximum of **4 applications** per fiscal year within this Program.

2.4. Ineligible Activities

The following activities are not eligible for the Program:

- conferences, industry forums, and awards ceremonies (these activities may be funded under the [Industry Promotion Initiatives Program](#)); and
- activities providing career development which take place **only** during the dates of a film festival, which are operated by the same organization as the film festival, and which film festival has been funded under the [Medium to Large-Scale Festivals Program](#) or the [General Admission Festivals Program](#).

3 Evaluation Criteria

3.1. Criteria Applicable to All Streams

All activities in all streams shall be subject to an evaluation process to assess their alignment with the eligibility criteria and intentions of the Program and are not guaranteed funding under this Program.

² See the Essential Information Guide available on the Program's [webpage](#) for more details.

3.2. Criteria Applicable to the Selective Stream

Applications to the Selective Stream will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below:

3.2.1. Activity Alignment & Impact

- The activity's alignment with the intentions of the Program;
- The skill or knowledge gap(s) for Canadian industry professionals being addressed by the activity; and
- The tangible takeaways for activity participants, such as scripts, short films, business plans, pitch proposals, screen credits, marketing plans, employment outcomes, or new or improved skill sets.

3.2.2. Activity Design & Innovation

- The scope of the activity, including activity duration, number of and career stage of participants, type of activity, confirmed partnerships; and
- The innovative and relevant nature of the activity in terms of content and programming, partnerships, international reach, leveraging of digital platforms, or training in new technologies or practices.

3.2.3. Organizational & Delivery Capacity

- The relevant experience of the key personnel of the activity, including how the trainers are qualified to deliver the activity;
- The ability for the applicant to deliver the proposed activities (budget, financial structure, results of the previous edition); and
- The applicant's history of fulfilment of Telefilm's contractual obligations, including but not limited to the timely provision of reporting.

The breadth of applications and applicants/organizing teams will also be considered. Activities that are held in a hybrid or in-person format may be considered preferentially for funding over online-only activities. Activities that target mid-career or established participants may be considered preferentially for funding, unless the activity furthers Telefilm's objective to fund an equitable and balanced portfolio in terms of regional and diverse representation as described in 3.3. below.

3.3. Diversity of Voices

The decision-making process takes into account Telefilm's objective to fund an equitable and balanced portfolio in terms of regional representation and diversity of voices.

In line with our commitments to Official Languages, data will be collected to assess the feasibility of a potential resource allocation on a linguistic basis, namely, that one-third of the funding could be dedicated to activities in the French language.

As part of fostering a diversity of voices, Telefilm may prioritize activities whose **mandate** is to **only** train professionals who belong to historically underrepresented groups:

- Indigenous people;
- Black people;
- People of Colour;
- 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals;
- Women;
- Gender-diverse identities and expressions;
- Persons with disabilities;
- Members of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMC).

4 Terms of Funding

4.1. Telefilm's Financial Participation

Telefilm's financial participation will take the form of a **non-repayable contribution** to cover the applicant's eligible costs as described in Section 5.

4.2. Amount of Telefilm's Financial Participation – Selective Stream

The amount of Telefilm's financial participation for activities in the Selective Stream will be calculated based on the availability of funding, the budget of the activity, and the scope of the activity. Amounts may be increased for activities whose **mandate** is **only** to train professionals who belong to historically underrepresented groups as listed in Section 3.3.

Telefilm's financial participation for activities in the Selective Stream will not exceed the lower of **\$75,000** or **75%** of the budget of the activity for which funding is requested.

4.3. Amount of Telefilm's Financial Participation – Prequalified Stream

The amount of Telefilm's financial participation for applicants in the Prequalified Stream will be a minimum per fiscal year of **\$200,000**, which amount may be increased based on Telefilm's objective to fund an equitable and balanced portfolio in terms of regional and diverse representation. Applicants in this stream who have confirmed partnerships with other expert organizations³ may also receive additional funding of up to **\$25,000** per applicant per fiscal year. All amounts are subject to the availability of funds.

Telefilm's financial participation for applicants in the Prequalified Stream will not exceed **\$350,000** per fiscal year.

Prequalified Stream applicants may divide their financial participation amount amongst up to **4 separate activities**, but funding allocated to each activity cannot exceed **75%** of the budget of that activity.

4.4. Access to Funding

Telefilm's funding must be used to cover the eligible costs described in Section 5. Telefilm reserves the right to reduce its funding upon review of final cost reports submitted by applicants. Furthermore, costs covered by Telefilm must not be borne by any other entity or program.

Telefilm's financial participation is contingent on the applicant's continued compliance with the eligibility and evaluation criteria described above, as well as the availability of funds in the Program.

It is important to note that funds under this Program are limited and that not all applicants who meet the eligibility criteria are guaranteed to receive funding.

Further, applicants and activities that have received Telefilm funding under the Promotion Program in past years are not guaranteed to receive funding via this Program or any other program.

5 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs shall be incurred in connection with the funded activity only, and shall comply with the following types of costs:

Programming: direct costs related to the design of the funded activity's programming, including but not limited to:

- Staff salaries and benefits (pro-rated per cost category and for the funded activity only)
- Consultants, trainers/teachers, mentors or programmers (non-staff) fees or honorariums

³ An expert organization is an organization providing the applicant with specific expertise that is essential to the design and/or delivery of the activity.

- Travel and accommodation (staff and guest related)

Communication and Promotion: direct costs related to the funded activity's communication and promotion strategy, including but not limited to:

- Staff salaries and benefits (pro-rated per cost category and for the funded activity only)
- Consultant fees
- Promotional materials/assets
- Digital and social media related expenses
- Advertising
- Website maintenance/redesign
- Internet/bandwidth increases
- Translation/revision of marketing materials

Production: direct costs related to delivering the funded activity to its targeted audience(s), including but not limited to:

- Staff salaries and benefits (pro-rated per cost category and for the funded activity only)
- Freelance, contractual labour, technical crew, and other consultants (non-staff)
- Permits
- Rentals for venue, equipment, and vehicles
- Networking activities
- Prizes and awards-giving
- Catering
- Insurance
- Waste management (e.g. recycling, compost, deposits, hazardous materials, etc.)
- Source reduction and reuse (e.g. water fountains, reusable tableware, etc.)
- Translators, video description services, ASL & LSQ interpreters and other expenses related to accessibility accommodations

Administration: direct and reasonable costs related to the funded activity's various administrative fees; it being understood that costs related to the applicant's core business and capital expenditures, such as rent, staff salaries, equipment rentals and other maintenance charges, are only eligible if they are prorated and directly related to the funded activity. **These costs cannot exceed 35% of the activity's total direct costs.**⁴

Only Canadian expenses shall be eligible. However, Telefilm shall assess the eligibility of expenses incurred outside of Canada when services of a comparable nature are not available in Canada and are essential to the success of the funded activity.

6 Application Process

Applications under this Program must be submitted during the appropriate application period indicated on the Program's [webpage](#), depending on the scheduled start dates of the activity.

All applications must be submitted online via [Dialogue](#) and include the documents included in the list of required documents available on the Program's [webpage](#). Please note that incomplete applications may be automatically rejected.

A separate application must be submitted for each activity that is seeking funding, each with their own set of documents as required by the Program.

For more information, please consult the Essential Information Guide on Program's [webpage](#). All first-time applicants are encouraged to contact their Promotion Lead before applying.

⁴ See the Essential Information Guide available on the Program's [webpage](#) for more details.

7 General Information

Compliance with the guidelines is a prerequisite for funding eligibility but does not guarantee access to Telefilm funding. Telefilm reserves the right to modify its guidelines and application forms as needed. The implementation and interpretation of these guidelines are at Telefilm's sole discretion, and Telefilm ensures that its funding is granted to activities that respect the Program's spirit and intent. For any questions regarding the interpretation of these guidelines or the spirit and intent of the Program, Telefilm's interpretation shall prevail.

Please note that Telefilm expects all applicants to read its [Code of conduct for business partners](#) and comply with its requirements in the course of their dealings with Telefilm. Acceptance and adherence to this code of conduct is mandatory for all applicants and it is a condition to the continuation of any activity with Telefilm.

All information provided, obtained, created or disclosed in connection with the application is subject to the [Access to Information Act](#) and the [Privacy Act](#).

All Telefilm programs are subject to the availability of funding from government and other sources.