

Film Agency for Wales Film Festival Strategy and Application Guidelines

Introduction

Established as an objective in our original exhibition strategy, the Film Agency for Wales has reviewed film festival activity across Wales since our inception, and in the context of the UK Film Councils UK-Wide film festival strategy, herein set out our proposed film festival strategy going forward. This document lays out the aims and funding priorities for the Film Agency's 'Film Festival Fund' designed to help new and existing festivals to realise or enhance their scale, reach and ambition.

Festival Definition

'An event which takes place annually, bi-annually or less frequently which offers film screenings or a programme of films that would not otherwise be available to the local or national population. It includes events associated with the festival e.g. debate, criticism, guest speakers etc. These features create a sense of occasion/time/place and generate a unique atmosphere of anticipation, excitement and learning which over time permeates the festival's brand.'

Funding

The Film Festival Fund in conjunction with the new Discretionary Exhibition Project Fund, for non-festival exhibition activity (see separate guidelines), replaces the previous Project Exhibition funding strand and is open to applications from all film festivals in Wales other than the International Film Event, which is funded through other means.

The film festival fund will make available the following per annum:

- A total of £45,000 will be allocated to festivals that are, or in the opinion of the Film Agency have the potential to be of **national** significance (Strand 1). Available funding will be capped at 75% of the total budget or £15K per festival whichever is the lower amount;
- A total of £15,000 will be allocated to festivals that are of **local/or regional** significance (Strand 2). Available funding will be capped at 75% of the total budget or £5k per festival, whichever is the lower amount.

The Film Agency for Wales' Goals:

The Film Agency for Wales' festival strategy is designed to support film festival organisers, enabling them to establish, maintain and enhance their festival activity

We will offer advocacy, advice and assistance to festivals, including those who may wish to apply for funding from the UKFC Festival Fund, and/or who aim to forge new networks and alliances within or beyond Wales.

We will listen to, identify and understand the needs and desires of the festival sector going forward.

In this respect we propose facilitating the setting up of a network of festival representatives across Wales to facilitate discussion on relevant topics and to discuss best practice. This could be a forum for learning, sharing and initiative-building between festivals.

- The Agency's priority is to promote a vibrant and dynamic film culture, through increasing access to and broadening the range of films available to all audiences across Wales;
- To facilitate the range and potentially increase the number of festivals that deliver across Wales and for a wider audience;
- To enhance the value of existing provision of festivals and champion collaboration, utilising partnerships and a network of exhibitors to maximise audience choice and access;
- We will also encourage all festivals to seek diversity of funding in future years so they are less reliant on any given funder;

We acknowledge that, together film festivals make a major contribution to the Film Agency for Wales' overall goal of broadening the range of films available to audiences across Wales.

Overview of the Film Festival Landscape in Wales.

There are currently 16 annual film festivals of various types across Wales. They range in size, ambition, focus and type, though the majority are local and offer a rich diversity to audiences in their particular area. A number of these festivals have sought to collaborate on programming and education in addition to developing their own USP with several touring their programmes to multiple areas.

The Film Festival Fund is aimed at building the ambition, geographical reach and diversity of audience of these festivals that currently or potentially are of local and national significance.

Values

The Film Agency wishes to set out clear impact measurement criteria for all festivals which can be applied to the overall funding mechanism we employ and that is compatible with the UKFC's UK-Wide festival strategy to which festivals of national and international significance are encouraged to apply.

The Agency recognises that festivals contain some or all of the following values, however we do not expect festivals to demonstrate all values.

Strand 1 – Festivals of National Significance

Festivals applying to this strand should provide a **3 year business plan** outlining the festivals vision for the future and its distinct USP, and must demonstrate at least 4 of the following criteria:

- Significant geographical reach across Wales including the use multiple venues screening films not otherwise publicly available;
- Collaborative relationships with other appropriate organisations from Wales and or elsewhere in the UK or abroad;
- Diversity of audience;
- A clear Company Development/Industry Focus AND/OR significant stimulation of cultural debate with specific input from relevant specialist speakers;
- Clear and structured formal and informal educational value;

Successful applications to strand 1 will receive up to 75% of the project's cost, up to a cap of £15,000 (whichever is the lower amount). However, it should be noted that due to limited resources, the maximum amount can only be given under exceptional circumstances.

Strand 2 – Festivals of Local/Regional Significance

Festivals applying to this fund should be able to demonstrate the following criteria:

- Significant reach in their local community (with audience statistics and demographic breakdown);
- Increasing access to a wider range of films for the community;
- Provide a formal and/or informal education programme for all ages;
- Encouraging diversity of audience.

Successful applications to strand 2 may receive up to 75% of the project's cost, up to a cap of £5,000 (whichever is the lower amount).

Assessment Criteria

1. Each festival will be assessed on its own merits and in context, with regard given as to whether it is new, emerging or an established event and the festivals ambitions of the future.
2. The assessment process will take into account the viability of the festival in relation to its budget and value per head/cost, its schedule, financing and, in the case of Strand 1 festivals, its (3 year) business plan.
3. Additionally the Film Agency will assess the festivals relative contribution against the following four core cultural values.

1. Cultural Value for the individual, diversity of audience and material, including use of Archive footage.	Providing pleasure and stimulation from film in all its variety, and thus enriching the life of individual citizens through films that are not otherwise available. This can be achieved through programming choices, screening
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	environments and events enriching the film experience such as Q+A Sessions.
2. Educational Value *	Improving, increasing and deepening understanding of the world and its diversity and its history for citizens of all ages through film literacy. Education may be structured in a formal manner, or intrinsically delivered through the festival in various forms.
3. Social Value – Communities. Rural re-generation, Bilingualism, Communities First Areas	Improving understanding within and between communities, encouraging participation by all and enriching the life of those communities across the UK. This may include different communities seeing and enjoying films that they would not normally encounter
4. Representational Value	Representing Wales around the UK and internationally, and building partnerships with other festivals and organisations.

* Please note separate Education Funding strand to which festivals with sufficient focus on film literacy can additionally apply.

Funding guidelines

Eligibility

Applications for funding will be accepted at any time and at any stage of the proposal's development from incorporated companies (i.e. not individuals) and who operate on a not-for-profit basis. Where the proposal is at an early stage, but addresses or is likely to address the Agency's Aims and Objectives and Guiding principles, we will collaborate in working up that proposal to facilitate it reaching a form that could potentially be funded.

Application Procedure

Applicants should complete and submit an application form which can be downloaded from the website and submitted as a hard copy, or you can contact the Agency if you would prefer a hard copy to be sent to you. Applications will be accepted at any time (i.e. there will be no funding rounds/deadlines).

Funding Decisions

Applications will be considered by the Audience Development Manager and Chief Executive, (with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman called upon where appropriate). Decisions will normally be made and communicated in writing within 4-6 weeks of application.

The Film Agency's funding will take the form of a non-recoupable grant-in-aid and will be subject to a written agreement between the Film Agency and the applicant, which will be tailored to specific circumstances. Please note that the Film Agency

may withdraw or reducing funding if significant changes occur to the exhibitor's circumstances and/or the proposed project.

Contact Details

If you have any queries, or if you would like to discuss any aspect of your project prior to application, please contact:

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