

**SCREEN SCOTLAND  
SGRÌN ALBA**

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# **SCREEN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND**

**APPLICATION GUIDANCE  
UPDATED JUNE 2024**



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

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# About Screen Scotland

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We were established in 2018 as part of [Creative Scotland](#) and deliver these services and support with funding from the Scottish Government and The National Lottery.

Screen Scotland's vision is to cultivate creatively ambitious and economically sustainable film and TV sectors in Scotland, which provide fulfilling jobs and opportunities for people across the country, at all stages of their careers.

We work to develop Scotland's creative potential as a filmmaking nation and as an originator of distinctive films, television programmes and content enjoyed by audiences the world over.

Discover more in our [Strategy to 2023/31](#).

# Alternative Formats, Languages and Access Support

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Screen Scotland is committed to offering clear and accessible application processes that are open to everyone. We have several ways of supporting you in making an application.

## Alternative Formats and Languages

Our published materials, including funding guidance and application forms, are provided in alternative formats and languages. On request, they can be made available in other formats, as required.

We can accept applications and supporting materials which are written in English, Gaelic or Scots.

## Access Support

Access support contributes to costs for services to help applicants overcome barriers to applying for our funds.

We offer access support to individuals or the lead applicant of a group who self-identify as d/Deaf, hard of hearing, disabled or living with chronic illness, mental illness or neurodivergence, such as dyslexia, autism or ADHD.

Visit our website to learn more about the types of support you can request, how and when to request assistance and, how to request access costs as part of your funding application:

[Access Support | Creative Scotland](#).

If you are a d/Deaf BSL user, you can access our services with the Contact Scotland-BSL programme.

Visit [www.contactscotland-bsl.org](http://www.contactscotland-bsl.org) for more information.

# Contacting our Enquiries Service

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If you require technical support, further information or have any other queries, contact our Enquiries Service by email, website or social media.

**Email:** [enquiries@creativescotland.com](mailto:enquiries@creativescotland.com)

**Website:** Fill out a [form on our website](#)

We aim to respond to all enquiries promptly. If you want us to call you back, give us your number and we'll arrange to come back to you as soon as possible.

# Professional Development Fund

## What is the aim of the fund?

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Continuous development and inclusive expansion of Scotland's screen workforce is essential to both our sector's growth and ensuring its diversity at all levels and in all roles. This fund aims to contribute to this by providing support for individuals already working in film and television to access training, mentoring and other professional development activities, nationally and internationally. Priority will be given to:

- **Developments in areas of skills shortages** (outlined in the Skills Priorities section below) and
- **Applicants under-represented in the screen industries.**

### Skills Priorities

While there are skills gaps throughout the screen workforce, areas of particular concern include skills associated with the following roles:

- Production (Producers, Line Producers, Unit Production Managers, Production Managers and Production Co-ordinators)
- First and Second Assistant Directors
- Heads of Department and Supervisory Grades across technical and craft departments in film and TV
- Locations
- TV Series Producers
- Showrunners
- Editors
- Development Executives and Researchers
- Script Editors.

## Under-Represented Groups

We will prioritise applications from those who are under-represented across the screen sector in Scotland. Current evidence indicates that these under-represented people are those who self-identify as disabled, those who come from Black and Minority Ethnic cultural backgrounds, women, and gender non-conforming identities. There have been a number of gender-focussed studies that indicate a particular under-representation of women in areas of Directing, Camera, Post-Production and VFX.

Please see Creative Scotland's [Equality Matters](#) and [Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion in the Screen Sector](#) for further information.

## What can I apply for?

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**The fund may cover the following activities (note that this is a guide and not restrictive):**

- A structured training programme of relevant creative or technical skills development
- Screen-related business skills development (eg film financing, IP rights)
- Participation in talent labs
- Relevant and structured mentoring, shadowing and work-based learning
- Other types of development activity will be considered, including those which accommodate particular access needs, if they fulfil the Assessment Criteria below.

**You must supply a budget for participation with your application, and expenditure should only cover the following:**

- Registration/course/activity fee
- Economy Travel
- Accommodation
- Subsistence of up to a maximum of £30 per day
- Project Access Costs (including childcare costs, where applicants are unlikely to be able to attend planned development activities without this support – please explain why this support is required. Note that childcare costs are classed as a taxable benefit, so whilst Screen Scotland will reimburse these costs, you will be responsible for reporting this benefit to HMRC.)
- Personal Access Costs (more detail below)
- Other costs associated with the proposed activity may be considered, if a strong case is made for them within your application.

# What the fund will not cover

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**The following is not exhaustive and if you want to check please contact our Enquiries Service.**

- Support for those in full-time courses in Further and Higher Education (including HNC, HND, degree and postgraduate programmes)
- Equipment costs
- Salary costs
- You should be aware that we will not normally support applications for activity which is already supported by Screen Scotland, either directly through our existing skills and talent development programmes ([details on the Screen Scotland website](#)), or indirectly, through Film Hub Scotland
- If you wish to attend a market or festival for the development of a specific project or if your work is screening in competition, you should apply to Screen Scotland's [Market and Festival Attendance Fund](#).

# Personal Access Costs

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**If you, or any key collaborators involved in developing and leading your activity, are d/Deaf, disabled or neurodivergent, you may have additional costs relating to your own access needs, in order to deliver the project.**

Some examples are:

- a BSL interpreter
- specialist equipment or software
- additional travel costs
- a Personal Assistant for a disabled person

**Please note**, that this list is not exhaustive, and you should tell us what you require in order to deliver the activity.

**Please also note**, Personal Access Costs are treated separately to your main project budget. They do not count towards your total funding request. This is to ensure that your requests under Personal Access Costs do not push you into a higher funding band or take your total budget over the maximum funding level for the fund.

# Access to Work

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You may also be eligible to apply for support from the UK Government's Access to Work fund, which can help cover some of the extra costs of carrying out your job, or travelling to, from and during work if you are disabled. More information on Access to Work is available on the UK Government website.

For more information, please refer to the Access Support page on [Creative Scotland's website](#).

# Who can apply?

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Applications are welcome from individuals who live in Scotland and work within the Scottish film and TV sector. The fund is aimed primarily at freelancers. However, applications from individuals working in small and growing screen businesses may be considered if a strong case for public funding is made, and there is a cash contribution from your employer to the budget.

Please note that this fund cannot support new entrants to the industry. You must be able to demonstrate the work you have undertaken in the screen sector to date, which will include at least 2-3 credits. Please see the [Screen Scotland website](#) for information on new entrants training schemes, or contact our Enquiries Service.

Those currently in full-time education are not eligible to apply.

We will prioritise applicants who have not previously received developmental support from Screen Scotland in the 12 months prior to current application.



## How much can I apply for?

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You can apply to this fund for any amount between £250 and £5,000 (not including personal access costs). You should include a rationale explaining why you require this level of support to undertake the development programme, and your budget must include a minimum of 10% cash or in-kind contribution, from personal or other resources.

You should demonstrate that you have considered and, if applicable, applied for other appropriate support funds in addition to Screen Scotland (eg the [ScreenSkills bursary fund](#)) and included these in your budget.

Awards will vary depending on the location and nature of the developmental activity, and the estimated cost of accreditation and attendance. Higher costs of travel and attendance for those located in rural areas of Scotland will be considered.

**Please note**, we will only consider awarding above the maximum in exceptional circumstances (for example, where the cost of attendance is high due to the location or nature of the course or event). Your application must clearly demonstrate why there is a need to make such an award.

## When can I apply?

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This fund is open all year round. You can apply up to **two weeks** before the activity is scheduled to begin.

If you are waiting for acceptance on a course and/or need funding well in advance, we would encourage you to apply for the Screen Professional Development fund early, even before your place has been confirmed.

If you apply less than two weeks before the professional development activity begins, your application will be deemed ineligible.

**Please note**, successful applicants will be notified ahead of their activity but are unlikely to receive their funding within the minimum two-week window.

# How long will it take to get a decision on my application?

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Decisions will take up to **two weeks** from the date we receive your application form and consider it complete.

# What to consider before applying for Professional Development Funding

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This programme is intended to support applicants who have demonstrably embarked on a career in the screen sector in Scotland, and funding can be applied for at any stage of your career.

## **The proposed activity should:**

- Enhance your learning and professional practice
- Develop your career and professional opportunities
- Benefit the wider screen sector in Scotland.

Therefore, you must be able to demonstrate how the proposed activity will build on your work and experience to date to advance your career. Work carried out while a student is not considered relevant experience.

The proposed activity should also address development needs and skills gaps in your chosen field and the wider Scottish screen sector, referencing known skills gaps and industry standards (see for example [A Skills Audit of the UK Film and Screen Industries](#)).

## **Your application should include (within the application form or additional supporting documentation):**

- An outline plan and schedule for the proposed activity, including appropriate risk assessment
- Information establishing the track record and/or professional recognition of those delivering your proposed activity.
- The skills and career outcomes you seek from the activity, related to your CV
- Demonstration of individual need, and current barriers to professional development.

**Supporting Materials that will be required when submitting your application:**

- Copy of your acceptance to a course (where applicable)
- Your CV and/or a statement about your relevant experience and/or credits in film and/or television
- Details of a professional referee
- A detailed budget
- Confirmation of other funding contributions.

## Assessment Criteria

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**Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:**

- The extent to which the proposed activity will contribute to your professional development in relation to your work and experience to date
- The extent to which the proposed activity will enhance your career prospects
- The extent to which the proposed activity addresses known skills needs in the relevant screen sector
- The extent to which the personnel delivering the training has an established track record / appropriate experience
- Individual need and the extent to which the proposed activity helps to break down barriers to progression
- Value for money.

## Evaluation

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The grant awarded through this fund does not have to be repaid, but all successful applicants will be required to complete an evaluative report on the programme undertaken.

# Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

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As a lottery distributor and public funder, Creative Scotland / Screen Scotland is committed to addressing diversity in film and television, as outlined in our review of equalities, diversity and inclusion in Scotland's screen sector, [Equality Matters](#) (2017) and elsewhere.

A proactive approach to increasing diversity can improve screen projects creatively, fueling innovation and creativity, and engaging audiences through a wider range of stories, perspectives and experiences. It can also benefit projects commercially, attracting wider audiences and generating greater revenues. Creative Scotland / Screen Scotland believes that true representation both on and off screen is vital for the sustainability and equity of the screen sector.

The Screen Professional Development Fund has been established to help those under-represented in the screen sector to access the developmental support they need to progress in their careers.

## How to apply

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### **Do you need help or access support before making an application?**

Access support is available to applicants to overcome any barriers when applying to our funds.

For more information, please refer to the [access cost section](#) or visit [Creative Scotland's website](#).

# Making an application

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All applications to the Professional Development Fund must be made through Screen Scotland's [online application portal](#).

For information on how to register, access and complete the application form, visit: [my.creativescotland.com/user-guide](https://my.creativescotland.com/user-guide).

To register an account, visit: [my.creativescotland.com/signup](https://my.creativescotland.com/signup)

If you are already registered, log in to the portal at [my.creativescotland.com/login](https://my.creativescotland.com/login)

To access the application portal, visit: [my.creativescotland.com](https://my.creativescotland.com)

1. Once logged in, select the **Professional Development Fund** application form.
2. Click on '**Apply Now**' to begin your application and complete the form as instructed.
3. You can **save your application** and return to it at any time.
4. If you need access support during the application, click on the '**Access Support**' button. This will inform the support team of your requirements and you will be contacted as soon as possible.
5. **Once you have completed and submitted your application**, you will receive a confirmation message with a reference number. If you do not receive this email, check that you have submitted the application, and then contact the Enquiries Service.

Please note, it is not possible to amend the application once it is being assessed, so ensure that you thoroughly review and check before submission.

# Our assessment and decision-making process

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## What happens when we receive your application?

Once you have submitted your application we will review it for completeness and eligibility. If you have not provided all of the information required, or if you do not meet the eligibility criteria for Screen Funding, your application will not be assessed. You will be notified of this, and of the reasons why, by email.

Complete and eligible applications will be assessed by Screen Scotland Officers, against the criteria and priorities set out in this guidance.

Assessments will be made on the basis of the information you provide in your application form and any supporting materials submitted.

We may contact you during the assessment process to seek further information about your project or clarification on aspects of the information you provide.

## How we will make our decisions

Applications will be assessed by a Screen Officer with relevant expertise. They will make a recommendation to support or reject the application based on the Fund's guidelines. This recommendation will be reviewed by the Director of Screen before a final decision is communicated to the applicant.

As with most funders, we can only fund a proportion of the applications we receive. However, we will offer feedback to unsuccessful applicants to strengthen their future applications. We will only accept an application for the same project if the reasons for it previously being unsuccessful have been addressed.

## Once a decision is made:

Once we have reached a decision, we will email you to let you know the outcome of your application.

Successful applicants will be notified ahead of their activity but are unlikely to receive their funding within the minimum two-week window. If you are waiting for acceptance on a course and/or need funding well in advance, please apply for the Professional Development fund early.

If you are successful, we will send you your Funding Agreement, detailing any specific conditions of award, which are required to be fulfilled before cashflow commencement. You must note and adhere to all the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement. On receipt of the Funding Agreement we will also ask you for your banking details. At this point we will also agree a payment schedule and cash-flow with you, which will normally be set against agreed milestones. You will need to return a signed copy of our Funding Agreement. Once all conditions have been met we will release the first instalment of your funding award.

If your application is unsuccessful, we will email to let you know why, and advise you of any next steps if applicable.

## Freedom of Information

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Creative Scotland is committed to being as open as possible. We believe that the public has a right to know how we spend public funds and how we make our funding decisions. For more information, visit the Freedom of Information section of our website:

[Freedom of Information | Creative Scotland](#)

We are listed as a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002. By law, we may have to provide your application documents and information about our assessment to any member of the public who asks to see them under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. We may not release those parts of the documents which are covered by one or more of the exemptions under the Act.

Please see the Freedom of Information website at [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info) for information about the Act generally and the exemptions. We will not release any information about applications during the assessment period, as this may interfere with the decision-making process.

# Complaints

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As an organisation, we will always listen to and respond to any concerns that you may have. If you would like to make a complaint about either the service you have received from Creative Scotland or the way we have handled your application, we have a process that you can use.

Please note that Creative Scotland does not have an appeals process and for this reason, we are unable to accept complaints that relate solely to the decision we have made rather than how we have made it. For more information, please visit the Complaints section of our website: [Complaints Handling | Creative Scotland](#).

# Data Protection

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Creative Scotland requires some personal information about you/your organisation to consider your application for funding. Without this information we will be unable to process your application.

If you would like to see a breakdown of the personal information we require, why it is required, what we do with that information and how long we keep it, please refer to our Privacy Notice on our website: [Privacy Notice | Screen Scotland](#).

Creative Scotland may share your personal information with third parties to comply with the law and/or for our legitimate interests and/or the third parties concerned.

Where the personal information you have provided to Creative Scotland belongs to other individual(s), please refer to our Privacy Notice. Please ensure you share this Privacy Statement and Creative Scotland's Privacy Notice with the respective individual(s).

You have some rights in relation to the personal information that Creative Scotland holds about you under data protection law. Our Privacy Notice contains information on how to exercise these rights, or you can contact our [Data Protection Officer](#).

If you have any concerns with how we have processed your personal information, you should contact our Data Protection Officer in the first instance, as we would welcome the opportunity to work with you to resolve any complaint. If you are still dissatisfied, you can submit a complaint to the [Information Commissioners Office](#).



# Subsidy Control

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As a public body Creative Scotland must comply with the subsidy control rules in the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the UK Government and the European Union. More information can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime)

Any award made through this fund will require the recipient to acknowledge that the grant comes from public funds and confirm that the support provided is compliant with the Subsidy Control rules.

Where applicable, the recipient must agree that Creative Scotland will publish information relating to the grant and that the recipient will keep reasonably detailed records to demonstrate compliance with the Subsidy Control rules and shall provide a copy of such records to Creative Scotland upon reasonable request. If it is deemed to be non-compliant with the Subsidy Control rules, the recipient may be required to repay the entire grant (and any other sums due) immediately.



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Waverley Gate  
2-4 Waterloo Place  
Edinburgh EH1 3EG  
Scotland UK

[www.screen.scot](http://www.screen.scot)

[enquiries@creativescotland.com](mailto:enquiries@creativescotland.com)



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