



Independent  
Production  
Fund



CANADA  
MEDIA FUND  
FONDS DES MÉDIAS  
DU CANADA

## DEVELOPMENT PACKAGING PROGRAM: Short Form Scripted Series

### GUIDELINES

**Deadline for Proposals: March 1, 2021 (5pm EST)**

#### Objectives

The Independent Production Fund (“**IPF**”) and the Canada Media Fund (“**CMF**”) encourage the development and growth of Canadian drama series and adapt their financing activities to most effectively fulfill needs identified as requiring support.

The Development Packaging Program (the “**Program**”) is designed to assist independent producers create high quality original scripted short form series, by providing the opportunity for intensive creative and business development and packaging. With these tools, projects will be in a better position to attract partners, financing, distribution and move into production.

The focus of the Program is to support outstanding story-driven content by providing funding that will enhance the development of strong creative materials, encourage the incubation of new talents and the participation of experienced professionals, provide opportunities for insightful business development and establish the quality and reputation of projects proceeding through the Program.

#### Project Eligibility

To be eligible for support, projects must:

1. be new and original (second or subsequent seasons of a series are not eligible);
2. be conceived as scripted, episodic short-form dramatic content<sup>1</sup> with multiple episodes and episodic running times that are less than 20 minutes;
3. not have already applied for production financing;

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<sup>1</sup> “Drama” shall be defined as fictionalized live action or animation programming that meets the CMF’s definition of Drama or Children and Youth Programming in [Appendix A](#).

4. have a confirmed creative team at the time of application including producer and writer; a qualified and experienced story editor or development executive (who is a separate person than the writer and producer) must be confirmed on the creative team at the time of application.
5. 75% of the project's eligible expenditures must be Canadian costs;
6. be scheduled so as to provide all required deliverables to the IPF and the CMF by September 30, 2021;
7. all rights and options for the development, production and exploitation of the project must be acquired by the eligible Applicant exclusively for at least 24 months and the project is, and remains throughout its production, under Canadian ownership and Canadian executive, creative and financial control; and
8. be developed in either English or in French.

### Applicant Eligibility

#### To be eligible for support, Applicants must:

9. be an independent production company that:
  - is for-profit: (i.e. a taxable Canadian corporation, within the meaning of the *Canada Income Tax Act*);
  - is Canadian-controlled as determined for the purposes of sections 26 to 28 of the Investment Canada Act;
  - has its head office based in Canada; and
  - does not meet the definition of In-house or Broadcaster-Affiliated, as set out in s.2.1.1 of the CMF's [Development Program Guidelines](#).
10. have an attached confirmed Canadian writer. Either the producer or writer must have previous credited experience as a producer or writer on scripted episodic or short form content (including short films);
11. in cases where the producer and writer/creator are the same person, this person must have previous credits as either producer or writer on scripted episodic or short form content;
12. agree to participate at training events with industry experts, which may be organized by the IPF or its industry partners;
13. be limited to one (1) application per year<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> An individual producer may only submit one application each year and may not appear in any producer-related role on any other application. A production company and all of its subsidiaries in which there is any overlap of ownership may together, only submit one application per year.

## Application Procedures

**Deadline for Proposals:** March 1, 2021.

Applications to include:

- a completed application form found in the application portal at <https://application.bellfund.ca/Login.aspx>;
- a Creative Pitch for the short form series in a maximum of three (3) pages, including a complete synopsis of the series, story arc over the season, description of lead characters, a typical episode format and outline, etc.;
- a one (1) page vision document;
- bios of the producer, writer, creator, story editor and/or development executive including relevant production credits;
- URL links (or other) to previous credited work of either the producer or writer;
- confirmation in writing from a story editor and/or development executive including responsibilities, proposed schedule and fee;
- a packaging phase development budget;
- a packaging phase development schedule (Note: all deliverables must be completed and delivered to IPF and the CMF by September 30, 2021);
- proof of any other confirmed development packaging financing;
- a document containing information on previous phases of development (if applicable).

## Eligible Expenditures

The Program may support costs associated with the following roles or activities:

- Screenwriter(s)
- Story editor/development executive (Note: although an experienced story editor or development executive may be provided by end users such as broadcasters or distributors or distribution platforms, they are not an eligible budget *expenditure*)
- Production manager (preparation of a budget and schedule)
- Marketing/promotion or audience engagement professional
- Printing and graphic designer for concept or pitch materials
- Professional fees – research, legal, accounting
- Travel
- Producer fees (only if this role is a stand-alone position and not combined with any of the other expensed positions) Maximum 10% of the eligible budget
- Production expenses for the production of proof-of-concept content
- Note: the Acquisition Rights costs are not eligible in this program

For clarity, 75% of the project's eligible expenditures must be Canadian costs<sup>3</sup>.

## Financial Participation

The maximum funding available for each eligible project is \$30,000.

Funding will be in the form of a repayable, non-interest bearing advance.

The IPF and CMF may fund 100% of the project's eligible expenditures through the Program. If, however, the project's budget exceeds \$30,000, additional financing such as producer investment, deferrals or services, distribution advance, platform development deal or licence, must be confirmed at the time of application.

Seventy percent (70%) of the funding approved through the Program will be advanced on signature of the IPF and CMF's respective Financing Agreements. The final 30% will be issued on receipt and approval of all contracted deliverables and a final cost report.

Each project awarded funding through the Program will repay the advance as follows:

- To the IPF: 50% of IPF's portion of the advance on the first day of principal photography of the series and the remaining 50% of IPF's portion of the advance from revenues generated by the production *pari passu* and pro rata with third party equity investors. However, if the IPF becomes an equity investor in the series, the recoupment terms of the Production Financing Agreement will apply.
- TO the CMF: 100% of CMF's portion of the advance on the first day of principal photography.

In the event that the Producer does not request production financing from the IPF for the series, in addition to the loan repayment, the IPF will also receive 10% of the Producer's profit participation in the series, subsidiary rights and subsequent works based on the project developed through the Development Packaging Program.

## Evaluation Process

Recipients will be selected and notified in April 2021.

Applications will be initially evaluated by a Selection Committee overseen by the IPF with final decisions made by representatives from the IPF and the CMF.

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<sup>3</sup> For clarity, with the exception of the specific business and financial requirements listed in these Guidelines, the CMF reserves the right to apply all relevant sections of the CMF's [Appendix B Business Policies](#) to projects funded through this program.

Evaluators look for originality, quality of written creative materials, the experience of story editor or development executives their commitment to the project, the experience of the writer/producer team, the overall potential for success and the appropriateness of the budget and packaging activities.

Funding will be awarded through the Program on a 2/3 (English) and 1/3 (French) basis.

### **Deliverables Required Upon Completion of Project Development**

Producers who receive funding in this program will be required to produce and submit the following deliverables:

- Synopses of the series and for each episode of the first “season”, including story arc, character descriptions, locations, etc.
- 3 episode scripts
- Produced and released online a video or audio proof-of-concept content/sizzle reel/trailer with an analysis of the analytics (Note: There is no maximum length required for the video.)
- A preliminary production budget
- A preliminary financing plan
- Outlined production schedule
- A list of potential or confirmed lead performers and other key creative positions
- Audience identification and preliminary engagement plan
- A list of distributors and specific platforms/channels which have been, or will be pitched
- Final cost report

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