



CANADA
MEDIA FUND

FONDS DES MÉDIAS
DU CANADA

COMMERCIAL PROJECTS PROGRAM – MAIN STREAM GUIDELINES 2026-2027

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Section 1 of the [IDM Content Programs – Core Guidelines](#) shall apply to the Commercial Projects Program Guidelines, unless otherwise specified.

2. OVERVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Unless otherwise specified, in addition to the requirements set out in these Guidelines, Applicants must comply with:

- i) The rules and requirements of the [IDM Content Programs – Core Guidelines](#), and
- ii) The applicable policies and definitions in [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#), namely:
 - a. [Appendix A](#): Section 7 (CMF Definitions)
 - b. [Appendix B](#):
 - i. Chapter 1 (Default Policy),
 - ii. Chapter 2 (Accounting and Reporting Requirements),
 - iii. Chapter 3 (Producer's Fees and Corporate Overhead (PFCO) Policy), and
 - iv. Chapter 5 (Insurance Policy).

The objective of the Commercial Projects Program (the “**Program**”) is to fund Canadian interactive digital media Projects that have a greater probability of commercial success.

A Project in this Program should have completed the conceptual/ideation and prototype stages and able to demonstrate a clear path to market and monetization. Production support is provided for the creation of a final, market-ready version of an Eligible Project, including localization of the Project and marketing/commercialization activities.

Starting in 2026-2027, this Program shall fund Projects through two streams:

1. The Main Stream, a selective process in which Eligible Projects are assessed according to an evaluation grid. Projects will be evaluated based on their potential to attain stated commercial objectives, demonstrate business opportunity and achieve profitability.

And

2. The Third-Party Investment Stream, a first-come first-serve pilot initiative for Eligible Projects that have a viable locked financing plan including a minimum 25% of bona-fide third-party investment at the time of application. The intent of this Stream is to incentivize external investment and recognize the presence of multiple investors in the Project.

These Guidelines pertain solely to the **Main Stream (the “Stream”)**. For the first-come first-serve process with third-party investment already attached, please visit the [Commercial Projects Program – Third-Party Investment Stream Guidelines](#).

2.2 DEFINITIONS

Please see [Appendix A](#) section 7 for definitions of the following terms found in these Guidelines:

- Diverse Community
- Diverse Community (Ownership) Project
- Gender Balance (Ownership) Project

3. ELIGIBILITY

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

An Eligible Applicant to this Stream must meet:

- The criteria in section 3.1 of the [IDM Content Programs – Core Guidelines](#); and
- Any applicable specific eligibility criteria noted in this section.

As a reminder the following additional requirements now apply across all IDM Programs (for more information see 3.1.1 of the [IDM Content Programs - Core Guidelines](#)):

- All new Applicants to the CMF through an IDM Program will be required to participate in a Pre-Application consultation with CMFPA staff in order to be considered eligible to apply.
- Applicants will be limited to holding a maximum of two (2) open contracts at the Production phase. Applicants must ensure that previous Projects' Final Cost Documentation (including a cost report) are delivered and the file(s) closed before applying with new Projects.

3.1.1 Program Specific Eligibility

For this Stream only, an Eligible Applicant (or its majority shareholder(s)) must have previously produced and publicly released at least one project to the public¹, that is similar in nature to the Project being proposed (e.g. if applying with a game, have released a game before).

3.2 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

An Eligible Project to this Stream must meet:

- The criteria in Section 3.2 of the [IDM Content Programs – Core Guidelines](#); and
- Any applicable specific eligibility criteria noted in this section.

As a reminder the following additional requirement now applies across all IDM Programs (for more information see 3.1.1 of the [IDM Content Programs - Core Guidelines](#)):

- Applicants may apply to this Program with a maximum of one (1) Eligible Project per spring or fall deadline period.

For clarity, Applicants should determine which stream of the Commercial Projects Program their Project is best suited. A Project which is submitted to the spring deadline period in this Stream, will not be eligible to apply to the Third-Party Investment Stream this fiscal year.

3.2.1 Potential for Commercial Success

To be eligible for this Stream, Projects must have potential for commercial success. Commercial potential is based in business opportunities and the probability that the Project will achieve its commercialization, monetization and profitability goals.

¹ Content must have been publicly released according to an industry standard definition to qualify. Prototypes / demos / testing content or game jams will not count.

3.2.2 Distribution Plans

Projects may be self-distributed, provided that the Applicant provides a clear plan, including a robust audience engagement strategy, and demonstrates that it has the ability to effectively self-distribute the Project.

This should include an overview of audience interest and engagement cultivated in the Project to date. In the case of video games, this could include, but is not limited to: wish list numbers, demo /prototype / playtest results, community server numbers, or other suitable means reflective of where the core community for the Project is being built. Other types of Projects should do their best to quantify interest and demand as it relates to their specific release strategy.

Projects may have a letter of intent from a Publishing or Distribution partner (the “**Publisher / Distributor**”) committed to taking the Project to market and to actively promoting the Project. A letter of intent does not need to include a cash financing commitment to the Project.

3.2.3 Miscellaneous Requirements

- a) A Project cannot have substantially commenced Production prior to submission of an application, nor have already being made publicly available (except as clearly indicated for demo or prototyping testing in previous phases of work).
- b) A Project that has been refused funding from this Program two (2) or more times since 2010-2011 cannot apply again for CMF-funding in this same Program.
- c) A Project that has been refused in the Commercial Projects Program, can apply to the Innovation & Experimentation Program (and vice versa), if eligible. However, a Project cannot be submitted to both the Commercial Projects Program and the Innovation & Experimentation Program in the same spring or fall deadline periods.
- d) The CMF may commit up to 50% of the Stream allocation for Applications submitted on the First Closing Date. The CMF will make the remainder of the allocation available for the Second Closing Date.
- e) The Project must be made available in Canada.

4. CMF CONTRIBUTION

A CMF Contribution to an Eligible Project in this Stream will follow:

- The criteria in section 4 of the [IDM Content Programs – Core Guidelines](#); and
- Any applicable specific criteria noted in this section.

4.1 AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION

Successful Applicants receive funding in an amount appropriate to the needs of the Project and subject to a Maximum Contribution of the lesser of 75% of the Project's Eligible Costs or \$1.5 million.

4.2 ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible Costs must be costs directly related to the Project, including but not limited to:

- Research and preparation of content;
- Salaries and benefits/wages/contracts for Project team (Project management, business development, coding, design, system infrastructure, content development);
- Technology infrastructure (hardware and software);
- **Starting in 2026-2027**, design, construction or exhibition costs related to the physical exhibition of immersive / experiential works, so long as the production of digital content remains the primary component of the budget;
- Travel and accommodations;
- Project audit fees;
- Other technical and administrative expenses;
- Localization activities;
- Marketing and promotion; and/or
- Reasonable costs related to environmentally-sustainable activities, practices and personnel.

Projects must spend a minimum of 25% and maximum of 50% of categories B + C of their production budget on eligible marketing and promotion costs.

Design, construction or exhibition costs, related to the physical exhibition of immersive / experiential works can account for a maximum of 20% of the Project's Eligible Costs.

5. DECISION PROCESS

Evaluation of an Eligible Project will follow:

- The criteria in section 5 of the [IDM Content Programs – Core Guidelines](#); and
- Any applicable specific criteria noted in this section.

This Stream shall fund Projects through a selective and competitive process in which Eligible Projects are assessed according to the following evaluation grid.

Assessment Criteria	Weight
<p>Team (13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience and achievements of the Applicant within the interactive digital media industry. ▪ Professional experience and achievements of team members within the interactive digital media industry. Team members shall include lead production, creative, technical and/or sales and marketing roles. ▪ Experience and track record of team members working with one another. ▪ Feasibility of the team assembled to carry out and deliver the Project. ▪ Quality and degree to which the applicant and creative and production teams are well-positioned to create this Project. <p>“Well Positioned” is outlined in the CMF's Narrative Positioning Policy and can be addressed in the submitted Narrative Positioning Statement.</p> <p>Parity (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eligible Projects that meet the Gender Balance (Ownership) Project definition² (as defined in Appendix A). <p>Diversity (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eligible Projects that meet the Diverse Community (Ownership) Project definition² (as defined in Appendix A). 	17
<p>Community and Sustainability</p> <p>Community Engagement Plan (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Applicant and team members commit to (i) concrete steps to create the content responsibly, thoughtfully and without harm, including community engagement steps, and/or personnel hires, and (ii) will provide a written report at the final costs stage confirming the work completed. <p>Sustainability Plan (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Applicant and team members commit to (i) steps related to environmentally-sustainable activities, practices and/or personnel hires on this Project, and (ii) will provide a written report at final costs stage confirming the work completed. 	4

² The CMF will rely on the self-identification information associated with an individual's PERSONA-ID number for shareholders and board of directors of the Applicant company (and co-applicant, if applicable) and parent company(ies) to determine whether Projects qualify. For clarity, non-Canadians will not be counted in these scores. For more information on PERSONA-ID, please see section 1 of the [IDM Content Program Core Guidelines](#).

<p>Children and Youth Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects whose target audience is General Public - Children or General Public – Youth. Marketing strategies submitted need to reflect this target audience selection in order to qualify. 	<p>2</p>
<p>Potential for Commercial Success</p> <p>Content and Form (19)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design elements that can maximize audience reach and retention. Marquee elements or distinctive elements. Distinctive elements can include, as applicable, the Project's potential to add cultural significance and distinguish itself in the current Canadian audiovisual landscape – for example, adding greater representation in voices from Diverse Communities or sharing new perspectives. Relevance of monetization elements in the user experience. <p>Financial Viability (25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevance and accuracy of budget and cash flow. Financial structure risk (confirmation and validity of investments). Applicant's financial stability in relation to the size of the Project. Potential of revenue model to maximize sales. Credibility of revenue projections and profitability. 	<p>44</p>
<p>Strategic Positioning and Marketing</p> <p>Market Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audience analysis. Market analysis. Product positioning and competitive advantages. <p>Marketing Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence between the marketing strategy and sales projections. Quality of the Project's marketing and promotional strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity and relevance of distribution modes. Relevance of promotional activities. Level of interest demonstrated by Publisher / Distributor partners and/or the audience base, if applicable. 	<p>33</p>
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>100</p>