

DIGITAL CREATORS PILOT PROGRAM - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1. APPLICATION PROCESS AND GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

When are applications due?

Applications are due by **October 1, 2026 at 11:59pm EST**. Incomplete applications or applications received after this will not be reviewed.

How do I apply?

Applications are submitted via [Dialogue](#), the online application portal managed by the CMF Program Administrators (CMFPA) at Telefilm Canada.

New clients to the CMF must first create a Dialogue account before you can begin any applications. We recommend starting the account process as soon as possible, ideally a month before the program deadline. More information is available [HERE](#).

You can also begin gathering the deliverables you will need to submit with your application. Please refer to the List of Required Documents.

When does the Dialogue application portal open?

The application form will open on **September 15, 2026**, roughly 2 weeks before the final application deadline.

Who is the program targeted towards?

This program is designed to support the growth trajectory of mid-career Canadian digital content creators, who are making short-form video content exclusively for digital social media platforms.

In addition, starting in 2026-2027, the program will also allow applications from mid-career Canadian podcast creators wishing to grow or expand their business in original video podcast production on the primary podcast platforms – Spotify, YouTube and Apple Podcasts.

The intent is to identify how you see this as a full-time business – by setting business goals or targets - and discuss how you intend to reach those goals over the coming year.

What is meant by mid-career?

Digital Creators will need to demonstrate that they have been active for at least the last 12 months, with an average of one post per month in that period, on at least one of the eligible platforms: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube.

Podcaster Creators will need to demonstrate that they have been in operation for at least a year, have produced at least 3 episodes of a podcast in the past year, and have previously produced and released at least one season of a podcast that they are the primary owner of.

In addition, all Applicants will need to demonstrate that they meet a minimum engagement threshold, which differs according to whether they are a Digital Creator or a Podcast Creator and whether they create content in English or in French (Please see the [Program Guidelines](#) for the full breakdown).

Do I need to have an incorporated company to apply?

In this program, it is not required that Applicants be incorporated at the time of application. Individuals can apply. However, in order to receive funding from the CMF, recipients must have an incorporated Canadian for-profit company. Should you be selected, you will be required to incorporate before you can be contracted. You can include your incorporation costs in your budget.

What is the maximum amount I can request?

The maximum amount of funding that can be requested is \$40,000 CAD.

Do I need other financing attached?

Yes. The CMF can account for no more than 75% of the intended costs of a budget that we finance. Recipients will need to demonstrate other financing (or contribute it yourself) towards the overall costs.

For example, if you wish to request the full \$40,000, you will need to indicate a total budget of \$53,334, of which \$13,334 must come from another source (this can be a personal investment).

What type of activities can I apply for?

Funding may be used for business and marketing activities such as hiring a marketing consultant, social media manager, editor, legal or accounting services, outfitting a permanent studio space, community or audience building, or expanding onto new platforms. They should be clearly tied to the goals or targets included in your business and audience plan.

Can I cover the costs of producing content?

No. Starting in 2026-2027, this program has been refocused on supporting business development activities only. Costs associated with the production of content will not be allowable. Further, any activities that would be primarily for the benefit of branded, commissioned or sponsored content will not be allowed.

I represent a Creator. Can I apply on their behalf?

The primary applicant needs to be the content creator(s) the application is for. An agency, representative or 3rd party to the content creator can gather materials and begin the process of application.

BUT the creator must:

- Be the primary driver of the application and its materials
- Be listed as the primary contact for the application and any correspondence with the CMF
- Directly sign the application form (and adhere to all the requirements that entails)
- Directly sign the contract, should they be selected

2. APPLICATION MATERIALS

Do I need to include a budget at the time of application?

Yes, budgets are required at the time of application. A template is available as part of the application documents. The CMFPA team welcomes questions in advance of application as you put together your budget.

Can the purchase of equipment be included in the budget?

Yes, new equipment purchases can be included in your budget. All costs must be new. You cannot request coverage of previous purchases retroactively.

Purchases are limited to 20% of total costs in your budget. Any individual purchase (e.g. a new camera) can be covered 100% in your budget, so long as its within that 20% cap.

What is a business growth strategy and audience engagement plan?

This is a written narrative document that speaks to how you plan to grow your audience and your business as a creator over the next year. This will be reviewed by the jury in part to determine your business plan score in the Evaluation Grid. A template will be made available, but should address the following:

- Where you are at in your business and audience strategy (platforms on, audiences engaged, any current or future brand or sponsorship affiliations, size of your business, collaborators or employees you currently work with)
- Proposed audience engagement, growth targets, new platforms, business tactics or affiliations you intend to pursue
- How you intend to reach those targets and what activities you will be undertaking to meet them
- What makes you unique and strongly situated in the next wave of creators in Canada
- For Podcast Creators, it should speak specifically to how you intend to grow or expand your business into video podcast production

What is a creator overview?

This should be a short synopsis of you, your online presence, and what you represent as a creator – think of it as your resume or CV. This will be reviewed by the jury in part to

determine your Creator Track Record score in the Evaluation Grid. A template will be made available, but should answer the following:

- why you got into content creation or podcast production,
- who is your current audience,
- how long you have been posting content or producing podcasts,
- what platforms you post to,
- what type of content or podcasts you create,
- examples of how your engagement or audience numbers have been growing recently, and
- any successes to date.

What is a pitch video?

A pitch video allows you to present your background – personality, style and previous content created– and proposed growth plan in a visual way for the jury members to consider. Videos should be no more than 5 minutes long and shared via URL from a video platform site such as Vimeo or YouTube (not Google Drive). If it is password protected, make sure that the password is noted in your application.

3. SELECTION PROCESS AND CONTRACTING

How will decisions be made?

The evaluation process will be selective and competitive. With funds available, up to 35 creators will be able to be supported. Eligible applications will be reviewed by an external independent jury of peers in the digital creator and podcast ecosystem, according to the evaluation criteria in the [Program Guidelines](#). This will include:

- Viability and likelihood of delivering on the proposed business plan and reaching stated goals
- Potential for Applicant to contribute to a thriving and resilient creator economy in Canada
- Track record and experience of Applicant
- Strength and quality of past content

In the event that a large number of applications are submitted to the program, creating significant oversubscription, the CMF reserves the right to conduct a preliminary selection process where only a reasonable number of high performing creators will be moved forward to the juried creative selection process.

For Digital Creators, “High performing” will be determined by validated total views across all channels.

For Podcast Creators “High performing” will be determined by total download numbers across all episodes.

What are my deliverables if I am selected?

You will have 12 months to execute on the goals included in your business plan (the contract period). Following the end of the contract period, you will have 2 months to gather and submit your final deliverables. These will include:

- A final cost report confirming your spending
- A final written report outlining the activities you undertook, where your business is at now and whether you achieved your goals or objectives
- An updated Audience Engagement Form, noting changes in your subscribers/followers (for Digital Creators) or download and consumption rates (for Podcast Creators) and video views or engagement metrics during the contract period.

You will also be required to provide interim updates (“**Success Reporting**”) for a period of 2 years following the final report.

I still have questions. Who do I talk to?

The CMFPA encourages applicants to contact them with any questions they might have during the application process.

The CMFPA can be reached at cmf.fmc.coordination@telefilm.ca.