



Canada

## CIFVF Film and Video Production & Post-Production Applications: A Guide

### Deadline for 2008

March 6, 2008

Applications must be received by 4:00 PM at:

**Canadian Independent Film & Video Fund**  
666 Kirkwood Avenue, suite 203  
Ottawa, ON K1Z 5X9

*To all applicants:*

*Before investing time and resources preparing an application, you will want to ensure that you and your project meet the Fund's eligibility criteria. To this end, you should begin by reading the CIFVF's Eligibility and Selection Criteria for Film and Video Applications. Copies of these documents and the application forms are available at the CIFVF office and on its Web site: [www.cifvf.ca](http://www.cifvf.ca).*

*The CIFVF receives about 200 applications at each Deadline, many more than the Fund can support and only a proportion of the applications will be successful. A well-prepared and presented application package, setting out a business-like proposal, will give you the best chance at success. The information and advice that follows will help you prepare just such a package.*

## The Application Package

A complete application package for CIFVF financing consists of

- A. Four copies of the signed application form and four copies of the supporting documentation that CIFVF requires. Each set of copies must be bound, or presented in a binder, with a table of contents that identifies the page or tab number for each section of the submission. Numbered or colour-coded dividers should separate the sections.

Application packages which are not bound and tabbed will be returned to the applicant.

Please note that there are separate requirements for development financing and production/post-production financing. The requirements for development applications are described in a separate document.

- B. Supporting audio-visual material on videotape for production and post-production applications.
- C. A processing fee of \$50.

### PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- ❖ The full application package must arrive at the CIFVF office by 4:00 P.M. on the day of the Deadline. The CIFVF will not accept applications arriving after that date, even if they bear postmarks for the date of Deadline or earlier.
- ❖ Applications and all the supporting documentation for projects that will be produced in both English and French must be submitted in one language only.
- ❖ CIFVF office will review each application package and advise the applicant, by fax or email, whether it is complete. If your application package is not complete, you will have 72 hours to deliver the missing material to the CIFVF office.
- ❖ Failure to provide a complete application will render your project ineligible for consideration for the current Deadline.
- ❖ The CIFVF will only begin to accept applications one month prior to the Deadline date. Any applications sent in before this time will be returned to the applicant.

## A. Application Form

Your application form must

- ❖ be completed and signed by you, as the producer.
- ❖ be typed or, if completed by hand, printed in a readily legible style.
- ❖ contain the applicant's telephone and fax numbers, and email address. If you do not have access to a fax machine, or if your telephone is also a fax modem, please specify.

The application form contains a checklist of the supporting documentation required by the CIFVF. By signing the application form you are confirming that you have addressed all of the Fund's criteria.

## B. Documentation for Production and Post-Production Applications

Your application package for production or post-production financing must include the following supporting documentation presented in the order listed:

1. Application Form
2. Synopsis
3. Script or treatment
4. Proof of market
5. Financing structure
6. Production budget
7. List of key personnel & C.Vs
8. Production schedule
9. Rights Acquisition Checklist and related documentation
10. Supporting Audio-Visual Material Notes

The CIFVF requires four copies of the documentation. Each set of documents must be bound, or presented in a binder, with a table of contents that identifies the page or tab number for each section. There must be nine dividers for the nine sections. There are three ways to prepare the copies and you should choose one of the methods that are described below:

- You may use dividers with tabs that you label with each of the nine section headings listed above.
- Alternatively, you may use dividers with tabs that are pre-numbered and include an index page, which is the table of contents, indicating the section title of each pre-numbered tab.
- Or you may use dividers that are colour-coded with tabs that are colour-coded. In this case, the index page, which is the table of contents, should indicate the section title of each colour-coded tab.

**If you are unclear about tabs, [click here](#) to see pictures of the three methods described above.**

Please include all information relating to a specific item in the relevant section. For example, all information relating to personnel should go in section 7; the letter from the distributor should be included in section 4 on proof of market demand and not at the end of the proposal.

**The CIFVF will not accept applications that are not bound and tabbed with a table of contents as set out above. Applications that are not bound and tabbed will be returned to the applicant.**

**Language of the Application:** Given that separate French-language and English-language juries evaluate the proposals, all documents in the application package should be in one official language or the other but not in both English and French.

Please note that if principal photography has not been started or is not complete, the application is considered to be for production. An application in post-production is only for projects in which editing has started.

## **2. Synopsis**

In a synopsis of no more than one page, you must describe the project's focus, visual style, story line and intended market.

## **3 Script or Treatment**

The CIFVF requirements are:

- ❖ *for a drama:* a draft script that contains all scenes and dialogue, accompanied by brief character descriptions and director's notes on the intended approach and style.
- ❖ *for a documentary:* a detailed treatment that describes the focus, sequential flow of the work and its conclusion, accompanied by director's notes on the intended approach and style.
- ❖ *for a docu-drama:* a detailed treatment that describes the focus, sequential flow of the work and its conclusions, with identification of the characters and fully-scripted dialogue for the dramatic sequences. Again, this document must be accompanied by the director's notes on the intended approach and style with particular attention to how the dramatic sequences will be incorporated into the flow of the production.

The length of this document will depend on the intended duration of the project and whether it is a drama or documentary. However, the document

- must clearly describe the production or, in the case of a series, the individual component episodes;
- identify the film/video's intended style: how it will look; its visual treatment; what will be seen and heard on screen. The visual treatment or style will include such elements as rhythm and pace, music and, especially in the case of documentaries, the planned use of locations, archival footage, on-screen or behind-camera interviewers or presenters, etc. It should also illustrate the subject matter's sustainability for the duration of the project.
- should address the originality of the idea - what makes it unique and interesting?
- discuss the feasibility of the execution of the project: are there factors that will be difficult to manage? For example, if your project requires access to police, an institution or the military, access will be difficult without very high-level approval. You should discuss how this will be managed, what steps you will take to guarantee the successful completion of the production. These are some of the factors that will be used in

evaluating your project. To this end, you may wish to look at the production marking scheme that can be found on the CIFVF web site under “Guidelines & Application Process”.

The CIFVF’s Web site page “Links and Resources” identifies industry guilds, such as the Writers Guild of Canada, and organizations, such as provincial associations and funding agencies, that can provide applicants with guidance in preparing effective script and treatment documentation.

#### 4. Proof of Market

The proof of market demand documentation defines and evaluates the potential non-theatrical market for the proposed project. It must address each of the following:

- ❖ **Intended or Target Audience** – You will have to identify the intended audience(s) for the project, i.e., identify whether the proposed project is intended for distribution to educational institutions, specialty television channels, health, community groups, cultural or social services, business or other non-theatrical markets. In preparing this material, it is suggested that you consider responding to the following questions:
  - For whom, or to whom, is the project being made or directed?
  - If it is intended for the educational market, is it directed at pre-school, elementary level, high school, college or university students? In what part of the curriculum would it be used? Does it conform to the curriculum framework guidelines? How will it be “versioned” to fit within class time limits? Will other tools such as teachers’ guides accompany it? How will these be created and published?
  - If it is intended for other market sectors, who are the targeted users/audiences? For example, if it is intended for the health sector, are the targeted users doctors, nurses, or patients?
  - Is there a secondary audience and, if so what is it?
  - If the project is being produced for an educational or specialty television market, what is the targeted type or demographic of that audience? It is insufficient to state that the project is intended for a general audience.
- ❖ **Competing or Analogous Products** - In all likelihood, there are other products available in the market on the same subject as your project. You must do research to see what already exists, how your project differs from them, and why there is a need for your production. For example, your project may take a completely different approach, or it may be a more current update on the topic. Establishing the market’s need for your project is crucial. The CIFVF suggests you:
  - Discuss your project with distributors and examine distributors’ catalogues. Distributors know their markets and can provide you with valuable insight.
  - Contact librarians in public libraries or educational institutions who are also knowledgeable what is already available.
  - Research Internet databases.
  - Consult end-users, particularly specialist health, community service or social groups, who are knowledgeable about what is already available.

A list of the sources you used in preparing this assessment should be included with this documentation. Please see example on our website.

- ❖ **Assessment of Users' Audio-Visual Needs/Summary of Discussions with End-Users** - Once the target audience(s) has/have been identified, you should consider how the intended viewers would use the production. To prepare this section, it is necessary to conduct focus groups or interviews with prospective users/viewers. Some questions that may be useful in addressing this requirement are:
  - Is the length of the proposed project appropriate for the context in which it will be used? For example, if it is intended for elementary schools with class periods of 30 or 40 minutes, a 45 minute film/video would not be appropriate.
  - From the users' perspective, what are the main issues that need to be covered in your project? Is the approach you intend to take appropriate to their needs? Will it be useful to them?
  - How will the intended audiences use it? Will users watch the film/video alone, in workshops or as part of group discussions? Will there be printed discussion or activity material to accompany it and how will this requirement be met?

In the process of assessing user needs, you or others on your behalf may have consulted groups representing the target audience, spoken with subject matter experts, conducted focus groups and/or surveyed prospective users/viewers. Rather than submit all the information that your research produced, your submission should summarize and assess the results of that work. Nevertheless, you should include a list identifying the sources that were consulted.

Please note that the CIFVF expects you to prepare the assessment of users' needs in your own words. The letters from the end users (see below) support your application; they do not replace your assessment or summary of your discussions with end users.

If you are still unclear about how to prepare this section, [click here](#) to see an example of an assessment of users' audio-visual needs.

- ❖ **Evidence of End-User Support** - You must provide up to five letters, and no more, from representative end-users and/or subject matter experts that offer evidence that your proposed project has the potential to be well-received by its intended market. Each letter should address the following questions:
  - ◊ Why would the film/video be of use?
  - ◊ How will it be used?
  - ◊ Is it useful as a springboard for discussion?
  - ◊ Does it offer a fair portrayal of the subject?
- In recognition of the importance of the specialty and educational television market, one of these letters may be from a broadcaster.
- The user's/expert's name, title and place of work should be clearly identified in the letter:

- Sending these letters to the CIFVF by email is not sufficient: it is important that the letters be on letterhead and signed by the writer of the letter.
- Letters of support should not be older than one year prior to the CIFVF deadline. This requirement is to ensure that there is still an interest in the project in question.
- The following are not accepted as letters of support from end users:
  - ◊ Letters of recommendation from other producers or influential members of society attesting to the experience of the producer are not considered letters of support from end-users.
  - ◊ Letters from individuals featured in the project are not considered as being at arm's length.

You will be interested to know that end users' letters sometimes mention aspects of the project which help distributors in determining the marketing of the project.

◆ **Canadian Non-Theatrical Distribution:** Your application package must include a letter of interest from a Canadian-owned and controlled private sector distributor who is active in the non-theatrical market and has at least two years of experience in the non-theatrical market. Consistent with its Mission, the CIFVF supports Canadian non-theatrical distributors operating in the private sector whose primary purpose is distribution. Therefore, it cannot accept distribution arrangements with public sector agencies, whether federal or provincial, or with the distribution arms of CRTC-licensed broadcasters. The CIFVF will accept letters of interest only from non-theatrical distributors who are listed on the CIFVF list that is found on the CIFVF web site. The letter should indicate the distributor's interest in acquiring the exclusive rights to distribute the completed production in Canada for at least three years. If the application is successful, the producer will be required to enter into such a distribution contract with a Canadian-owned and controlled private sector distributor.

The distributor's name, title and place of work should be clearly identified in the letter: Sending letters by email is not sufficient: it is important that the letters be on letterhead and signed by the writer of the letter.

## 5 Financing Structure

Please note that the CIFVF will contribute no more than 49% of the total production cost to a maximum of \$50,000.

In this section, you must identify your confirmed and pending sources of funding to cover the balance of the full production budget. The sources must be specified together with the amounts being requested or, in the case of federal or provincial tax credits, the amount due. In production projects, the CIFVF requires at least one other source of funding in addition to itself and producer and crew deferrals and investments.

Copies of letters of commitment or contracts must support confirmed sources. You must include letters of confirmation from anyone (producer or crew) who is making a deferral or investment to the project.

For pending sources of financing, you must identify the source and their status, i.e., dates when an application was made and the anticipated date of response. Please note, if your application is successful, the CIFVF commitment will only be available for six months, so all pending sources

should have the potential to be confirmed within that timeframe.

Any new funding secured during the period that applications are being reviewed by the CIFVF must be communicated to the CIFVF.

The CIFVF has specific policies with respect to production financing raised through deferrals and sponsorships. Specifically:

- Producer investment through deferrals, services or otherwise cannot exceed 35% of the production budget. "Deferrals" are defined as those agreed to by any, or all, of the producer, crew, labs or other production services. "Investment" includes donations of goods and services.
- Sponsors involvement through limited participation is welcome; however, "sponsored" or "commissioned" film/video projects, where one company provides more than 51% of the production financing, are not eligible for CIFVF financing.

There is a template for a financing plan/ financial structure on the CIFVF web site under "Resources" that you may use.

## 6. Production Budget

You must present the production budget in two formats: a summary budget and a detailed line-by-line production budget. If you are not already using the standard Telefilm Canada budget form, available through its web site, the CIFVF has a budget form available on its web site under "Forms & Tools".

If you are submitting a post-production application, your submission must include a full production budget as well.

Unless they are being prepared by another entity at no cost to your project, associated materials, such as teachers or discussion guides, that will accompany the completed film/video as part of delivery items, must be included in the production budget.

## 7. Key Personnel

Your submission must provide:

- ❖ a list of the key creative personnel who will be involved in producing the project and their role. The nationality of each person should be noted.
- ❖ a resume, CV or filmography (2 pages maximum) for the producer, director, writer, director of photography, editor and, where appropriate, feature interview subject(s).
- ❖ if the proposed project is a documentary involving specific individuals or groups as its subject, a list of those individuals or groups.

For First-Time Producers (this is in addition to the documentation listed above):

- ❖ While it is not mandatory, the CIFVF recommends that a first-time producer demonstrate that he/she has complied with one of the following criteria:
  - is associated with an experienced producer as evidenced by a signed and dated letter from the senior producer confirming his/her commitment to help the new producer and/or;



- has become a member of a film/video cooperative that can provide assistance throughout the production process as evidenced by a letter from the cooperative confirming the new producer's involvement and indicating that the cooperative has knowledge of the new producer's project and/or;
- has taken steps to inform him/herself about the producing process by taking a production course or workshop as evidenced by a detailed description of the course and the registration form for the course/workshop.

As mentioned, it is not mandatory that a new producer comply with any of the three criteria listed above, but it will improve his/her mark in the Background/Experience section of the CIFVF project marking scheme (found under the Guidelines & Application Process section of the CIFVF web site).

## 8. Production Schedule

The detailed production schedule must reflect the most realistic intended timetable for pre-production, the actual shoot and post-production through to delivery of the completed project. It should also detail scheduling for the preparation of any accompanying discussion guides or similar materials that will form part of the final delivery items. Applicants are reminded that the CIFVF requires 8-10 weeks to complete the jury evaluation process following each Deadline. In addition, there may be key dates involved in obtaining responses from other funding sources.

It is more useful to prepare the production schedule using actual dates (i.e., month & year) as opposed to stating only the number of days involved for each task. An example of a production schedule can be found on the CIFVF web site under "Resources".

## 9. Rights Acquisition

You must hold copyright in the completed project. To that end, you must provide evidence that all rights necessary to produce and distribute the production are held or, at a minimum, are accessible to you. You must complete and submit the form entitled Rights Acquisition Checklist which is found on the Fund's website under Forms & Tools.

**Copyright and Clearances** - You must show that you have addressed the important elements of copyright ownership and clearance of rights in your production planning. In doing so you must consider the following questions:

- Do you own the copyright in the concept or underlying work upon which the project will be based? Alternatively, do you have an agreement, or an option to enter into an agreement, with the copyright holders of any underlying work that grants to you the necessary rights to produce a project based on the underlying work? Do you have chain of title in the form of signed documents showing your acquisition of the copyright or the necessary rights in any underlying work on which the project will be based?
- Do you have a writer's agreement that assigns copyright, or licenses the necessary rights, in the script or research to you as the producer?
- Have you obtained clearances for use of existing music and/or performances, as well as archival or stock footage or any previously recorded images such as photographs or graphics, which will be employed in the project?
- Have you acquired licenses to use any trademarks, trade-names or logos that may appear in the project?

- Have you ensured that you can acquire the right to distribute the intended production in any other proposed markets such as domestic television broadcast or international markets? For example, you may need to obtain clearances not only for Canadian non-theatrical use but also for Canadian television and for international rights on any pre-existing footage, literary material, music etc. to be included in your finished production if your distributor intends to exploit these markets.

**Releases** - Where individuals and/or groups are the principal subjects of the project, letters of agreement or personal release forms from the principal subjects must be provided with the application. At the application stage for production financing, release forms are also required for the main subject(s) of the project (which may include people, locations, buildings, businesses, personal property or products, etc.) and for films about music. At the application stage, release forms are not required for individuals and/or groups who are not the principal subjects; however you should be aware that you must acquire releases for all subjects of the project for the completed production, and that the list of rights set out above is not exhaustive. Sample releases are on the Fund's web site under Forms & Tools, though you are not required to use those forms.

The CIFVF web site page Production Information and Links contains information that you may find useful in ensuring that all rights and related legal requirements are adequately addressed. Please note, however, that the CIFVF is not responsible for the information provided on the linked websites and resources, and urges you to obtain independent legal advice to ensure all necessary rights and clearances have been obtained for your project.

### C. Supporting Audio-Visual Material

In addition to the application form and supporting documents, your application package for production must include three copies of previous work on 1/2-inch videotape or DVD for viewing by the jury. **Please do not submit master tapes.** You should note why you have chosen the particular work to support your application and its relationship to the project for which you are requesting funding. If you wish to send DVDs, please do not affix stickers to the DVD as that sometimes prevents the playing of the discs. Instead, a marker should be used to identify them.

For post-production applications, three copies of some of the footage (about 10 minutes) from the project for which funding is requested must be submitted. It is preferable that you send some footage from an assembly; please do not send rushes or dailies. If you are submitting footage from the project for which funding is requested, it is not necessary to submit additional previous work. No audio-visual material is required for development applications.

If requested, CIFVF will return the copies to the applicant after the evaluation process is completed.

### D. Processing Fee

A cheque or money order in the amount of \$50.00, payable to the *Canadian Independent Film & Video Fund*, must be enclosed with the application and supporting material.

### Other Documents

The following are available from the CIFVF office and Web site:

- ❖ Application Forms
- ❖ Guide for Development Applications

❖ Eligibility and Selection Criteria: Film and Video Applications



For further information contact:

**Canadian Independent Film & Video Fund**  
666 Kirkwood Avenue, suite 203, Ottawa, ON K1Z 5X9

Telephone: (613) 729-1900

Toll Free: 1-888-386-5555

Fax: (613) 729-4610

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Web site: [www.cifvf.ca](http://www.cifvf.ca)