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British Council – Travel Grant Guidelines

1. Description

The British Council, supported by the BFI, offers short filmmakers and filmmakers producing virtual reality / immersive storytelling experiences and installations the opportunity to apply for funding to attend premier international film festivals and events where their work has been invited to screen. The purpose of this funding is to enable filmmakers to represent their work abroad, develop new contact networks, reach new audiences and increase the exposure of new UK film and film talent internationally. The British Council's Film Department manages the applications process for travel grants.

Grants can be used to cover travel and accommodation costs.

Awards will range from a minimum of £100 to a maximum of £1500, but will not normally be in excess of £750. Successful applicants screening in European festivals can expect a smaller grant than those screening in festivals which require a long haul journey. Grants are often a contribution towards travel costs, and do not always cover the full cost of attendance.

2. Eligibility

Eligibility for grants will be on the basis that the applicant has had a short film / project selected by at least one of the festivals on the British Council's 'Key Festivals List' (available online here)

At point of application the applicant must be:

- Over 18 years old
- Resident in the UK

And the selected film or project must be:

- No more than 60 minutes in duration

- A UK production or co-production

The fund will not accept applications for retrospective activity i.e. an application for travel that has already taken place or when a festival has already started

3. Application Process

Applications can be made on a rolling basis and applicants will be required to fill out an online application form and provide evidence of festival selection.

Applications can be made by a director, producer or writer and must include:

- Project details (key personnel, synopsis, tech information, cast etc)
- Applicant CV / filmography
- Details of the festival you have been invited to attend
- Written evidence of acceptance into the festival
- An explanation as to why do you want to attend

Please note that applicants may make a maximum of three applications to the fund for any one film and applications must be for a different festival each time

Once you have read these guidelines in their entirety including the Travel Grant Fund FAQ's at the end of this document please submit your application on the Travel Grant Fund webpage.

4. Assessment

Applications will be assessed roughly every two weeks by British Council Film

Applications will be assessed according to the eligibility criteria as listed in 'Section 2 Eligibility'.

If the eligibility criteria are successfully met then British Council will prioritise grants and grant amounts based on the following criteria:

- 1) Whether a project has been selected in a festival in either the 'A' or 'B' category (listed on the 'Key Festivals List'). Once all 'A' list applications have been assessed, 'B' list applications will be considered if funds permit.
- 2) Whether a project has been selected in competition or has been nominated for an award e.g. if we receive a substantial amount of applications for one festival in particular, we will seek to prioritise those filmmakers who have been selected in competition or who have been nominated for an award.

5. Access and Support

If you have specific access needs please talk to us about what additional help may be available to Travel Grant recipients – for example additional funds to facilitate travel with a BSL interpreter or access worker. Please contact films@britihcouncil.org to discuss this in more detail before submitting your application.

6. Timeline

- You will be sent an automated confirmation email response once you have submitted an online application.
- Applications will be considered at the next British Council Film meeting with assessments based on the criteria above.
- You will be notified by email with the outcome of your application
- If your application has been successful we will send you an offer letter suggesting an appropriate travel grant amount and the necessary forms to set you up on our financial system.
- Once you have returned all necessary forms we will begin the payment procedure.
- Payment will take a maximum of 30 days to clear into your bank account from date of returned forms.
- Applicants will need to commit to taking part in an evaluation procedure providing a report following their visit

To help us process payments as quickly as possible, it is important that you make a submission to us as soon as you have been notified of your festival acceptance.

TRAVEL GRANT FUND FAQs

What kinds of project does the Travel Grant Fund support?

We accept applications for short film projects of any genre that meet the eligibility criteria above, as well as Virtual Reality and immersive storytelling projects and installations on our 'Key Festivals List' for details.

How do you select the festivals on your Key Festivals list?

We select the festivals on our list based on the strategic role each festival plays in promoting and developing new talent internationally. We work hard to make sure our industry knowledge is as up to date as possible and therefore may add/remove festivals when appropriate. The list is subject to change. Support for travel to any festivals or related events outside of the Key Festival list is at the discretion of the British Council Film department.

If my film is selected for a major event like the Oscars can I apply to the fund?

The Travel Grant Fund is designed primarily to support filmmakers to travel to festivals, but we may consider major film awards for travel grant support. Consideration for support in these cases is at the discretion of the British Council Film department. Support for travel to any festivals or related events outside of the Key Festival list is at the discretion of the British Council Film department.

Can more than one applicant apply for support to travel with the same film or project?

Travel grant awards are made per film or project. It is ultimately up to the creative team how any grant is divided, the only stipulation being that grants must be used to cover travel and accommodation.

How many times can I apply to the fund?

We will not accept more than three applications to the fund for the same film or project.

If I have applied to the fund already and been successful, do I need to make a subsequent application when the film or project is selected in another festival?

For administrative reasons, we need to log all applications. However, if you have already applied we will have your original information and you will be able to omit certain sections for subsequent applications.

Does my film or project need to have been shot or created in the UK to be eligible?

No, but the core personnel behind the film or project must include filmmakers resident in the UK.

I have only just been notified that I have been selected for a festival on your list that starts very soon, can I still apply?

If you have received a notification of acceptance from a festival and are concerned that your application will not be assessed in time then please contact films@britishcouncil.org to let us know. There will still be a minimum of 7 working days for decision turn around, and payment can still take up to 30 days to clear once offer forms are returned.

Can I suggest a festival to be included on your Key Festivals list?

We are always keen to hear from filmmakers who have had positive experiences at film festivals. If you want to suggest a festival for the list then please let us know by email why we should consider it. Please remember that professional development and potential for exposure on the international stage are key factors in our decision making.

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