

FILM EXHIBITION FUND

Funding Guidelines – March 2023



INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) reaches out across the UK to ensure people have the maximum possible opportunity to watch and enjoy a diversity of films, regardless of geography or circumstance.

As part of FAN, Film Hub North has been awarded funding from the BFI National Lottery to reach a broad range of audiences with independent UK and international film and deliver against the priorities set out in the [BFI's Screen Culture 2033 strategy](#).

The Film Exhibition Fund will help the independent film exhibition sector by supporting screening and audience development activity that engages audiences with British, independent and international film, and that meets the overall objectives of BFI's Screen Culture 2033 strategy.

Film Hub North is focussed on increasing access and growing audiences that are representative of the UK population. As such, audience development activity supported by the Film Exhibition Fund must deliver against one or more of the following BFI and FAN priority outcomes:

- **Children and young people are empowered to develop their own relationships with a wider range of screen culture**

Under Screen Culture 2033, FAN is broadening its focus to include children as well as young people, recognising the important role that early cinema visits have on the health of the exhibition sector both now and in the future. By engaging with children, families and young people, organisations can introduce new audiences to their work and foster future generations of cinemagoers. Activity focused on young audiences may target a segment of those aged 25 and under or the group as a whole. Organisations will need to demonstrate that they have safeguarding policies in place.

- **People across the UK can access a wider choice of film and the moving image including stories that reflect their lives**

Everyone should have the chance to access the greatest possible choice of moving image storytelling. This includes classic and international cinema, new

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Our funding aims & priorities

titles from emerging creatives, games and work that takes creative risks. National Lottery funding can enable people to experience a rich range of this work. This includes through the work of diverse and inclusive programming teams. It can also help them to develop a relationship with work which resonates with them personally.

- **Funding helps to tackle social, economic, and geographic barriers for screen audiences in new and effective ways**

People from different backgrounds across the UK face different barriers to accessing screen culture, both in physical locations and via digital platforms. This might include a lack of accessible screenings in the local area, preclusive costs, or inconsistent availability of audio description and subtitling. National Lottery funding can help address these issues. It can also create more inclusive spaces and address historical perceptions of independent film and cinemas as middle-class spaces.

We will also explore how funding can better access

work at home and in venues, helping combat loneliness and social isolation.

- **More people can engage with heritage collections that better reflect the diversity of the UK**

Providing audience access to screen heritage is a key component of a diverse and rich screen culture and deepens our understanding of both the past and present. National Lottery funding can support organisations to make work available in a variety of ways, from screenings and exhibitions of screen heritage material, to creative use of existing archives of film and television content. Organisations will need to demonstrate that they have in place the relevant partnerships with screen heritage collections. [A best practice guide for working with archive collections is available here.](#)

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Underpinning our work are the following **cross cutting principles** that **all supported activity** will need to address:

- **Equity, diversity and inclusion**

FAN champions everyday inclusion. We would like to see how your project will meaningfully contribute to diversifying audiences for the widest range of cinema and how it will broaden the range of stories represented on screen. Where applicable we also seek opportunities to tackle under representation in the exhibition workforce.

- **Environmental Sustainability**

We are committed to minimising the negative environmental impact of the work we support and ask all recipients to contribute to this aim. In your proposal, you will be asked to set out the steps you are taking both to minimise the environmental impact of your activity and to improve audience awareness of the climate and biodiversity crises.

Some inspiring examples of exhibitors working in this area include: [Curzon](#), [Depot](#), [HOME](#) and [Scott Cinemas](#). The BFI has a number of [recommended resources](#) that may be useful when planning around sustainability.

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Supporting independent film exhibition

Film Exhibition Fund

The fund will support activity taking place from **April 2023 – March 2026**. Organisations can apply for up to £10,000 per project, per year and, subject to available resources, we may support activity that runs over multiple years where this is in the best interests of the project and where it strongly addresses our outcomes. Please get in touch with us to discuss if you think this might apply to your project.

The fund is open to the entire range of organisations in Film Hub North's exhibitor network. This includes full-time cinema venues, mixed arts centres, community cinemas and film societies, film festivals and touring programmes.

The primary focus of the Film Exhibition Fund is in-person events that bring audiences together for a communal viewing experience. Projects which support audiences to experience broader screen activity such as television, online, digital media and extended reality (VR, AR) will also be considered where this represents a valuable opportunity for audience development in line with our priorities.

We are unable to support core programmes; activity will need to target specific audience groups and show how our funds are necessary to reach those identified audiences. Our overall focus is championing programmes of independent UK film, world cinema and screen heritage.

Your activity does not need to meet all of the FAN and BFI Screen Culture 2033 outcomes set out in this document but it should respond to **at least one** and as many as are relevant to your proposal. The more funding you are seeking, the more outcomes we would expect you to address.

Proposals can be made at any time from **01 April 2023 to 1 December 2025**. We expect the Film Exhibition Fund to be oversubscribed and advise members to consider carefully how their proposal meets this guidance and to submit proposals in good time. At the discretion of Film Hub North, the Film Exhibition Fund may close early if all resources have been committed. We will notify members in good time if this is likely to be the case.

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Key information

At a glance

Apply for **up to £10k per annum**
(or equivalent for multi-year projects)

Applications open: **01 April '23**

Applications close: **01 December '25**

Assessments **take place monthly**

Submit at **least 6 weeks in advance**

Supporting activity: **April '23 – March'26**



FOCUS AREAS

BFI Diversity Standards

In line with the [BFI Diversity Standards](#) as updated in 2022, we encourage activity aimed at, and/or co-produced with, under-represented groups. The Standards focus on under-representation in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation, and religion and belief (as they pertain to the [Equality Act 2010](#)), as well as socio-economic background, caring responsibilities and geographical location.

We are particularly committed to ensuring disproportionately affected audiences, such as disabled, those with a longstanding physical or mental condition, and those identifying as D/deaf or neurodiverse, can experience independent film and be welcomed into cinema spaces.

All Film Exhibition Fund proposals will be asked to demonstrate how the intended activity promotes inclusivity among audiences, on screen and – where applicable – in the workforce.

We ask that all proposals positively respond to the Standards, and priority will be given to proposals that do this in a clear and convincing way. You should particularly focus on **Standard D** and how your proposal provides inclusive audience development opportunities and **Standard E** that requires evidence of conscious commitment and tangible actions to improve overall accessibility.

If your project requires additional accessibility requirements, these are eligible to be added to your budget.

Responding to the Standards

We've provided a brief guide of the sort of information you should provide in relation to each Standard below. The Hub team is on hand to help applicants interpret the Standards further, please [get in touch](#) to discuss this.

- **Standard A - On screen representation**

This standard relates to how the programme will address under-representation. Where the project is a programme or a suite of films/broader screen content, e.g. a festival or venue, the applicant will need to provide a range of different examples that reflect the diversity and breadth of how the selected films/broader screen content address under-represented groups differently. If your programme is not yet confirmed, you should provide examples from your latest project alongside as much detail as you can about the future programme.

- **Standard B - Project team**

This standard relates to how the project will address under-representation throughout its team: from Creative Leadership and Senior Management to secondary and junior roles across the board including volunteers and advisory groups feeding into programme decisions.

- **Standard C - Industry access**

This standard relates to how the project addresses under-representation with certain roles, as well as how opportunities are presented and followed through with paid employment, career advancement and other opportunities.

- **Standard D - Audience development**

This standard relates to promotional and marketing strategies that will enable the project to reach under-represented audiences. It is important to detail the strategies, access plans and interventions that go beyond your current standard provision. A real commitment to making a project accessible to as wide an audience as possible should be demonstrated.

- **Standard E - Accessibility**

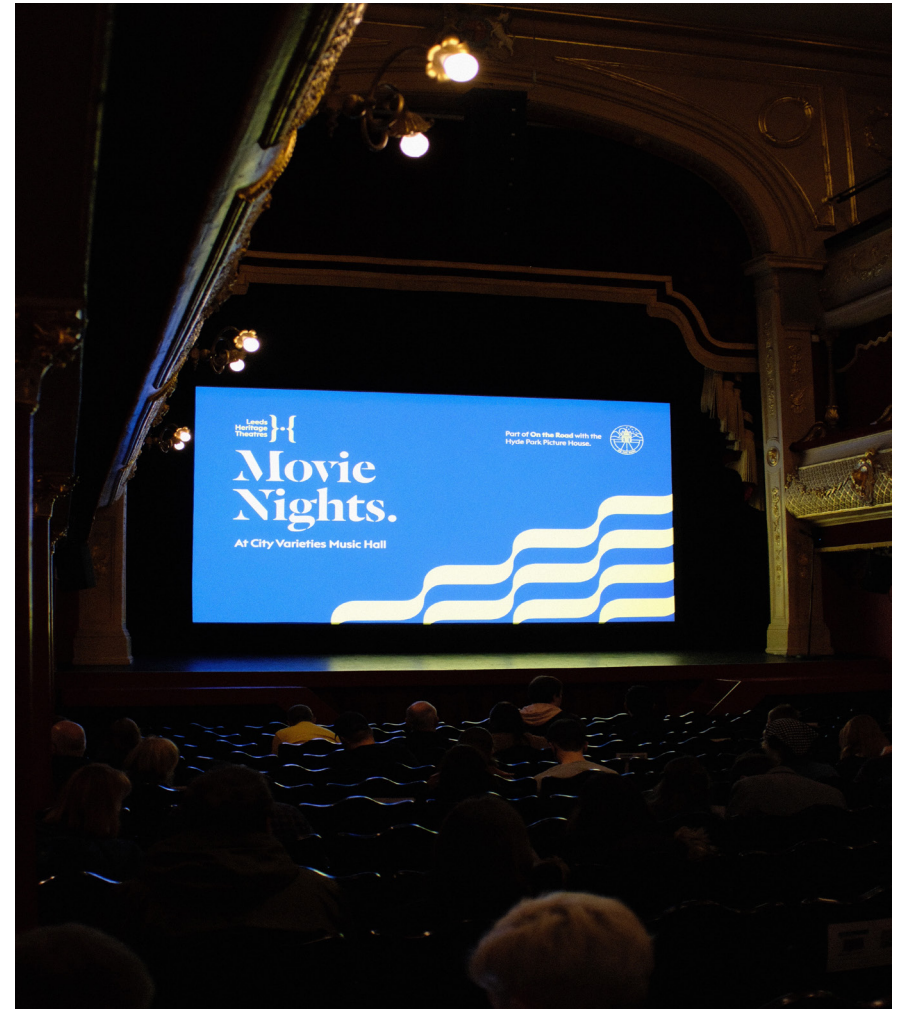
This standard emphasises the importance of taking intentional and proactive action to increase accessibility across every aspect of the project's life cycle. Going beyond Standard D, this standard requires evidence of conscious commitment and tangible actions to improve overall accessibility. Examples include but are not limited to:

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Our commitment to inclusion

- Project team recruitment and onboarding processes
- Fully accessible sites / venues
- Accessible promotional marketing materials
- Accessible events
- Awareness raisings.

More resources are available on the Film Hub North website.



Safeguarding

Projects involving children, young people or vulnerable adults should have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies in place. Where relevant, you will be asked to confirm this in your application.

For more information on safeguarding, read the [Guide to Safeguarding for Film Exhibitors](#) published by our colleagues at Film Hub London.

Bullying, Harassment and Racism

Bullying, harassment and racism have no place in our industry and we expect all organisations we fund to share our commitment to this principle.

The BFI and BAFTA have developed a set of principles and zero-tolerance guidance in consultation with organisations, unions and industry bodies across the film, television and games industry in response to urgent and systemic issues.

These documents can be found in [the BFI's Bullying, harassment and racism prevention hub](#). We ask all

applicants to engage with these principles by, as a minimum, reading these documents and sharing them within your organisation.

Bullying, Harassment and Racism is not a formal assessment criteria, but the information you provide will be used to gauge how we may support you further in these areas and ensure best practice across the BFI Film Audience Network. If a proposed action will incur additional costs, you can include these in your budget for consideration.

Am I eligible?

You must be a Film Hub North Member in order to access Film Hub North funding opportunities. To become a Member, fill in our [application form](#).

Film Hub Lead Organisations (HOME and Showroom Cinema) are not eligible to apply to the Film Exhibition Fund even if they meet the fund criteria.

How much can I ask for?

Members can request **up to £10,000 each year per proposal** for a maximum of three years. Eligible expenses and application instructions are outlined in the following pages. If you think your project would work best over multiple years and have a clear reason for this, please get in touch to discuss with us before you submit your proposal.

If your project requires less financial support (up to £3,000), you might consider applying to our [Film Exhibition Fund - Pitch Pot scheme](#).

Note that we are not able to fund 100% of project costs. While we do not have a set percentage requirement for match funding, we expect to see box office income and other support, whether in cash, volunteer time or other in-kind contributions, included in the budget.

When is the deadline?

Proposals can be submitted at any time from **01 April 2023 to 1 December 2025** but they should be received by the FHN team **at least 6 weeks in advance of the project start** date to allow time for assessment, project development and marketing lead-in.

When will I hear back?

Film Exhibition Fund proposals will be assessed on a monthly basis and we will let you know the outcome as soon as possible. To be considered in the next upcoming monthly assessment, your proposal should be submitted on or before the cut-off dates listed below. When you submit your proposal, you will be informed of your assessment date and when you will receive feedback. Please note if we require further information from you, this will extend the time taken to review your proposal.

Submission cut off dates 2023 – 2024

- 21 April 2023
- 19 May 2023
- 16 June 2023
- 21 July 2023
- 18 August 2023
- 15 September 2023
- 20 October 2023
- 17 November 2023
- 15 December 2023
- 19 January 2024
- 16 February 2024

Eligible expenses

Each project will have its individual needs - however, broadly speaking, the Film Exhibition Fund can support the following costs.

- Film rights and print transport
- Project-specific staffing costs - eg. curation, project management, audience development
- Venue hire and project-specific technical costs
- Marketing costs
- Event costs for enhanced screenings - eg. guest speakers, live scores
- Volunteer and evaluation expenses
- Accessibility costs - eg. creating accessible supporting materials, subtitling fees
- Outreach and community inclusion costs
- Audience development expenses - eg. young programmers workshops
- Rights clearances and curation fees for screen heritage materials
- Costs related to online activity - eg. web platforms or hosting fees

This list is not exhaustive and other items may be considered eligible.

Ineligible expenses

All proposed spend should go towards the activity detailed in your application. Beyond this, there are some things we can't support. These include::

- Filmmaking costs, support for filmmakers to develop, screen or distribute their work, or for programmes that primarily engage filmmaker audiences
- Capital costs, including building repairs, purchasing equipment or additional health and safety measures required due to Covid-19
- General organisational running costs not specifically related to the proposed activity
- Activity that should be covered by statutory education, including events taking place on school grounds/in school hours
- Events not primarily focused on film exhibition
- Activity covered by existing funding arrangements

- Programmes that duplicate provision in the same area
- Events taking place in a venue not open to the public - eg. members only venues
- Events taking place outside of the North

This list is not exhaustive and other items may be considered ineligible.

Submitting your proposal

To seek support for your project, please complete and submit the documents listed below.

The Proposal Form is your opportunity to tell us more about your project and its target audiences, and to show how your activity meets the funding objectives set out in these guidelines. You'll also be asked about the motivations behind your activity; why it's important and what it will provide to audiences locally.

More information on how your proposal will be assessed is provided in the following pages. Note that your proposal may be reviewed by an external assessor unfamiliar with your organisation or its work, so you should aim to describe your plans and relevant experience clearly and concisely.

- [Proposal form \[.docx\]](#)
- [Budget template \[.xlsx\]](#)
- [Equality Monitoring Form](#) - Note that the Employee section needs to be completed as well and if you have volunteers, that section will also need to be filled out.

If you have access requirements that mean you need assistance when applying for funds, you can request help through the [BFI Access Support Scheme](#).

Completed application documents should be submitted via email to our Finance and Data Officer Andrew Beadling: info@filmhubnorth.org.uk.

If you have any questions about the fund or the application process, or would like to discuss submitting an application in a different way, please [get in touch](#).

Assessment criteria

Your proposal will be assessed by the Film Hub North team. External assessors may also be brought in to review your proposal. Please note that we expect this fund to be oversubscribed and may not be able to fund your activity even if it meets the criteria.

The panel will consider the following assessment criteria:

- **Organisational capacity:** Are the proposed activity and timescale achievable? What are the long-term plans to reach audiences? Does the organisation have the required staff, partnerships and venue buy-in to deliver the project?
- **Fund objectives:** Which of the fund outcomes as set out in this document does this project address and how effectively? Does the activity respond to any of the fund's other key focus areas? Are all eligibility criteria met? Is there a proactive response to environmental issues?
- **Audiences:** Are projected admissions realistic? Is there a clear need for the activity - does it provide audiences with access to films otherwise unavailable

locally? Is this project specifically targeted at under-represented and/or under-served audiences? Does it actively contribute to reducing barriers to audience engagement?

- **Marketing & Evaluation:** Who are the target audiences and how will they be reached? Does the applicant have experience of reaching audiences in this way? What does success look like and what will the organisation learn from the project?
- **BFI Diversity Standards:** Does the proposal respond meaningfully to the BFI Diversity Standards? Will activity address under-representation among audiences, on screen or, if appropriate, in the workforce?
- **Budget:** Have all costs been considered and are they reasonable/eligible? Does the budget balance? Does the project represent value for money? Have details of income been provided? Have access costs been included? Have appropriate staffing costs been included?

Proposals will be scored using the [Film Exhibition Fund Assessment Form](#). We strongly encourage you to refer to this form when writing your proposal to ensure that you're providing all the information the assessment panel will be looking for.

Successful proposals

If your proposal is successful, the assessment panel may discuss amendments and wish to see a revised plan before confirming funding. Project timelines will need to accommodate this process.

If there are no recommendations or amendments to be made, you will be sent an email approving your funding.

Prior to contracting, the Hub may undertake an ID check on the lead applicant as part of our due diligence processes. You will then be sent a contract setting out the terms and conditions attached to the funding. These will cover payment information, crediting guidelines, audience surveying, and monitoring and reporting requirements.

Please note that final confirmation of support will be subject to the availability of Lottery Funding.

Unsuccessful proposals

If your proposal is unsuccessful, you will be contacted by email with notes from the assessment panel. We are not able to accept resubmissions or revisions of proposals that have previously been unsuccessful.

Being unsuccessful does not prevent you from accessing future Hub opportunities.

For more information on how to feedback on this funding opportunity or the Hub's work more generally, please consult our [Feedback & Complaints Policy](#).

Please note: these guidelines are subject to change. Film Hub North reserves the right to review and alter its policies, procedures and assessment criteria.



Film Hub North is a sector development organisation supporting film culture in the North of England. The Hub works with a range of organisations and individuals to help great films get made, screened and seen in the region. The Hub is supported by, and proud to award, National Lottery funding as part of the BFI Film Audience Network and BFI NETWORK.

E: info@filmhubnorth.org.uk

W: filmhubnorth.org.uk



Supported by National Lottery funding, the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) is central to the BFI's aim to ensure the greatest choice of film is available for everyone. Established in 2012 to build wider and more diverse UK cinema audiences for British and international film, FAN is a unique, UK-wide collaboration made up of eight Hubs managed by leading film organisations. FAN also supports talent development with BFI NETWORK Talent Executives in each of the English Hubs, with a mission to discover and support talented writers, directors and producers at the start of their careers.

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Images: FACT Cinema in the City 2021, The MOMENT at Leeds International Film Festival (Richard Ramchurn), Hyde Park Picture House's Movie Nights (Ollie Jenkins), Love LIFF At Home.