

Bursary Fund

Film
Hub
North

Funding Guidelines - March 2026



Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The Bursary Fund helps individuals working or volunteering in film exhibition to access training and professional development opportunities.

Bursary grants support recipients to improve their skills, boost their confidence, and contribute to a vibrant, inclusive film culture in the region.

Funding can be used to address a range of training needs that your organisation's existing budgets may not be able to cover.

If there is a festival with a valuable industry strand that you want to attend, a training course that addresses skills gaps in your team, or a screening event that will help broaden your programme, bursaries are available to make these opportunities more accessible.

Support of up to £500 is available, per organisation per annum. Funding can support both in-person and virtual development opportunities.

AT A GLANCE

Up to £500 per organisation, per annum

Supporting in-person and online training

Rolling fund, apply at any time

Submit at least 2 weeks in advance

Not awarded retrospectively

Focus areas

OUR FOCUS AREAS

The Bursary Fund will support training or development opportunities that provide recipients with the skills, knowledge and experience they need to contribute to a vibrant, inclusive film culture in the North.

After completing the training or development opportunity, funded organisations should be better equipped to grow audiences for British, international and independent film in the region.

We will prioritise training or development opportunities that 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 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.

Focus areas

- **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.](#)

All supported activity will need to address the following cross cutting principles:

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.

Diversity Standards

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 Bursary Fund requests will be asked to demonstrate how the intended activity promotes inclusivity among audiences, on screen and in the workforce.

We ask that all requests positively respond to the Standards, and priority will be given to requests that do this in a clear and convincing way. You should particularly focus on **Standard C** and how your request addresses under-representation in your workforce; **Standard D** and how it 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 have provided a brief guide of the sort of information you should provide in relation to each Standard below. If you need support to interpret the Standards further, please [get in touch](#).

You can learn more about the BFI's Diversity Standards [here](#).

Diversity Standards

Standard A - On screen representation

This standard relates to how the programme will address underrepresentation. Where the project is a programme or a suite of films/broader screen content, the applicant will need to provide a range of different examples that reflect the diversity and breadth of how the selected programme addresses underrepresented 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 underrepresentation throughout its team, from Creative Leadership and Senior Management to secondary and junior roles across the board, including the volunteers and advisory groups who feed into programme decisions.

Standard C - Industry access

This standard relates to how the project addresses underrepresentation 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 the promotional and marketing strategies that enable the project to reach underrepresented audiences. It is important to detail 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. For example, fully accessible sites, accessible promotional marketing materials, project team recruitment and onboarding processes.

More resources are available on Film Hub North and BFI FAN websites, including [BFI FAN's Access Directory](#) and the quarterly [Access Cinema Bulletin](#).

Fund details

FUND DETAILS

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](#).

Paid staff and volunteers from member organisations can apply to the Bursary Fund.

Where appropriate and representing value for money, Bursaries may support more than one team member from a single organisation to access a development opportunity.

How much can I ask for?

Hub member organisations can apply for a maximum of £500 within a financial year.

We can support up to 100% of eligible costs.

To ensure that our funds are awarded fairly across a range of different organisations, we may request that organisations with larger staff development budgets contribute to a proportion of costs where possible.

When is the deadline?

This is a rolling fund so requests can be made at any time from 18 March 2026.

Applicants should submit their requests at least 2 weeks before the event or training in question takes place.

We strongly advise that applicants do not purchase any tickets, accommodation or services associated with their funding request until after their request has been assessed. In the event of a request being unsuccessful, applicants will be liable for these costs.

We are unable to accept retrospective requests submitted to cover costs for training or development opportunities that have already taken place.

Use of support

USE OF SUPPORT

Eligible expenses

Funding can cover the costs associated with a variety of training and development opportunities.

Example eligible expenses include:

- Standard class rail, bus and air travel
- Petrol costs at 45p per mile
- Fees for training programmes and event tickets
- Accommodation costs

All costs must be confirmed with original receipts.

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

Ineligible expenses

Some costs that we can't support through the Bursary Fund include:

- Alcohol
- Food and drink costs
- First class travel
- Staffing cover for your organisation
- Training or development opportunities primarily aimed at filmmakers

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

Submissions

SUBMITTING YOUR REQUEST

To seek support for your training or development opportunity, please complete and submit the document listed below.

The Request Form will give you the chance to briefly outline the support you require, and tell us about your chosen development opportunity, and how taking part will benefit your organisation.

[Request form \[.docx\]](#)

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

We aim to provide feedback on your request within 5 working days of submission.

If you have access requirements that mean you need assistance when applying for funds, you may be able to request financial support through the [BFI Access Support Scheme](#).

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

Assessment

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Your request will be assessed by the Film Hub North team. External assessors may also be brought in to review your request.

The panel will consider the following assessment criteria:

Fund objectives

Will the training or development opportunity help the applicant contribute to a vibrant, inclusive film culture in the North? Will it support them to grow audiences for British, international and independent film? Does it align with one or more of the Hub's focus areas?

Cost

Does the request represent value for money? Are all requested costs reasonable and eligible?

BFI Diversity Standards

Does the request respond to the BFI Diversity Standards? Will the training opportunity help the applicant to address underrepresentation among audiences, on screen or in the workforce?

Legacy

Has the applicant attended the same or a similar training activity before? If so, why is it necessary to attend again?

Feedback

Successful proposals

If your request is successful, you will be sent a confirmation email setting out the terms and conditions attached to the bursary. These will cover the use of funds, reporting requirements and payment information.

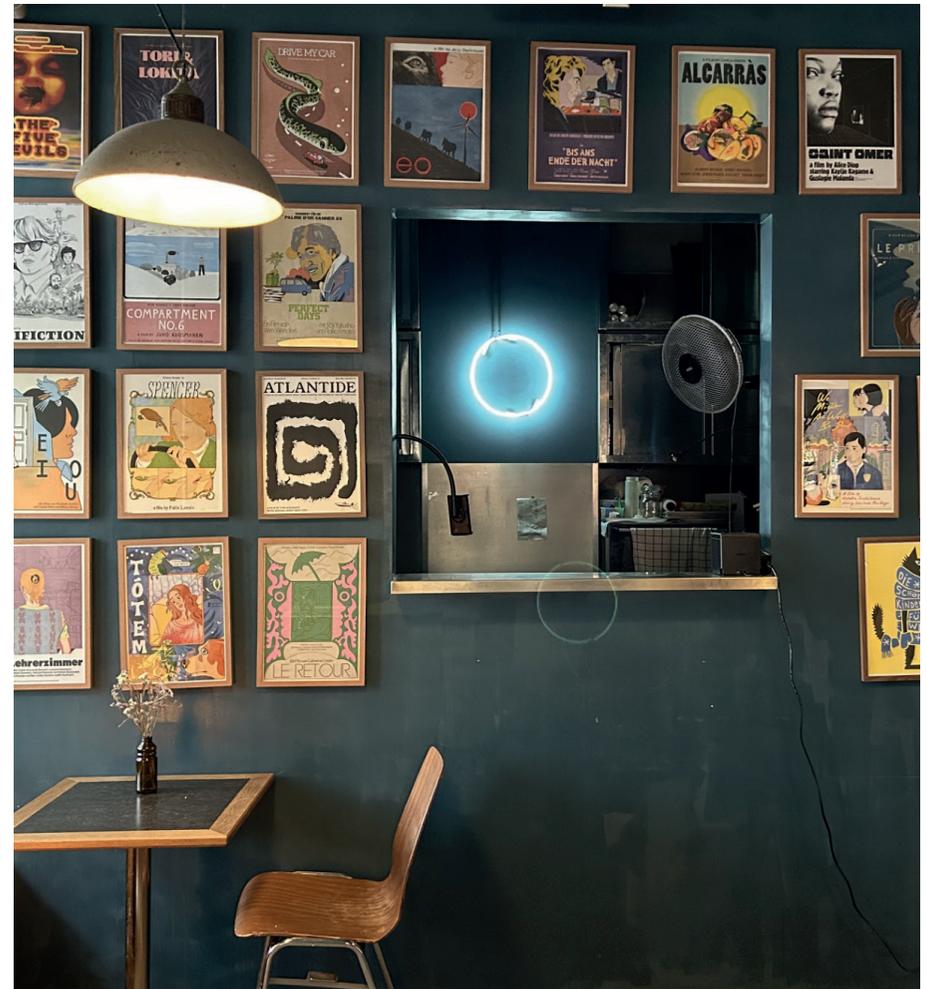
Please note that payment of bursaries is only made on completion of the course or event and following receipt of all necessary reporting and expenses documentation.

Unsuccessful proposals

If your request is unsuccessful, you will be contacted by email with brief feedback on the reasons why. We are not able to accept resubmissions or revisions of requests that have previously been unsuccessful.

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

For more information on how to feedback formally, please consult our [Feedback and Complaints Policy](#).





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 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.