

MADE OF TRUTH: BFI DOC SOCIETY SHORT FILM FUND

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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What can I apply for?

You can apply for up to £25,000 in grant funding for a nonfiction short film or short immersive nonfiction project. Your project can be between 5 - 40 minutes in length.

What do you offer people who have specific access needs at the application stage?

BFI Doc Society is committed to making its funding accessible to all. TAPE Community Film and Music will be providing individually tailored support for applicants with access needs. www.tapemusicandfilm.co.uk

Find all the details **on what support you can receive** and how to get the help required to make an application by downloading the PDF on our website under the 'access support' section.

How about access support costs during production?

If any members of your core team, contributors and/or crew have access requirements that mean there will be additional costs during the production of your project, you can include these on the Access Budget tab of the budget template provided. We define access support as specific help required by people who are disabled or have a physical and/or mental health condition, which will result in a verifiable additional cash cost to your production budget. This might include:

- a BSL interpreter to work with members of cast or crew;
- additional transport or accommodation costs for disabled team members;
- fee for the personal assistant of a team member who requires assistance during the production
- extra shooting time due to the need for regular breaks in filming

If you're asking for the maximum award amount (£25,000), you can still apply for access costs on top of this if you need to

What do you mean by new and emerging talent?

Somebody who has a creative track record but is yet to make a distributed feature film. New does not mean “young”. New and emerging filmmakers of all ages are welcome to apply.

Do I need a producer to apply?

We highly encourage all directors to team up with a producer before applying however we understand this can be a barrier to entry so we accept applications from directors directly. If your project is successful we can help match you up with a producer. If you have a producer attached, they should complete the application.

How do I find a producer?

Find some really useful tips on finding a producer on this webpage [Finding collaborators — Film Hub Midlands](#) from our colleagues at BFI NETWORK.

Look at short documentaries and who the producers are out there making work. You can look at the teams behind short films previously funded by Made of Truth on our [film directory](#).

Check out producers involved in schemes such as [Sheffield DocFest’s Future Producers School](#), [BFI NETWORK Insight Emerging Producers Programme](#) and regional labs run by BFI NETWORK such as Film Hub North’s [Creative Producer Lab](#).

Take a look at peer-initiated filmmaker networks such as [FWD-Doc](#), [Boomflix Network](#), [Brown Girl Docs Mafia](#) and local filmmaker groups on social media such as [York Filmmakers](#)

Look at film festival industry and film programmes to see who is behind recent documentary films and who is involved in talks and programmes, including [Sheffield DocFest](#), [Open City Documentary Festival](#), [Aesthetica Short Film Festival](#), [Encounters Film Festival](#), [Folkestone Documentary Festival](#) and many more. You can find a [directory of film festivals](#) in the UK on the British Council website.

Can you help match me with a producer?

We're unable to offer bespoke matchmaking between filmmakers applying for the fund and producers due to the volume of requests we receive and the very specific nature of this relationship.

What advice do you have on starting an application?

Here's our top tips on preparing to make an application:

- Read the guidelines
- Read the BFI's Diversity Standards guidelines & download & complete the form
- Preview the application form & draft your application offline
- Get your visual materials together
- Get trusted peers to look over your application
- Create an account online - <https://app.doc society.org/login/>
- Don't leave it until the last minute to submit

What kind of films do you fund?

The Brief is intentionally broad and we can fund all types of short non-fiction work. This includes projects that are: observational, personal stories, essay films, journalistic work, hybrid work rooted in documentary, artist films (but not installations), non-fiction animation and immersive projects. We don't fund short form factual work for TV or series.

You can see what kind of films we have funded in the past by visiting our [Made of Truth short film directory](#).

What if I've never made a documentary short film before?

Made of Truth welcomes new talent in the documentary sector. Both the director and producer on the project can be new to documentary filmmaking, but they will need to be able to demonstrate a broader creative track record as part of the application. This could be student work, or something created at a grassroots/non-professional level. The work may be in film, television, theatre or another art form.

Can I apply with more than one project?

You can apply with more than one project. Each individual application will be assessed on its own merits. However the application process requires an investment of time and we encourage you to prioritise the project you think would benefit from funding the most and that you are confident you can make in terms of the story, schedule, team, budget and timeframe of the funding period.

What if my budget is more than £25,000?

We can accept applications for projects with budgets above £25,000. If the total cost of your film exceeds the amount you are requesting, you don't need to have all of the additional funds raised at the point of application but you will need to show an achievable plan for securing them. These additional funds will need to be secured before we make any award to you.

What if my budget is less than £25,000?

We can accept applications for projects of any budget up to a maximum of £25,000. You should apply for the amount of money you will need for the production and finishing costs of your project, up to a maximum amount of £25,000. We will assess the feasibility of your budget and may offer you funding at a different amount than that which you've requested.

What should I include in my budget?

In your budget you must include:

- All costs for pre production, production & post
- Fees for all crew - including the director and producer. We encourage you to include flat fees for all HOD's & all other crew must be paid at least equivalent to the London Living wage, with parity across grades, across departments.
- Post production crew including sound designer, composer, mixer & colourist
- Any covid or other health & safety costs needed

- All delivery items including enhanced access materials (see guidelines for further details)
- Festival submissions (up to £500)
- At least a 5% contingency

What can't be included in my budget?

You cannot include the following costs in your budget:

- Any retrospective costs (money already spent before receiving our grant)
- Marketing or PR
- Impact costs
- Distribution costs
- You cannot **purchase** equipment using the grant if you are awarded, your budget should reflect rental fees rather than purchase costs.

When will I find out if my application has been successful?

After you have submitted your application, you will receive a confirmation email that your application has been received. A decision on whether your application is progressed to the next stage or declined, will be made within 16 weeks of the fund closing date. If we request additional materials from you, the amount of time it takes for you to supply these may have an impact on our ability to take a decision on your application within the above timeframe, and it may take more than 16 weeks after the fund closes acknowledgment to reach a decision.

What kind of visual materials should I include with my application?

Examples of visual materials that you can include to support your application are: teasers or footage already shot, visual mood boards, a visual treatment or other material that expresses your ideas for your new project.

I've already started making my film, can I still apply?

Yes, we can support at any stage however it's unlikely we would come in just for completion (post production) costs as we would prefer to have some editorial input on the edit. You would need to demonstrate the need for funding to continue to make your film. We cannot support retrospective costs.

Can I reapply if I have applied to the fund before?

If you made a previous application to Made of Truth that was declined, you can reapply with the same project or with a different project. Please demonstrate how your film may have progressed and make sure you read the current guidelines ahead of making an application.

What are the reasons my application might not be successful?

Unfortunately we do not have the capacity to provide feedback to every filmmaker who makes an application to the fund. However, there are a number of reasons why your application may be declined. These reasons are listed in the fund guidelines in the section titled "Feedback".

How can I speak to someone about my application?

If you have any questions that are not answered by reading the guidelines, application form preview or these frequently asked questions, please feel free to contact us on hello@docsociety.org.

Upcoming Talent Support Events:

Find information on all upcoming events here <https://bfi.docsociety.org/talent/>
We will be hosting a number of online roundtables throughout April, alongside those listed below.

1-2-1 Sessions at Glasgow Short Film Festival 2025

Friday 21 & Saturday 22 March // Civic House Canteen, Glasgow

Attending GSFF this year and interested in applying to the BFI Doc Society Made of Truth Fund with your short non-fiction project? You can book in for a 20-minute advice session with Sanne Jehoul to get guidance ahead of the fund opening on 1st April.

[Book a 1-2-1 slot at GSFF](#). Please note if no slots pop up on 21 or 22 March this means all have been booked. You can also attend the Funders' Roundtable we're participating in - please find more info further down this page.

1-2-1 Sessions at Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival 2025

Saturday 29 March, 10:00 - 12:30 // The Maltings Café Bar, Berwick-upon-Tweed

Attending BFMAF this year and interested in applying to the BFI Doc Society Funds? You can book in for a 20-minute advice session to discuss your non-fiction project and questions related to the funds. For feature-length projects suited to our Features or RAD Funds, please book in with Luke Moody. For short form projects suited to our Made of Truth Fund (opens 1st April), please book in with Sanne Jehoul.

We will meet you in The Maltings Café Bar.

[Book: Made of Truth Short Film Fund 1-2-1 with Sanne Jehoul](#)

Thank you for reading these FAQs, good luck with your application!