Screen Nova Scotia Amplified Voices Development Fund 2026 Guidelines

Screen Nova Scotia

Screen Nova Scotia (SNS) is a not-for-profit industry association and film commission. Screen Nova Scotia recognizes the support of the Province of Nova Scotia and is pleased to work in partnership with the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage (CCTH).

Guiding Principles

The Screen Nova Scotia Amplified Voices Development Fund (the "Fund") provides an opportunity to advance the skills of emerging creators and producers from underrepresented communities in Nova Scotia. The Fund accelerates the creative and professional development of producers and writers through the creation of early-stage project-related deliverables. It supports creators by building capacity and expanding the talent pool, and improves the quality and competitiveness of Nova Scotian applicants from underrepresented communities to national development and production funds.

Program Details

1. Introduction and Key Principles

- The Development Fund provides funding to develop high quality creative content to a level that can attract partners, financing and distribution so that it can move into production. Applicants may submit an application to the Fund to receive one of a limited number of grants to assist them with their project development activities.
- The Applicant and the project are controlled by Nova Scotian(s) who have been resident in Nova Scotia for at least the two years prior to the first filing of the application to the Fund.
- Applicants must be Emerging Talent and must self-identify as members of an Underrepresented Community.
- Applicants apply at the Fund deadlines and are evaluated by a selection committee.

The above summary is subject to these Guidelines, and the funding agreement.

Screen Nova Scotia advises all Applicants to respect the guiding principles and best practices set out in the On-Screen Protocols & Pathways Media Production Guide and the Being Seen Directives for Creating Authentic and Inclusive Content.

2. Definitions

"Applicant" means the Nova Scotian individual or Production Company that applies to receive funding and who produces the Production and incurs the attributable production costs.

The "Creative Team" or **"Team"** is composed of the Screenwriter(s) and Producer(s) on the project.

"Documentary" is defined as an original work of non-fiction, primarily designed to inform but that may also educate and entertain, providing an in-depth critical analysis of a specific subject or point of view.

"Emerging Talent" means Nova Scotia resident producers, directors and/or screenwriters who have previously produced, directed and/or written no more than one Feature Film or four hours of television content which have been produced for intended commercial release.

"Feature Film" means a standalone Documentary or dramatic production 75 minutes or longer in duration. This definition includes standalone productions that are a sequel or are part of a franchise, but only if the Production will be sold and marketed individually.

"Nova Scotia Production Company" means a production company incorporated in Nova Scotia under the Companies Act or continued as a Nova Scotia company through a Certificate of Continuance or federally incorporated in Canada, and in all cases, registered and in good standing with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

"Nova Scotian Ownership and Control" means a Nova Scotia Resident(s) (as defined below) that has/have 50 per cent or more of each of the following:

i) Corporate ownership and control (e.g. 50% or more of the voting shares of the Applicant Company are owned by a Nova Scotian(s) either directly or indirectly through one or more holding companies);
ii) Rights to the Production;
iii) Financial and creative control of the Production; and
iv) Right to profit participation from the exploitation of the Production proportionate to the percentage owned or controlled.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to affirmatively establish 'Nova Scotian Ownership and Control' based on the above criteria including:

i) Supplying all documentation required to establish the percentage of 'Nova Scotian Ownership and Control' based on the above criteria;
ii) Responding to any further requests for documentation or other confirmation as required; and
iii) Supplying if so requested, one or more duly sworn statutory declarations attesting to specific facts or circumstances.

"Nova Scotia Resident" is a lawful individual resident of Canada for the purposes of the Income Tax Act (Canada) who has resided in Nova Scotia and has filed/shall file a personal income tax return as a resident of Nova Scotia for not less than two consecutive years prior to the first filing of the application to the Fund.

"Official Language Minority Communities" are groups of people whose chosen official language (of Canada) is not the majority language in their province or territory – in other words, English-language communities in Quebec and French-language communities outside Quebec such as Nova Scotia.

"One-Off Programming" means a one-off standalone television program of 40-74 minutes in length. One Off Programming must be bona fide individual Productions.

"Producer" is an individual who controls and is a central decision maker in respect of a production and is directly responsible for the acquisition of the Production story or screenplay and the development, creative and financial control and exploitation of the Production, and is identified in the Production as being the producer of the Production.

"Screenwriter" means a person who writes script material and is responsible to the Producer for the finished script.

"Series" means documentary, dramatic, and variety show Productions composed of multiple episodes. This definition includes miniseries and also anthology series, but only if all episodes will be sold and marketed together as a series.

"Underrepresented Community" means a member of one or more of the communities of Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, 2SLGBTQIA+, People with a long-term, intermittent or recurring Disability, or Official Language Minorities.

3. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by a Nova Scotian Production Company or individuals on behalf of a company to be incorporated in the future.

If an Applicant wishes to submit an application to SNS but has yet to incorporate a company, a duly authorised member of the Creative Team may submit an application on behalf of the company to be incorporated. **If a project is selected by SNS for funding, the financing agreement will be signed with the company.**

3.1 When the application is submitted by an individual on behalf of a company to be incorporated in the future

The individual must:

A. Be a key member of the Creative Team of the project
B. Self Identify as a member of an Underrepresented Community, as defined in these Guidelines
C. Be Emerging Talent, as defined in these Guidelines
D. Be authorised by the rightsholders of the project to apply to SNS

Further, once incorporated, the Company must meet all the eligibility criteria for Companies set out in section 3.2.

3.2 When the application is submitted by a Company already incorporated

The applicant must be a Nova Scotian Production Company that meets the following criteria:

A. Completed the Amplified Voices Pre-Development Program
   OR
B. Is a Nova Scotian Production Company where the majority of owners (including by shareholders and control) self-identify as members of an Underrepresented Community

3.3 All Applicants

To be eligible for the Development Fund, all Applicants must additionally meet the following criteria:

A. Have an attached confirmed Nova Scotian Resident Screenwriter who self-identifies as a member of an Underrepresented Community
B. The Producer and Screenwriter must be Emerging Talent, as defined in these Guidelines
C. Applicants do not need to be a member of Screen Nova Scotia to apply, but no less than one member of the Creative Team must become a member if approved for funding
D. Applicants must show a demonstrated interest or experience in working in the screen industries and either the Applicant or Screenwriter must show a track record of content creation (any screen format, including but not limited to short film, series, and short-form video content for digital social media platforms is acceptable)
E. The Applicant and its Team and shareholders shall be limited to one application per year.

SNS reserves the right to assess Applicants and projects for eligibility on a case by case basis.

4. Project Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, projects must:

a. Be new and original (second or subsequent seasons of a series are not eligible)
b. Be conceived as Documentary or scripted in Feature Film, One-off Programming, short form digital Series, or broadcast TV Series formats
c. Have a confirmed Creative Team at the time of application that includes a Producer and Screenwriter. The Producer and Screenwriter positions may be held by one or more individual(s).

The Applicant must own or control, exclusively for at least 24 months, under options or other chain of title agreements, all rights for the development, production and exploitation of the project.

Productions structured as inter-provincial or international co-productions at the time of application are not accepted.

Projects that receive funding through the Amplified Voices Development Fund are not eligible to apply to the Screen Nova Scotia Content Creator Fund until all deliverables under the Amplified Voices Development Fund agreement have been submitted and approved.

5. Ineligible Content

Genres of any projects NOT eligible for funding include:

- Any film or production prohibited under the Theatres and Amusement Act
- News, current events or public affairs programming, or a program that includes weather or market reports
- Talk shows
- Production in respect of a game or contest
- Projects that are primarily user-generated content including product review videos, how-to videos, tutorials and other forms of unscripted programming
- Gala presentations or awards shows
- Professional/franchise sporting events or activities
- Production that solicits funds
- Reality television
- Pornography
- Advertising
- Production produced primarily for industrial, corporate, or institutional purposes
- Production, other than Documentary that has at least 25 per cent non-stock footage, that consists of all or substantially all stock footage
- Performing arts programming, defined as productions composed of live or pre-recorded performances of traditional and popular music, opera, operetta, musicals, taping of live stage plays, ballet and other forms of dance or performing art.
- Console or online video games
- Software/programming applications

6. Eligible Activities

The Fund is intended to accelerate the development of the project through the creation of early-stage project-related deliverables.

Examples of eligible activities include:

- Detailed pitch deck
- Series outline
- Episode outlines
- Script(s)
- Production expenses for the production of proof-of-concept content or teaser
- Marketing plan
- Preliminary audience development plan
- Story editor
- Paid mentorship support

Activities that are part of the production phase of the project will not be eligible.

Activities must be completed within one year of notification of the decision.

SNS must be notified in advance of any changes in the activity, including start and end dates, Creative Team, or any other significant changes.

7. Funding Contribution

The Fund will grant non-repayable development funding contributions to a maximum of $20,000 for each eligible project.

SNS may fund 100% of the project's eligible expenditures through the Fund. If the project's development budget exceeds $20,000, additional financing such as Producer investments, deferrals or services, distribution advance, platform development deal or licence must be confirmed at the time of application.

8. Payment of Funding Contribution

Selected Applicants to the Program will be paid the funding contribution, subject to Applicant and Production compliance, as follows:

- Drawdown 1 - 80% of the funding contribution will be paid out upon full execution of the funding agreement
- Drawdown 2 - An amount equal to the unpaid balance will be payable to the Applicant upon receipt and approval of all closing documentation and final deliverables, as outlined in the funding agreement. SNS will adjust the 2nd Drawdown of the Funding Contribution, if necessary.

If the project is not undertaken after payment of the Funding Contribution has been made, the recipient must return the funds to SNS.

9. Application Process

How to Apply

- Download the Guidelines and the Application Submission Checklist for reference during the application process
- Complete and submit the Application Form from Screen Nova Scotia's website and upload all required documents and submission materials.
- It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that SNS receives all required and relevant documentation. A complete application submission must be received by the Fund Administrator before the Applicant will be considered for the Fund.
- The Applicant should contact the Fund Administrator if they need accessibility accommodations in order to submit their Application.

Application Deadline

The Development Program has one deadline annually. Refer to the current year's deadline published on the SNS website.

Application Checklist

To apply for funding from the Development Fund, a complete submission must be received by the Fund Administrator. That consists of a completed application form and all required accompanying documentation and supplementary information, including:

- ☐ **Project details form**
- ☐ **Self-identification forms** for members of the Creative Team and Nova Scotia Production Company owners
- ☐ **Filmography/CVs** for Producer and Screenwriter
- ☐ **Pitch package**
- ☐ **Development phase budget** using SNS budget template
- ☐ **Chain of title** documentation or option agreements evidencing the rights for the development, production and exploitation of the project, or attestation that the material is original to the applicant
- ☐ **Detailed development proposal**, submitted as a single document that includes the following:
    - **Description of proposed development activities**, and a demonstration of how they will accelerate the development of the project
    - **Key creative personnel**, and a description of how this team is well-positioned to undertake this project
    - **List of deliverables** (this may include but is not limited to demo/teaser, script, episode outlines, detailed pitch deck, marketing plan, audience development plan, hiring of paid mentor/consultant)
- ☐ A link to an **example of previous work** by either the Producer or Screenwriter
- ☐ For companies already incorporated, a copy of the **Certificate of Incorporation** of the Applicant Company
- ☐ For companies already incorporated, information regarding the **ownership structure** of the Applicant Company, including contact information of all shareholders (e.g. corporate register of shareholders)

SNS shall also at all times be entitled to require that Applicants provide further information in respect of an application or a Production, including as may be necessary to verify information, determine compliance, or assess risk.

Producers are encouraged to ensure that they have received the most current guidelines, templates, and policies prior to submitting an application. These Guidelines are available on the SNS website. SNS reserves the right to update guidelines without notice.

10. Evaluation Process

Applications will be initially evaluated by a selection committee overseen by SNS with final decisions made by representatives from SNS. Applications will be evaluated with consideration of the following elements:

- Quality, innovation, and creativity of the project

- The Applicant's access to the capacity, skills, knowledge and expertise required to complete the proposed activities
- The Applicant's commitment to the project
- The Applicant's readiness to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Fund
- The overall potential for success
- The feasibility of the budget and development activities

If approved, the Applicant will be notified of the funding decision by email, together with any conditions which must be satisfied prior to executing a funding agreement.

Once the conditions have been satisfied, a funding agreement will be issued to approved Applicants. Upon full execution of this agreement and receipt of all deliverables, the Funding Contribution will be released for each drawdown.

In all matters related to the application of, or exceptions to, these Guidelines and in the event that the interpretation of these Guidelines or the spirit and intent of the Fund are in question, SNS has complete discretion and final interpretation. SNS reserves the right to make revisions to the Fund, its Guidelines, policies, or application forms at any time.

11. Deliverables

A final report and cost report are required from all successful Applicants within 60 days of their project end date. Information (data/results) should directly relate to the objectives identified in your proposal.

Upon completion of the project, the Applicant must provide the following deliverables within 60 days of their project end date:

a. A final project report that relates directly to the objectives outlined in Applicant's description of activities
b. A final cost report in accordance with the reporting requirements of the funding agreement
c. Additional documentation, including contracts, deal memos, receipts and creative materials that SNS may require to complete its assessment of the project

For two years after the project end date, the Applicant must agree to complete an annual survey for SNS regarding the status of their project.

12. Ethics and Programming Standards

All projects must comply with the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) Code of Ethics and with all other programming standards endorsed by the CAB or the CRTC, and not contain any element that is an offence under the Criminal Code, is libellous or in any other way unlawful.