

# [i]FEATURES

## GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS 2018

### SUBMISSION DEADLINE

5pm  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018



**These guidelines are intended to assist filmmakers in making a submission to iFeatures. They should be read in conjunction with the iFeatures' FAQs at <http://www.ifeatures.co.uk/faqs.html>**

### **WHAT IS iFEATURES?**

iFeatures is a filmmaker initiative run by Creative England with support from BBC Films and is made possible through National Lottery funding from BFI and Creative Skillset. The aim of the programme is to support the development and realisation of low budget feature films, and to discover the next generation of passionate filmmakers in the UK.

iFeatures offers a unique opportunity to explore and help realise your vision. In addition to funding the development of twelve projects, each selected team will take part in an intensive, exploratory Lab programme which will include dedicated support, access to industry and networks, as well as mentoring and high-level training with established industry professionals.

iFeatures is evolving and has revised its structure to remove the elimination aspect from the process. As a result, the production financing of each project will be approached individually after a full period of development. Each project will be given bespoke, dedicated support as it readies itself for the market. In order to ensure a conversion to production of at least the same level as previous years, key partners BFI and BBC Films have committed to ensuring their support on progressing a minimum of three projects to production following the programme.

The new round will open for applications on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018. The submission process will close on Wednesday 28th March at 5pm.

### **WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?**

iFeatures takes inspiration from the principle that low-budget, ambitious, well told stories can break out to achieve critical and commercial success. Filmmakers, emerging and established, have found expression through low budget filmmaking and increasingly it is seen as a powerful form of expression in itself, as well as a stepping stone to bigger things. From Gareth Edwards' *Monsters*, Andrew Haigh's *Weekend*, the Blaine Brothers' *Nina Forever*, Alice Lowe's *Prevenge*, Babak Anvari's *Under the Shadow*, to Sean Baker's Sundance hit *Tangerine*, we have seen exciting voices emerge from the low budget world. iFeatures has driven forward and elevated this principle with resounding success. Multi-award winning and critically acclaimed festival favourites *The Levelling*, *Apostasy* and *Lady Macbeth* were all made directly through the programme - the latter going on a spectacular international theatrical run. *Adult Life Skills*, *Pin Cushion* and *God's Own Country* also went on to be produced outside the programme to equivalent acclaim - the latter becoming the most successful British debut at the UK box office in over twenty years.

From recent experience, we believe there is a sweet-spot for high-quality low-budget films between £500,000 and £750,000. We are looking for projects which at

the point of application expressly intend to finance within this bracket and will develop films with a view to tailoring proposed budgets to what we believe the project needs and what can be reasonably financed in the current landscape.

We are looking for distinctive creative voices and bold visions, regardless of the genre of film. We believe that 'meaningful' and 'entertaining' are not mutually exclusive terms in most audience's mind, and we want to see intelligent, high quality genre films just as much as dramas. We want stories that express a powerful sense of place and time, and with distinctive, unique takes on the whole of the UK. Stories that transcend low production budgets, and engage audiences in the UK and world-wide, regardless of the type of camera they might be shot with or platform they are being experienced from. Stories that move, entertain, surprise, challenge and resonate. And voices that need to be heard.

### **WHO CAN APPLY?**

iFeatures is targeted at emerging writers, directors and writer/directors who have yet to make a funded feature film (or have already made a no/micro budget feature that has not been theatrically released), and at producers who are still at an emerging stage of their career as a lead creative film producer.

iFeatures is aimed at creative talent whose work has already garnered positive industry and/or public attention in the fields of short films, theatre, TV, documentaries, online storytelling, art films and videos, video gaming, commercials/advertising, graphic novels, music promos.

Writers, directors and producers should each be able to demonstrate one of the following as evidence of such public recognition:

- acceptance at a minimum of two short film festivals listed in the British Council festival directory <http://film.britishcouncil.org/festivals-directory>
- selection for online platforms such as, amongst others, Vimeo Staff Picks, Short of the Week
- a minimum of one completed professional theatre production of your work
- a minimum of two completed professional advertising campaigns
- a minimum of one completed television production of your work
- a minimum of one professional gallery or other public exhibition of your work
- a minimum of two released video games

Writers should submit a full-length writing sample as part of the application, being a full-length screenplay, TV script, novel, play or equivalent. In the case of a short film script or short story of less than twenty pages, two such samples should be provided.

Teams of writers, directors and producers can apply. We strongly encourage producers being attached, however we will also accept applications from teams of writers and directors (or a writer/director on their own) with no producer attached. If selected for the programme, the iFeatures team will facilitate attaching a producer to the project as soon as possible in order for the project to benefit fully from the

support available. iFeatures is designed for emerging talent, however if producers intending to apply have considerably more experience than one full feature as lead producer, then please discuss with us before applying. Each team should have no more than 4 people attached to the project at the time of submission. Any individual can be attached to a maximum of 2 submissions, either with the same or with a different team. If a producer is attached to the project we would normally expect them to be the lead applicant on the submission.

We embrace the BFI's Diversity Standards and proactively encourage submissions from women, BAME, disabled and other groups currently under-represented in film: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/about-bfi/policy-strategy/diversity/diversity-standards>

Applications from more experienced directors – for example, documentary directors making their first fiction or directors with some TV experience making their debut feature - who are looking to make a low-budget fiction feature may also be considered at our discretion.

We welcome projects not in the English language so long as the story is set in the UK, including Cornish, Irish and Ulster Scots, Scots and Scottish Gaelic, and Welsh. Please note that all project development and Lab sessions will be conducted in English and all projects must be able to engage fully with the programme and the advertised timeline below.

We do not accept applications from:

- anyone currently studying in Further or Higher Education at any level
- teams with stories which are not primarily/substantively set in the UK.

### **HOW TO APPLY?**

You can make your project submission anytime from Wednesday 21st February until 5pm on Wednesday 28th March 2018. The application form can be found at <http://www.ifeatures.co.uk/apply-now.html>

Your application will need to include:

- A 25 words or less logline
- A 100 word short synopsis
- A story treatment of no more than 3000 words (or 5 A4 pages)
- A team creative statement of no more than 1000 words
- A writing sample from the writer – if a script for the project already exists, you should include this as the (or an additional) writing sample
- Relevant examples of work by the director

The application form includes further instructions on what each of the above documents should cover.

### **HOW DO WE SELECT PROJECTS?**

Each submission will be assessed based on:

- ability and potential of the filmmaking team
- quality of the project

- audience and market potential of the project

In determining which teams to support we will also take into consideration the location of the talent and would like to support at least one project from filmmaking talent based in each of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and, of the remainder, at least 50% of the filmmaking team to be based in the English regions.

Up to 24 applications will be shortlisted and teams will be invited to a selection panel during w/c 4th June 2018.

The selection panel will then invite up to 12 projects/filmmaking teams to participate in iFeatures. We aim to notify all filmmakers in writing as to the selection panel's decision no later than w/c 11th June 2018. The selection panel will consist of senior representatives from Creative England, the BFI and BBC Films.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL?**

Up to twelve selected teams will be invited to take part in the iFeatures Lab programme and will be awarded development funding commensurate with standard fees for a low-budget debut film development.

The programme will consist of four intensive Labs.

In the first two 'Story' Labs, filmmakers will explore their stories and advance their projects through dedicated development and experimentation. These labs will include a range of sessions and approaches from one-on-ones and group seminars, to writing and script workshops, to high-level inspirational master classes.

In the 'Direction' Lab, filmmakers will explore their craft through the prism of their project, and their project through the prism of their craft - including directorial vision, communication, style and approach, actors and performance, sound and production design, the edit and post-production.

The 'Production' Lab will equip and prepare teams for market and production, examining their project in the contexts of packaging and financing, contracts and financial management, budgeting and production management, festivals and distribution, and more.

Please note that residential Labs form a mandatory part of iFeatures and will take up approximately three days each (please see key dates at the end of this document).

iFeatures is a big commitment. We want to work with passionate, ambitious and committed filmmakers who will seize the opportunity provided by the initiative. However, we also realise that people have jobs and families and will do our best to make it work for everyone, no matter what their personal circumstances.

iFeatures places professional development at its core and this part of the initiative is primarily funded by the Creative Skillset Film Skills Fund and the BFI. However, each selected individual is also required to make a modest contribution of up to £200 to

the costs of the professional development offer as tangible evidence of their commitment to attend the programme.

Nonetheless, iFeatures5 has a limited amount of travel bursary support available for participants to assist with costs of attending labs. In addition there are limited funds available in order to contribute to childcare costs and other specific access needs (e.g. for disability). Decisions regarding the allocation of support will be made on an individual case-by-case basis. If you expect a significant financial barrier to your participation, please get in touch with the iFeatures team via the email address provided at the end of this document to discuss your circumstances.

### **TIMETABLE**

Below is a timetable for the iFeatures Labs. Please note these dates may be subject to change.

- iFeatures 5 Opens for applications – Wednesday 21st February 2018
- iFeatures 5 Deadline for applications – Wednesday 28th March, 5pm
- Teams selected for interview informed – w/c 14th May
- Interview panels for 24 teams – w/c 4th June
- Successful teams informed – w/c 11th June
- Story Lab 1 – w/c 2nd July (3 days)
- Story Lab 2 – w/c 27th August (2 days)
- Director's Lab – w/c 22nd October (3 days)
- Producer's Lab – w/c 26<sup>th</sup> November (3 days)
- Partner feedback meetings – February 2019

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF DEVELOPMENT FUNDING**

If your project is selected for iFeatures, you will enter into a development agreement the terms and conditions of which will include the following:

- You will be provided with an award of funding which is part development funding (recoupable) – financed through support from BBC Films and BFI - and part 'in-kind' contribution to your participation in the Lab financed through support from BFI and Creative Skillset and which is non-recoupable
- if the project is based on any underlying work you will need to have obtained rights or prove that you can obtain rights in (or an option over) that underlying work sufficient to be able to make one feature film
- if your project subsequently goes into production (with or without support from BBC Films or BFI) then the development award amount will be repayable no later than first day of principal photography of that film; we will require a development end credit, to include reference to our partners and the National Lottery; and we will expect a 5% share of producer's net profits (payable to BFI and BBC Films).
- iFeatures is made possible through National Lottery funding. It is important that all filmmakers proudly acknowledge their National Lottery funding through highlighting the Good Cause message. We ask that they prominently display the National Lottery logo in the film's credits, as well

as on related marketing materials, press releases and on front pages of any website. We also ask beneficiaries to warmly and energetically spread the word about their fantastic project being made possible by money raised by National Lottery players whenever there are opportunities appropriate to do so. This includes messaging, at a minimum, on press releases, on print, marketing materials, on digital platforms and on social media, and when speaking to audiences, media and stakeholders about the project.

## **FEEDBACK**

Due to the high volume of submissions that we expect to receive, we regret that we are unable to give feedback to applicants who are not invited to the selection panel.

## **CONTACT**

We welcome enquires from any filmmakers who are thinking about making a submission to iFeatures. If you have questions then many of these should be answered by our FAQ's <http://www.ifeatures.co.uk/faqs.html>

If you can't find an answer to your question please email [ifeatures@creativeengland.co.uk](mailto:ifeatures@creativeengland.co.uk).

All dates referred to in these guidelines are subject to revision at iFeatures' discretion. In the event that a date changes, we will endeavour to let participants know as soon as possible.

*Whilst the information and advice in these guidelines is believed to be accurate at the time of going to press, Creative England reserves the right to make changes at any time to the iFeatures initiative and/or to these guidelines at any time at its discretion. iFeatures and its partners shall not be responsible for any loss attributable to errors, omissions or other inaccuracies in the information contained in these guidelines.*

*Creative England's full terms and conditions can be found here:* <http://applications.creativeengland.co.uk/assets/public/resource/33.pdf>