

[i]FEATURES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We hope these are useful and may issue updates throughout the submissions period.

If you can't find an answer here or in our iFeatures guidelines, please contact ifeatures@creativeengland.co.uk

ELIGIBILITY

- I live in London / Scotland / Wales / Northern Ireland. Can I apply?
- I'm a first-time filmmaker. Can I apply?
- Can I apply as an individual?
- Can individuals apply with more than one project?
- I'm an individual writer/director/producer looking for some collaborators to apply with. Can you help?

SUBMISSIONS

- Are you looking for a particular genre or type of story?
- Our story is not set in the UK. Can we submit?
- Our script is not in English. Can we apply?
- We have an idea that has already been developed to script. Can we submit?
- I am a director. Should I send you a DVD of my showreel as part of our submission?
- Our project is a feature-length documentary. Can we submit?
- We do not have the rights to the project we wish to apply with. Can we submit?
- I have previously submitted a project to iFeatures, Creative England and/or the British Film Institute. Can I apply?

MISCELLANEOUS

- When will we know if our submission has been successful?
- How much time commitment will iFeatures demand from filmmaking teams?
- How will the professional development programme work?
- How will the development award be spent?
- Apart from the award, how will story/script development be supported?
- What happens if one or several of our filmmaking team leave the project along the way?
- What are the recoupment expectations for development awards?
- How flexible is the low-budget bracket for projects?
- What will happen at the conclusion of iFeatures?

ELIGIBILITY

I live in London / Scotland / Wales / Northern Ireland. Can I apply?

Yes. Individual team members can live anywhere in the UK and we encourage pan-national and regional collaborations.

I'm a first-time filmmaker. Can I apply?

iFeatures is not for the very new or inexperienced. It is aimed at talent that has some professional experience and whose work has already garnered positive industry and/or public attention. You should be able to evidence a successful track record in shorts, television, video gaming, online storytelling, theatre, commercials, graphic novels, music promos, documentary, art film and videos, and/or other related media. You need to demonstrate clear readiness to tackle a debut feature-length film of a scope and quality that has the potential to break out nationally and internationally.

The overall team needs to be well balanced in terms of skills and experience, and we welcome teams that bring together different perspectives and ways of working (eg: a film producer working with a TV director and a playwright)

iFeatures is not only about having a great idea; it's first and foremost about having the right talent in place to execute it.

Can I apply as an individual?

Yes. Writer/directors, or writer and director teams, can apply without a producer attached. We encourage having a producer on board as early as possible in the creative process, however we appreciate that filmmakers coming from outside the shorts/film school route may not have a relationship with a potential feature film producer, and we do not advise forming hasty relationships for the sake of it as these can prove problematic later. For those filmmakers that feel unable to secure the right producer at the point of application, the iFeatures team will facilitate producer relationships as quickly as possible if you are selected for the programme.

Can individuals apply with more than one project?

An individual can be attached to a maximum of two submissions. These can be with the same or a different team. We welcome meaningful collaborations between experienced and emerging producers. 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. Established producers may mentor applications from emerging producers and/or attach as an Executive Producer to projects. Such established producers wishing to support applications can discuss this with the iFeatures Executive before submitting.

I'm an individual writer/director/producer looking for some collaborators to apply with. Can you help?

We're happy to help people connect and to encourage, like and link to any social media groups set up to generate iFeatures' collaborations, but with a small core team it is sadly not possible for us to provide one-to-one matchmaking support to prospective applicants.

SUBMISSIONS

Are you looking for a particular genre or type of story?

We're looking for stories that capture a clear sense of time and place, and that express and reflect the many regional and national identities and that might resonate with audiences at a national and international level. We want to see genre films as much as dramas, and firmly believe that 'meaningful' and 'entertaining' are not mutually exclusive terms in most audience's mind; some of the best low-budget and debut films being made are intelligent, high quality genre films.

Our story is not set in the UK. Can we submit?

Unfortunately not. Projects must be set in the UK and have a clear, specific sense of time and place.

Our script will not be written in English. Can we apply?

Yes we can consider projects to be written and produced in languages other than English but only so long as the story is meaningfully set in the UK. Please note that all project development and Labs will be conducted in English and all projects and teams must be able to engage with the scheduled programme and timeline as advertised. If you are unsure if this applies to you or might prove problematic for your project, please contact us to discuss.

We already have an idea that has been developed to script. Can we submit?

iFeatures is primarily concerned with fresh ideas that can be developed with the demands of lower budgets in mind from the outset. We also want projects that can maintain forward momentum and fully benefit from the Labs. A project that has already received some development and is at script stage is not precluded from submission but we would require a commitment to going back to pre-draft examination of the story. We would need to see that you are committed to a fresh overhaul of the material, and advise you discuss it with the iFeatures Executive in advance.

I am a director. Should I send you a DVD of my showreel as part of our submission?

Our application process is online and, rather than a DVD, you should include a weblink (which may be password protected) to a Vimeo, YouTube or other online platform where we can view examples of your work. We'd like to see complete examples of your work - short films, TV programmes or features – rather than montage reels in order to have a clearer sense of your creative voice, style, abilities with actors, approach to narrative etc.

We can only accept DVDs in extremely exceptional circumstances and you will need to discuss this with the iFeatures team in advance.

Our project is a feature-length documentary. Can we submit?

Regrettably, we are unable to accept documentary proposals in iFeatures; all projects must be primarily and substantively fiction.

We do not have the rights to the project we wish to apply with. Can we submit?

You should only apply to iFeatures if you can demonstrate that you either own or can acquire the necessary rights to the project in question at a cost that is commensurate with a low-budget production. We will require successful applicants to evidence the chain of title to their project before their participation commences.

If your project is based on a previously published work such as a novel, or has been exploited under another form such as a play or a video game, then you must discuss your submission with the iFeatures Executive before submitting.

I have previously submitted a project to iFeatures, Creative England and/or the British Film Institute. Can I apply?

We regret that projects that have previously been declined by iFeatures are not eligible to apply except with our prior agreement (please contact the iFeatures team to discuss). In such cases, you would need to demonstrate that there are significant and substantive changes to a project or that major new elements have been attached or secured. Projects previously selected for iFeatures, which did not continue to production, are not eligible to reapply - however previous teams/talent may apply with a different project.

Projects can be considered for iFeatures if they have previously been declined through other Creative England and/or BFI offers, including the Emerging Talent Fund. However, it's not advised that you simply resubmit the project as it was - it's worth reflecting on why the project might have been declined before.

MISCELLANEOUS

When will there be a decision on our submission?

We will endeavour to let all applicants know whether they have been shortlisted for interview or not by w/c 14th May. If there is any delay to this date due to an unexpectedly high number of submissions, we will contact all applicants by email with a revised timescale.

How much time commitment will iFeatures demand from filmmaking teams?

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.

During the programme, there will be a number of group residential Labs which participants will be expected to attend. There will also be individual script development and mentoring sessions that we will try to arrange at times and locations convenient to all parties. Otherwise, how you manage your time to complete required development deliverables (treatments/beat sheets, script drafts, revisions etc) is down to you agreeing a credible plan with the iFeatures Executive.

The onus will inevitably fall on the lead writer but both the director and producer will be expected to be intimately involved with script development as well as working up other aspects of the package. For projects that progress through the process towards market readiness and packaging in earnest, the demands on your time will inevitably increase.

How will the skills and professional development programme work?

Primarily funded by Creative Skillset through the Film Skills Fund, the accompanying professional development will be closely integrated with project development. Through the intensive Lab programme, filmmakers will have access to a range of workshops, master classes, one-to-one mentoring and shadowing opportunities to help extend their knowledge and thereby feed into the creative and commercial development of their projects. The emphasis will be on tailoring to individual wants and needs since we recognise that participants may have very different kinds of experience and requirements coming to iFeatures. We're lining up compelling high-end speakers and mentors to provide a range of opportunities and experiences to draw on.

How will the development award be spent?

Each filmmaking team will agree a development budget with the iFeatures Executive. This may vary according to the specific needs of each project and the stage of development that it is at, but will also be informed by guideline rates suitable for low-budget projects. We would expect the writer to receive a significant proportion of the monies with appropriate retainers for director and producer.

Apart from the award, how will story/script development be supported?

The short answer is in a way that is most appropriate to the project and team. The iFeatures Executive will be the key editorial contact point but teams will also work with a story, script or development editor who is suited to the material. The development teams within Creative England, BFI Film Fund and BBC Films will also provide input/feedback at key stages in the process.

What happens if one or several of our filmmaking team leave the project along the way?

We'll do all we can to help you resolve any issues but at the end of the day it's your project and you'll have to find a way of driving it through the development process. In the unfortunate event that a member of the team does drop out or is asked to stand aside, we'll assist you in finding a replacement but will reserve the right to approve who they are. In the event that a suitable resolution can't be reached, we'll have the right to put the project into turnaround.

What are the recoupment expectations for development awards?

Projects will be subject to industry-standard turnaround provisions set out in the development contract with Creative England. 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).

How flexible is the low-budget bracket for projects?

In our experience, depending of course on the nature of the film and the filmmaker's approach, we have found that there is a 'sweet spot' for high-quality low-budget films between £500,000-750,000. We will not select projects which have the express or obvious aim of shooting significantly outside that bracket; if you feel your project falls clearly outside of it, please discuss this with us before applying.

What will happen at the conclusion of iFeatures?

Both during and on completion of the programme and the final development phase, Creative England, BFI and BBC Films will consider the best route to market for projects. Following the Lab, the BFI and BBC Films have both committed to supporting at least three films to progress to production. iFeatures aims to drive a high proportion of the projects developed through the Lab to a position where they can successfully finance, and access the full range of financing options available in the current landscape.

We will offer bespoke advice and support according to each project's needs. During iFeatures, projects will have undergone thorough examination and received dedicated support on a budget, schedule, package and finance plan, and iFeatures staff will support teams in any way they reasonably can to progress their films towards production, regardless of the sources of the finance being pursued. The intention of iFeatures is to equip and empower producers and filmmakers to drive their projects forward. iFeatures 2 and 3 each saw three films progress directly through its own production funding scheme, but have also seen a further four films (thus far) convert outside the scheme through a variety of routes, and at various budgets. We have redesigned the initiative so that it can more flexibly engage with the opportunities of the current funding landscape, and better serve the filmmaking teams as the agent of their own success.

While the information and advice in these FAQs is believed to be accurate at the time of going to press, Creative England reserves the right to make changes at any time to iFeatures and/or to these FAQs at any time at its discretion. Neither Creative England, the Partners nor the Skills Partner shall be responsible for any loss attributable to errors, omissions or other inaccuracies in the information contained in these FAQ's.

