

[i]FEATURES



GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS 2019

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

**9am on
Friday 29 March 2019**

These guidelines are to assist submissions to iFeatures. They should be read in conjunction with our FAQs, available for download at ifeatures.co.uk/apply-now

WHAT IS iFEATURES?

iFeatures is a premier UK filmmaking programme, driving the development of low-budget high-quality debut features and realising the talent of the next generation of filmmakers. Our aim is to produce the most outstanding, daring and distinctive storytellers in the UK, by giving them the tools and the support to experiment, develop their voice, and create contemporary films that speak to a world audience. iFeatures is run by Creative England and supported by the BFI, awarding funds from the National Lottery, BBC Films and the ScreenSkills Film Skills Fund with contributions from UK film productions.

iFeatures offers a unique opportunity to explore and realise your vision. In addition to funding the development of projects, selected teams 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. The programme has evolved to focus on a dedicated period of development for 12 projects and teams, with each receiving bespoke support as they work towards market engagement. Following the programme, BFI and BBC Films have committed to ensuring that at least three of the projects progress to production.

The 2019 round opened for applications on Friday 8 March 2019; the submission process will close on Friday 29 March at 9am.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

iFeatures is driven by the principle that low-budget, ambitious, well told stories can break out to achieve critical, audience and even commercial success. Filmmakers, emerging and established, find expression through low-budget filmmaking as much as an end in itself, and not just as a stepping stone to bigger things. From *Theeb*, *Under the Shadow* and *Prevenge* to *I Am Not a Witch*, *Beast* and *Calibre* in recent years, exciting voices in the UK are always emerging from the low budget world. iFeatures plays a key part in supporting the development of new and exciting voices, with multi-award winning, acclaimed films being developed and supported through the programme - including iFeatures productions *Lady Macbeth*, *The Levelling*, *Apostasy* *Perfect 10*, *Make Up* and *The Goob*, and further films such as *Adult Life Skills*, *Pin Cushion*, *The Last Tree* and *God's Own Country*. Films supported through the programme have premiered at Sundance, Berlin, Toronto, Venice, SXSW, San Sebastian, Tribeca and Rotterdam, with *Lady Macbeth* becoming one of the most successful British independent debuts at the international box office in years.

We believe there is an achievable sweet-spot for high-quality films budgeted 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 we will develop films with a view 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 genre. We believe that 'meaningful' and 'entertaining' are not mutually exclusive ideas in the audience's mind, and we want to see original 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 every corner of the UK. Stories that transcend low production budgets, and engage audiences at home and world-wide, regardless of the type of camera they might be shot with or platform they are being experienced on. 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 may have already made a no/micro budget feature that has not had wide exposure or been theatrically released), and at producers who are still at an emerging stage of their career as a lead creative film producer.

iFeatures is looking for emerging creative talent whose work has already garnered positive industry and/or public attention in fields from short films, theatre, TV and documentaries, to online storytelling, art film and video, video gaming, commercials/advertising, graphic novels and music promos.

The programme is designed for talent with projects which are primed and ready for an intensive personal and project development experience that provides focus to a momentum that already exists. If you are at an earlier stage in your creative career or your project requires earlier stage development work first, then the BFI NETWORK with Talent Executives based across the UK may offer the right opportunities for you: network.bfi.org.uk/funding-finder.

If you are looking only or primarily for development funding then there are other avenues available, such as the BFI Film Fund or BBC Films:

bfi.org.uk/supporting-uk-film/production-development-funding/development-funding

bbc.co.uk/bbcfilms

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

- acceptance at a minimum of two short film festivals listed in the British Council festival directory: film.britishcouncil.org/festivals-directory
- selection for online platforms such as Vimeo Staff Picks, Short of the Week, BFI NETWORK Postroom Pick of the Month
- a minimum of one completed professional theatre production of their work
- a minimum of two completed professional advertising campaigns
- a minimum of one completed television production of their work
- a minimum of one professional gallery or other public exhibition of their 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.

We are preferably looking for teams where a producer is working with a writer and director (or a writer-director) to apply. We always encourage a producer being attached, however we will also consider applications from teams of a writer and a director (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. We cannot accept submissions from writers by themselves, or from a producer with only a writer attached – a director must be attached to projects.

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 contact us before applying.

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

Each team should have no more than four people attached to the project at the time of submission. Any individual can be attached to a maximum of only one submission, and we ask lead applicants to make sure before applying that their team members are not attached to other projects. If a producer is attached to a project, we would normally expect them to be the lead applicant on the submission.

Successful applications must achieve the BFI Diversity Standards. We proactively encourage submissions which tackle under-representation in the film industry, both behind the camera and on screen:

bfi.org.uk/about-bfi/policy-strategy/diversity/diversity-standards

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 as such, as well as 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 Friday 8 March until 9am on Friday 29 March 2019. The application form can be found at

ifeatures.co.uk/apply-now

Your application will need to include:

- A 25 words or less logline
- A synopsis of no more than 500 words
- A story treatment of no more than 3000 words (or five A4 pages)
- A team video statement of no more than 3 minutes
- 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 links to examples of work by the director

The application form includes further instructions on what each of the above elements should cover; please note that for the video statement we are looking for an insight into the people applying and their shared creative vision for the project (and not for e.g. sizzle reels).

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
- achieving the BFI Diversity Standards

In determining which teams to support we will also take into consideration the location of the talent and would like to support projects with filmmaking talent based in each of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and, of the remainder, 50% of the filmmaking teams featuring talent based in the English regions. As part of the application, we will require all team members to confirm their current region of primary residence in the UK.

Up to 24 projects will be shortlisted and teams will be invited to a selection panel during w/c 3 June 2019.

The selection panel will then invite up to 12 projects/filmmaking teams to participate in iFeatures. The selection panel will consist of senior representatives from Creative England, BFI and BBC Films.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL?

Up to 12 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 a series of intensive residential Labs:

In the 'Story' Lab, filmmakers will explore their stories and advance their projects through dedicated development and experimentation, including a range of approaches from one-on-ones and group seminars, to writing and script workshops, to master classes.

In the 'iFeatures@LFF' Lab, filmmakers will advance their vision, craft and market awareness through exposure to international talent, industry and marketplace during BFI London Film Festival.

The 'Production' Lab will equip and prepare teams for the realities of delivering a film, in the context of packaging, financing and production, including a range of approaches from roundtables and practical workshops, to master classes

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 commitment. We want to work with passionate, ambitious and committed filmmakers who will seize the opportunity provided by the initiative, which has been designed to see engagement throughout from the filmmaking teams. We realise that people also 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 funded through BFI, with funds from the National Lottery and part of BFI NETWORK, and through the ScreenSkills Film Skills Fund with contributions from UK film productions.

iFeatures has support available for participants to assist with the travel costs of attending Labs. In addition there are limited funds available 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 Opens for applications – Friday 8 March 2019
- iFeatures Deadline for applications – Friday 29 March, 9am
- Teams selected for interview informed – w/c 13 May
- Interview panels for 24 teams – w/c 3 June
- Successful teams informed – w/c 10 June
- Boot Camp – w/c 1 July (1-2 days) in London
- Story Lab – w/c 5 August (approx. 3 days) out of London
- iFeatures@LFF Lab – mid-October (approx. 3 days) in London
- Production Lab – early-February 2020 (approx. 3 days) out of London
- Final script delivery – mid-March
- Partner feedback meetings – end-March

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 BFI and BBC Films - and part 'in-kind' contribution to your participation in the Lab financed through support from BFI NETWORK and ScreenSkills 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, including the National Lottery; and we will expect a 5% share of producer's net profits (payable to BFI and BBC Films).
- iFeatures is supported by National Lottery funding through BFI. It is important that all filmmakers proudly acknowledge their National Lottery funding through highlighting the Good Cause message, as well as their funding from BBC Films and ScreenSkills. We ask that they display the BFI National Lottery and BBC Films logos in the film's credits, and if appropriate on related marketing materials, press releases and digital comms.

The general terms and conditions of development agreements will be along standard lines for debut/low-budget features; however, development funding is designed to support stages of development work which complement the wider journey through the Lab programme, and as such filmmakers and their agents should note that this fee/payment structure will not be negotiable. Selected projects should expect that writers and writer/directors will assign appropriate rights to the lead producer and/or production company in an approved form of agreement.

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

If you have questions then many of these should be answered by our FAQs, available for download at ifeatures.co.uk/apply-now.

If you can't find an answer to your question in these Guidelines, the FAQs or on our website, please email 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:
applications.creativeengland.co.uk/assets/public/resource/33.pdf