

# The Film and TV COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund Guidance for Applicants

This Guidance document is for individuals planning to apply to the COVID-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund, and we would encourage you to read it carefully before starting an application.

An easy-read / accessible version of this Guidance is available [here](#).

If you need additional support making an application please contact us on 0800 054 00 00.

The Film and TV Charity helps with life behind the scenes. For nearly 100 years we have been awarding Support Grants to help people in moments of crisis get back on their feet when circumstances outside their control mean they are struggling to manage.

Today, the COVID-19 pandemic is having devastating impacts for many people working in our industry.

The **Film and TV COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund** is a unique and time-limited fund created by the Film and TV Charity in partnership with the BFI.

The Fund will provide one-off financial support to active film and TV workers who are facing immediate significant financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We want to focus on helping the UK freelancers and other contract workers who will not significantly benefit from the Government's [Job Retention Scheme](#) or [Self-Employment Income Support Scheme](#), and are not receiving funding from other sources.

If you meet the eligibility criteria you will be able to apply for one-off grants **from £500 up to £2,500**.

We want to make the fund go as far as possible and be able to help as many of those most deeply impacted and disadvantaged by the COVID-19 pandemic as we can. So we're asking you to request the minimum amount necessary, and help us to reach as many of your industry colleagues as we can.

**Applications will be open for two weeks from 9am on Wednesday 8th April 2020 to 6pm on Wednesday 22nd April 2020.** We will start awarding grants in the week beginning 27th April 2020.

We are expecting high demand for this fund, and therefore it's unlikely that we will be able to give grants to everyone who applies. Assessments will be made on the basis of need and vulnerability, and we expect that we will only be able to fund those in significant financial difficulty and/or who are particularly vulnerable.

If you need help in the meantime, our Support Line is open 24/7 on 0800 054 0000. As well as being a listening ear, our advisors can offer financial and debt advice and mental health support.

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## About this Guidance document

### **Section 1** (page 3)

explains the **eligibility criteria** you need to meet in order to make an application.

### **Section 2** (page 8)

explains the **personal details** we need when you make an application, so that we can contact you and verify your identity if you are successful.

### **Section 3** (page 8)

explains what we will need to know about your **personal situation**, which will help us determine your need. This information forms part of the assessment we will make.

### **Section 4** (page 10)

explains how to apply, and what you will need to have ready before you start your application.

### **Section 5** (page 11)

provides some **other useful information** about the grants.

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## Any questions?

If you have read this Guidance and have any questions about making an application, or if you need assistance making an application, you can contact us on 0800 054 0000 and select Option 1. Our phonelines are very busy at the moment, and we apologise in advance if there any delay in picking up your call.

# Section 1

## Eligibility Criteria

These grants aim to assist people with the most urgent and immediate need for financial support over the next three months caused directly by the COVID-19 emergency.

Unfortunately, we will be unable to award grants to applicants who do not meet our criteria, so please check these before taking the time to apply. If we're unable to help, we may be able [to support you in another way](#) and will try our best to signpost you to alternative options.

To be eligible for the Film and TV COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund you will need to:

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### **1. Work in film, TV or Cinema and earn the majority of your income through this work.**

You may have worked in multiple roles both in and outside of film and TV as long as you can demonstrate that the majority of your paid work is from jobs in film, TV or cinema.

This is defined as working in a role that contributes to the creation, dissemination or commercial exploitation of moving image content for:

- **Broadcast and on-demand television**
- **Paid-for original content streaming services**
- **Cinemas**

You may have worked in above-the-line and below-the-line roles anywhere in the industry, from development through to broadcast and exhibition.

This includes contributions through allied services such as facilities and catering, or financial and administrative services.

The Film and TV Charity supports people who work behind the scenes in film and TV and therefore cannot support actors or other solely front-of-screen talent. However, actors and front-of-screen talent can apply for help from the [Actors Benevolent Fund](#), [Equity Charitable Trust](#) or the [Royal Variety Charity](#).

People who make film used solely for the purpose of education, advertising, corporate films, campaigning/lobbying, or personal services such as wedding videos, or in which work is broadcast/exhibited in venues or via channels other than those described above (e.g. galleries) are not eligible for this fund. [Other industry funds](#) may be able to offer support to these workers.

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**2. Have worked at least 40 days (8 working weeks) between 1st October 2019 – 30th March 2020 or be able to demonstrate that you had a contract for work that was due to start between 1st March and 30th April which has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

This fund is for industry workers who have lost their income as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Therefore, we can only support people who have:

- a) been recently active in the film and TV industry, defined as working at least 40 days or 8 working weeks within the last six months; or
- b) had agreed work beginning between 1st March and 30th April which you can evidence in a written contract or email

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**3. Be experiencing immediate and significant financial difficulty due to the COVID-19 pandemic**

This fund has been set up with the purpose of supporting those who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of cancellation of work and loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you're experiencing financial difficulties due to an unrelated issue you will not be eligible for this fund, but we may be able to support you through our other funding schemes. Please call our Support Line on 0800 054 0000 to see if we might still be able to help.

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**4. Have less than £2,500 in savings**

We can only support people who have no access to other means of covering their costs. If you have available savings, we ask that that

you draw on these before you apply for financial support so we can prioritise those with no access to funds. If you have savings under £2,500, we ask that you include these in your budget at question 11 and take them into account in the amount you request from the Fund.

You do not have to include in your calculations the following:

- funds set aside to cover tax or NI liabilities for the tax year 2019-20
- funds in junior ISAs for dependent children
- funds in officially designated pension schemes

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## 5. Be a UK resident

This is defined as those with the [“right to work in the UK”](#)

You can have worked on UK or international productions, but your primary residence should be in the UK.

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## 6. Not be a sole trader eligible for the Government’s Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (unless you anticipate receiving less than £800 per month in support)

If you’re a sole trader and you earn most of your income from self-employment and you have earned less than £50,000 per year profit (averaged over the last 3 years) you should be eligible for the Government’s Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (‘SEISS’). You would need to have completed your 2018/19 tax return (or complete it before 23rd April). Please check the Government’s [latest guidance](#) to check whether you will be eligible.

If you’re eligible for SEISS and expect to receive income support in excess of £800 per month you will not be eligible for this fund. This is because we’re targeting this grant fund at those who do not have any access to income support or who will only be eligible for minimal support. [You may however be eligible to apply for our [repayable grant scheme](#) which can help you manage short term cash flow issues until payments are made in June.].

If you’re eligible for SEISS but anticipate this support being **under £800 per month** you are eligible to apply to this fund. We understand that many freelancers mix self-employment with short-term PAYE contracts or work for short periods throughout the year and therefore the income support you expect to receive through

the SEISS may not represent 80% of your average monthly salary and may not offer you adequate support. Again, we ask that you only request what you absolutely need to get by so we can help as many of your industry colleagues as possible.

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### **7. Not be currently employed**

We cannot support people who are working during this period as we are targeting our support at those who have lost their income due to work being cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. If you're currently working on a contract that started on or before the 28<sup>th</sup> February and your contract is due to end in the next few weeks you should contact your employer to ask if they can furlough you – see below.

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### **8. Not be furloughed or due to be furloughed under the Government's Job Retention Scheme**

The Government's Coronavirus [Job Retention Scheme](#) enables employers to furlough employees (put them on a leave of absence) and claim 80% of each employees' usual monthly wage costs, up to £2,500 a month. In order for your employer to furlough you must have been on PAYE payroll on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

If you are eligible to be furloughed and will continue to receive at least 80% of your normal salary over the next three months you are not eligible for this fund.

However, if you are furloughed as the sole employee of your own limited company and you anticipate your support from the Government Retention Scheme will be less than £800 per month you can still apply.

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### **9. If you are accessing any other industry Coronavirus related funding in excess of £1,500**

There are a number of schemes that aim to support workers in the creative industries during this difficult time. These include [Arts Council](#), [Creative Scotland](#), [Help Musicians](#), and others.

To ensure that we target our fund to those with the greatest need and least access to other financial support we are unable to fund anyone who is accessing other industry Coronavirus schemes that offer support in excess of £1,500.

**Please note: you are eligible to apply if you have previously received a grant from The Film and TV Charity, but we may take this into account.**

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### **What can I apply for?**

You can apply for a one-off grant of between £500 and £2,500, which will be paid in a single sum but is intended to cover essential living costs for up to three months.

Applications should detail essential outgoings and grants will not be provided for costs that are non-essential or that can be deferred through other statutory assistance.

We know that many thousands of workers are finding themselves in desperate situations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to help as many of them as possible. Please help us by only applying for the amount you absolutely need to cover your essential living costs.

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### **Before you apply**

We ask everyone who applies to this scheme to read the information [on our website](#) outlining Government and other financial support available through COVID-19 support programmes and to ensure that they have explored all the financial support and payment deferral options available to them to before making a request to this fund.

## Section 2

# Completing your personal details

We will need your personal details so we can contact you and verify your identity and work experience. This information will not be used in the assessment process and but may be used to verify your identity and eligibility if your application is successful.

Where we ask about your work experience, please attach a clearly formatted CV which demonstrates your relevant experience or link to your professional experience on a recognised professional website such as IMDb or LinkedIn.

You will need to upload an image of the photo page of your passport or your photocard driving licence for ID verification. This can be a photo taken on your phone.

## Section 3

# About your situation

We need to ask about your personal situation so that we can ensure we identify and help those who are most in need of immediate assistance. We ask that you please support each other and our industry by answering these questions as honestly as possible.

Questions 1 to 5 are designed to understand if there are any factors of your personal situation that could make you a priority for support. If you feel that you should be a priority for support for a reason that is not covered in the application form you can tell us about this at question 15.

Questions 6 to 13 are designed to understand your current financial situation and how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected your finances.

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### **Are you the sole earner in your household?**

A household is defined as a partnership/family or other group who financially support one another and are mutually responsible for household and other bills. If you have a partner with an income

who has responsibilities for shared outgoings you are not the sole earner in your household. If you are in a flat share with other adults who have shared responsibilities for bills but who are not in a relationship and do not financially support one another you can consider yourself the sole earner but you should only tell us about the portion of bills that you are responsible for.

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## **Detailing your incomings and outgoings**

We ask you to detail all your anticipated income and outgoings over **a three-month period 1st April – 30th June 2020**. We have chosen three months as we expect that the COVID-19 disruption will continue for at least three months. We also know that if you are self-employed your income can be lumpy and inconsistent, so a three-month period will provide as clear a picture as possible.

### *Income and accessible funds*

Please detail all expected income from work and/or statutory support, any savings that you have access to and any other money that you expect to receive from rebates, grants, shares and any other source. If you have a partner or spouse who you share financial responsibility with, please also include their income as detailed above.

### *Essential Outgoings*

Please detail all outgoings that are essential for your continued security, health and wellbeing over this period that cannot be reduced or deferred over the next three months. We ask that you read our guidance about possible options to reduce your outgoings during this period and confirm that you have explored these options where possible.

Deficit is the outstanding amount you need to cover your outgoings once your income has been deducted. We will automatically calculate your deficit based on your budget details.

### *Amount requested from the fund*

You can apply for any amount between £500 and £2,500. The amount requested **should not exceed the deficit calculated in your budget** up to our maximum grant amount of £2,500. Please ensure that you only apply for what you absolutely need to get by so that we can use our funds to help as many of your colleagues as possible through this unprecedented crisis.

## Section 4

# How do I apply?

Applications can be made online via our application form available [on our website](#). Please ensure that you have all the details necessary to make your application as you will not be able to save your application and come back to it.

Before you apply you will need:

- To read this Guidance carefully.
- To read the **attached document** outlining Government and other financial support available through COVID-19 support programmes and to ensure you have done everything you can to access other financial support and payment deferral options available to you. You will be asked to confirm you have done this when filling in the application form.
- Please ensure you have access to
  - A copy of your passport or driving license
  - Your National Insurance number
  - A copy of an up-to-date CV or be able to link to a current page on IMDb, LinkedIn or Talent Manager.
  - Details of your individual and household gross income for the tax year between 6 April 2019 and 5 April 2020.
  - Details of your current and projected income and outgoings over **a three-month period 1st April – 30th June 2020**

Once you have submitted your application you will receive an automatic response to confirm we have received your application. We will start awarding grants in the week beginning 27th April and will contact you as soon as we are able to let you know the outcome of your application or to ask for any further information we might need. Please do not contact us during this period as we will be very busy processing applications and will not be able to give you an update on your application during this time.

Our Support Line is open 24 hours on 0800 054 0000 if you need a listening ear or would like to talk through your situation but please note they will not be able to answer questions about your application once it is submitted.

If you need help filling in the online application form, we are here to help. You can call our Support Line and select Option One to be put through to our dedicated team who can assist you in providing

answers by phone. The line is open 9 – 6 Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays. If you call outside of these times you will be able to leave a message and one of our information support officers will call you back as soon as possible.

## Section 5

# Other useful information

Applications to this exceptional one-off fund will not affect your ability to apply to the charity through our other support schemes in the future.

The Film and TV COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund grants are a gift and do not incur tax on NI liabilities.

You can only apply for funds due to a reduction in your own income, not that of a partner or family member. But if that person works in the film, TV or cinema industry they would be eligible to apply for funding themselves.

You will not be able to claim for repayment of costs already incurred except in exceptional circumstances

We need to ensure our funding reaches those who really need it and so, as with many funding schemes, we have a framework to guard against fraud. Part or all of the information you give us will be held on an internal grants management system for the administration of applications and awards. We may also use this information for the evaluation of our funds. We may provide copies of the information in confidence to further individuals or organisations who are helping us to undertake eligibility checks, assess applications or monitor funding including to the BFI. We may use a credit reference agency to validate information you have provided in your application. This is not a credit check and will not affect your ability to receive credit from other organisations. The credit reference agency we use may keep a record of the information, and may disclose the fact that a search of its records was made to its other clients, in order to stop fraud.

By submitting an application, you're providing your informed consent (permission) for us to share information in this way and for us and/or the BFI to run such an identity verification check, including its access, use and storage. If you have knowingly provided false or inaccurate information to us at any point, we will provide details to fraud prevention agencies.

The decision of the charity is final. Unfortunately, we cannot enter correspondence about funding decisions. If you have a complaint about your application and/or our process, please see our [complaints policy](#).