

### THE FINNISH FILM FOUNDATION

The Finnish Film Foundation is an independent foundation under the guidance of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The aim of the Film Foundation is to promote high-quality, diverse and innovative film production in Finland. The Foundation grants support for the professional production, screening and distribution of films in various distribution channels. The Foundation is also responsible for the export of Finnish films, promoting the internationalisation of Finnish films and filmmakers and distributing support for the international promotion of films. The Foundation grants support for nationally significant international film festivals in Finland.

The Finnish Film Foundation receives its funds from Veikkaus and the Finnish gaming system from the monies allocated to the government's budget for the promotion of film. The Film Foundation's support is discretionary and falls under the Act of Discretionary Government Transfers and act on the government promotion of film culture. The support is granted based on applications.

The aims and specific criteria of the support vary across support types. They have been described in support-specific grant announcements and in this guide. The grant announcement defines for whom the support is intended and who may apply. The Film Foundation's support is granted for professional operations.

### ACT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR THE PROMOTION OF FILM CULTURE (1174/2018)

The aim of the act is to promote

- 1) diverse and professional Finnish film production
- 2) the broad supply and distribution of films
- 3) the internationalisation of Finnish films and filmmakers
- 4) film culture and its development.

Participation, pluralism, cultural diversity and artistic freedom form the basis for reaching this aim.

(Act on the government's support for the promotion of film culture, section 2)

The Foundation's grants are based on the act on the government's support for the promotion of film culture (1174/2018). The grants apply the Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (688/2001). The Foundation follows the Administrative Procedure Act, the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999), the Language Act (423/2004), the Sámi Language Act (1086/2003), the Archives Act (831/1994), the Act on Electronic Services and Communication in the Public Sector (13/2003) and the Privacy Protection Act (9/2018).

### ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

According to the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999), a document submitted to the Finnish Film Foundation is public. Documents may also be designated confidential under the law or access to them may be discretionary. Confidential official documents include documents that contain information about private business or trade secrets.

### BLOCK EXEMPTION REGULATION

The support granted by the Foundation is government aid that falls under the EU's Treaty, Article 107, and the decision by the EU Commission on 26 November 2008 concerning subsidies for the Finnish film industry (Commission regulation (EU) 651/2014), later block exemption regulation (BER).

Support granted by the Foundation must fulfil conditions listed in the BER's Articles 1–9 (general regulations) and Article 54 (aid schemes for audiovisual works).

According to the BER, support must be directed to a cultural product and can be granted for the production of audiovisual works, pre-production and distribution. According to section 3 of the act on the promotion of

film, support may be granted for the production and distribution of films if the film can be considered an independent work of art, its content is based on cultural values originating in cultural identity and the film involves a significant artistic contribution by creators and performers whose wages and salaries form a significant portion of the production costs.

According to the BER's Article 53 (aid for culture and heritage conservation), the support may be granted for festivals and other similar cultural activities. According to the Article, support may take the form of either operating or investment aid.

According to the BER's general regulations, **the support should not be applied** to cases where the recipient would execute their project with or without the support, government support that has conditions or financing methods that do not follow EU legislation and especially support measures where the recipient is required to operate mainly from or in the country granting the support. However, the requirement that the recipient has a place of business or a subsidiary in the country granting the support is permissible.

An unconditional requirement is that the support cannot be granted to a corporation which is subject to an outstanding recovery order following a previous Commission decision declaring the aid illegal and incompatible with the internal market (BER, Article 1, Section 4 a).

# SUPPORT GUIDE / Scriptwriting grant

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## Preparing an application

- Study the grant announcement, support guide and the section on scriptwriting grant carefully.
- Register as a new client to the online application system or log in to your existing account (new registrations are usually processed within one week).  
<https://ses.fi/tukitoiminta/sahkoinen-hakujarjestelma/>
- Fill in an application in the online application system that consists of an electronic application form and the necessary appendices.
- Submit the application before the deadline.

[See the grant announcements](#)

## 1. THE GENERAL CONDITIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPWRITING SUPPORT

### The aim of the support

The aim of the Finnish Film Foundation is to promote the diverse and professional production of films in Finland. The Foundation's values include participation, pluralism, cultural diversity and artistic freedom.

The aim of the scriptwriting grant is to promote the production of high-quality, diverse and original films in Finland. The purpose of the scriptwriting grant is to support the writing of a screenplay into further development and finally production.

(Act on the government's support for the promotion of film culture, section 2)

### To whom?

The scriptwriting grant may be granted to a professional scriptwriter or group of writers based on a scriptwriting plan.

(Act on the government's support for the promotion of film culture, section 7)

### Professional criteria

The Film Foundation supports professional film productions. The recipient of the scriptwriting grant must be a professional scriptwriter. Professional qualifications are evaluated based on the applicant's training and previously exhibited works.

## For what purpose and how much?

The scriptwriting grant is meant for the writing and related research of a feature-length, short or serial work, documentary, animation or children's film or combination thereof.

(Act on the government's support for the promotion of film culture, section 1)

### How much?

In 2019, the monthly support is **€1,700 per month** and the maximum support is 12 months / 20 400,00 €.

Previous support decisions may be viewed from the Foundation's [support decisions page](#).

## How and when to apply?

Applications are submitted online (<https://hakemus.ses.fi>) by sending in the application and appendices to the Finnish Film Foundation before the deadline noted in the grant announcement. The application period ends at midnight on the final application day.

**Submission dates of the scriptwriting grant applications vary according to the type of film. Information about the application periods is available on the Film Foundation's website under Grant Announcements and deadlines:** <https://ses.fi/en/funding/grant-announcements-and-deadlines/>

New applicants must register to the online application system. New registrations are processed within a week.

Prior to submitting an application, the applicant must carefully read the relevant grant announcement and support guide.

Applicants fill in an application in the online application system that consists of an electronic application form and the necessary appendices that are uploaded into the system.

The applicant is responsible for submitting the application within the deadline. It is therefore important to prepare for unexpected delays and reserve enough time to draft the application. Applications submitted after the deadline are transferred to the next application period.

From 2019, the applicant does not select a film commissioner for the application. **The application is directed to The Finnish Film Foundation. The Film Foundation designates a film commissioner for the application.**

### Documentaries

The applicant receives information of the application's film commissioner in the application's general information after a week from the deadline has passed.

Documentary scriptwriting grant film commissioners:

Piia Nokelainen

Pekka Uotila

If the documentary project has previously received support from the Film Foundation, the Foundation designates the same film commissioner for the new application.

### Feature-length, short and serialised fiction, animation or children's film or a combination thereof:

The Film Foundation appoints Kaisu Isto as the film commissioner.

## A good application and smooth communication

The Film Foundation processes approximately 150–200 applications each application period and the production department makes roughly 1,000 decisions each year. It is essential for the evaluation and comparison of the applications that the application is clear and carefully prepared.

Be clear and relate the essentials in your application. Consider also how the support corresponds to its goals and what is special about this particular film.

### **Fluent processing and communication**

When uploading appendices, make sure that

- the name of the appendix corresponds to its content
- the forms include the date
- fill in the scriptwriting plan according to the Foundation's model as completely as possible and refrain from referring to appendices

When you email the Foundation during any stage of the project, mention your application number and the name of the project.

Please note that the Film Foundation's online system does not automatically inform the Foundation's employees of updated information or appendices. Inform the film commissioner or the production coordinator mentioned below about the matter via email.

## How are the applications evaluated?

The scriptwriting grant is discretionary. The evaluation and comparison of the applications is based on an overall assessment that considers the purpose of the funds, the grounds mentioned in the grant announcement and available funds in the budget.

The scriptwriting grant application is evaluated as a whole in terms of content and artistic merit. In addition, the evaluation takes into account the applicant's artistic and professional skills that contribute to the completion of the project. Other support previously granted by the Film Foundation to the applicant is also taken into account.

The Film Foundation may request further information if it deems it necessary for the decision-making process.

A prerequisite for granting the support is that the recipient has complied with earlier support agreements and met their conditions.

## How are the decisions made?

The Finnish Film Foundation's Board decides on the scriptwriting grant based on the suggestions of a film commissioner.

The applicant receives a written decision that contains the conditions of the support and a claim for corrections with instructions.

The Foundation aims to make decisions in 8–10 weeks after the deadline.

The support may only be used for its designated purpose.

The decision is based on the act of government funding for the advancement of cinema (1174/2018), the Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (688/2001) and the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003).

## 2. GRANT APPLICATION

The application consists of an online application form and the obligatory appendices submitted to the system.

The applicant must submit the following appendices to the online application system before the final deadline:

- A script plan following the Foundation's template  
<https://ses.fi/en/funding/guidelines-and-forms/>
- A more detailed description of the content  
**For feature films, the description may be**  
- A treatment / step outline / a version of the script / other description of content  
**For short films, the description may be**  
- A treatment / step outline / a version of the script / other description of content  
**For series with episodes over 22 min, the description may be**  
- An introduction to the concept behind the series, its world, main characters, the aims of the author, etc. (about 5–15 pages)  
**For series with episodes under 22 minutes, the description may be**  
- An introduction to the concept behind the series, its world, main characters, the aims of the author, etc. (about 5–10 pages)  
**For documentaries, the description may be**  
- An informal introduction to the idea, topic and possible main characters / a script
- The scriptwriter's word and project plan
- A short description of the project / Description of content for the Foundation's communications  
The Film Foundation publishes support decisions on its website and to the media a week after the decision. The applicant must include a brief description/blurb (1–2 sentences) for the media in the Further Information section of the application.

All the scriptwriting appendices are submitted to the online application system as appendices. The name of the appendix is chosen from a drop-down menu to correspond to the appendix in question.

**NOTE! Scriptwriting grant clients DO NOT submit anything to the Applicant's appendices.**

All saved and processed files are appended to the relevant Application appendices.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS – SUPPORT APPLICATION:

**A script plan drafted according to the Film Foundation's template:**

Download the Film Foundation's scriptwriting plan template from [Guidelines and forms](#) section of the Foundation's website.

The scriptwriting plan should include information on

- Genre, duration and language
- The film's scriptwriter or team of writers
- A preliminary schedule
- A synopsis and summary of contents
- Prior support granted to the applicant and project
- A one-page CV

### **A one-page CV**

CV: training, writing experience, other professional experience, grants

Filmography: published works, duration of the works, year of publication, screening venues, prizes

When a group of writers is applying, the scriptwriting plan must include CVs from all members.

Fill in the scriptwriting plan as completely as possible and refrain from referring to appendices

### **Group as applicant**

A group applying for the support must draft a work group contract: <https://ses.fi/en/funding/guidelines-and-forms/>

The team selects a representative in the team contract who acts as the main applicant for the support application, decision and payment. The names of the other team members are recorded in the team contract and scriptwriting plan.

When submitting the team contract, select "Työryhmäsopimus" ("Work Group Contract") as the appendix type.

### **Transferring rights when the script is based on an original work by a third party**

If the script being written during the supported period is based on an original work by a third party, the applicant must have the right to turn it into a script. An agreement or contract concerning this right is appended to the application under the title "Alkuperäisteoksen oikeuksien luovutussopimus" ("Transfer of Rights to an Original Work").

If the production company has reached an agreement concerning the original work, the applicant must establish the chain of title for the copyright. The applicant must include a production company agreement or a contract with the copyright holder of the original work as an appendix to the application. The production company, in turn, must at the very least grant permission to write a script based on the work.

Both documents are appended to the application under the title "Alkuperäisteoksen oikeuksien luovutussopimus" ("Transfer of Rights to an Original Work").

### **Latest version of the script**

If the film has received prior scriptwriting grant, the prior script must be appended to the current application. The prior script is submitted under Other Appendices.

## **3. GRANTED SUPPORT AND PAYMENT**

### **Payment**

The support is paid to the applicant's Finnish bank account in two instalments. The first (80%) instalment after the decisions and the second (20%) after the work based on the scriptwriting plan has been approved by the Foundation.

Prior to the payment of the first instalment, the recipient must update the months in the schedule of the application, the period when the work takes place (including dates) and the date of completion to reflect the decision.

The appendix must be submitted under the title "Työskentelyn päivitetty aikataulu" ("Updated Work Schedule"). Information about the update is emailed to Production Coordinator Susanna Haarla at [susanna.haarla@ses.fi](mailto:susanna.haarla@ses.fi).

### **The recipient's pension insurance/MELA**

The MYEL pension insurance applies to a Finnish artistic or scientific grants and grant recipients.

The law states that the mandatory pension insurance applies to all grant recipients who have received a grant from Finland and fall under Finnish social security services. The grant must be intended for at least four months of artistic or scientific work in Finland must amount to at least 1276,04 euros, which amounts to 3 828,13 annually (in 2018).

The insurance also covers, with some reservations, work abroad and the work of a foreign citizen in Finland if the recipient falls under Finnish social services while working in Finland.

The insurance is mandatory for recipients of personal grants and team members working on a grant.

Those under 18, over 68 or enjoying retirement pension cannot be insured. The mandatory insurance does not apply to grants meant for undergraduates or grants aimed at covering costs such as travel expenses.

For more information on pension insurance for grant recipients, see the grant recipients insurance guide: [https://www.mela.fi/sites/default/files/tiedostot/apurahansaat/apurahansajaan\\_vakuutusopas\\_20160906.pdf](https://www.mela.fi/sites/default/files/tiedostot/apurahansaat/apurahansajaan_vakuutusopas_20160906.pdf)

Since 2009, the party granting the support has had an obligation to inform MELA of the grant. The obligations of the party granting the support are listed in the act on farmers' pension insurance (MYEL, section 141 b). The notification obligation comes into effect when the time period of the work and the amount of the support exceed the minimum requirements noted in the law. MELA uses the information to audit the recipient's insurance duties and monitoring. MELA must be notified within three months of the first payment. For further information, visit MELA's website: <https://www.mela.fi/en/grant-and-scholarship-recipients> and <https://www.mela.fi/en/grant-and-scholarship-recipients/calculators>

## 4. OVERSIGHT

The Film Foundation oversees and monitors the work and schedule defined in the project plan. The Film Foundation has the right to use audits to oversee payments and monitor how the support is used. The Film Foundation may also postpone payments during audits.

### **Disclosure requirement**

The recipient must provide the Finnish Film Foundation the correct and sufficient information to enable oversight of the support decision's conditions.

The recipient must inform the Foundation of all changes that influence the way the support is used without delay. Changes that influence the use of the support include changes in the project's quality and scope. The Foundation also always has the right to receive information about the project's current status and follow the project's progress.

### **Documentaries**

A written report of changes must be emailed to the film commissioner who has processed the grant.

### **Feature-length, short and serialised fiction, animation or children's film or a combination thereof:**

A written report of changes must be emailed to Film Commissioner Kaisu Isto, [kaisu.isto@ses.fi](mailto:kaisu.isto@ses.fi).

The basis for the report is the support agreement between the recipient and the Film Foundation which can only be changed with written permission from the Film Foundation.

### **Changes in intended use and extensions**

The Finnish Film Foundation may change the intended use, schedule and conditions of the support based on the recipient's application. Changes in intended use and extensions require a written application. Applications must be submitted 30 days before the support runs out.

A written report concerning the extension must be emailed to Susanna Haarla, [susanna.haarla@ses.fi](mailto:susanna.haarla@ses.fi).

**NOTE!** The recipient is obligated to inform MELA of changes in the schedule.

<https://www.mela.fi/en/grant-and-scholarship-recipients>

## 5. REPORT ON THE USE OF THE SUPPORT

The Foundation must receive a report of the use of the grant no later than a year from the decision.

A report on the use of the grant is part of the project plan and is submitted to the Film Foundation's online application system as an appendix.

### **Documentaries:**

Information about the submitted final report is forwarded to the processor who has suggested the grant.

### **Feature-length, short and serialised fiction, animation or children's film or a combination thereof:**

Information about the submitted final report is forwarded to Film commissioner Kaisu Isto, [kaisu.isto@ses.fi](mailto:kaisu.isto@ses.fi)

### **NOTE!:**

An automatic message indicating that the final report is missing is only removed when the final report has been approved at the Film Foundation and the final instalment of the grant has been paid.

The general information of the application includes a link to payment information that shows when the instalments have been paid.

### **Repayment of discretionary government transfers**

#### ***Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (688/2001) section 20***

*Recipients of discretionary Government transfer must repay without delay any transfer or part thereof they have received through error, in excess or manifestly without cause. Recipients must also repay a transfer or part thereof if it cannot be used as required in the transfer decision. If the repayable sum does not exceed 100 euros, it is not necessary to repay it.*

In addition to the Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (688/2001), section 20, the recipient must abide by the following repayment conditions:

The recipient is obliged to immediately repay the grant or part of the grant if the grant has not been used during the time period agreed upon by the parties and if the Film Foundation has not granted an extension.

The repayable amount must include annual interest and an added three percent following the Interest Act (633/1982), section 3, subsection 2. The interest is calculated from the last payment to the support repayment date.

The target of the support and application number must be mentioned in the message field during repayment.

The support must be repaid to the Finnish Film Foundation's bank account:

Nordea Bank Abp

IBAN FI74 1572 3000 0305 77

BIC NDEAFIHH

## **6. HALTING PAYMENT AND REPAYMENT**

If the recipient does not repay the Film Foundation according to the Act on Discretionary Government Transfers, section 20, repayment of the support or a portion of it will proceed according to section 9 and section 10 of the act of government transfers to promote film culture.

### **Section 9 Halting payments**

The Arts Promotion Center Finland is responsible for halting payments. The Finnish Film Foundation must immediately propose to the Arts Promotion Center Finland that the government transfer be halted if the Film Foundation has discovered information that warrants the halting of the payments. The Arts Promotion Center decides on the halting of payments and the continuation or halting of government transfers based on the Film Foundation's suggestion.

The decision of the halting of payments must be made immediately and, for special reasons, during at least two calendar years after the Finnish Film Foundation's suggestion. The Finnish Film Foundation must include sufficient and essential information to make a decision to halt payments. The Arts Promotion Center Finland also has the right to receive the necessary information from the Finnish Film Foundation to halt payments without regard to confidentiality agreements.

### **Section 10 Repayment**

The Arts Promotion Center Finland is responsible for halting payments. The Finnish Film Foundation must immediately inform the Arts Promotion Center Finland of facts that would or should warrant government transfer repayments. The Arts Promotion Center Finland makes the repayment decision.

The decision of repayments must be made immediately and, for special reasons, during at least two calendar years after the Finnish Film Foundation's suggestion. The Finnish Film Foundation must include sufficient and essential information to make a decision of repayments. The Arts Promotion Center Finland also has the right to receive the necessary information from the Finnish Film Foundation for repayments without regard to confidentiality agreements.