

# The 7<sup>th</sup> First Feature Film Initiative Screenplay and Production Proposal Competition

## Scheme Summary and Application Guidelines

### A. Scheme Summary

#### Introduction

1. Create Hong Kong (“CreateHK”) of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau first launched the First Feature Film Initiative (“FFFI”) in March 2013 to identify new talents through a competition on screenplay and production proposals. FFFI is supported by the Hong Kong Film Development Council (“HKFDC”) and funding is made available from the Film Development Fund (“FDF”) for the winning new directors and their film production teams to make their first feature films<sup>1</sup>.

#### Aim

2. FFFI provides Government funding to winning teams in the form of cash prizes as more particularly set out in paragraph 3 below. The aim of the FFFI is to support new directors and their film production teams to make their first feature films on a commercial basis in order to nurture talents for the film industry.

#### Main Features

3. FFFI takes the form of a competition. The competition is divided into: Higher Education Institution Group (“HEIG”) and Professional Group (“PG”), with each group being awarded a maximum of three prizes. The winning teams of the HEIG and the PG will be awarded a maximum of \$5 million and \$8 million respectively to make their first feature films.
4. The winning teams are required to complete the whole film production and sales process, involving planning, shooting and distribution, and acquire practical knowledge in planning and making a feature film.
5. Each participating team is required to submit a screenplay and production proposal which shall contain: logline, synopsis, character description, treatment, full screenplay, detailed production plan (including schedule), names of cast and crew members (attaching letters/statements of intent from the main cast and main film crew members), production budget and marketing forecast. No substantial changes of the screenplay and production proposals after submission are allowed without approval.
6. The winning teams should complete the whole film production and sales process with only the prize money granted under this competition and shall not engage any

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<sup>1</sup> A feature film is a fictional narrative. It must be a film or digital film suitable for release in commercial cinemas and is not shorter than 80 minutes in running time. Animation films and documentaries are not considered as feature films under FFFI.

financier/investor or use prize monies or funding from any other sources (including any other Government funding) to finance the film.

7. Each team may only submit one application and participate in either of the competition under the HEIG or the PG.
8. **To be eligible for an application under the FFFI, the film project must not have previously received or successfully applied for financial support from any of the following five (5) schemes** under the FDF, namely, (i) the Film Development Fund Scheme for Financing Film Production, (ii) Film Production Financing Scheme (Relaxation Plan), (iii) the FFFI; (iv) the Directors' Succession Scheme, and (v) the Film Development Fund Scheme for Film Production Grant (now defunct). Please refer to the Guide to Application for the respective schemes for details of the respective rules.
9. If the screenplay of a film project has obtained Government funding/financial support under the Scriptwriting Incubation Programme ("SIP"), the fund to be granted under FFFI for the screenwriting portion shall be reduced by the amount obtained under the SIP fund. Please refer to the Guide to Application for the SIP scheme for details of the rules.

#### Eligibility for Participation

##### HEIG & PG

10. Each participating team shall comprise at least a director, a producer and a screenwriter. The director and the producer shall not be the same person.
11. Each and every director (if more than one director) of a participating team shall not have previously shot<sup>2</sup> any commercial film<sup>3</sup> with a running time of 80 minutes or longer and shall be a Hong Kong permanent resident aged 18 years or above. For the avoidance of doubt, the Assessment Panels referred to in paragraph 23 below and the Government shall have full discretion in determining whether a director is considered as having previously shot any commercial film.
12. Each and every producer (if more than one producer) of a participating team shall be a Hong Kong permanent resident aged 18 years or above.
13. At least one of the screenwriters of a participating team shall be a Hong Kong permanent resident aged 18 years or above.
14. Apart from the director(s), producer(s) and screenwriter(s), there shall be at least one Hong Kong permanent resident in each of the following nine positions: leading actor, leading actress, cinematography, action design, art direction, costume design, editing, music scoring/ sound effect and visual effect.

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<sup>2</sup> "Shall not have previously shot" means not having shot any commercial film as a director, co-director or executive director.

<sup>3</sup> "Commercial film" means a fictional narrative that has been publicly exhibited at commercial cinemas in or outside Hong Kong.

HEIG

15. The director(s) of a participating team in the HEIG shall be a student or graduate of not more than ten years from film/TV production or similar disciplines of a local or overseas higher education institute or a professional school.
16. The producer of a participating team must have participated in the production of at least two films publicly exhibited in Hong Kong<sup>4</sup> in the past 20 years<sup>5</sup> in the capacity of a presenter (出品人)/producer (監製) (not including executive producer (執行監製) and assistant producer (助理監製))/director/director of cinematography/art director (with at least one occasion as a producer) and must be a Hong Kong permanent resident aged 18 or above.
17. To ensure that a participating team possesses reasonable knowledge and skills in film production, a participating team shall be screened and nominated by one of the following local higher education institutions or institutions under the Vocational Training Council providing film/TV production or similar programmes. The number of team(s) to be recommended for participating in the competition by the relevant recommending bodies are as follows:

	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Number of Team(s)</b>
a.	The Hong Kong Academy for Performance Arts	2
b.	Hong Kong Baptist University	2
c.	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	2
d.	City University of Hong Kong	2
e.	The Open University of Hong Kong	2
f.	Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Lee Wai Lee)	2
g.	Hong Kong Design Institute	2
h.	The University of Hong Kong	2
i.	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	2
j.	Chu Hai College of Higher Education	2
<b>Total :</b>		<b>20</b>

18. In addition to the above, there are four additional quotas available for the above recommending bodies this year. The additional quotas, together with application quotas remaining after the application deadline on 21 May 2021 (“Application Deadline”) (i.e. the number of applications received by the Government is less than the quota of 20 applications stated in paragraph 17 above) would be available for allocation after the Application Deadline. Each recommending body may submit additional applications within a week after the Application Deadline, i.e. on or before 28 May 2021. If, after the same number of remaining quotas allocated to each recommending body who submits additional applications, the number of backup applications exceeds the

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<sup>4</sup> “Publicly exhibited in Hong Kong” means theatrically released in Hong Kong for at least five shows within 30 consecutive days in commercial cinemas on the member list of the Hong Kong Theatres Association.

<sup>5</sup> Refer to films publicly exhibited in Hong Kong between 22 May 2001 and 21 May 2021.

remaining available quotas, CreateHK will decide by drawing lots.

## PG

19. The director(s) of a participating team in the PG must be a member of the local film industry who possesses filmmaking or related experience; or who has previously won in local major short film competitions or a film industry member who has returned from overseas.
20. The producer(s) of a participating team must have participated in the production of at least two films publicly exhibited in Hong Kong<sup>4</sup> in the past 20 years<sup>5</sup> in the capacity of a presenter (出品人) or producer (監製) (not including executive producer (執行監製) and assistant producer (助理監製)) (with at least one occasion as a producer), and must be a Hong Kong permanent resident aged 18 or above.
21. For the PG, a producer can only take up the post of producer (including co-producer) of one participating team in the same competition. For the avoidance of doubt, a producer may still participate in this round of competition even if he or she is a producer or co-producer for other film projects which were awarded in previous rounds of the FFFI.
22. Quota system does not apply to PG. Participants of the PG may submit their applications to CreateHK direct.

## Assessment Procedures

23. The Assessment Panel shall comprise veteran industry practitioners including director, screenwriter, film critic, film investor, producer or representative of the HKFDC.
24. The Assessment Panel will recommend the list of awardees to the Fund Vetting Committee (“FVC”) of the HKFDC for consideration, and funding will be approved by the Controlling Officer of the FDF.

## Assessment Method

25. There are two stages of assessment. All nominated teams which have met all eligibility criteria can enter the first stage.
26. In the first stage of assessment, the Assessment Panel will shortlist the screenplay and production proposals (film projects) for assessment in the second stage. The core creative members (that is the director, screenwriter and producer) of the shortlisted film projects shall in the next three to four weeks revise and improve their projects for re-submission to the Assessment Panel for consideration in the second stage of assessment.
27. In the second stage of assessment, the core creative members of the selected teams will present their film projects to the Assessment Panel and the Assessment Panel will finalise the rank list and recommend the winners to the FVC for

consideration.

28. Notwithstanding that each of the HEIG and the PG are allocated a quota with three winners, the quality of film projects would be of paramount importance. The Assessment Panels reserve the right not to recommend any award(s) if the film project(s) does/do not attain the required standard.

### Film Production

29. The director and the producer of each winning team shall, within one month after receiving the notification and accepting the award, form and incorporate a production company (“ProdCo”), and they shall submit to CreateHK a copy of the ProdCo’s Certificate of Incorporation, the ProdCo’s membership list and the percentage of shares held by each member. Upon receipt of all the said documents, CreateHK will sign an agreement with the ProdCo and disburse the funding to it for embarking on the winning film project. The ProdCo shall finish making the film in accordance with the production plan, budget and the terms and conditions of the agreement signed between the parties. It shall also commence principal photography not later than two years of the signing of the agreement.
30. The founding members (i.e. director, producer, screenwriter and/or the other crew members of the film project) of a ProdCo should, before the commencement of the film’s principal photography, reach a consensus on the way and ratio of income-sharing and sign an agreement on this matter.
31. As the main objective of FFFI is to assist new directors in making their first feature films, change of the directors and producers of the selected film projects is not allowed. If there is a genuine need to change other crew members, the ProdCo shall inform and apply to CreateHK for the change(s).
32. The director and the producer shall be the person-in-charge and the coordinator of the film project respectively, and shall be responsible for the completion of the film according to the production plan and the production budget of the winning film project, and shall report to CreateHK on the filming progress, production expenses and seeking approval of any changes associated with film production.

### Copyright Sale and Distribution

33. During the production stage, a ProdCo shall not transfer any company share, and shall not solicit funding through pre-sale of distribution rights before the final cut is approved by the Government.
34. A ProdCo shall arrange by itself for the sale of the copyrights of the film. The Government will not recover any film production costs and related administrative expenses, nor will it share the profits generated from the film. In principle, all proceeds from the sale of the copyrights will go to the ProdCo and be available for release to members of the ProdCo according to the share of stakes held by them or the income-sharing ratio agreed in advance.

35. The basic conditions related to film distribution include:
- (a) the film shall be exhibited in commercial cinema(s) in Hong Kong for not less than five shows in thirty consecutive days within three years upon signing of the agreement between the ProdCo and the Government;
  - (b) upon consent of the Government, the related publicity and promotion shall highlight that the film is funded by the FDF; and
  - (c) include in the end credit of the film the following disclaimer: “The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the sponsorship granted under the Film Development Fund bear no relationship whatsoever to the content of, or views expressed in the Film”.
36. If a ProdCo is not able to arrange exhibition of the film in commercial cinema(s) in Hong Kong and complete the requirements as stated in the agreement within three years from the date it is signed, the ProdCo shall without prejudice to any of the Government’s rights and remedies, repay immediately to the Government all sums provided by the Government in relation to the agreement together with interest incurred up to the date of repayment.
37. The ProdCo shall obtain the Government’s written approval before the screening of the file or work-in-progress of the film at/for: (a) film festivals in or outside Hong Kong; (b) film markets in or outside Hong Kong; and (c) exhibition at any place of public entertainment within the meaning of section 2 of the Places of Public Entertainment Ordinance (Cap. 172) in or outside Hong Kong before the final cut is approved by the Government. No prior approval is required after the approval of the final cut.

#### Supervision and Execution

38. CreateHK will be responsible for administering the FFFI. To ensure that the films are produced according to schedule, within budget and at a standard meeting the requirements of commercial films, CreateHK will assign industry member(s)/Government staff who is/are experienced in film production to monitor the production of the subsidised films and provide timely assistance.
39. To ensure the proper use of public money, the Government will disburse the approved funds to the ProdCo according to key milestones. In the event that a ProdCo cannot complete the film production, the film copyright and production material will all go to the Government, and be taken over by CreateHK.

### **B. Application Guidelines**

#### Application Date

40. From 15 March 2021(Monday) to 21 May 2021 (Friday).
41. Applicants are required to submit to the Film Services Office (“FSO”) of CreateHK a duly completed Application Form together with supporting documents in duplicate (one set of which being bound and the other not) **not later than 6:00pm on 21 May 2021 (Friday) (“Application Deadline”)**.

42. All supplementary information and/or documents, where necessary, shall be submitted to the FSO of CreateHK **not later than 6:00pm on 4 June 2021 (Friday) or such other date and time as requested by the Government.** Application Forms not duly completed, signed or stamped as required, or omission of any requisite information and/or documents by the due date may result in the applicant being disqualified.
43. Application Forms and supporting documents sent by mail, e-mail or fax will not be accepted. Late application will not be processed.
44. In the case of the typhoon signal No.8 or above is hoisted or a black rainstorm warning signal or “extreme conditions after super typhoons” announced by the Government is/are in force on the Application Deadline, the latest time and date before which applications are to be submitted will be extended to 6:00pm on the next working day (excluding Saturday) after the typhoon signal No.8 or above or a black rainstorm warning signal or “extreme conditions after super typhoons” is/are cancelled.

#### Application Procedure

45. To submit an application, each participating team of HEIG must be nominated by one of the recommending bodies listed in paragraph 17 of Part A above. The Application Form shall be signed and stamped by a representative of the recommending body.
46. Participating teams of PG can submit their applications to CreateHK directly.
47. Each of the director(s), producer(s) and screenwriter(s) of the participating team must sign “Authorisation to Disclose Confidential Information” attached in **Annex B** of the Application Form to the Government for the disclosure of its Application including but not limited to its Application Form; the logline, synopsis and screenplay of the proposed film; and required documents to the relevant parties including without limitation, panelists of Assessment Panels who are veteran film industry practitioners; members of the FVC and HKFDC; experienced writers and tutors of seminars and workshop organised by the HKFDC; film financiers; film producers; film directors; professionals with experience in film production, financing, distribution; the Secretariat of the HKFDC and other representatives of the Government involved in the assessment process.
48. No application fee is required. Application Forms can be downloaded from the following website: [www.createhk.gov.hk/fffi/en/](http://www.createhk.gov.hk/fffi/en/) or obtained at:

#### **Create Hong Kong**

Address: 40/F, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wanchai

Tel: (852) 2594 5846

Fax: (852) 2824 0595

Email: [enquiry@createhk.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@createhk.gov.hk)  
[info@fdc.gov.hk](mailto:info@fdc.gov.hk)

### Announcement of Results

49. FSO of CreateHK will notify individual participating teams of the results.

### Signing Agreement

50. The ProdCo shall enter into a written agreement with the Government on terms prepared and approved by the Government. The agreement shall contain the complete terms and conditions of the film production, including matters referred to in this Application Guideline and the Application Form, expanded and modified as necessary, and other matters such as filming schedule, budget, reporting to CreateHK on the filming progress, financial commitments and to seek approval of any changes associated with film production. The governing laws of the agreement shall be the laws of Hong Kong. Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions of the agreement shall entitle the Government to terminate the agreement and exercise its discretion not to disburse any of the approved funds, and to require the ProdCo to return forthwith all or any of the funds provided by the Government under the agreement.

### Handling of Information

51. The Authority (which for the purpose of this Application Guideline means all or any of the Government and the HKFDC (including the Secretariat)) is committed to ensuring that all personal data submitted under an application is handled in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486) (“PDPO”). Personal data provided in relation to an application may be used by the Authority and disclosed among them for the following purposes:
- (a) processing and authentication of the applications;
  - (b) payment of Government funding and any refund thereof;
  - (c) the daily operation of FFFI and the FDF Scheme;
  - (d) meeting the requirements to make disclosure under the requirements of any law;
  - (e) statistics and research; and
  - (f) any purposes relating to any of the above.
52. Personal data provided in an application will be kept in confidence. They may however be disclosed by the Authority to any of the following parties for the purposes set out in paragraph 51:
- (a) any person (including the agent, the contractor or the third party service provider of the Government) who is involved in the FFFI;
  - (b) subject to (c), any other person under a duty of confidentiality to the Authority;
  - (c) in relation to the names of the members of the participating teams, their recommending bodies and the persons-in-charge, the names of the cast and the other crew members, the public; and
  - (d) any person to whom the Authority is under an obligation to make disclosure under the requirements of any law.



53. According to Section 2.3.3 of the Code of Practice on the Identity Card Number and Other Personal Identifiers issued by the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, the Authority will obtain the identity card number of the applicant in order to verify the identity of the identity card holder.
54. According to Sections 18 and 22 and Principle 6 of Schedule 1 of PDPO, the individuals whose personal data are provided in an application has a right of access and correction with respect to the personal data provided including the right to obtain a copy of the personal data provided in the application.
55. The person to whom access to data or correction of data or for information of the policies and practices and kinds of data held is to be addressed as follows:

Senior Executive Officer (Administration)  
Administration Section  
Communications and Creative Industries Branch  
Commerce and Economic Development Bureau  
21/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices  
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar  
Hong Kong

A fee will be charged in accordance with the PDPO for providing access to or correcting any data and for providing the information.

#### Language

56. The Chinese translation of this Guide is for reference only. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the English text and the Chinese translation of this Guide, the English text shall prevail.