

Film Hub Midlands

BFI FAN COVID-19

Resilience Fund

Application Guidelines

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FAN
BFI FILM AUDIENCE NETWORK

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Introduction

The **vision** of the BFI's UK wide Film Audience Network (FAN) is to build a wider, more diverse cinema audience with a richer appreciation of British and international film.

Its aims are twofold:

- to develop a larger, more diverse, confident and sustainable audience for a wider range of independent British and international film – with a primary focus on the collective viewing experience
- to create a stronger, more connected and confident sector for the distribution and exhibition of independent British and international film

Please see the [BFI FAN Overview](#) for more detail on FAN's aims and priorities under the BFI 2022 Strategy.

As of 20 March 2020, the achievement of these aims has been put at risk due to the Government directive to close cinemas, cultural venues and other places of gathering across the UK which, along with the mass cancellation of film festivals, has severely impacted on the ability of FAN Members to deliver to this brief.

Whilst audiences are at the heart of everything FAN does, its ability to reach those audiences in a collective setting is entirely dependent on the sustainability of the cinemas, festivals and other organisations that make up the Film Audience Network.

We do not know how long venues will remain closed but once they are able to open their doors again, it will be vital that buildings are still fit for purpose, core cultural assets have been retained and that they can benefit from a continued connection with the local communities that support them during the period of closure. For cultural organisations that do not operate from a publicly accessible venue the challenges may differ, but are still significant, and FAN will seek to alleviate pressure on its members in some way during this time of extreme difficulty.

About the Fund

The **BFI FAN Covid-19 Resilience Fund** has been launched with the intention of helping FAN members to maintain connections with audiences during the closure period and to be in a position to reopen and re-engage those audiences once the crisis has passed.

This Fund is offered on the assumption that the disruption to audience activity could last 6 to 9 months and that the priority for all exhibitors and FAN members will be to get back on their feet as soon as venues are allowed to reopen (which may have to be on a partial basis to start with).

As such FAN, with support from BFI, has decided to direct the majority of its unallocated project funds towards this Resilience Fund which may mean that later in the year there is less available for 'normal' project activity. If however the Resilience Fund is not fully spent, any remaining funds will be reallocated to their original purpose enabling FAN Members to reach audiences with a varied and diverse film offering.

The total amount available is up to **£1.3m**. The BFI FAN Covid-19 Resilience Fund repurposes National Lottery funding originally allocated to each Hub for the purposes of supporting in-venue and other audience facing film activity over the next 6 to 9 months. Each Hub will therefore have a different amount of funding available within this overall total to offer in support of its Members.

Whilst the criteria and guidelines outlined below will apply across FAN, each Hub will have its own needs to meet and we expect this Fund to be heavily over-subscribed. As such it is estimated that the average grant per organisation will be in the range of £5,000 to £15,000 and that grants over £20,000 will be exceptional. Grants must be used within 6 months of being offered or otherwise should be repaid.

There are no formal match funding requirements for this Fund but we will expect to see clear evidence that you are actively seeking support from other appropriate sources.

The deadline for applications to the Fund is **6pm on Wednesday 6 May 2020**. We do not anticipate issuing a further call for applications but this may be reviewed if the impact of Covid-19 is longer than anticipated and subject to initial demands on the Fund.

What is this Fund for?

The purpose of this Fund is to support activity that will help FAN member organisations respond to the financial impact of the Covid-19 emergency. This might include:

- Helping to maintain FAN member's estate – buildings and other infrastructure such as IT – so that it is fit for purpose and ready for use once venues can re-open e.g. through assistance with rent, utilities, insurance and maintenance costs etc
- Retaining cultural or intellectual assets such as staff that cannot be furloughed (e.g. leadership staff) or who are able to work on the organisation's longer term sustainability e.g. through fundraising, audience engagement programmes etc
- Offering short term support to meet irrecoverable costs incurred in planning or delivery of programmes that are now suspended
- Audience engagement activity (including online) during the period of closure that will enhance Members' ability to connect with its audiences and continue to contribute to FAN aims

Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants must be FAN members that can demonstrate:

- (i) Prior to 20 March 2020 a track record of substantive audience facing activity in line with BFI FAN priorities; AND
- (ii) Immediate financial need;

Organisations that have been awarded BFI Audience Fund 'Organisational Awards' for 2020/21 are not eligible to apply even if they meet the above criteria.

Priority

The maximum impact of this funding will be felt through supporting venues to get back to business once the crisis is over. This will therefore be the overarching focus for the Fund but beyond that, priority will be given to Members that:

- are not able to access sufficient or any other emergency funds¹ for those items for which they're seeking this support
- had been operational for at least two years before 20 March 2020 – delivering activity in line with BFI FAN priorities
- had received FAN funding for audience facing activity in the period January 2018 – March 2020
- have limited or no access to alternative funding sources e.g. from ACE, the BFI Audience Fund, Creative Scotland, NI Screen, ACW, Local Authorities etc
- are able to demonstrate a realistic plan for how they intend to re-commence activity after the crisis
- AND (where applicable) priority will be given as follows:
 - **Cinemas** (including those within mixed art-form venues) – to those that ordinarily offer an average of two screenings per week for part time venues and a minimum of seven screenings per week for full time AND that operate on a year-round basis (with allowance being made for holiday closures);
 - **Film festivals** – to those that have presented at least two editions and have year round core staff;
 - **Touring cinema operators** – to those that have a minimum of 5 venues in their network and have been operating for a minimum of two years

Eligible costs

Activity intended to support your organisation in its response to the financial impact of the Covid-19 crisis – which could include:

- Staff costs – we expect all organisations to be looking after their staff and taking full advantage of the Job Retention Scheme etc. offered by the Government. We are only able to consider covering staffing costs not covered by any other means, and would anticipate an explanation as to why they are included
- Other committed but unpaid expenditure incurred in the delivery of your cinema/festival programme e.g. marketing materials, freelancer costs, website hosting, and distributor rentals etc
- Rent/utilities – limited to a contribution while you seek a rent or utility holiday from your landlord/supplier (you will need to let us know if such 'holidays' cannot be sought)
- Repayment of existing bank loans – we may be able to make a contribution towards these while you negotiate a loan holiday (you will need to let us know if such 'holidays' cannot be sought)
- Insurance and maintenance costs
- Modest costs relating to audience facing online activity taking place during the closure period – intended to put the applicant in a stronger position to recommence activity in future that will support FAN aims

This list is not exhaustive and other items may be considered.

Please note that applicants with multiple sites will be treated as a single organisation and that only one award per organisation will be made.

¹ Including but not limited to, the Government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Ineligible costs

The following costs are ineligible under this Fund:

- Costs or losses not incurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Costs for audience activity taking place beyond the next 6 months or for any activity within the next 6 months that involves in-venue audiences

In addition, we will not offer funding to cover costs that can be met by any of the Government's emergency measures such as, but not limited to:

- The Job Retention Scheme
- Deferring VAT and Self-Assessment payments
- The Statutory Sick Pay relief package for SMEs
- The 12 month business rates holiday for retail, hospitality, leisure and nursery businesses in England
- Small business grant funding of £10,000 for all businesses in England in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief
- Grant funding of £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England with property with a rateable value of between £15,000 and £51,000
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering loans of up to £5m for SMEs through the British Business Bank
- The HMRC Time to Pay Scheme
- The Self Employment Income Support Scheme

Because some elements of business support are devolved, the measures you can access may differ if your business is in [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) or [Northern Ireland](#).

For further information on these schemes and other relevant information, please visit the [Government's COVID-19 Support for Business page](#) and the [BFI's COVID-19 support page](#) which include information on the Covid-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund.

How to apply for funding

In the first instance you should contact your Film Hub lead by email and they will be in contact to discuss your application with you and advise what information is needed.

If you have access requirements that mean you need assistance when applying for funds, you may be able to request financial support through the BFI Access Support Scheme. Find out more information [here](#).

This funding is intended to complement other funding and support available to organisations, and not duplicate it. You should only apply for funding if you cannot access support for the request costs elsewhere.

Please give careful thought to how much you need to request from this Fund and only apply where no alternatives are available to you – this will help us ensure funding goes as far as possible. If you are seeking support from elsewhere but do not yet know if you'll be successful, you will be asked to set this out in your application.

As part of your application you will be asked to provide the following information:

- An overview of your organisation's previous work demonstrating how you contribute to FAN's aims and priorities
- A short narrative that explains what income you've lost and what other measures you've taken to mitigate the impact of closure/cancellation (including use of reserves where applicable)
- A summary of the status of these measures (evidencing that you have exhausted all other reasonable options or are awaiting responses)
- An overview of the impact of any emergency support that FAN can provide – what difference will it make?
- An overview of what, if any, activity you are undertaking during closure in order to engage with your audience and/or increase your future resilience e.g. planning, fundraising, putting together inclusion strategies etc
- A cashflow statement for 2020-21 based on the assumption of 6 to 9 months disruption, and a budget which shows clearly how much is being requested from FAN and what this will be directed towards

Depending on the level of funds being requested and their purpose, we may also ask you for one or more of the following:

- An organisational budget for 2019-20
- Your most recent annual accounts
- Your original 2020-21 organisational budget as drawn up before the Covid-19 crisis

Decision making

Decisions on applications to the BFI FAN Covid-19 Resilience Fund will take into account the information provided in the application, the track record of the applicant in contributing to FAN's aims and the need to balance limited resources fairly. All applications will be evaluated by your Film Hub against the following core criteria:

- Severity of demonstrable need and lack of availability of other support measures or sources of funding
- The difference the funding will make to your organisation's ability to get back on its feet
- The positive impact any funding will make on your future ability to contribute to FAN's aims and priorities

For audience engagement activity during the closure period, additional criteria will be:

- Creativity of approach
- Potential audience reach
- Alignment with BFI FAN aims and with the [BFI Diversity Standards](#)
- Value for money

We will expect organisations that benefit from this Fund to demonstrate that they will do all they can to support those freelancers and/or micro-businesses with which they work.

What happens next?

Step 1

Please contact your Film Hub immediately if you are interested in applying to the BFI FAN Covid-19 Resilience Fund and they will offer you advice and guidance.

Step 2

Please ensure you have investigated all avenues for emergency relief from other sources including government or industry schemes.

Step 3

Submit your application along with any supporting documentation to your Film Hub (in the format and to the recipient that you are directed to by the deadline in these guidelines).

The deadline for applications is **6pm on Wednesday 6 May 2020**.

Step 4

Your Film Hub will assess your submission alongside other applications received and will contact you to discuss any outstanding issues or questions.

Funding decisions will be made by your Film Hub. However, in order to ensure a broad consistency of approach across FAN – and to ensure applicants are not submitting multiple applications for the same funds to different sources - all applications that are recommended for support will be reviewed by the BFI.

Please note, in some instances, Film Hub staff may share your application documents with external specialist advisors as well as the BFI in order to ensure a speedy response and accurate evaluation of your position. This will be done on a confidential basis.

Step 5

The Film Hub will aim to notify you of the outcome of your application within 3 weeks of the submission deadline – this might be delayed if there are complexities or outstanding questions associated with your request. Not all grants will therefore be announced at the same time and due to the volume of funding requests we expect to receive, feedback will not always be possible.

Complaints and appeals

The funding decision is final. Inevitably applications will be turned down and applicants may be disappointed by this result.

Formal appeals against the final decision will not be considered unless the applicant has good cause to believe that the procedures for processing the application were not adhered to, or applied in such a way as to prejudice the outcome of the application.

Whilst this is a BFI Film Audience Network Fund and decisions will be made by your Film Hub, in order to ensure consistency of approach across the UK, the BFI's complaints and appeals procedure will apply to this Fund although if you have any concerns please contact your Film Hub in the first instance.

A copy of the BFI's Complaints and Appeals procedure can be found [here](#).

Conditions of funding

If you are successful you will be issued with a contract confirming amount of funding, payment provisions, reporting requirements and branding.

Successful applicants will be expected to stay in regular contact with their Film Hub and to notify them of any developments that may relate to the grant. For example any staffing changes, changes to your cost needs (e.g. a loan holiday is confirmed) as well as updates on any activity you are undertaking during the period which is being assisted by FAN funding.

The amount of your grant may be adjusted to take account of any such changes. You will be required to submit a cost statement demonstrating how you have used the funding.

You will be required to make clear on your website and via social media that you are being supported during this period by National Lottery funding through the BFI Film Audience Network.

We may – in due course – ask you to write a short report explaining the impact on your cultural business of any funding you receive from the Resilience Fund.

Changes to this Fund

BFI FAN has designed and launched this Fund very quickly in order to ensure we can best support our members. Because of this, we will be keeping our processes under review to ensure we are making best use of our resources, particularly in relation to any further announcements by Government and any changing circumstances in relation to Covid-19. We reserve the right to make changes to this programme, which may include changes to the focus, timing, budgets or amount of funds. We will communicate any changes as quickly as we can.