

NZ ON AIR

REGIONAL TELEVISION FUNDING GUIDELINES & APPLICATION 2008

These guidelines give the context for NZ On Air's support for regional television – why we fund regional television programmes – and the criteria we use to fund regional television – how we fund regional television programmes.

Introduction

In May 2005 the Government allocated \$3.555 million, exclusive of GST, to support regional television over the next four years. This provides an annual amount of \$890,000.

The funding is consistent with the Government's 2004-09 Programme of Action for broadcasting in which enhancing regional and community broadcasting is one of six priorities.

The allocation acknowledges the role regional television plays in delivering local content that reflects local interests. The funds are for television programmes, particularly news and current affairs, that fill the gap in local content left by network television's national focus.

The funds are for programme proposals from regional television stations. Independent producers are not eligible to apply but broadcasters are free to contract them at a rate which is not inconsistent with in-house production costs.

What is Regional Television?

Regional television gives a local community its own voice. A regional television channel provides a reasonable level of local content, giving access to and reflecting a range of community events, issues, interests and personalities.

The Funding Formula

- (a) NZ On Air has a funding pool for regional television stations which it administers annually. Regional broadcasters are to use the funding

exclusively for the cost of producing and broadcasting television programmes that reflect the events, issues and interests of local communities, including, where relevant, ethnic and other minorities. NZ On Air will not fund general station overhead or operating costs.

- (b) A station which qualifies for funding will have provided a list of programmes which fit within the programme funding criteria. The station will then be allocated an annual funding amount to be drawn down monthly as a contribution towards the cost of producing the approved programmes.
- (c) The annual funding amount for each qualifying station is based on a “core” grant, which is the same for all stations.
- (d) The core grant will be topped up by a “supplementary” grant which is based on:
 - the size of the potential audience as measured by the station’s regional territorial reach,
 - the number of programme hours and
 - the degree to which the programmes meet the funding criteria.

Funding Criteria

1. Station Criteria

In order to qualify for a core grant, a station must satisfy these five conditions:

- (a) The station must fulfil a regional brief. It must reflect its region by providing opportunities for communities to give expression to their concerns and interests. It must demonstrate that it fulfils this specific regional audience need with a programming schedule that provides a reasonable level of local content.
- (b) The station must produce evidence of its local production history.
- (c) The station must demonstrate it has wide community support. A measure of community support might include evidence of local advertising, and links to local organisations, local government, schools and/or tertiary institutions, local businesses and audiences.
- (d) The station must have been on air for at least two years.
- (e) The station must produce evidence of its financial viability through audited financial accounts and forecast income and expenditure for the year ahead.

2. Programme Criteria

In order for NZ On Air to make an assessment about the level of the supplementary funding, a station must provide the following information:

- (a) Verifiable figures on the station's potential audience size as defined by its regional territorial reach.
- (b) A list of programmes for which funding is sought, in accordance with NZ On Air's regional television policy framework i.e. programmes covering local news and current affairs and local events (sports/culture) including, where relevant, ethnic and other minorities.

A station may also provide any plans to share some programmes or production costs with other regional broadcasters.

Costs

The production costs of programmes are to be broken down into direct and indirect costs. Direct costs are costs for which receipts can be produced eg tape stock, contract crew, studio or equipment hire. Indirect costs are the

specific costs of the share of station resources that have been used (eg staff, premises/studio, transmission) for the production of the programmes.

Process

- (a) One funding round a year.
- (b) Payments will be made in monthly instalments.
- (c) Quarterly reports to NZ On Air will include an itemised income and expenditure statement of the preceding quarter, a balance sheet at period end date, and an explanation of all significant variances to budget. The broadcaster will supply evidence of how the funding was used, including sample tapes and a brief narrative.

Contestable Funding

Of the total \$890,000, a pool of \$50,000 of contestable funding will be reserved for stations which fulfil a regional brief but which do not yet meet the primary eligibility criteria. Proposals will be sought for one-off individual or shared projects.

APPLICATION CHECK LIST

Please structure your application in four parts as follows:

(a) **The cover sheet.** Please fill out the cover sheet provided formally applying for funding and confirming contact details.

(b) **Station criteria.** Please provide –

- A copy of your station's mission statement or a statement of programming philosophy/policy
- Programme scheduling information
- Evidence of local production history
- Evidence of community support
- Evidence of having been broadcasting for at least two years
- Audited financial accounts and forecast income and expenditure for the year ahead

(c) **Programme criteria.** Please provide –

- Verifiable figures on the size of your station's potential audience as defined by its regional territorial reach.
- The list of series/programmes for which funding is sought that reflects regional events, issues and interests and is planned for the months to 30 June 2006. This is to be set out to include:
 - i. Series/Programme title
 - ii. Number and duration of individual programmes
 - iii. Brief synopsis (up to 200 words)
 - iv. Total cost per hour

You may also wish to provide any plans to share some programmes or production costs with other regional television broadcasters.

(d) **Costs.** Please supply a detailed budget with a summary of all costs associated with the programmes. This is to be presented as:

- **Direct Costs**

These are costs for which receipts can be produced and which may include tape stock, contract crew, studio and/or equipment hire etc

- **Indirect Costs**

Broadcasters are required to specify the station resources which will be used to produce the programmes, with a cost apportioned to each item where relevant:

- i. Production staff and crew
- ii. Studio
- iii. Equipment
- iv. Transmission
- v. Other (specify)

NZ ON AIR
APPLICATION FOR REGIONAL TELEVISION FUNDING
COVER SHEET

REGIONAL TELEVISION STATION: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

FAX: _____

EMAIL: _____

TOTAL PROGRAMMING COSTS (excluding GST): \$_____

- Please attach this form to the top of your application.
- Please supply eight (8) copies of your application. Please don't bind documents – just staple the top left-hand corner.
- Please send your application to:

Glenn Usmar
Television Manager
NZ On Air
PO Box 9744
WELLINGTON

- Applications are due no later than **Friday 2 May 2008**