

Information for Funding Applicants – Special Scripted round

16 June 2023

A. Purpose

This information is intended for applicants who are considering submitting a funding application for the Special Scripted round.

The funding allocations for this round are based on [our recently confirmed funding](#) for the 2023/24 financial year.

We have also released our new investment strategy, which can be [read here](#).

B. Introduction

NZ On Air's funding strategy is founded on core public media principles. We do this by funding **quality, diverse** and **discoverable** content that inspires, engages, and entertains local audiences.

Here are the [funding round deadlines](#) for financial year 2023/24.

C. Assessment criteria

Alongside our nine investment principles (page 15 of our [Investment Strategy](#)), we will additionally assess the following when evaluating applications:

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** – Does the content reflect the diverse makeup of New Zealand's population and provide opportunities for under-represented groups? Does it shed light on aspects of NZ culture, society, or people that are often overlooked or misunderstood?
- **Gender equality** – Will the project promote and uphold gender equality both on screen and behind the scenes?
- **Talent development** – Is this project offering a supportive environment for early and mid-career writers and production creatives, particularly those who represent New Zealand's cultural and ethnic diversity, to hone their skills?
- **Regionalism** – Will this production showcase regions and communities that are seldom represented in local content, giving us a glimpse into parts of the country that we rarely see?

D. Special Scripted round priorities

We welcome projects intended for both hard-to-reach and general audiences with our usual priority emphasis on hard-to-reach audiences. Only Scripted drama and comedy production applications will be considered.

We are not considering children's or feature film projects in this round.

Unfortunately, we will not accept Development applications into this round due to the high demand on funds in Round Tahī. The next opportunity for Development applications to be considered is Round Rua with applications closing 28 September.

Scripted

A minimum allocation of \$15m has been allocated for Scripted content in this round.

Our focus for this round is funding Scripted projects that fall into [Tiers 1 and 2](#) of our Investment Strategy.

- Tier 1: Projects seeking >\$3m
- Tier 2: Projects seeking \$1m - \$3m

It has recently been announced that the NZ Screen Production Grant (NZSPG) rules will change and the NZSPG will be known as the Screen Production Rebate (SPR). The changes will allow NZ On Air to support production funding of series and other non-feature film productions that access a SPR rebate (beyond children's and animation which are already eligible). In this round we welcome applications from projects that require gap funding from NZ On Air as part of a finance plan that includes the SPR. For further information see [para H](#).

E. Timeline

Thursday 29 June 2023

Funding round opens.

All applications must be made through [NZ On Air's online application system](#).

Applications not submitted through this system will not be accepted.

Tuesday 1 August 2023, 4pm

Application deadline. Round closes.

Late applications will not be considered. In very exceptional circumstances, for time-sensitive projects agreed prior by the Head of Funding, we may consider an out-of-time application.

Friday 22 Sept 2023

Decisions confirmed, applicants notified.

This date may be extended at NZ On Air's sole discretion.

F. Application Limits

For projects not intending to apply for SPR funding:

To cope with the increasing demand for our funding and the resulting surge in declined applications, we are implementing application limits (per round) for producers/production companies and platforms.

Producers/production companies are limited to a maximum of four applications. Platforms, on the other hand, can submit up to 10 applications per round, without any restrictions per category within that total. It's important to note that the platform application cap does not apply to children's applications and returning series.

If you have a strong case for exceeding these limits, please contact the Head of Funding before submitting your applications. For any questions, please email amie@nzonair.govt.nz.

For projects intending to apply for SPR funding:

Each production company is limited to a maximum of two applications in this round. Similarly, individual producers, even if associated with different entities, can submit up to two applications.

This requirement is specific to the SPR opportunity and is separate to any application limits in place for accessing other NZ On Air funding. For full detail on guidelines pertaining to SPR funding and NZ On Air funding, please see [para H](#).

G. Platform Support

To be eligible for funding, Scripted applications must have the support of a local broadcaster or platform that has a proven track record of reaching local audiences. We strongly encourage the distribution of content across multiple platforms whenever feasible.

Supporting platforms should provide:

- free access to the content
- audience data and insights
- a well-considered and well-resourced marketing plan for reaching audiences
- an audience for funded content that is appropriate for the amount of pūtea (funding) sought
- an established, viable business
- a sustained commitment to local content for New Zealand audiences
- co-investment - this demonstrates market attachment and strengthens the business case of an application.

Please note that if supporting platforms seek content exclusivity then appropriate co-investment in the production budget is required.

H. SPR Applications

Although the revised guidelines for the SPR have not been finalised it is not expected there will be significant changes to those that already exist for Children's Drama and Animation projects seeking to qualify for the rebate and applying for NZ On Air funding. Final details and implementation timelines for SPR will be known in July/August. In the meantime, NZ On Air has, following consultation with producers and other stakeholders adopted guidelines for SPR applications that can be seen [here](#).

I. Sync Licensing

We encourage applications from projects looking to use a significant amount of local sync music. Ideally, productions should engage with a music licensing specialist early in pre-production. Applications can include a notional amount of up to \$300k in their budgets, subject to confirmation once funding is approved. If you would like to speak to someone in the team about this opportunity, contact Head of Music, Teresa Patterson teresa@nzonair.govt.nz.

J. Health and Safety

Your production budget should consider the costs of operating in line with [ScreenSafe COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols and general health and safety requirements](#). You can access other ScreenSafe Health and Safety Toolkit documents [here](#).

K. General Guidelines

Information on how to make a funding application is [here](#).