



BFI Film Audience Network (FAN)

Film Exhibition Fund (FEF)

Guidelines 2026/27

Request funding to screen UK independent and international film and the moving image to audiences across Wales.



CHAPTER

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At a glance

- **Total amount available:** Circa £105,000
- **Funding:** up to £10k
- **Fund opens:** 23 February 2026
- **Fund closes:** 9am Wednesday 8 April 2026 (round one) and 9am Wednesday 8 July 2026 (round two)
- **Activity window:** May 2026 – 31 March 2027. Multi-year funding may be available, subject to funds and demonstrable need.
- **Aim:** To develop audiences for UK independent (including Welsh) and international film, screen heritage and the wider moving image.

Note: Your activity start date should be May 2026 onwards to allow for funding decisions. Please contact us if your project is due to take place before this date.

Priorities: We are especially interested in project proposals that represent and connect with communities across Wales. In particular – disabled audiences, young audiences, Black and Global Majority audiences, working-class audiences and projects that break down economic barriers. Please contact us if you need additional advice. We are also interested in proposals that bring regular programmes of the best new UK independent and international films to audiences.

Introduction

At Film Hub Wales (FHW), we celebrate cinema. We fund, train and advise organisations that screen film, from film festivals, to film societies and mixed arts centres. This Lottery funding opportunity aims to bring the best UK independent and international film to audiences across Wales, delivering against the priorities set out in the [BFI's Screen Culture 2033 strategy](#).

We're part of the [BFI Film Audience Network \(FAN\)](#), which has been awarded BFI National Lottery funding with the aim of reaching audiences across the UK, giving them the opportunity to enjoy a broad range of films, regardless of geography or circumstance.

Chapter is appointed as the 'Film Hub Lead Organisation' (FHLO) in Wales. [See examples of our funded projects here](#).

What is the Film Exhibition Fund (FEF)?

The FEF supports independent film exhibitors to develop audiences for UK independent and international film and the wider moving image.

Our Priorities

We can offer funding towards projects that meet one or more of the following priorities:

Young Audiences: Opportunities for children, young people (aged 25 and under) and families to develop a relationship with screen culture. This might include young curation schemes, clubs or partnership projects with film education specialists. Organisations will need to demonstrate that they have safeguarding policies in place.

Public Engagement: Access for people across Wales to a wider choice of film and the moving image including independent UK (including Welsh) and international film, documentaries, TV and screen heritage:

- Big screen experiences are our priority but we will consider online / digital screenings where there is a clear benefit for audiences, such as access requirements,

- We are open to exploring immersive and interactive technologies such as gaming, VR/AR and wider screen based technologies that interact with cinema experiences,
- Added value such as post film discussions, Q&As, informal learning activities and creative assets are encouraged.
- We want to ensure that our support reaches across Wales, with good geographical spread and welcome proposals from areas of deprivation, such as local authorities outlined for [Plan for neighbourhoods](#) / [Pride of Place](#) schemes.

Screen heritage: Greater access to national and regional archive collections that reflect the diversity of Wales and increase appreciation for heritage film across all ages.

All supported activities will also need to address these fundamental principles:

Equity and Inclusion: FAN champions everyday inclusion. We would like to see how your project diversifies audiences for a wide range of cinema, breaking down social, economic and geographical barriers for audiences, including:

- Programmes led by and for minoritised communities, that prioritise lived experiences and broaden representation on-screen, in audiences and where relevant, in the exhibition workforce (e.g. LGBTQIA+ audiences, Black and Global Majority audiences, old age groups, disabled audiences, multi-sensory needs, working-class audiences, rural and underserved, isolated groups, minority languages and economic hardship),
- Programmes that prioritise outreach with community engagement at their heart.

Additional advice and support may be available to projects with strong inclusion aims that specifically address:

- Economic barriers and / or engagement of working-class audiences,
- Access for Deaf and Disabled Audiences,
- Inclusion of Black and Global Majority Audiences;
- Engaging children, families and young audiences aged 25 and under.

Proposals that focus on one or more of these areas may be shared with specialist freelancers. Any eligible applicants will be contacted to discuss what, if any, support might be of use. If you require more information at application stage, please contact us.

- **Environmental Sustainability:** We are committed to minimising the negative environmental impact of the work we support and ask all proposals to contribute to this aim. You will be asked to summarise steps you are taking to minimise the environmental impact of your activity and to improve audience awareness of the climate and biodiversity crises.

Please see our [resource section](#) for inspiration, which includes examples such as [ABiodiverse Big Screen: Programming for our Planet](#).

The BFI and [Julie's Bicycle](#) have a number of [recommended resources](#) that may be useful when planning around sustainability, including the [BFI Sustainable Screen Hub](#) and the [Creative Climate Tool](#).

We also operate a skills fund: Boosting knowledge, confidence and capability across the BFI FAN membership. Please see our [Training & Skills Guidelines](#) to apply for a bursary.

BFI Diversity Standards

Project proposals should take an inclusive approach to audience development, setting out how they will address the updated [BFI diversity standards](#). This means giving clear consideration to fair representation on screen, in the workforce (where appropriate) and ensuring that audiences feel welcome in your cinema spaces.

The Standards focus on the protected characteristics defined in the UK [Equality Act 2010](#), in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, gender fluid and non-binary identities, religion and belief - as well as socio-economic background, language, caring responsibilities, geographical location and wider intersectional experiences.

Larger awards will be expected to respond in more detail. Please see the Inclusive Cinema '[Dismantling Structural Inequality in Your Cinema](#)' guide to support action and get in touch if you need help interpreting the Standards. [See our example of best practice here](#).

Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Racism

There is much work to be done to create safe, respectful, workplaces across the screen industries.

BFI and BAFTA developed [a set of principles and zero- tolerance guidance](#) in consultation with organisations, unions and industry bodies across the film, television and games industry in response to urgent and systemic issues. We encourage applicants to read and share them within their organisation.

Should you wish to raise any queries or concerns [please read our feedback process and contact us here](#).

Am I Eligible?

You must be a BFI FAN member in order to access Film Hub Wales funding. Filmmakers and / or individuals cannot apply. To become a member, [fill in our Application Form](#).

[Membership](#) is free to qualifying organisations and offers access to our range of funding, support and benefits.

How much can I ask for?

Members can request up to £10,000 per proposal.

The average funding for the FEF was £4,911 in 2025/26 (the smallest being £305 and the largest £9,000). Larger requests will need to demonstrate audience reach, strategic impact and address more of the criteria.

While we do not have a set percentage requirement for match funding, we expect to see box office income and other partnership support - whether in cash, volunteer time or other in-kind contributions.

There will be two deadlines for final proposals only:

- **9am, Wednesday 8 April 2026**
- **9am, Wednesday 8 July 2026**

Your activity must be completed by 31 March 2027.

Early submission is recommended.

If you have a multi-year project in mind that could run beyond this date, this may be considered, subject to funding and demonstrable need. Applications must closely fit the criteria and have a strategic plan in place..

Use of Funds

Eligible expenses

- Film rights and transport,
- Rights clearances and curation,
- Project staffing costs e.g. project management or travel expenses,
- Venue or equipment hire,
- Marketing, advertising and PR,
- Event costs - e.g. speaker, talent or artist fees,
- Volunteer expenses,
- Evaluation costs,
- Accessibility - e.g. supporting materials, subtitling fees,
- Outreach e.g. community engagement or transport for isolated audiences,
- Other audience development - e.g. young programmers workshops,
- Online activity such as web platforms or hosting fees,
- Translation costs.

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

Ineligible Expenses

- Film Premieres,
- Film-making (the production and / or development of films) or workshops relating to filmmaking,
- Applications from film distributors / filmmakers to cover film release campaigns,
- Formal education activities / school events,
- Capital for new film equipment or building repairs,
- Setting up a new screening offer, film club / society (we can support once live / active) or new festival where there is no demonstrable plan for audience development,
- Screenings where organisers have not secured a film licence from the rights holder,
- Closed events which are not open to the public, including student film events, industry showcases, award ceremonies, or un-ticketed events where numbers cannot be reported,
- Film festivals that are submission based. We are also unlikely to fund entire programmes of shorts, with no associated features,
- Programmes where film is not the central art form, such as opera, literature, dance on film, or entire programmes of artists' moving image,
- General running costs not related to the activity, or activity covered by other funding,
- Programmes that duplicate provision in the same area.

Expenses with conditions:

- For applications (such as touring festivals) where funds will not go directly to participating cinema venues but they are expected to deliver activity on behalf of that third party, and / or to pay a charge for services such as film hire - a clear agreement should be in place with the venue, with benefits to their audience.
- UK applicants based in other Hub regions. If you aim to establish work in Wales such as touring programmes, this will not be a priority. You may apply if you can demonstrate demand from Welsh venues at application stage.

We suggest you speak to your main Hub region as a first step to establish process. You should also read the [BFI Audience Project Fund](#) guidance to see if your plans meet the national criteria.

How to Submit a Proposal

If you wish to proceed you will need to submit a proposal and budget, all of which are available to [download from our website](#).

If you have access requirements that mean you need assistance with the process, you may be able to benefit from the [BFI Access Support scheme](#).

If you have not received funding from FHW in the past, we strongly recommend contacting us before going ahead.

If you have a project currently underway, that has been funded by FHW, we will require the project report in order to assess the outcomes, before we can consider a new funding proposal.

Assessment criteria

Your proposal will be assessed by the Film Hub Wales team.

We will specifically look at:

- **Eligibility:** Whether the activity meets the priorities of the fund,
- **Audience reach:** Your audience targets and whether the planned activity delivers them. Subsidy per head will be a consideration, as well as geographical spread, to ensure that our support is available Wales wide. Whilst we appreciate that predicting admissions in the current context is difficult, please provide considered estimates. If you didn't meet your targets for a FHW funded project in a previous year, we will need to understand how you have adjusted your approach.
- **Impact:** The cultural ambition of the proposed programme. Is there demonstrable audience demand? Are the film selections likely to attract audiences - for instance, programmes of new independent titles that are not showing elsewhere locally, or that audiences are may have missed. Are relevant partnerships in place to effectively deliver the activity?
- **Organisational capability:** Whether the organisation is able to carry out the proposed activity, track record of success with similar projects, including project management experience, curatorial knowledge, risk management, marketing, audience development and evaluation plans,

- **Budget:** If the budget balances and all costs are eligible. Have all reasonable costs, including access, been included?
- **Legacy:** The longer-term plans to continue to reach audiences once the activity is completed. If the proposed activity is a one off, how might that support future audience development?
- **BFI Diversity Standards:** Does the proposal clearly address the Standards?

Please give clear examples when answering each question, to help us understand how you meet the criteria.

Decisions and Feedback

We give feedback on all proposals. The team may require further information before making a decision. If successful, you will be sent a confirmation email setting out terms such as reporting, branding and audience survey guidance.

If your proposal is unsuccessful, this will not prevent you from seeking support for a different project, or accessing other Hub opportunities such as bursaries.

You will not be able to resubmit a declined proposal in the same financial year. If you wish to submit a similar proposal in future, please contact us to discuss this first

Complaints and Appeals

We expect this fund to be oversubscribed and may not be able to support your activity even if it meets the criteria. The funding decision is final.

Formal appeals against the 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.

Next Steps

If you wish to discuss a potential proposal with FHW prior to submission, please get in touch with:

- **Lisa Nesbitt, Member Support Officer** - lisa@filmhubwales.org / 02920 311067
- **Hana Lewis, Head of Film Hub Wales** - hana@filmhubwales.org / 02920 353740

Other Funding Available

- FEF Pitch Pot (single events or short term programmes)
- Made in Wales (proposals should be made to FEF)
- Festivals (proposals should be made to FEF)
- Training & Skills Bursaries

If you're looking for funding for an activity we cannot cover, please see our [fundraising resource](#) for external links.

We also offer networking events, training courses, marketing support, and industry news.