FILM OTAGO SOUTHLAND

Film Otago Southland – Writers in Residence and Creative Development Support

Last update: April 2025

The purpose of Film Otago Southland's Writers in Residence and Creative Development Grants is to offer support for Otago and Southland-based screen projects in their early creative development phase.

For a project to be eligible, the majority of the story and/or locations must be set in Otago and/or Southland, and the writer and key creatives must have existing credits or suitable experience to make the project viable.

We welcome a brief synopsis of the project in development which could include:

- A summary of the project – project type, synopsis
- Who is attached to the project and their experience/credits
- Where the project is at in the development process
- Where/when it's set (the regional connection)
- A description of what kind of support is being requested – if it's a Bespoke Creative Development request, an explanation of what the grant would go towards and how much is being requested is required
- Details of any other investment and support secured or being investigated

A Writer in Residence programme normally takes the form of a writer visiting a district/s to write and research a regional project. Costs covered can include: domestic flights, accommodation, and car hire up to a total cost of approximately $2000. The film offices can help to facilitate introductions to local contacts to help with the project.

If a Writer in Residence isn't suitable for this project, FOS can consider other modes of Creative Development support, such as: research trips, script consultancy services, travel grants to attend pitching workshops or events, or some other kind of ring-fenced cost that would help support a project in its development phase. These grants are also $2000 max.

Where the application is for professional fee, such as a script consultant, the applicant will need to provide evidence that a consultant has been engaged.

What we don't fund:

- General expenses or professional fees for writers who have their permanent residence in Otago or Southland.
- Legal costs
- Option payments
- Short film development
- Project-related overheads
- Costs already incurred (retrospective)
- Capital works or acquisitions or equipment purchases

- Projects that are part of formal academic assessment
- Advertising programmes, commercials, news or current affairs programmes
- Productions of a public event or live event, including sports events, stage plays, music concerts, dance performances or comedy shows

An applicant will only be eligible for one grant per financial year (July – June) and per project.

FOS can receive applications for our Screenwriters In Residence programme or Creative Development support at any time and applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the FOS Co-Managers and Trust Chair (in the case of larger grants only as per FOS's financial delegations). Assessment will be taken into account available budget and the strength of the application and intended outcomes. It is at the discretion of the Chair and/or Board to accept grant applications that are outside of the criteria set out in this document if they are of significant benefit to the Otago and Southland screen industry.