

Questions and answers about the German Motion Picture Fund

What is eligible for funding?

The German Motion Picture Fund assists both the production of feature films and the making of high-quality TV series. The programme provides a special incentive to make digital films in Germany. In case of high German costs for digital filmmaking (at least €3 million) shooting in Germany is not necessarily required.

Who is eligible for funding?

(Co-)producers of films or series who are resident in Germany or have a company with headquarters or a branch office in Germany.

Public-law and private broadcasters are not eligible.

The applicant must have made at least one feature-length cinema film (reference film) in Germany or another EU or EEA member state and released it in Germany's cinemas within the last five years prior to submitting the application.

If the film is a non-European co-production, the applicant must have made the film either alone or as a co-producer with majority participation. Exceptions from the majority participation requirement are possible.

Where an application is made for funding for a series, this provision applies, with the proviso that the applicant must have produced a reference film or a feature-length series that has been accepted by a broadcaster or a video-on-demand platform.

What preconditions have to be met?

FOR FEATURE FILMS:

Feature films are eligible for support. A feature film is a film with a running time of at least 79 minutes, or 59 minutes in the case of children's films.

The proportion of funding from Germany must be at least 20%. In the case of production costs exceeding €35 million, a financial contribution of at least €7 million on the part of the applicant is sufficient.

The production costs must be at least €25 million. The German production costs must be at least 40% of the production costs or at least €13 million. If the German costs for digital filmmaking exceed 3 Mio. EUR the applicant can apply for the minimum German spent to be inapplicable.

The film must be commercially released in German cinemas or on a vod-platform accessible from within Germany.

FOR SERIES:

Feature-length series are eligible. A series has a continuing, fictional plot that is played out in a predetermined number of at least six consecutive episodes (season). Whole seasons or individual episodes of a season may be supported. A series is feature-length if each episode runs for at least 40 minutes.

The grant will only be awarded for series where German broadcasters themselves or companies affiliated with them have a maximum share of funding of 60% when the application is made. If the series is not filmed in German, the maximum involvement of German broadcasters in funding may be 70 %.

The production costs must be at least €1.2 million per episode. The German production costs must be at least 40% of the production costs or at least €10 million. If the German costs for digital filmmaking exceed €3 million the applicant can apply for the minimum German costs to be inapplicable.

The series must be distributed on German television or on video-on-demand platforms accessible from within Germany.

How much funding can be applied for?

The financial aid will be awarded as partial financing in the form of a non-repayable grant.

The amount of the grant is calculated according to the eligible German production costs and usually amounts to a maximum of €2.5 million.

In the case of films, the grant is for 10% of the eligible German production costs. An application can be made for a grant of up to 20% when at least €2 million is spent on digital filmmaking in Germany.

In the case of series, the grant is for 20% of the eligible German production costs. An application can be made for a grant of up to €4 million when the German production costs are at least €20 million and at least €2 million is spent on digital filmmaking in Germany.

What conditions apply to the application?

The application must be sent to the Federal Film Board (FFA). The FFA is to be contacted before the application is sent.

The application must be submitted at least six weeks before filming begins.

The shooting or animation work may only commence once a grant notification has been issued.

Funding will only be granted if the project scores well enough in the test of characteristics.

The grant can be approved once the applicant has demonstrated that 75% of the production costs of the project have already been financed.

When will the funding be disbursed?

Payment of the grant to the applicant always takes place after the project has been completed and proof is provided that the money has been used properly. On application, however, the funding can be disbursed in instalments.

Overview of the main preconditions to be met.

	Films	Series
Minimum running time	79 minutes or 59 minutes for children's films	40 minutes per episode
Minimum production costs	€25 million	€1.2 million per episode
Minimum German production costs	At least 40% or €13 million (inapplicable if German costs for digital filmmaking exceed €3 million)	At least 40% or €10 million (inapplicable if German costs for digital filmmaking exceed €3 million)
German share of funding	At least 20% If production costs > €35 million At least €7 million	No requirements
Involvement of TV channels	No requirements	Maximum 60% of funding or 70% if filming is not in German
Level of grant	10% of eligible German prod costs €2.5 million maximum	20% of eligible German prod costs usually €2.5 million maximum
Increased grant	Up to 20 % if at least €2 million is spent on digital filmmaking in Germany	Up to €4 million when German prod costs are at least €20 million and at least €2 million is spent on digital filmmaking in Germany

Further questions?

Please contact the German Motion Picture Fund at www.ffa.de.