

COVID-19 Impact: Telefilm Canada and the Canada Media Fund Release Criteria for Emergency Relief Funding

Stephen I. Selznick, Lindsay E. Dykstra, Jesse Tepperman

May 21, 2020

CMF and Telefilm COVID-19 Emergency Relief Funds

The Canada Media Fund (CMF) and Telefilm Canada (Telefilm) have each announced how they will distribute the \$127 million dollars allocated to them by the federal government out of the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations. The \$127 million dollars is intended to support Canada's screen-based industries, which have struggled significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. (For more information, please see our previous articles from [May 11, 2020](#) and [May 19, 2020](#).)

The CMF and Telefilm finance, develop and promote the Canadian audiovisual industry. Of the \$127 million dollars in federal government support, \$88.8 million dollars was allocated to the CMF, and \$27 million dollars was allocated to Telefilm. The purpose of this funding is to support the continuity of organizations and protect jobs in the audiovisual industry. The funds will not only help keep Canadian-content projects alive but will also support key industry stakeholders such as production companies, writers, directors, actors and crew members.

Funding Criteria

In order to be eligible to receive emergency relief funding from the CMF or Telefilm, an applicant must have been negatively financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and have received funding from one or more of these organizations during the 2017-2018, 2018-2019 or 2019-2020 fiscal periods. In order to streamline distribution and avoid duplication, the CMF and Telefilm have made it clear that an eligible party must apply for funding relief from the organization from which it has received the most funding in the previous applicable three-year period. For clarity, if an applicant has received the majority of its funding from Telefilm during such period, it must only apply through Telefilm for relief funding.

The allocation of funding to an eligible applicant will be calculated in accordance with the average percentage of funds granted by Telefilm or the CMF, as applicable, to such applicant during the prior three-year fiscal period, subject to a maximum cap. In respect of corporate groups, the parent company will be allocated the relief funding. While eligible applicants are not precluded from applying for and receiving funding under other federal government COVID-19 relief initiatives, neither Telefilm nor the CMF will provide duplicate funds to cover the same expenses, if such expenses have already been covered by payment made to an applicant via another federal COVID-19 initiative.

Of note, a portion of the emergency funds to be distributed by Telefilm and the CMF will be specifically allocated to underrepresented members of the audiovisual industry through targeted initiatives from each organization.

Eligible parties should contact their assigned CMF or Telefilm analyst for further information. Applications for emergency funding through both Telefilm and the CMF will open on May 20, 2020 and close on June 12, 2020 at 8:00 pm EST.

Further guidance on the criteria are available at the following links:

- [CMF](#)
- [Telefilm](#)

[Read more about CMF's new measures to increase the flexibility of its programs and policies in support of eligible applicants and broadcasters here.](#)

[Additional resources related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic can be found here.](#)