

Call for application for the NBC Docudrama Series 2019 – Requirements and Selection Criteria

Minimum Requirements

- Project plan must be for docudrama series with eight episodes in total between 20 and 30 minutes long each.
- Applicant must represent an audiovisual production company with a team with previous experience in film making.
- Proposal must be based on Maltese literature and feature an author and his/her works. This should include a letter of intent describing the proposal, budget and selection of authors.
- Proposal can include screenplays written in Maltese or English.

Apply by sending in the project plan to Michael Mercieca by 30 March 2019 at michael.mercieca@gov.mt or to National Book Council, Central Public Library, Joseph Mangion Street, Floriana, FRN 1800.

Application Criteria and Rules

This is a call for application open to film-making teams to produce a docudrama series of eight episodes in total (each between 20 and 30 minutes long). The theme of the docudrama shall be Maltese literature. Each episode will focus on an author and his/her work/s, which have to be dramatised and placed in an artistic context. Each episode will also feature an interview with the chosen author. This is to be shot in various locations with different settings. The focus of the episode has to remain on the author's thoughts, ideas and work.

The authors to be featured should have won the National Book Prize in the past five editions (2013-2018) and the National Book Council reserves the right to have a say in the editorial selection.

To apply, prospective candidates must submit a project plan, including a breakdown of the budget, and a letter of intent describing the proposal and the proposed selection of authors. Any additional information that may add value to the audiovisual production company's application may also be submitted.

The selected application will also be vetted by each author and the script must be approved by him/her prior to production.

Each episode should not cost more than €10,000 (incl. VAT). The chosen proposal will receive €10,000 per episode in funding from the National Book Council (NBC), which should cover all the technical requirements and logistics, including electricity charges and lights, as well as the author's fee. The NBC will allocate a nominal fee to the chosen author of each episode (as part of the funding per episode) as compensation for the participation in the film and the use of his/her story.

The selected team will be responsible for the execution of the docudrama series, including all development and post-production tasks, and must deliver a finished copy in High-Definition true HD native format (PAL 1920x1080 50i - Audio 4ch stereo) R128 compliant and in Stereo sound to NBC prior to the National Book Festival.

The NBC, which will be listed as the Executive Producer in the credits of the finished project, retains the right to publish and distribute the finished product after completion. The docudrama series will be aired on a major television station and publication and distribution rights of the docudrama series will be retained exclusively by the National Book Council.

The chosen applicant will be decided by a board composed of experts appointed by the NBC.

Throughout the production period, the team must be in contact with NBC to ensure that the project is developing according to the proposal and in line with the application criteria and rules.

Project Plan

The project plan should not exceed 2,000 words. It should be accompanied by letter of intent describing the proposal, budget breakdown and the selection of authors. The project plan must address the selection criteria as indicated below.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Producer's Statement

Explain how the team dynamics and your approach to the project will ensure a consistent output throughout the eight episodes of the docudrama series, whose aim is to help promote Maltese Literature and the collaborative relationship between literature and film-making in literary adaptations.

Screenplay Proposal

Adaptation: The script should focus on an author and his or her works, which have to be dramatised and put in an artistic context, along with an author's interview, which should be shot in various locations with different backgrounds. Focus has to remain on the author's thoughts, ideas and work. Any variations should be explained in the Producer's statement.

Structure: The structure of the each episode in the docudrama has to be consistent so that the docudrama may give a holistic experience, but each episode does not necessarily have to have a sense of narrative closure. Whilst ambiguity and open questions in films can add suspense and

create intrigue for the audience, it is important that the script guides the audience to understanding the themes and content of each episode.

Visual Interpretation:

Director's vision

The director should have a clear vision of where the each episode in the docudrama series would lead to in terms of feeling and response by the audience. Explain how the director intends to achieve this response.

Visual Style

How does the director and his/her creative team plan to bring the vision and script to life? What kind of lenses, colours, locations, outfits etc.. do they plan to use? Is it to be an animation or a live-action project, or both? Is it an engaging visual style? The proposal must be supported by examples and sketches.

Sound and Music

What sound and music is the team going to use and do they play an important role in the episodes of the docudrama? One must ensure that all rights are obtained before the screening of the project.

Team

The technical and creative team should be outlined and the biography and filmography of each Head of Department should be included. Whilst changes to the creative and technical team will be allowed post adjudication, each change has to be justified along with a confirmation that the same quality of talent has been chosen. A tentative list of cast members should also be included.

Portfolio

Applicants should present their project plan along with a list of previous works. Applicants must provide a case to explain that their portfolio is a testament of their reliability and, moreover, a convincing statement on the ability of the applicant to execute submitted project.

Technical Points:

Care must be taken to ensure that enough time is given to each phase to allow the project to develop well and achieve the desired quality.

Schedule

Is the schedule realistic? How much time is allocated to planning? To production and post-production? Is the use of the budget also realistic? Is it a 1 day shoot or a 10 day shoot?

Pre-Production

Must include plans for casting, location scouting, final rewrites, storyboarding, contracts and crewing.

Production

The period during which all filming takes place. The application must include a tentative schedule for the production.

Post-Production

The period during which the editing, colour grading and animation is done. Including sound editing and music composition or licensing.

Approach

Applicants must show that their approach and previous experience will ensure that the project is within their means and abilities.

The applicant must show that the project can be completed to the level expected within the financial and scheduling constraints present. Should the team be planning on acquiring further investment, either in contributions in kind, sponsorships or financial investments, the plan must be detailed in the proposal.

NOTE: Film projects always carry an element of risk and it is important that the applicant shows that they are aware of the risks involved in their project and how they plan to approach the project to reduce these risks.

Budget Breakdown

How is the budget being spent?

It is important that applicants provide a clear budget breakdown of how they plan to use the funds and resources at their disposal. The budget will need to be adjusted throughout the process, but it's important that there is certain transparency in the use of the funds and planning on how they are spent.

Accounting procedures

Applicants must also provide a declaration committing to presenting the final budget and any payslips or invoices related to the project on successful completion. It is important that employment regulations are followed and the production operates in good faith and without any discriminatory practices.

Documents Checklist

- Project Plan (not more than 2,000 words)
- Letter of Intent including selection of authors for each of the 8 episodes
- Producer's Statement
- Director's Statement
- Team Bios
- Team Portfolio
- Project Schedule
- Project Budget Breakdown – no more than €10,000 (incl. VAT) per episode, to include authors' nominal fee
- Accounting Declaration
- Any additional information that may add value to the audiovisual production company