



GUIDELINES

Performance Accelerator Program

May 2015

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Application Deadlines: February 1, May 1, July 15, October 1

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1. Mandate

The Bell Fund (formerly the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund) advances the Canadian broadcasting system. The Bell Fund:

- Encourages and funds the creation of excellent Canadian digital media,
- Promotes partnerships and sustainable businesses in the broadcast and digital media sectors,
- Engages in research and sharing knowledge,
- Enhances the national and international profile of industry stakeholders

2. Structure

The Bell Fund is a not-for-profit organization. It has been certified by the CRTC as an independent production fund eligible to receive and administer contributions from broadcast distribution undertakings under section 29(2) of the *Broadcasting Distribution Regulations*.

The Fund is governed by a nine member Board of Directors which operates as an arm's-length corporation with representatives from broadcasting, the television and digital media production sectors and from Bell TV and its affiliates. Approximately \$14 million is contributed annually by Bell TV and Bell Aliant.

3. Performance Accelerator Program Overview

This Program is designed to maximize the opportunities for *existing successful* digital media projects to evolve and iterate in order to optimize audience engagement, monetization and exploitation opportunities on an on-going basis, nationally and internationally.

The Performance Accelerator Program is project based and is intended for upgrades and revisions of eligible existing digital media content to ensure continued success on their *existing* platforms. For example, a mobile app with increasing monthly sales may require new levels of content, maintenance, build for additional mobile platforms, promotion; a website or game with high levels of traffic may need new content, maintenance, updated technology or be refreshed to remain viable over longer periods of time; an international distributor may identify content or versioning required to conclude sales, etc. The program is *not* intended for simple upgrades or new digital projects based on the brand.

Funding for the **digital media** component is available in the form of grants which may be awarded as follows:

- A grant of up to 75% of the cost of production of the digital media component, to a maximum of \$ 75,000 per project;

Approximately two-thirds of the funds will be designated to support English language projects and one-third for French language projects.

4. Applicant Eligibility

1. Applicants must be independent producers or broadcaster-affiliated production companies (which will in the aggregate, be eligible for a maximum of 25% of the funds awarded in any fiscal year). The definition of "independent producer" and "broadcaster-affiliated production company" shall be as set out in Appendix A.
2. Applicants must have creative control over the digital media project and own the rights to exploit the project.
3. Applicants must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, and, in the case of a company, must be Canadian-controlled within the meaning of the Investment Canada Act and as defined under section 1106(1)(c) of the Regulations under the Income Tax Act.
4. Applicants must demonstrate a sound financial position and the required expertise and relevant experience to successfully complete the project.

5. Project Eligibility

1. **An eligible digital media project must complement a Canadian television program (which has received a licence from a CRTC licensed Canadian broadcaster) and meet the following criteria:**
 - a) **The digital media project must demonstrate identified existing measures of success. Success may be measured by factors such as audience metrics, revenues generated, international exploitation, etc.**
 - b) **The factors inhibiting ongoing growth and maximized success must be identified.**
 - c) **The potential for ongoing growth and success must be identified and the goals of this performance accelerator stage must be established.**
 - d) **The rationale, strategies and methodology to address the roadblocks to success must be detailed. This may include creative content, technical design, promotion, marketing initiatives, versioning, etc.**
2. The original digital media project must be rich content that was designed for and delivered on a digital network and was created to extend, enhance and complement the television viewing experience. Acceptable platforms include, but are not limited to, websites, mobile devices, iTV.
3. Projects must adhere to the Bell Fund's "Principles for Licensing and Distribution of Interactive Cross Platform Rights" (see Policies).
4. All digital media projects must have analytics available and reported to Bell Fund as per the Digital Media Performance Accelerator Financing Agreement.
5. For all projects receiving Performance Accelerator grants, an appropriate credit must appear on all updated and revised versions and all copies of the digital media work and on all publicity and promotional materials under the Producer's control relating to the digital media work. Such credit shall appear on the "home page" or opening screen of the digital media work

6. The digital media component may be an international co-production. In the absence of an official co-production treaty, the digital media component must qualify under the terms of the Bell Fund's "Framework for International Co-Production" (available under Guidelines, Forms and Templates)
7. Projects may not be an industrial, corporate, or primarily promotional project; projects may not be game projects intended primarily for the video arcade market; projects may not be stand-alone DVDs.
8. The associated television component:
 - a) must have achieved Canadian content certification as certified by CAVCO with a minimum of 8 out of 10 points, or be an official Canadian co-production as certified by the Co-production office of Telefilm Canada.
 - b) may not be News, Reporting and Actualities, or Sports programming.
 - c) must be in compliance with the laws, regulations, standards and policies applicable to broadcasting and to intellectual property, and it will not infringe upon any public or private rights and will not otherwise contravene any civil and criminal laws in effect.

6. Financial Participation

Grants for the digital media component may not exceed 75% of the costs of digital media production, to a maximum of \$75,000.

1. Disbursements will be made in 2 installments:
 - 75% on execution of Financing Agreements between the applicant and the Bell Fund;
 - 25% on completion and delivery of the digital media project.

7. Evaluation Process

1. Applications are reviewed to ensure that all eligibility criteria are met and that the required documentation is complete.
2. Eligible applications are assessed by industry consultants who evaluate the digital media's success factors to date, the challenges to ongoing success, the identified potential and goals and, strategies to achieve the goals. Creative, business, financial, technical and marketing plans, and audience engagement potential will be evaluated, where appropriate.
3. Funding decisions are made by the Board of Directors by the end of the month of application
4. Successful applicants must finalize financing of their projects within 90 days or the Bell Fund's commitment may be cancelled at the Board's discretion.

All terms and conditions are subject to interpretation and/or revision of these Guidelines at any time. All decisions are at the Board's discretion and the Board reserves the right to final judgment in this regard.

Appendix A / Eligible Applicants

Access to the Bell Fund is limited to individuals, corporations, partnerships and joint ventures which are independent producers or broadcaster-affiliated production companies:

Independent Producers

An “Independent Producer” is a production company that is not an “affiliate” of any licensed Canadian broadcaster or programming undertaking (a “Canadian Broadcaster”). The Bell Fund uses the Canada Business Corporations Act (“CBCA”) definition of the word “affiliate” when assessing the relationship between a production company and a Canadian Broadcaster. The production company should operate principally as a television or Digital Media production entity. Eligible applicants to the Bell Fund must be a Canadian-controlled corporation as defined in subsection 1106(1) of the *Income Tax Regulations* under the definition of “Canadian” with its head office based in Canada.

Broadcaster-Affiliated Production Companies

To be eligible, a “Broadcaster-Affiliated Production Company” must be a separately incorporated entity and distinct from the operations of its affiliated Canadian Broadcaster. In effect, a production company is an affiliate of a Canadian Broadcaster if:

- one is a subsidiary of the other;
- both are subsidiaries of the same body corporate; or
- each is “controlled” by the same person.

Production entities which are affiliated with publicly-funded Canadian Broadcasters (e.g. CBC/SRC) are not eligible to apply for funding.

An Independent Producer and a Broadcaster-Affiliated Production Company are eligible to jointly apply for a co-production project, or may apply via a jointly-owned and/or controlled entity or joint venture.