

dlr First Frames Short Film Scheme

Additional Information for prospective applicants



Additional Information and Frequently Asked Questions

We have put together this information about dlr First Frames to help you with your application. It includes details from the funders Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) County Council, IADT and film experts. The Frequently Asked Questions below are responses to questions from Information Sessions we have held in recent years.

- Please refer to the dlr First Frame Scheme **Brief** for full details about the Scheme, application process, assessment criteria, and key dates via www.iadt.ie News Item, ref. dlr First Scheme 2024/2025 (<https://iadt.ie/news/dlr-first-frames-2025/>)
- The application is made online and will be available via www.iadt.ie (Direct link to application form: [dlr First Frames Application Form 2025/2026 - Formstack.](#))
- The closing date is **Monday, July 21 at 12pm (12 noon)**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council – the Funders

- dlr First Frames Scheme is funded fully funded by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, via the Arts Office and the Economic Development Unit.
- Key aims: support emerging film makers, highlight the range of potential film locations and support employment in the film industry.
- DLR County Council has funded a number of short films through dlr First Frames.
- Recommendation: Sign up to the dlr Arts e-bulletin for on-going information and updates and follow @dlrcoco and @myiadt on Facebook and Instagram.

dlr First Frames Short Film Scheme includes two commissions worth €13,500 (VAT inclusive) each. There is also access to mentoring where required from IADT's National Film School (NFS) staff, as well as use of equipment / facilities at the NFS (subject to availability and professional ability to use the equipment).

Important points about other sources of funding:

- Crowd funding is **not** allowed under this Scheme.
- Any additional funding must come from a legitimate source and approved in advance by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

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- Certain types of funding/sponsorship will not be permitted – for example sponsorship from a drinks company.
- Any additional funding **must** be outlined in the application, in place and confirmed in writing before the contract stage.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council is the main film funder. Other funders may be included in credit roll. The funding credit requirements are included in the contract for the selected films.
- Self-funding may be used subject to the above conditions.
- Raising money through additional grant aid bursary / is permitted subject to the above conditions.

There are a wide variety of locations in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown area, some suggestions as listed below. This is not a full list and applicants are encouraged to look at all areas of the County – there are many urban, suburban, rural, forest, seaside, park locations all around the area.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| • Glencullen | • The 40 Foot |
| • Killiney & Dalkey Hills | • Cabinteely Park |
| • Marlay Park | • Peoples Park |
| • Dún Laoghaire | • Kilmasnogogue Forest |
| • Sandycove Beach | • Ticknock Forest |
| • Glasthule | • Tibbradden wood |
| • Dún Laoghaire West Pier | • Carrickgollogan |
| • Dún Laoghaire East Pier | • Hellfire |
| • Deansgrange Cemetery | • Massey's Wood |
| • Sandycove | • Kilternan |
| • Killiney Beach | • Shanganagh Park |

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do we need to have the locations fully signed off or is it more of a wish list?

At the initial application stages, it is more of an indication of the dlr locations you are considering using in the film rather than having everything finalised. If your application is successful, the dlr Arts Office can assist in getting location sign off subject to availability and suitability. You need to show in your application that you have looked at potential locations in the County and identified ones that may work for your film.

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Q: If we only want to use a single location set at a house, how will that affect the assessment of the application?

Successful applications in the past have used limited locations, such as the inside of a house. It is more about how you use the locations than the amount of them. Bear in mind that the use of locations is one of the selection criteria so you will need to have some DLR locations in the film (for example for setting a scene).

Q: Do we have to live in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown? Does the production company involved require a tax base in Ireland?

- Applicants do not have to live in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, but DLR location(s) must be included in the film.
- The production company must be registered with the Companies Registration Office in Ireland and have a euro bank account.
- International travel is not funded under the Scheme.

Q: What are the typical number of days for the shoot?

For the budget – you could try for five days but depends how you work the budget, depends on the project – certainly more than two – probably three to four.

The Lighthouse film producer (previous dlr First Frames short film) said this:

“This will vary depending on the concept and whether lots of crew, equipment is required. As a ballpark, budget for about three days; maximum five days. One shoot day could be with a skeleton crew to keep costs down. If you budget for three days and are successful in your application, do up a more dedicated budget at this point to ensure that the three days is workable”

Q: Is there an age restriction?

No, the scheme is aimed at **emerging** filmmakers. Emerging relates to career stage rather than age - the Scheme is for filmmakers who are at an early stage making creative films.

Q: Will applicants who have made a short before be looked on more favourably than someone who is applying to make their first film?

No. However, it is important for the assessment panel to have confidence in your ability to complete the project if your application is successful.

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Q: Can a team submit more than one application?

There is no restriction on number of applications, however, a good quality application will take a lot of work, so we advise you to consider focusing on one strong application as opposed to stretching yourself across more than one.

Q: What is the maximum run length the film can be?

The scheme is for shorts. Ideally the run length would be an average of 15 minutes.

Q: Is it possible to have the same person Directing and Producing?

Yes, it is possible but not recommended. CVs submitted at shortlisting (Stage 2 assessment) will be reviewed by looking for key strengths in both those areas, so bear that in mind. It is possible for the same person to be writer and director and this has happened in a number of previous films.

Q: Do actors and crew need to be fully confirmed or preliminarily agreed?

Much like locations, it is good to give an indication of the team you would be assembling for the production should your application be successful. It is understood that given the nature of the Scheme and the industry, full confirmation will not necessarily be possible at the early stage of application to the Scheme.

Q: I am new to this - How do I find a team?

You can find connections in industry, try women in film and television, filmmaker groups on Facebook, and go to film festivals etc. Screen Wexford have a database. Sign up for Screen Ireland's newsletter and try to attend as many networking events as you can.

Q: Budget

You will need to present a realistic budget for your project if shortlisted. If there are holes in the budget this will be a cause for concern. Please highlight any other sources of funding (meeting above criteria) in the budget presented. We encourage applicants to work within the First Frames budget of €13,500 rather than to work to higher budgets which require extra funding.

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Q: Pay rates

That is for the applicants to work out as they work through the budget for the film (budget being an important part of Stage 2 additional information submission) as you will be deciding how far the budget will go.

It is likely you will be calling in favours, from people (crew) who are looking to make a name for themselves. Keep payment fair across the crew. The cast should be paid appropriate industry rates.

Q: Is it ok to work with a fight coordinator for the short and should I put the insurance in the budget?

Yes, if the film requires the use of a fight coordinator. Insurance should be accounted for in the budget as it is essential to have this in place (both Public Liability and Employers Liability).

Q: Classifications

The film does not have to be PG but should not be XXX! Remember that the funder is a local authority aiming to increase awareness of the DLR region as a film making location and to support employment in the film industry in the area also.

It is not required for the Scheme, but it should be possible for your film to be IFCO (Irish Film Classification Office) classified.

Q: Screening/Premiere:

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (the funder) screening will take place in the County. This is not a festival and it will not affect your Irish or International Film Festival premiere status.

Q: Financial returns and Credits

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council are not looking for financial return on the investment should the film get picked up for terrestrial, broadcast, etc.

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council are the main funders and must be credited in this way. IADT's National Film School (who manage the Scheme) should also be credited in the credit roll. The required credits and the format and running order will be part of the contract for the selected films.

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Q: Animation

The Scheme is not open to animation - it must include filming in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown locations.

Q: Documentary

The Scheme is not open to documentaries; it is for creative shorts.

Q: Mentoring support

This will be available re. script development / directing and or producing (if required and recommended by the interview panel) There is a maximum of seven hours support. The type of support will vary based on the type of film you are making. It will be available between announcement and completion date. Mentors will be provided via IADT.

General Comment regarding relationship between applicants and interview panel:

Remember that the interviewers want your script and project to succeed – i.e. they are on the same side and hoping for a successful collaboration for all.

Q: Equipment and Studio availability at IADT's National Film School, Kill Avenue, Dún Laoghaire

A range of equipment and use of studio is possible subject to availability and by arrangement in advance with IADT. IADT management must be satisfied that the crew are experienced and capable of handling and using the equipment and facilities. The NFS is in constant use by IADT students during term time and grad season, so availability for successful applicants is likely to be during July and August **by arrangement in advance.**

Q: When is Grad Season?

Grad season is January – April. However, we will always endeavour to work with you on equipment and support on a case-by-case basis.

Q: If my film is shortlisted for Stage Two, who needs to attend the interview?

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Ideally the Producer, Director and Script Writer – at minimum Producer and Director but all three are advised. Attendance at the interview is mandatory to remain eligible. Please see schedule of Key Dates in the Scheme brief.

Tips and Advice

Expert A:

A good short film will have some of these ingredients, but a film with all of the following ingredients will be too complicated!

- Some suggested ingredients:
 - **Short Film** – keep it short
 - **Originality** – your voice, it comes from you. If you are going to adapt; make it your version, reflecting your personality
 - **Story**
 - **Sound** – good sound and music is important. It is an easy and cheap way to increase production value in film
 - **Clear Point Of View** (not camera shot POV – who / what is the film about)
 - **Emotional Centre** – if your film is dealing with emotions, usually rooted in you and your view of the world.
 - **Credible Plot** – if it doesn't make sense, it won't reach the audience
 - **Individual voice** – again, goes back to you
 - **Consistency** – e.g. if you start with a horror, end with a horror
 - **Period dramas** - can be expensive, not recommended - especially for shorts
 - **Entertaining**
 - **Authentic**
 - **Short Credits** Don't forget to credit everyone & should be included in your run time
 - **Interesting locations**
 - **Good acting**
 - **Good Concepts**
 - **Festival Friendly** – Film itself and you too! Need to be approachable.
 - **End Well** – Opening of film important, so is the closing shot. That is what the audience remembers
 - **Stay on brief!**

This scheme is funded by dlr County Council – consider your project, make sure your film fits the brief! And go walking in the area! Have a wander and see if your script can be helped by getting a feel of the place and possible locations



Expert B:

Story is the most important thing! So, story and script are key.

- Short Films challenge you to tell an engaging and impactful story in a condensed amount of time. Make your short stand out
- Make something you are personally engaged with, that excites you. That you are passionate about
- Keep it simple, be aware of the scope. Don't cram too much into a short; think of a narrative and story that will fit the format.
- Have a strong opening and closing; have a clear beginning, middle and end.
- Keep it cinematic
- Put as much time into **pre-production** as possible. Prepare! Invariably things go wrong on a shoot, the more prepared you are...the easier you will be able to react and adapt. Break down the script, get to know the material, make notes, "watch the film in your head" to help you decide what are the cuts, what is the pacing. From there you can then do your shot list and storyboards (which are great as visual aid for you on set but also to help communicate with your crew, DP etc. Look books, mood boards etc great for art department / costume etc.
- Regarding **Pitching**, this your film; practice, get comfortable talking about your film, aloud, what it is about, the themes etc. Try and anticipate the questions that might come up. Be passionate about your film!
- Have as much supportive material as possible, e.g. for Director have notes, visual style, reference imagery, concept art, photos, etc. For producers, have budget, possible locations, ideas for cast etc.
- Have solutions to any possible problems!
- **Casting** hugely important. A bad actor/performance can ruin a short film. Just because it's your first or smaller budget film, don't be afraid to aim high! Get the best actor possible for role. Actors want to act, so if they are not on a shoot and available, and they like the script, they may well be happy to be involved.
- Do rehearsals
- **The Shoot** itself, you won't have enough time! You may have to drop shots or change things. Be prepared. Have a vision in mind but be open minded and then you can improvise if needs be. Don't Skimp on the food. Feed your crew well. It helps keep up morale and performance.

Postproduction: try get the best editor you can, preferably someone with experience; someone you can collaborate with. The edit is where your film will live or die, because you see what you have. You re-write the film in the edit! In relation to the scheme, there will be back and forth with DLR. Be open to feedback, send out cuts to people, get constructive criticism.