

dlr First Frames Short Film Scheme

Additional Information for prospective applicants



Following on from the previous dlr First Frames Short Film Funding Schemes - the below is a collated overview of responses from funders Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Arts Office, scheme managers, IADT and film experts, and from prospective applicants. FAQ's below are responses to Q's from previously held pre-application Clinics/Information Sessions.

- Please refer to the dlr First Frame Scheme **Brief** for full details re. scheme, application process, assessment criteria, processes and key dates via www.iadt.ie News Item, ref. dlr First Scheme 2024/2025 (<https://iadt.ie/news/dlr-first-frames-2024>)
- Application Submission is online and will be available via www.iadt.ie as above.
- Closing Date is **Friday, July 22nd at 12pm (12 noon)**. Late applications will not be accepted.
- FAQ's from previous rounds of dlr First Frames funding have been collated below for your convenience

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council – Funders

- dlr First Frames Scheme is funded fully funded by the 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 have funded a number of short films previously.
- Recommendation: Sign up to the dlr Arts e-bulletin for on-going info. and updates + follow @dlrcoco and @myiadt on Facebook+ Instagram.

dlr First Frames Short Film Scheme includes three commissions worth €13,000 (VAT inclusive) each; one commission is specifically for a short in Irish. As well as mentoring where required from IADT's National Film School staff, as well as use of equipment / facilities at the NFS (subject to availability & crew competence).

Important points re. other additional sources of funding:

- Crowd funding is not allowed under this scheme.
- All other funding must come from a legitimate and non-competitive source to dlr
 - Other funding must be declared and available at shortlisting stage, and confirmed in writing before a formal offer can be made. It is not possible to seek funds after selection process and it is essential that any additional funding is secured before application to the Scheme.
 - Other funders may be included in credit roll but NOT as main film funder i.e., Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.
 - Self funding may be used subject to the above conditions.
 - Raising money through additional grant aid bursary / is permitted subject to the above conditions.

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There are a wide variety of locations in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, suggestions as follows:

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

FAQ's

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 would be considering using in the film rather than having everything fully lined up. If successful in your application, the dlr Arts Office can assist in getting location sign off subject to availability.

Q: If it's just 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: Is residing in DLR a pre-requisite? Does the production company involved require a tax base in Ireland?

It is not a pre-requisite that applicants reside in the DLR region, but the DLR region must serve the film shoot location(s). (Please see suggested DLR region locations above.). Yes, the production company requires a tax base in Ireland.

Q: Typical number of days for shoot

For the budget – you could try for 5 days but depends how you work the budget, depends on the project – certainly more than 2 – probably 3 to 4.

The Lighthouse film producer (previous dlr First Frames scheme) responded as follows: *“This will vary depending on the concept and whether lots of crew, equipment is required. As a ballpark, budget for about 3 days; maximum 5 days. One shoot day could be with a skeleton crew to keep costs down. If you budget for 3 days and are successful in your application, do up a more dedicated budget at this point to ensure that the 3-days is workable”*

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Q: Age restriction?

None, the scheme is aimed at emerging film-makers; emerging relates to career stage rather than age.

Q: Will applications who have made a short before be looked on more favourably than if it's your first film?

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

Q: Multiple applications?

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 it can be?

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

Q: Same person as Directing & Producing?

Yes, it is possible, but CVs submitted at shortlisting (stage 2 assessment) will be reviewed by looking for key strengths in both those areas, so need to bear that in mind. Empirically speaking, considered opinion is a very difficult / challenging approach to opt for.

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

Much like locations, it is good given 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 would not necessarily be possible at the early stage of application to the scheme.

Q: How do you find your team if you're new to this?

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: Do Irish language teams have to be fluent in Irish to be considered?

If your application is for the short in the Irish Language, the script should be written for the Irish Language as opposed to being a translation. Additionally, part of the interview will be conducted in Irish.

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.

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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.

Likely to be calling in favours, from people (crew) who are looking to make a name for themselves. Keep it fair across the crew.

Cast should be paid appropriate industry rates.

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

Yes, if the film requires the use of a fight coordinator and yes insurance should be accounted for in the budget as an expected expense.

Q: Classifications

Don't 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 doesn't have to be for the scheme, but should be possible for your film to be IFCO (Irish Film Classification Office) classified.

Q: Screening/Premier:

Dlr premiere will take place in The Studio, dlr Lexicon. This is not a festival. If you've had own country premiere or screened at small film festivals, you can usually look to screen at international festivals without that being a problem.

Q: Financial returns

DLR must be credited (in the credit roll) as main financier of the film but they are not looking for financial return on the investment should the film get picked up for terrestrial, broadcast, etc.

NB: Important to credit and include the funder in the success of the film. IADT's National Film School (scheme managers) should also be credited in the credit roll but Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council are the key, primary funders and should appear as such.

Q: Animation

Not open to animation for this scheme – as it has to include filming in dlr region locations.

Q: Documentary

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

Q: Combined Producer / Director

Not advised – too difficult to achieve. Combined Writer / Director is okay though.

Q: Mentoring support

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Will be available re. script development / directing and or producing (if required and recommended by the interview panel) Max 7 hours support. The type of support will vary based on the type of film you are making. 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 & Studio availability at IADT's, National Film School, Kill Avenue, Dun 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 Jan – April. However, we will always endeavour to work with you on equipment and support on a case by case basis.

Q: If shortlisted, who needs to attend the interview?

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 it 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 & music is important. it's easy and cheap way to increase production value in film
 - **Clear POV** (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

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- **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!

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- **Casting** hugely important. 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; 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 criticism