



ISO General Funding Guidelines Policy

Table of Contents

ISO PROGRAM OVERVIEW	3
ISO FUNDING POLICY OBJECTIVES & PRIORITIES	5
OUR ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK	6
SELF-DETERMINATION	6
INDIGENOUS IDENTITY	7
PROCESSES FOR DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITIES	8
COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY & RECIPROCITY	9
TRANSPARENCY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	9
GENERAL ELIGIBILITY	10
GOOD STANDING	10
FUNDING MAXIMUMS	11
ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS TO THE ISO	11
INDIGENOUS INDIVIDUALS	11
INDIGENOUS CORPORATIONS	12
ELIGIBLE GROUPS	12
ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS	13
INDIGENOUS NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS OR REGISTERED CHARITIES	13
BIPOC NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS OR REGISTERED CHARITIES	13
OTHER NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OR CHARITIES	14
INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	14
INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES	14
UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS	15
MISREPRESENTATION	15



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

GENERAL CONDITIONS & ACCOUNTABILITIES **16**

STACKING LIMIT	16
TAX CREDITS	16
DEADLINES	16
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	16
TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP	17
RESPECTFUL AND ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE	17
RECOGNITION OF CONTRIBUTION	17
FINAL REPORT	18
FORFEITURE AND DEFAULT	18

DECISION MAKING PROCESSES **18**

WHAT YOU NEED TO APPLY – S UPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	18
REVIEWING YOUR APPLICATION	19
HOW WE ASSESS YOUR APPLICATION – P EER REVIEW	19
ARMS-LENGTH PEER ASSESSMENT	19
SELECTION OF PEERS	20
ASSESSMENT PROCESS	20
FEEDBACK ON INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS	20
APPEAL / DECISION REVERSAL	20
WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL	21



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

ISO Program Overview

The **Indigenous Screen Office (ISO)** provides funding to Indigenous screen practitioners and creators for the development, creation, and production of screen-based content, which includes international co-productions and completion funding. Development of the Indigenous screen sector is also a key component to the ISO's mandate, and we work with multiple partners to achieve our goal of building a robust Indigenous industry. Currently, ISO funding opportunities are available through two key streams:

1. The ISO Story Fund

The **ISO Story Fund** is the core funding program of the ISO, supporting the full cycle of creation, including development, production, post-production, marketing, promotion and distribution, and dissemination across all screen-based platforms with a focus on Indigenous storytelling and narrative sovereignty.

Development Program supports Indigenous individuals, companies, collectives and communities to develop scripts, research project ideas and content, develop existing Intellectual Property (IP) into screen-ready projects, and undertake protocols and community-based work as part of the development phase.

Production Program offers support to Indigenous screen-based creators, in the Production phase of their project. Indigenous creators applying to this program are undertaking work in the Production of screen-based content, including TV and web series, and film.

Finishing Fund/Marketing Promotion Distribution program provides support to Indigenous-owned screen-based companies for Finishing Funds and Marketing, Promotion and Distribution of films and television series. Eligible applicants must have previously secured production funding through Canada Media Fund's peer-assessed Indigenous Program, Telefilm's peer-assessed Indigenous Initiatives program, a government Indigenous-specific arts grant, or the ISO. This funding is intended to support projects to ensure their success in the completion of the post-production phase and to support their access to markets and audiences.

New Media program provides support to Indigenous screen-based content creators for the production of New Media, in the Production phase of their projects. Applicants to this program may undertake



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

project work in the Production of high-calibre game design, AR/VR/XR, apps, podcasts and narrative audio/visual immersive projects.

2. Sector Development

The ISO is committed to supporting a robust Indigenous screen sector, creating opportunities not just for key creatives but for the workforce of professionals that supports screen-based creation.

Sector Development Programs include:

Sector Development program recognizes that training, skills building, professional development, and sectoral capacity building are critical to ensuring the continued momentum and sustainability of the Indigenous screen sector. This program was created to support project-based activities that will contribute towards building a robust Indigenous screen sector for creators, crew and professional workers through a variety of opportunities.

Apprenticeships and Cultural Mentorship Funding Program, Supported by Netflix provides funding to support training, professional development and culturally-specific approaches for Indigenous on-screen content creators and Indigenous-owned production companies.

Travel Funding is to support Indigenous screen-based creatives for activities that require travel including festival and market attendance, conferences, community engagement, training opportunities, and artistic screen-based collaboration across Canada and internationally.

Sector development projects must positively impact the Indigenous audiovisual ecosystem in activities such as mentorship, training and professional development opportunities, export and market development, research, and industry promotion. Projects will be funded only if they support the development of the Indigenous audiovisual sector in areas such as:

- Youth programs in screen-based media;
- Labs, workshops, training initiatives, conferences, festivals and events;
- Services, programs or projects that address sectoral gaps;
- Innovative strategies to support Indigenous screen creators and industry professionals;
- Community centered initiatives that aim to develop emerging talent in screen-based media;



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

- Production training programs that will support the career development of at least four Indigenous creators, crew members or workers.

ISO Funding Policy Objectives & Priorities

The objective of this policy is to outline and communicate the values, tools, and processes underpinning funding activities at the Indigenous Screen Office. ISO policies and activities are grounded in and informed by Indigenous knowledge(s), which means respecting Indigenous ways of knowing, seeing, doing, acting, and listening. We acknowledge and strive to uphold the principles of respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relevance in our working relationships.

Our Funding Policy will be updated on an ongoing basis as the ISO evolves and the Indigenous screen industry grows and shifts. For example, identifying best practices in relation to identity is an evolving process. The ISO will continue to work and collaborate with the Indigenous screen sector and broader community to ensure that we have robust and transparent policies and processes.

The Indigenous Screen Office is committed to ensuring Indigenous stories on screens are in the control of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis storytellers. As an Indigenous advocacy and funding organization with the mission of fostering Indigenous narrative sovereignty, we firmly believe that Indigenous opportunities should be directed to Indigenous Peoples. We support content made by, owned, and controlled by Indigenous creators. This is what we mean when we speak about Indigenous narrative sovereignty. This means funds targeted to support Indigenous creators will be guided by Indigenous artists' values and worldviews, administered by Indigenous staff, assessed by Indigenous arts professionals, and their impact will be measured and reported on in an Indigenous cultural and artistic context.

The goal of the ISO is to elevate the unique voices of Indigenous storytellers, who have been historically marginalized due to colonial practices, racism, and systemic exclusion. Our mandate is to support Indigenous storytellers from across Canada in content creation, professional development, and sectoral capacity building.

ISO staff and jury members will internally assess each application in line with specific program guidelines, and with consideration of the following priorities:



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

1. Provide support to authentic Indigenous storytellers

- Support storytelling that is rooted in distinct lived experiences, world views, cultural and community contexts, and nationhood;
- Reflect diverse Indigenous perspectives and intersections including women, non-binary, and 2SLGBTQIAP+ people;
- Encourage work that is innovative in content and form and shows a diversity of perspectives and voices;
- Support talent development for filmmakers in the early stages of their careers and emerging voices.

2. Strive to support Indigenous storytelling where it is happening across regions

- Reflect regional representation and representation of Indigenous language groups;
- Increase the number of community-based/engaged work;
- Represent under-represented regions such as northern and remote communities and nations.

3. Create paid employment and career development opportunities for Indigenous people

- Support initiatives and projects offering paid employment opportunities for Indigenous above-the-line creatives, as well as crew and supporting professionals;
- Support training, apprenticeships, and mentorships across skill levels to Indigenous creatives and workforce development opportunities for crew members.

Our Accountability Framework

Self-Determination

As an organization, the Indigenous Screen Office supports First Nations, Métis and Inuit self-determination and the ability of sovereign nations to determine their own citizenship. The ISO respects the histories, traditions, languages, and contemporary practices of these cultural groups and acknowledges the cultural sovereignty of Indigenous peoples by respecting their artistic expression, cultural protocols, rights, and cultural self-determination. We understand that different nations and Indigenous people have different concepts and approaches to determining identity, and there is not one way to be Indigenous. **For the purpose of our work**, Indigenous in the context of First Peoples in Canada includes:



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

First Nations: are status and non-status individuals who are citizens, recognized members or direct blood relatives of a self-governing band, a reserve-based community, or a larger tribal group.

Inuit: are recognized as the First Peoples of the Arctic regions of Canada including Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, and parts of the Northwest Territories, whose relatives are also in Greenland and Alaska.

Métis: are culturally distinct from First Nations and Inuit and have historic Métis Nation ancestry from an accepted Métis Nation settlement or community - as defined by the Métis National Council, and as accepted by the Métis Nation.

Indigenous Identity

Identity connotes the beliefs, values, and expressions that encompass the memories, experiences, and relations that enable individuals and groups to construct themselves in the present. To apply for ISO funding as an Indigenous storyteller, and to be recognized as such, applicants must know and be able to articulate their relation and connection to their Indigenous identity. This may include familial connections or nationhood and it may also include displacement.

ISO recognizes that centuries of colonial practices including residential schools, relocation, urbanization, adoption, and the foster care system have disrupted community connections for many and have contributed to exclusion for many Indigenous peoples. We do not expect applicants to provide private information that causes them harm; however, we do expect applicants to tell us who they are and where they come from so that we may enter a relationship with them as partners and supporters of their work. Our intention is to approach issues of identity with policies that align with our values of trust and inclusivity. However, these values must also be balanced with the due diligence and accountability required to ensure that our funding is going where it belongs - to Indigenous people.

Distant or recently discovered ancestry alone does not make an individual Indigenous for the purposes of ISO funding. There are different ways of understanding Indigenous identity as different from distant Indigenous ancestry, such as nationhood, direct familial relationships or blood ties, cultural knowledge, community accountability and belonging.

Our approach is relational; we want to hear from applicants about who they are, where they come from and where they are going so that we can enter a relationship with them built on honesty and trust. Applicants to ISO's programs and opportunities will be asked to declare their identity and demonstrate their connections to their community or



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

communities. At minimum this will include identifying your nation or Indigenous affiliation and describing your lived experience as an Indigenous person in the context of your work.

ISO also reserves the right to request additional information, which could include but is not limited to:

- proof of citizenship or nationhood;
- a letter of support from a governance organization (e.g., Band office);
- a letter of support or nomination from an Indigenous community organization or group;
- further clarification of the declaration of Indigenous identity of the applicant.

Processes for Determining Eligibility and Priorities

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide information related to identity to satisfy ISO's eligibility criteria. If an applicant has not satisfactorily answered questions related to identity, the ISO or its assigned peer assessors may take one or more of the following actions as part of our screening and assessment processes:

- Follow up with the applicant to seek further clarification, if time permits;
- Withdraw the application from the review process prior to assessment, informing the applicant that eligibility questions were not answered satisfactorily;
- If flags or concerns related to identity occur during the assessment process, the ISO will recommend the applicant as a low priority for funding.

Applicants who have received prior funding are not exempt from this process.

Identity Complaints

The ISO does not accept complaints related to individual identity from other eligible funding applicants and recipients, as this poses a direct conflict of interest in a competitive process. We recommend that questions or concerns about the identity of another applicant are communicated directly to the individual and/or the community or governing body they have stated their affiliation to. The ISO will respond accordingly to complaints and concerns received from Indigenous communities and governing bodies/organizations.

The ISO understands that many are disconnected from their communities because of colonial practices and may be seeking increased connections and understanding. However, ISO funding is not a tool for that process and ISO funding is not a pathway to reconnection.



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

Please consult the [‘Building Trust and Accountability: Report on Eligibility in the Indigenous Screen Sector’](#) which informs the ISO in regards to Indigenous identity, relationality, and access to funding programs.

Community Accountability & Reciprocity

Not only is it our priority to demonstrate accountability and transparency in our processes and the delivery of our funding; the ISO also recognizes the importance of community accountability and reciprocity as expressed in the [On-Screen Protocols & Pathways: A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities, Cultures, Concepts and Stories](#). We strongly encourage that Applicants read this document prior to submitting their application.

If a project explores or includes traditional knowledge, customary practices or traditions (such as ceremony), or community intellectual property, the ISO expects to hear how protocols and community engagement are addressed, and your relation or connection to the communities and cultures included in the project. For example, how does your process respect cultural traditions? How are you addressing questions of authenticity and community support? How are protocols observed? How does your project reciprocate/give back to the community?

A community engagement plan is an opportunity for Applicants to talk about their process of working with communities impacted by or involved in the production of their project. It is typically done during the development stage. Appropriate engagement will depend on the content of the film, the knowledge of the team, and the territories and communities involved. The purpose of a plan is to ensure that the Applicant has considered the potential impact of their production and that they have a plan to work in ways that are collaborative and respectful of impacted communities. This will look different for each project, but may involve consultations, involving community members on the creative team, hiring advisors or counsellors, cultural sensitivity training, or hiring local crew. In the absence of a community engagement plan, Applicants may be asked for a Letter of Support for projects that intend to shoot in or collaborate with Indigenous communities.

The ISO provides financial support to assist filmmakers in their cultural and community engagement work, for engagement with experts, consultants, mentors, or knowledge keepers or other professional development in relation to the project.

Transparency and Confidentiality

The ISO is committed to the principle of transparency. The ISO adheres to Government of Canada guidelines on proactive disclosure. Our policy is to publish information on all funding recipients on our website following the acceptance and payment of all funding, and in our annual report. The ISO also proactively publishes the names of peer assessors



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

who serve on a committee in our annual report. The ISO does not make public the names of unsuccessful individual Applicants, and guidelines on confidentiality are enforced throughout and following the peer assessment process.

Information collected by the ISO may be subject to the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*. The ISO adheres to all requirements under these laws and may only use personal information for the purposes for which it was originally collected or for uses consistent with that purpose. Part, or all, of the information you give us will be held on an internal management system for the administration of applications and awards. We may also use this information for the evaluation of our funds. We may provide copies of the information in confidence to further individuals or organisations who are helping us assess applications or monitor funding. By applying, you are providing your informed consent (permission) for the ISO to use your data for these purposes.

General Eligibility

Projects must be Canadian Audiovisual Projects to any audiovisual product (all forms of audio-only and screen-based media content formats, such as podcasts, television programs, films, web series, video games, mobile applications, narrative audio/visual immersive projects and augmented-virtual-/mixed-reality (AR/VR/MR) experiences) that meets the definition of Canadian by the Canadian Audiovisual Certification Office (CAVCO); and/or the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). Where not applicable, this is determined by the maximum feasible use of Canadian talent.

All Applicants must own or have cleared all relevant intellectual property, including copyright, in the project that they are applying for.

Individuals, companies or organizations can deposit a cheque or accept a direct deposit in the name of the Applicant.

Good Standing

To apply for funding, all Applicants must be in good standing with the Indigenous Screen Office. Issues that may affect good standing include overdue final reports; failure to comply with ISO policies or terms and conditions on previous funding; failure to comply with requests for additional information or documentation; misrepresentation; or outstanding/unresolved formal disputes such as workplace harassment.

Applications are deemed ineligible pending the approval of overdue final reports from previous funding programs. Final reports are due three months after the stated completion date on the application. Extensions may be granted but must be submitted in advance of new program deadlines to determine eligibility.



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

Funding Maximums

Individuals cannot be the main applicant or project lead for more than one application in the same program application round but may be involved in more than one project if they are in a different role.

Companies cannot apply with more than one project in the same application round. Separate single purpose companies with the same owners cannot apply for the same program, until funded projects are complete and final reports submitted. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the ISO if they are part of an ownership structure of an applying company and/or their involvement in subsequent applications.

The maximum and recommended funding amounts are determined on a program basis. Applicants may receive less than the amount requested based on peer assessment, and the total amount of funding available. All funding over \$250,000 will require a hold back of at least 3% and the final amount will be provided to the Applicant following the completion of the project and provision of audited financial statements. All funding over \$500,000 must be approved by the ISO Board of Directors.

Eligible Applicants to the ISO

Indigenous Individuals:

- Indigenous Creators working in screen-based content, including TV, film, web, gaming, apps, and XR (VR, AR).
- Indigenous individual(s), such as researchers, academics and/or other professionals.
- First Nations, Inuit or Métis person residing in Canada for a minimum of eight months over the last one-year period.
- The age of majority in your province, working in media creation, and have been a resident of Canada for at least the past year.
- Is not in a state of bankruptcy within the meaning of the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (Canada).

Please be advised the Canada Revenue Agency considers ISO funding as taxable income. Please keep all expense receipts related to this funding to offset your tax obligations. If you are a sole proprietor, you must apply under the Business name for the funds to be deposited to your business bank account. ISO funding will not be deposited to an account in any name other than the Applicant's name.

Sole Proprietors: individuals who are incorporated as a sole proprietorship may apply as individuals in the name of their company, however, as stated above they are responsible



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

for meeting any tax obligations associated with their business. ISO does not pay HST to applicants on funding amounts.

Indigenous Corporations:

- Indigenous controlled (minimum 51% ownership by person/s who are First Nations, Inuit, or Métis).
- The project is under the financial and creative control of Indigenous persons; two of the three key members of the creative team (ie. director, screenwriter, showrunner, producer, key animator) are Indigenous.
- Registered as a corporation with its head office in Canada.
- Main activity of the organization is the production or support of screen-based content, including TV, film, web, digital narrative content, and XR (VR, AR).
- Is not insolvent or bankrupt, or in the course of the reorganization of its business within the meaning of the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (Canada).

Please note, the spirit and intent of ISO funding is to support companies and groups that are controlled by Indigenous people, who have decision-making authority and creative control. Indigenous control means the company is Indigenous-led, and the Indigenous partner is meaningfully involved in all relevant decision making.

Bios for each owner of the company or group must be provided as well as their individual percentage of ownership.

Eligible Groups:

First Nation, Inuit or Métis Collective(s) or Ad Hoc Groups are:

- Indigenous controlled (minimum 51% ownership by person/s who are First Nations, Inuit, or Métis);
- The project is under the financial and creative control of Indigenous persons; Of the key members of the creative team (ie. director, screenwriter/creator, producer, key animator/designer) at least the director or writer must be Indigenous.
- Main activity of the organization is the production or support of screen-based content, including TV, film, web, digital narrative content, and XR (VR, AR).

Indigenous governing bodies such as First Nation Band Offices, Inuit Registered Communities or Métis Settlements:



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

- Must currently be recognized as an Indigenous nation/established community.
- The project is under the financial and creative control of Indigenous persons; two of the three key members of the creative team (director, screenwriter/creator, producer, key animator/designer) are Indigenous.
- Must demonstrate capacity for undertaking a screen-based project.

Eligible Organizations:

When Organizations are eligible for ISO programs, as is the case for Sector Development, Applicants are:

- Indigenous owned and controlled non-profit organizations, or registered charities.
- BIPOC non-profit organizations or registered charities.
- Other non-profit organizations, educational institutions, or registered charities.
- All funding must be directed to the Indigenous participants and staff

Indigenous Non-Profit Organizations or Registered Charities:

- Must be Indigenous led, with a 51% Indigenous-majority Board of Directors and Indigenous-majority staff in key decision-making roles (ie. Executive Director, Artistic Director, Managing/Operations Director, Director of Finance).
- Must be an incorporated non-profit organization with head office in Canada.
- Includes festivals, associations, arts service organizations, and training institutes.

BIPOC Non-Profit Organizations or Registered Charities:

- Must be led by people who are Black, Indigenous or People of Colour, with a 51% BIPOC-majority Board of Directors and BIPOC-majority staff in key decision-making roles (i.e. Executive Director, Artistic Director, Managing/Operations Director, Director of Finance).
- Must be an incorporated non-profit organization with head office in Canada.
- Funding must be for a specific project that has confirmed participation by Indigenous creators.



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

Other Non-Profit Organizations, Educational Institutions or Charities:

A limited number of partnerships may be considered for non-profit organizations or institutions that are non-Indigenous or non-BIPOC for projects that are led by Indigenous people, that include a contribution of funding and/or resources from the applicant organization, and that have a clear benefit to Indigenous screen creators.

Since ISO program requirements may differ please refer to the specific program guidelines to which you are applying.

Ineligible Applicants

Applicants who are unsure about whether they are eligible for funding based on their Indigenous identity are recommended to connect directly with their nation, community, and/or group before applying to the ISO or any other funding body. ISO reserves the right to ask Applicants questions pertaining to their Indigenous identity or withdraw applications in cases where information is inadequate, unclear, or is contested by community members. Additionally,

- Applicants who are owners of a company not in good standing with ISO, may not apply as owners of a separate company;
- Applicants with official complaints made against them to the ISO or its funding partners may be deemed ineligible for funding until such complaint is resolved;
- No immediate family members of Board Directors, Board President/Chair, or employees of the ISO who are involved in funding programs are eligible;
- Employees of program partners are not eligible for the specific funding program related to the partnership.

Ineligible or incomplete applications can be withdrawn at any time in the process. Applicants will be notified by the ISO when the application is withdrawn. Applicants who provide false information may be required to repay funds awarded by ISO (see Misrepresentation section).

Ineligible Activities

Excluded productions include, but not limited to:

- Activities that are carried out to satisfy Post-Secondary course requirements of an educational institution;
- Activities proposed by someone under the age of majority in the respective province;l
- Activities that are illegal according to the [Criminal Code of Canada](#);
- Activities that are carried out to satisfy the course requirements of an educational institution;



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

- Activities carried out by organizations that have not paid, or do not pay, fees or royalties to artists according to the standards of the arts practice or sector;
- Talk shows, live sports events, game shows, reality television, music videos and advertising;
- Re-takes or pick-ups do not count as principal photography;
- Activities and phases of a project that have been previously funded by the ISO.

Unsuccessful Applications

Applications may be declined for several reasons including:

- The project is not eligible for funding;
- The project does not align with our core objectives for this funding;
- The application does not provide sufficient materials to move forward with contracting;
- The material provided is perceived as too ambitious for the budget;
- The material was thought too familiar or derivative;
- Viability and support of the production was questionable / unclear;
- There was insufficient or lack of engagement with communities involved;
- There was not enough funding to support all applicants.

For further information, please see our Decision Making and Assessment processes section below. When a project is unsuccessful in its application, a brief explanation or feedback may be provided, upon request.

Misrepresentation

If at any time, an Applicant, provides false information or omits material information in connection with an application, including Indigenous identity, the ISO may exercise the following rights:

- termination of any contracts;
- denial of eligibility for existing and future funding;
- repayment of any funds already advanced;
- civil and potential criminal prosecution, in the case of fraud.

These measures may be imposed not only on the applicant but also on related, associated, and affiliated companies and individuals that are parties to the application. Any applicant receiving approval for funding will be required to sign a legally enforceable agreement, which includes further provisions concerning misrepresentations, defaults, and related matters.



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

General Conditions & Accountabilities

Stacking Limit

A “stacking limit” refers to the maximum level of funding that is allowed from government sources. This is often a requirement for Government of Canada programs. ISO may directly fund up to 100% of a project budget. However, ISO funding does count as federal revenue against stacking limits for other funding programs, if applicable. Applicants must adhere to the stacking limit of the program they are applying to.

Please refer to your agreement with other federal funding agencies to determine if you are within the stacking limit of your proposed financing structure.

“Double dipping” refers to gaining funding from more than one source for the same expense or activity. This is not allowed by ISO or any funding organization and can lead to a funding recipient to be determined as not in good standing with ISO and ineligible for future funding.

Tax Credits

ISO Story Fund and Sector Development funding counts towards Canadian Film and Television Production Tax Credit assistance for eligible productions, as a federal funding source. Go here for more information about [CFTP](#).

Deadlines

Applications will not be accepted after the deadline date. Extensions may be granted but not unless approved prior to the deadline. If funding becomes available in the program new applications may be accepted.

Conflict of Interest

In all its assessment processes, the ISO relies on transparent and clear procedures to manage conflicts of interest in an ethical manner. A conflict of interest can be real, apparent or potential:

- a) “Real” means that the conflict of interest exists at the present time;
- b) “Apparent” means that the conflict of interest is perceived by a reasonable observer to exist, whether or not it is the case;
- c) “Potential” means that the conflict of interest can be reasonably foreseen to exist in the future

The ISO recognizes that the potential for conflict of interest will always exist in its funding activities, given the size of the Indigenous screen community, the process of peer assessment and competing proposals. Our approach is to avoid conflict of interest



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

whenever possible and to be ready to manage it when it does occur. Accordingly, peer assessors, employees and Board members are all subject to the ISO's procedures on managing conflicts of interest and are expected to disclose all conflicts of interest to ensure the integrity of the assessment and decision-making process.

Transfer of Ownership

The applicant must obtain the prior written consent of ISO if they plan to sell, assign, transfer, option or otherwise dispose of or encumber any right, interest, or property of the applicant in the project, in any materials created during the development of the project or in the underlying rights agreements.

Respectful and Accessible Workplace

The ISO is committed to providing a working environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. ISO is committed to the prevention of workplace violence, harassment, and discrimination. Everyone has the right to work in a professional atmosphere which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, and ISO will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect our employees from workplace violence and harassment.

Applicants must confirm that they comply and will comply with their obligations to ensure they maintain a respectful workplace free of bullying and harassment, including compliance with the Workers' Compensation Act, and applicable Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, Policies and Guidelines.

If you have barriers to access on production sets and workplaces including but not limited to language, internet, or physical barriers, please contact funding@iso-bea.ca to determine appropriate accommodations and support.

Recognition of Contribution

Recipients must acknowledge ISO support with textual reference and/or logo in the credit sequence, or appropriate placement in the completed work (where applicable). [ISO logos](#) are available for download on the ISO website iso-bea.ca.

When sharing information about your participation in the awarded project, please also tag the ISO on any social media posts.

- Instagram - [indigenousscreen](#)
- Twitter - [screen_office](#)
- Facebook - [ISO.BEA](#)



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

Final Report

A final report will be required within three months following the completion of the project. Projects are given 2 years to complete from the start date. Applicants with overdue final reports will not be eligible for ISO funding until the report is submitted and approved. The ISO will provide successful recipients with the Final Report questionnaire to submit.

Please note that companies applying to the same program under a different company name with the same ownership structure will still be required to submit a final report.

Forfeiture and default

A completion date is noted in the contract/agreement by which all deliverables will be submitted. Should all materials not be provided by the completion date, the eligible Applicant forfeits any outstanding drawdown amounts and the commitment will be reduced by this amount.

Should an eligible Applicant be placed in default - according to the terms of the Agreement, this limits the Applicant, its principals and any parent or subsidiary companies from accessing further funding from ISO. In addition, ISO reserves the right to request immediate repayment of any funds advanced.

Decision Making Processes

What you need to apply – Supporting Documentation

Applicants must apply through the ISO portal and online submission form.

Once registered in the portal, depending on the program, you may need to provide information about:

- your relationality as an Indigenous storyteller;
- your screen-based practice;
- your project or production;
- your budget.

Depending on the program, you may also be asked to submit:

- A Community Engagement Plan (max 2 pages) and/or Letter of Support for projects that intend to shoot in or collaborate with Indigenous communities.
- Link to a project demo or previous work (if applicable);
- A chain of title and agreement/contract for permission to Develop/Produce the project's IP;
- A detailed production schedule;
- (For scripted projects only) A completed script or shooting script for Documentaries;



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

- A project budget;
- Information related to the identity and work history of the key members of your team.

We ask you to submit relevant supporting materials (e.g., treatment, script, samples of previous work) at application stage. We may decide not to review all of these before making a decision.

Reviewing your application

An initial review for eligibility and missing documentation will be conducted by the ISO Program Manager, including:

- confirmation of chain of title;
- details on company structure and ownership;
- any confirmed financing or sales agent/distribution interest;
- full budget and links to previous work;
- additional information related to the project, team, or plan of activities.

ISO staff will reach out if any of this information is needed and applicants will be given a short period to submit anything outstanding.

How we assess your application – Peer Review

Arms-Length Peer Assessment

Peer assessment is the basis for most of the ISO's funding. Indigenous content creators have been clear that this is the most appropriate form of decision making. Peer assessment promotes fairness, transparency and accountability in decision making, while at the same time ensures knowledgeable assessment of artistic ability and merit. For both peer assessment processes, the ISO will ensure that a minimum of three (3) assessors are reviewing applications and that clear and transparent metrics are in place for assessing applications. For internal assessment processes, which are valuable for the delivery of time-sensitive and responsive funding, a minimum of three (3) ISO representatives will review applications and make decisions.

The review and analysis of each application is based on program criteria. The following priorities will be considered as part of the assessment process:

- Regional and language representation;
- Representation of diverse Indigenous perspectives and intersections including gender, 2SLGBTQIAP+ people, and creators with disabilities;
- Different career levels, including emerging voices.



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Selection of Peers

Peer review panels are made up of Indigenous individuals representing different nations and regions of Canada. The ISO selects artists and arts professionals for its peer assessment committees based on:

- professional specialization;
- artistic practice;
- demographics (age, gender); and
- nations, language groups, regions.

As an Indigenous organization, we work hard to embody our values and the sacred teachings. Trust, integrity, humility, and transparency are central to all our relationships, and we expect these values to be shared by those who are welcomed into the circle, such as peer assessors.

No peer review panel members with immediate family members in the applicant pool can adjudicate. Peers selected should not be involved with the works in their category / program area and are subject to ISO's Conflict of Interest Policy. All discussions pertaining to the assessment process are confidential. Peer review panel members are not permitted to consult with other panels or external parties regarding decisions. It is imperative to keep results confidential until they are announced.

Assessment Process

Peer assessment includes **evaluating** and comparing eligible applications against program criteria and objectives, **discussing** the relative merit of the application, and **scoring** each application against the assessment criteria. The scoring structure is different for each ISO program. Whether internally or peer assessed, scoring criteria will be based on the strength of the project idea, the viability of the project including its leads, feasibility (scope, timeline, budget) and the overall potential impact.

Feedback on individual applications

ISO staff does not give creative feedback on individual funding applications but will provide help and support applicants who are preparing new applications.

Appeal / Decision reversal

Funding decisions of the ISO are final. Decisions cannot be appealed unless *evidence* suggests that a procedural error may have occurred during the assessment *process*. The ISO may initiate a process to review and potentially reverse a funding decision where there are serious concerns about the recipient or the funded activities. Examples of serious concerns include failure to meet the terms and conditions of the applicant's contribution agreement, failure to comply with legal obligations, misrepresentation, and risk of insolvency.



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What happens if your application is successful

Final funding decisions will be made by the ISO and applicants will be notified of successful and unsuccessful applications through the ISO apply portal. Each applicant will receive an official notification letter advising the applicant of the next steps.

The next steps for successful applicants include:

- Receiving your contribution agreement to be reviewed by the applicant, signed and sent back to the ISO via ISO apply. A draft of our general contribution agreement can be found in Appendix A;
- An electronic funds authorization form to be filled out and resubmitted through ISO apply;
- Payment will be processed within one month of successfully submitting all necessary documentation;
- Please note that payments can only be made in the name of the applicant;
- A final report will be required within three months following the completion of the project and must be approved by the ISO.