



# Film Fund Review

## What We Heard

June 2019



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# What We Heard

## Feedback from the public engagement on the Film Fund Review

### Background

The Government of Yukon, through the Department of Economic Development administers a suite of funds which, together, are known as the “Yukon Film and Sound Incentive Program.” These include:

- Yukon Film Production Fund;
- Yukon Filmmaker’s Fund;
- Film Training Fund;
- Film Location Incentive Fund; and
- Yukon Film Development Fund.

These funds have not been updated since their inception in 2004 despite changes to the film and media industry.

The media landscape has changed significantly since the film and sound funding programs were launched over a decade ago. Digital technology, in particular the Internet, has revolutionized the feature film and television industry. Technology now enables content creation in ways that were not possible before. The explosion in digital distribution platforms such as social media channels, websites, YouTube, and Netflix creates new sources and opportunities for Yukon media companies to raise financing for content creation and to reach global audiences.



The Minister of Economic Development made a commitment to undertake a review of the department's film funding programs. As part of this review, the department engaged film and media industry stakeholders and the general public to obtain their ideas on improvements to the programs.

## Engagement process

We asked Yukoners to identify what changes they would like to see to the existing suite of film funding programs. Our goal was to learn how the programs successfully support content creation activities and what areas could be improved. While our engagement process was focused on the film and media industry, we also invited members of the general public to participate.

## Participation

We recognize this is a very specific topic which tends to be of interest to a small segment of Yukoners, primarily those focused on the media industry. Large-scale, broad-based public feedback was not expected nor received.

Working collaboratively with industry stakeholders, we conducted a public engagement process from October 15 to December 14, 2018. The engagement process included a variety of methods through which the film and media industry and interested members of the general public could provide input on how the Film and Sound Incentive Program could be modernized.

Opportunities for participation included facilitated public meetings, interviews, an online survey, an industry open house and written submissions.

## Notification

Notification of the engagement went out to the public through Facebook, EngageYukon.ca, as well as calls and letters to key stakeholders to inform people about the public meetings. Key stakeholders included Screen Production Yukon Association, Yukon Film Society and the Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture. Additionally, Screen Production Yukon Association repeatedly promoted the engagement in their weekly newsletter.

## Public meetings

We held facilitated public meetings in Whitehorse and Dawson City:

Community	# of participants	Community	# of participants
Whitehorse	17	Dawson City	1
Grand Total	18		

At the public meetings, participants reflected on and discussed the following six themes.

1. Funding that will support digital content creation and distribution.
2. Ensuring Yukon’s programs are complementary to other film funding programs—particularly federal programs.
3. Consideration for market triggers and calculation of funding.
4. Programs to support the development of the Yukon media industry.
5. Maximizing the leverage for Yukon participation and creative control of projects.
6. Programs and client service flexibility.

## Interviews and written submissions

We undertook four interviews and received five written submissions from industry stakeholders.

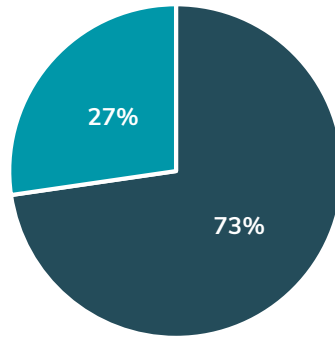
## Survey

We distributed a survey online made up of a mix of multiple choice and open-ended questions. We received 33 responses during the engagement period. The survey questions can be found at the end of this document in the appendix.

Of the survey respondents, 76% were from Whitehorse with 24% from other Yukon communities. 73% of respondents described themselves as members of the film industry, while 27% identified as interested members of the public.



## Which of the following best describes you?



- A film maker or producer or a film crew member
- Another interested member of the public

## What we heard

Below is a summary of the input received during the public engagement.

As an indication of the number of participants providing a similar or certain type of input, we use the following terminology:

Term	Participants
A couple	two
A few	three
A handful	Around five
Several	Around 10
Majority	50% or more
Strong/Most	80% or more



The public engagement process yielded positive discussion between industry peers and colleagues, highlighting areas for improvement in film funding programs, as well as those areas that are working well. The input was organized into the following five themes.

1. Developing Yukon's media industry.
2. Yukon participation and creative control.
3. Digital content creation and distribution.
4. Funding triggers and calculations.
5. Program delivery and client service.

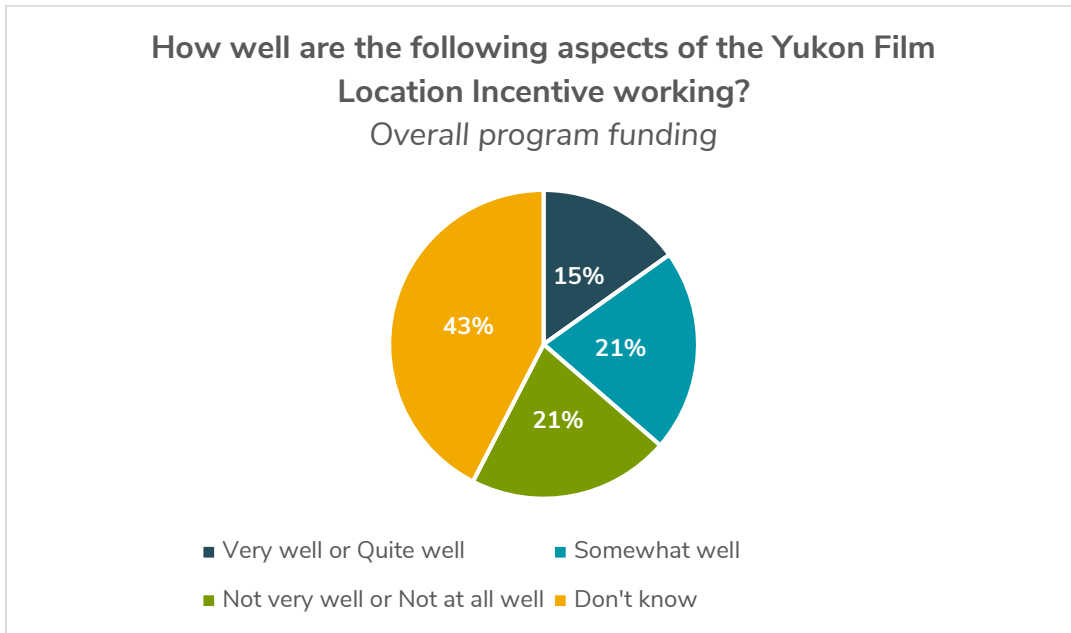
### Developing Yukon's media industry

“There is certainly a need to revamp the Filmmaker's Fund.” – Meeting participant

- a) Strong support for more responsive programs that can quickly adapt to frequent changes in federal policies and the rapidly evolving media industry.
- b) Strong support for an industry marketing program to help Yukon companies attract co-producers and funding to Yukon content.
- c) Strong support for building skills and capacity in the industry to develop, produce and distribute interactive digital content (for example games and mobile applications).
- d) Most respondents agreed that greater clarity is needed on how training is funded.



- e) Strong support for requiring returning series accessing the Film Location Incentive program to have a plan for training and employment in Yukon, particularly for key creative positions.



“Basing funding on a percentage of Yukon spend is no longer competitive, and does not do a good job of meeting the fund’s objective of offsetting the cost of doing business in the North.” – Written comment



## Yukon participation and creative control

- a) Most agreed that greater clarity is required in the eligibility criteria for co-productions.
- b) A couple of respondents expressed an interest in having specific funding programs available for Yukon writers.

“I feel extremely lucky to have the access to funding, training and advice that is available to me and my projects.” – Survey participant

- c) Most respondents support flexibility in “Yukon spend” definitions to include services and resources not available in Yukon (for example, auditors, insurance providers, professional actors, and specialists).
- d) Most respondents did not support removing the minimum 51% Yukon ownership requirement at the development stage to stimulate co-productions.

## Digital content creation and distribution

- a) Strong support for making convergent and digital media content eligible for all programs. This includes a definition of digital media that aligns with the definition and associated eligibility requirements of federal programs.

“I hope the programs work well for local producers so they can create more gigs for crews.” – Industry response



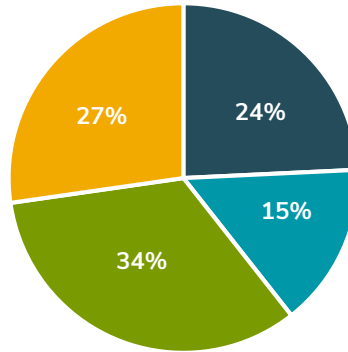
- b) Most respondents support expanding the definition of distribution arrangements to include digital platforms, thereby opening up opportunities for more projects to qualify for funding. Cautious support for allowing self-distribution on digital platforms to qualify as a distribution arrangement, provided that a strong process for evaluation is established up front.

## Funding triggers and calculations

- a) Most respondents agreed on the need for better support at early stages of development, but blending Filmmakers and Film Development Funds raised concerns, as these programs have different purposes. Additional funding was requested for content that does not have a market trigger.
- b) Strong support for changing the definition of broadcaster and distributor to include non-traditional market triggers. Additionally, in the absence of a market justification, it was recommended that strong evaluation criteria be developed and included in the program policies.
- c) A small number of respondents recommended changing the funding calculation.
- d) A few stakeholders recommended that Yukon applicants be permitted to use funding provided under the Filmmaker Fund to pay themselves for their own services on their production.



How well are the following aspects of the Yukon Filmmakers Fund working?  
The way the funds may be used by the fund recipient



■ Very well or Quite well      ■ Somewhat well  
■ Not very well or Not at all well      ■ Don't know

“Crew and talent is a major obstacle to producing in Yukon. Yukon has good people, just not enough [of them].” – Survey participant

- e) A few stakeholders requested the rebate calculation be simplified to include all Yukon costs regardless of the location of production.
- f) A couple of respondents asked for the minimum market trigger to be a dollar amount rather than a percentage of the budget, which limits the size of the budget.
- g) One respondent suggested removing the requirement that the market trigger (i.e., the broadcaster or distributor) must advance a portion of their funding prior to the delivery of completed content and previously incurred costs. The majority of participants, including industry stakeholders, disagreed.

- h) Several respondents identified the need for more frequent funding stages and deadlines for the documentary genre in order to capture events as they occur over an extended time period.

### Program delivery and client service

- a) Most respondents agreed on the need for published program policies to align with internal practices. For example, application deadlines, minimum percentage financing from market triggers, and the conditional approval process.
- b) There was strong support on the need to align standard business policies and reporting requirements with federal programs to avoid two budgets and final cost reports. For example, in the treatment of development expenses in the production budget and detailing of Canadian and Yukon expenditures.
- c) A few respondents supported increasing efforts to host more events outside of Whitehorse in order to build industry capacity throughout Yukon.
- d) Several respondents supported improved navigation on the website and development of an online application process similar to federal funding agencies.
- e) Most participants wanted to keep incorporation as a requirement for funding beyond pre-development. One person made the alternate suggestion that the costs of incorporation be allowed within the content budget.

“There was a time that 25% cash rebate was very attractive to outside productions, but that is no longer the case.” – Survey participant



## Other factors

Additional factors that were out of scope, that participants identified as important:

- a) Strong support for developing a Yukon Training Strategy to address a lack of skilled Yukon-based crew in key positions. Currently multiple organizations are active in the sector and it was felt that a shared strategy could improve results.
- b) A handful felt that the media development unit is understaffed, and that it is negatively impacting on client service. They suggested reduced reporting requirements and due diligence for low-budget and development funding, as compared to bigger budget production.
- c) Mixed response for an unofficial Advisory Board that could convene annually to evaluate and suggest policy updates to keep pace with other funding programs, as well as to discuss a unifying strategy for the various organizations within the Yukon film industry.
- d) Request to review how a Yukon film permit requirement could facilitate a greater respect for land, water and people and improve understanding of local values and regulations.

Some feedback received during the public engagement process suggested a need to verify that the Yukon Film and Sound Incentive Program's guidelines and processes are as clear and transparent as possible for those using the funds. A couple of respondents requested the inclusion of digital media under the existing programs (it is already included) and for the production fund to be available for co-productions (it is available).

## What's next?

Based on this feedback, we will work with industry stakeholders to develop recommendations for program changes. These recommendations will then be brought back to the public for further input prior to submitting final recommendations for the modernization of the programs to the Minister of Economic Development.

# Appendix: Survey questions

## Section 1: About you

This section asks questions about yourself and your interest in Yukon's film and media industries. This information will help us understand your responses and accurately analyze the data.

### 1. Where do you live?

- Whitehorse area
- Another Yukon community
- Another part of Canada, outside Yukon
- Outside Canada

### 2. Which of the following best describes you?

- A film maker or producer
- A film crew member
- A supporter of the Yukon media industry or member of a media industry association
- Another interested member of the public

## Section 2: Yukon Filmmakers Fund

The Yukon Filmmakers Fund provides a maximum of \$8,000 to support individuals and businesses to develop viable careers and businesses making films and videos for broadcast or commercial release. It supports expenses such as research and costs of seeking production funding, hard costs of any step between final draft of script and final edit, and childcare during the term of a project. You can find more information about the Fund [here](#).

### 3. Have you ever applied to the Yukon Filmmakers Fund?

- Yes
- No -> Skip to Q8



4. **Have you ever received funding from the Yukon Filmmakers Fund?**
- Yes
  - No
5. **What was your role in your most recent Yukon Filmmakers Fund application?**
- Principal applicant
  - Team member
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Was your most recent Yukon Filmmakers Fund application successful?**
- Yes
  - No
7. **What is the status of the project you most recently applied to the Yukon Filmmakers Fund for?**
- Not yet started
  - In progress
  - Incomplete, on hold
  - Complete
8. **From your perspective, how well are the following aspects of the Yukon Filmmakers Fund working?**
- a. The application process (goal: it should be clear and easy)**  
Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know
  - b. Number of intakes per year (currently twice a year)**  
Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know
  - c. Funding levels available to each successful applicant**  
Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know
  - d. Overall program funding**  
Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know
  - e. The way the funds may be used by the fund recipient**  
Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know
9. **What specific improvements would you make to the Yukon Filmmakers Fund?**  
[Comment box]

### Section 3: Yukon Film Production Fund

The Film Production Fund supports the production of Yukon films, which is the period of time during which the project is being captured on film or videotape, including post-production work. The Fund can support up to \$500,000 of expenses. More information about the Film Production Fund can be found [here](#).

**10. Have you ever applied to the Film Production Fund?**

- Yes
- No -> Skip to Q15

**11. Have you ever received funding from the Film Production Fund?**

- Yes
- No

**12. What was your role in your most recent Film Production Fund application?**

- Principal applicant
- Team member
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Was your most recent Film Production Fund application successful?**

- Yes
- No

**14. What is the status of the project you most recently applied to the Film Production Fund for?**

- Not yet started
- In progress
- Incomplete, on hold
- Complete





**15. From your perspective, how well are the following aspects of the Film Production Fund working?**

**a. The application process (goal: it should be clear and easy)**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**b. Currently, the program is first come, first serve, is this meeting the needs of industry?**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**c. Funding levels available to each successful applicant**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**d. Overall program funding**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**e. The way the funds may be used by the fund recipient**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**16. What specific improvements would you make to the Film Production Fund?**

[Comment box]

#### **Section 4: Yukon Film Development Fund**

The Film Development Fund supports the development of Yukon films, which includes acquiring property, writing script drafts, budgeting, packaging of stars, director and other creative personnel, and obtaining production financing. The Fund can support up to 50% of the actual Yukon expenditures to a maximum of \$35,000 or 33% of total project expenses (whichever is the lesser). An additional \$10,000 may be awarded for costs associated with mentoring and training of a Yukon scriptwriter or producer. More information about the Film Development Fund can be found [here](#).

**17. Have you ever applied to the Yukon Film Development Fund?**

- Yes
- No -> Skip to Q22

**18. Have you ever received funding from the Yukon Film Development Fund?**

- Yes
- No



**19. What was your role in your most recent Yukon Film Development Fund application?**

- Principal applicant
- Team member
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**20. Was your most recent Yukon Film Development Fund application successful?**

- Yes
- No

**21. What is the status of the project you most recently applied to the Yukon Film Development Fund for?**

- Not yet started
- In progress
- Incomplete, on hold
- Complete

**22. From your perspective, how well are the following aspects of the Yukon Film Development Fund working?**

**a. The application process (goal: it should be clear and easy)**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**b. Currently, the program is first come, first serve, is this meeting the needs of industry?**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**c. Funding levels available to each successful applicant**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**d. Overall program funding**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**e. The way the funds may be used by the fund recipient**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**23. What specific improvements would you make to the Yukon Film Development Fund? [Comment box]**



## Section 5: Yukon Film Training Fund

The Yukon Film Training Fund supports Yukoners to take training courses in film production of post-production and participate in workshops and mentoring opportunities to a maximum of \$3,000. The Film Training Fund also supports non-profit societies to bring visiting instructors to the territory. More information about the Film Training Fund is available [here](#).

### 24. Have you ever applied to the Yukon Film Training Fund?

- Yes
- No -> Skip to Q29

### 25. Have you ever received funding from the Yukon Film Training Fund?

- Yes
- No

### 26. What was your role in your most recent Yukon Film Training Fund application?

- Principal applicant
- Team member
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 27. Was your most recent Yukon Film Training Fund application successful?

- Yes
- No

### 28. What is the status of the project you most recently applied to the Yukon Film Training Fund for?

- Not yet started
- In progress
- Incomplete, on hold
- Complete

### 29. From your perspective, how well are the following aspects of the Yukon Film Training Fund working?

#### a. The application process (goal: it should be clear and easy)

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**b. Currently, the program is first come, first serve, is this meeting the needs of industry?**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**c. Funding levels available to each successful applicant**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**d. Overall program funding**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**e. The way the funds may be used by the fund recipient**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**30. What specific improvements would you make to the Yukon Film Training Fund?**

[Comment box]

## **Section 6: Yukon Film Location Incentive**

The Film Location Incentive encourages production companies from outside the territory to film in Yukon and hire and train Yukoners. Companies can receive a rebate of up to 25% of their expenses on Yukon goods, services and labour, 25% of wages paid to mentors that train Yukoners, or 50% of travel costs to Yukon. To receive support, companies must meet strict requirements for hiring or training Yukoners. More information about the Film Location Incentive is available [here](#).

**31. Have you ever applied to the Yukon Film Location Incentive?**

- Yes
- No -> Skip to Q36

**32. Have you ever received funding from the Yukon Film Location Incentive?**

- Yes
- No

**33. What was your role in your most recent Yukon Film Location Incentive application?**

- Principal applicant
- Team member
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**34. Was your most recent Yukon Film Location Incentive application successful?**

- Yes
- No

**35. What is the status of the project you most recently applied to the Yukon Film Location Incentive for?**

- Not yet started
- In progress
- Incomplete, on hold
- Complete

**36. From your perspective, how well are the following aspects of the Yukon Film Location Incentive working?**

**a. The application process (goal: it should be clear and easy)**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**b. Funding levels available to each successful applicant**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**c. Overall program funding**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**d. The way the funds may be used by the fund recipient**

Not at all well/ not very well/ somewhat well/ quite well/ very well/ don't know

**37. What specific improvements would you make to the Yukon Film Location Incentive?** [Comment box]

**38. Is there anything else you think we should consider when reviewing our film funds?** [Comment box]

**[End of survey]**

