



National Lottery Funding Plan
2023–2026

Screen Culture

/2033



BFI National Lottery funding plan 2023–2026

About the BFI National Lottery funding plan

In Screen Culture 2033 and our BFI National Lottery Strategy we set out the integral role public funding plays in the UK's screen sector and the objectives that will guide BFI National Lottery funding decisions over the next 10 years.

This funding plan is designed to be read alongside these documents and outlines the BFI National Lottery funds and programmes we will run over the next three years from April 2023 to March 2026 to deliver against these objectives.

The BFI National Lottery Funding Plan was developed during a 13-month period in which we consulted extensively to understand public and UK screen sector priorities for the next 10 years. It is the first of a series of shorter funding plans that we will run over the strategy period. Running shorter plans means we can adapt our support for UK screen culture as both audience behaviours and the sector continue to evolve. This will ensure BFI National Lottery funding is being invested as effectively as possible, delivering the greatest possible benefit to both the public and the sector.

Our available BFI National Lottery funding from 2023–2026 will be around £45m a year. This is approximately 10% lower than during the previous three year period under *BFI2022*. As a result, it is even more important that every investment we make delivers impact on behalf of the public.

We will only ever invest where there is clear evidence of need, absence of sufficient commercial funding, and clear benefit to the public. This is particularly important at a time when independent film faces financial challenges on a number of fronts.

BFI National Lottery funding has historically focused primarily on independent film. We took initial steps into supporting XR over the *BFI2022* strategy period. The rapid evolution of moving image storytelling and the convergence of film with forms including television, video games, and interactive and immersive technologies means BFI National Lottery funding may have a broader role to play in future. In this funding plan, we further integrate XR into our programmes, with support available in areas such as production, audience development, and research. We will also deliver more targeted interventions for video games, including work to deliver a review of the video games skills base.

As a distributor of National Lottery funding, the level of funding we receive is always dependent on National Lottery ticket sales, which can – and often does – fluctuate. Allocations detailed within this Plan are based on the latest available projections on National Lottery funding, and are therefore subject to change.

The National Lottery Strategy is available to read [here](#).



The BFI National Lottery strategic framework

All BFI National Lottery funding invested over the next 10 years will need to demonstrate how it delivers against our strategic framework. This framework is made up of three key elements:

- Three cross-cutting **principles**: priorities which apply to every area of our National Lottery activity
- Four major **objectives**: our long-term ambitions for the strategy period. They set out a bold vision of where we would like to see the sector in ten years' time.
- 16 focused **outcomes**: the specific changes, benefits or other impacts that need to happen to deliver the objectives.

All funds and programmes must deliver against each of the three principles, but will respond to a different combination of objectives and outcomes. This will ensure our funding delivers a range of benefits across different parts of the sector.



Principles:	<p>A Equity, diversity & inclusion: Making screen culture more equitable, diverse and inclusive</p> <p>B UK-wide: Supporting screen culture to thrive across the UK</p> <p>C Environmental sustainability: Making screen culture more environmentally sustainable</p>			
Objectives:	1. Experiencing screen culture	2. Creativity and storytelling	3. A skilled and representative workforce	4. Success in a changing landscape
	Everyone can experience a great range of screen culture	Anyone can create original screen work, from first-time creators to world-class professionals	The UK screen sector workforce is skilled and reflects the population	Independents and cultural organisations can adapt and thrive in a changing landscape
Outcomes:	1.1 Children and young people are empowered to develop their own relationships with a wider range of screen culture, including through education	2.1 More people understand how to express their creativity through stories on screen, including children and young people	3.1 Equitable and more visible routes into the sector for people of all ages	4.1 Better support available for small and medium-sized enterprises and independents to develop their businesses
	1.2 People across the UK can access a wider choice of film and the moving image including stories that reflect their lives	2.2 Creative talent is supported and nurtured, as they emerge and throughout their careers	3.2 People from under-represented groups across the UK can access the support they need to develop their careers and skills	4.2 An increase in the international engagement and reach of the UK screen sector
	1.3 Funding helps to tackle social, economic, and geographic barriers for screen audiences in new and effective ways	2.3 People are better enabled to innovate and experiment creatively	3.3 Workforce retention is improved by building inclusive, flexible and supportive workplaces	4.3 Evidence-based insight and analysis of the screen sector is readily available to all, supporting organisations and driving policymaking
	1.4 More people can engage with heritage collections that better reflect the diversity of the UK	2.4 A wider range of stories are told that otherwise wouldn't be	3.4 Vital skills for the sector that cannot be delivered by the commercial market are developed	4.4 Screen organisations have significantly reduced their carbon footprint

The framework is set out in more detail in our National Lottery Strategy, which is available to read [here](#).

Our Funds and programmes

The following section provides an overview of the funds and programmes we will operate over the three years from April 2023 to 2026. They are grouped into six main areas of activity:

- **Audiences**
- **Screen Heritage**
- **Education & Skills**
- **Filmmakers**
- **International**
- **Innovation & Industry Services**

We will set out more information on each of these funds and programmes in the weeks and months following publication of this Funding Plan. This includes through detailed guidelines developed for each programme, as well as advice and support for prospective applicants.

Audiences

BFI National Lottery Audience Projects Fund

Budget: £15m

Primary outcomes: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

Secondary outcomes: 1.4, 4.4

About: The *BFI National Lottery Audiences Project Fund* supports audience-facing exhibition and distribution activity taking place on a major scale. It works to increase audience access to independent film and XR work, with a focus on engaging priority groups and building audiences that are representative of the UK.

BFI Film Audience Network

Budget: £9.9m

Primary outcomes: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3,

Secondary outcomes: 1.4, 3.4, 4.4

About: The *BFI Film Audience Network (FAN)* supports distribution and exhibition activity taking place at a local level, boosting public and community access to screen culture across the UK. Delivered in collaboration with screen organisations based around the UK's regions and nations, it provides funding, guidance and support to a network of hundreds of exhibitors right across the country.

BFI National Lottery Open Cinemas

Budget: £2.7m

Primary outcomes: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

About: *BFI National Lottery Open Cinemas* is a pilot aimed at boosting attendance for new audiences in independent cinemas and growing engagement with independent film. With the ambition of supporting a free, fully accessible screening every month in UK-wide independent cinemas, we will work with industry to develop and build the programme.

Screen Heritage

BFI National Lottery Screen Heritage Fund

Budget: £7.9m

Primary outcomes: 1.4

Secondary outcomes: 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.4

About: *The BFI National Lottery Screen Heritage Fund* supports the UK's public screen heritage sector. It funds organisations that hold significant screen heritage collections – including regional, UK nations' collections, and the BFI National Archive – to widen access, develop skills and build resilience. Organisations can apply for support to enrich their collections, better represent the UK's diverse communities and make screen heritage available to the public.

Education & Skills

Education

BFI National Lottery Teaching with Film

Budget: £5m

Primary outcomes: 1.1

Secondary outcomes: 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.3

About: *Teaching with Film* supports a programme of activity enabling teachers to use film and moving image in the classroom. This includes lessons focused on screen culture, and to support teaching a wide range of subjects across the curriculum. It enables children and young people to engage with a wide range of archive, independent and international film while supporting improved learning outcomes too.

BFI National Lottery Careers and Progression

Budget: £6m

Primary outcomes: 3.1, 3.2

Secondary outcomes: 1.1, 2.2

About: *Careers and Progression* supports a programme of activity to deliver quality screen sector careers advice and guidance for children and young people across the UK. It ensures that children and young people from all backgrounds know about the roles on offer, and the steps they can take to get into the industry.

BFI National Lottery Young Creatives

Budget: £3m

Primary outcomes: 1.1, 1.3, 2.1

Secondary outcomes: 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2

About: *Young Creatives* delivers filmmaking activities for 11–16 year olds across the UK. Delivered in community venues, schools, colleges and universities, the programme gives children the opportunity to try their hand at filmmaking and learn what it has to offer them – whether it's expressing themselves, playing and experimenting, building new skills or learning about potential future careers.

BFI Film Academy

BFI Film Academy

Budget: £5.5m

Primary outcomes: 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

About: *BFI Film Academy* provides a variety of opportunities for 16–25 year olds to learn about and/or work in the screen sector, and is delivered in collaboration with a range of partners across the UK, from leading cinema venues through to studios, streamers and independent production companies. It ensures young people in every part of the country have the chance to build their knowledge and understanding of industry, develop their skills, take their first steps into filmmaking or secure their first professional role in the industry.

Skills

BFI National Lottery Skills Clusters

Budget: £9m

Primary outcomes: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 3.3, 4.4

About: *BFI National Lottery Skills Clusters* supports local industry, education and training providers and other screen organisations across the UK to take the lead on skills and training in their area. Supported programmes will offer a clear route into employment in the local sector, building its skills base and focusing on ensuring the workforce is representative of the UK.

BFI National Lottery Skills Fund

Budget: £5.7m

Primary outcomes: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 4.1, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 3.3, 4.3, 4.4

About: The *BFI National Lottery Skills Fund* delivers a range of skills and training interventions, designed to support both those looking to break into the sector, and those already working in it. It includes bursaries to help people from underrepresented groups access training, a new HR toolkit for productions, and programmes to help people build leadership skills and develop their businesses.



Filmmakers

BFI National Lottery Filmmaking Fund

Budget: £43.5m

Primary outcomes: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4

Secondary outcomes: 1.2, 1.3, 4.4

About: *The BFI National Lottery Filmmaking Fund* provides development and production funding, with editorial assistance, for a diverse range of risk-taking filmmakers from across the UK. It supports the films and stories of tomorrow for audiences far and wide, and for screens large and small, where other funding sources cannot. This includes support for short and long form work spanning fiction, documentary, immersive and animation.

BFI National Lottery Creative Challenge Fund

Budget: £2.7m

Primary outcomes: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4

Secondary outcomes: 1.2, 1.3, 4.4

About: *BFI National Lottery Creative Challenge Fund* supports organisations to deliver labs and creative development programmes for filmmakers around specific themes and topics, helping them to develop new work or expand existing ideas. It covers feature films and XR work across documentary and fiction.

BFI NETWORK

Budget: £7.8m

Primary outcomes: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4

Secondary outcomes: 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.4

About: *BFI NETWORK* supports new and emerging writers, directors and producers across the UK to advance their professional filmmaking practice and careers. Delivered in collaboration with organisations across the UK, it provides funding for short film production and development up to debut long form, including new support for micro-shorts. It also offers support around professional development and networking.

International

BFI National Lottery International Connections Fund

Budget: £1.2m

Primary outcomes: 2.2, 4.1, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 2.4, 3.2

About: *The BFI National Lottery International Connections Fund* supports UK screen professionals to build networks around the world and find new international partners for cultural and commercial collaboration. It supports attendance at international co-production forums and festivals, as well as backing UK delegations to a select programme of such events around the world.

We Are UK Film

Budget: £2m

Primary outcomes: 2.2, 4.1, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 2.4

About: *We Are UK Film* promotes the UK screen sector, across film, video games, XR, animation and documentary, to industry professionals around the world, showcasing and opening up the UK to new cultural and commercial opportunities. This includes through promotional campaigns and UK-focused events at international festivals and markets. .

UK Global Screen Fund (This is not National Lottery funding)

Our internationally-focused National Lottery programmes complement and support the UK Global Screen Fund (UKGSF). UKGSF boosts international business development, production and distribution opportunities for the UK's independent screen sector, focused on accelerating export growth and deepening international relationships with the UK.

UKGSF is financed through grant-in aid from the UK government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) rather than National Lottery funding. You can learn more about UKGSF support

Innovation & Industry Services

Innovation

BFI National Lottery Research & Statistics Fund

Budget: £1.9m

Primary outcomes: 4.1, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 1.3, 1.4, 3.2, 3.3, 4.4

About: *BFI National Lottery Research & Statistics Fund* supports the creation of publicly available, independent, trusted and rigorous evidence on the screen sector. It provides insight on how independent and cultural organisations – as well as wider industry – can adapt and thrive, and deliver the greatest benefit to the public.

BFI National Lottery Innovation Challenge Fund

Budget: £1.8m

Primary outcomes: 4.1, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 1.3, 2.2, 3.2, 4.4

About: *BFI National Lottery Innovation Challenge Fund* empowers not-for-profit organisations to tackle some of the sector's biggest challenges through the testing, development and delivery of new solutions. Funding calls are issued around specific questions and topics, which might range from making production more environmentally sustainable to building more inclusive workplaces. Successful applicants are required to share learnings from their funded activity, so the wider sector benefits from their work.

BFI National Lottery Places Fund

Budget: £0.7m

Primary outcomes: 3.1, 4.1, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 4.4

About: *BFI National Lottery Places Fund* helps areas outside of London to develop a strategy for supporting their local screen sector by either boosting local industry, improving cultural provision, or a combination of the two. Supporting lead applicants based in the area to work with a range of local partners to develop the strategy and secure local buy-in.

Industry Services

BFI Production Support Services

Budget: £2.3m

Primary outcomes: 2.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

Secondary outcomes: 3.2, 4.4

About: *Production Support Services* delivers a range of support for international and domestic productions. Awardees help secure inward investment and support international productions to take place across the UK, as well as helping to deliver production services on a local basis in the regions of England, complementing support in the nations. This helps make sure people in all parts of the UK feel the benefit of production in terms of jobs and growth.

Production support services are funded over the first two years of the funding plan. During this period, the BFI will work with the UK Government and other partners to secure a different source of investment for this work in the long term.

BFI National Lottery Sustainable Screen

Budget: £0.6m

Primary outcomes: 4.4

Secondary outcomes: 4.1, 4.3

About: *Sustainable Screen* supports all BFI National Lottery awardees and the wider screen sector to measure and minimise their environmental impact. This helps them work towards a net zero carbon pathway and positively contribute to tackling the climate and ecological crisis. This programme funds expert partners to deliver a range of resources and support that successful National Lottery recipients will be required to engage with.





How we will deliver against our principles

Each of our National Lottery funds and programmes must deliver against the three cross-cutting principles for funding set out in our National Lottery Strategy. How they deliver against these will be included in the guidelines of each fund and programme. However, there are a number of measures which are applied across all BFI National Lottery funded activity:

■ **Equity, diversity & inclusion:** We are committed to helping to drive meaningful change, using tools and interventions to encourage inclusion as well as help us monitor how effectively our funding is contributing to a more equitable sector. We will use the BFI's Inclusion Targets to track and report on how representative beneficiaries of National Lottery funding are. Our programmes and funded activity may include a focus on specific demographics and that activity should be designed appropriately for the needs of communities regionally and nationally. These will come with specific KPIs that are guided by our overall Inclusion Targets. All National Lottery recipients will be required to meet at least the minimum criteria of the **BFI Diversity Standards** as a condition of funding, and awardees will also be required to comply with the BFI's guidance and principles on **bullying, harassment and racism prevention**.

You can read more about our Inclusion work [here](#).

■ **UK-wide:** We will monitor the location of all recipients of BFI National Lottery funding, as well as where funded activity is being delivered. We will evaluate all funds and programmes based on this data, helping us to ensure that funding benefits people right across the UK. Awardees delivering activity on a UK-wide basis will be required to demonstrate how they tailor delivery to the varying needs and unique policy context of each of the four nations, as well as their track record of delivery in this manner.

■ **Environmental sustainability:** Applicants for BFI National Lottery funding will be required to submit a project-specific environmental action plan, as well as any wider existing organisational plans, as part of their assessment process. Through the Sustainable Screen programme, the BFI will fund organisations to support BFI National Lottery awardees to minimise the ecological impact of funded activity, or even turn their project into a net positive contributor to the environment. This support will be tailored to meet the needs of the wide range of projects the BFI funds, from production to audience-facing activity.



How we will measure success

We will rigorously monitor delivery and the impact of our funds and programmes. This will help make sure the National Lottery funding we award works as hard as possible for the public and the sector. We will do this in a number of ways:

- All programmes will set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and deliverables. They will be subject to regular review of monitoring data based on these KPIs. These will be tracked on a quarterly basis, with an annual review of progress against deliverables. National Lottery funded programmes will be interrogated against the principles, objectives and outcomes set out in this document. They will also be assessed against the BFI's National Lottery policy and financial directions.
- Programmes will primarily commission externally conducted evaluation. This helps ensure the good governance of public funds. We will, however, allow some internal work to be conducted for ad hoc and short-term data needs. National Lottery-funded programmes will require beneficiaries to participate in evaluation activity as a condition of their funding. The BFI will coordinate this.



Financial summary table, 2023–2026

Programme	Total (£m) 2023–2026
Audiences	27.6
BFI National Lottery Audience Projects Fund	15.0
BFI Film Audience Network	9.9
BFI National Lottery Open Cinemas	2.7
Screen Heritage	10.0
BFI National Lottery Screen Heritage Fund	7.9
Heritage 2022 final year*	2.1
Education & Skills	34.2
Education	
BFI National Lottery Teaching with Film	5.0
BFI National Lottery Careers and Progression	6.0
BFI National Lottery Young Creatives	3.0
BFI Film Academy	
BFI Film Academy	5.5
Skills	
BFI National Lottery Skills Clusters	9.0
BFI National Lottery Skills Fund	5.7
Filmmakers	54.0
BFI National Lottery Filmmaking Fund	43.5
BFI National Lottery Creative Challenge Fund	2.7
BFI NETWORK	7.8
International	3.2
BFI National Lottery International Connections Fund	0.9
We Are UK Film	2.3
Innovation & Industry Services	7.3
Innovation	
BFI National Lottery Research & Statistics Fund	1.9
BFI National Lottery Innovation Challenge Fund	1.8
BFI National Lottery Places Fund	0.7
Industry Services	
BFI Production Support Services	2.3
BFI National Lottery Sustainable Screen	0.6
Total	136.3

* Heritage 2022 is a multiannual screen heritage programme run over the course of our previous strategy, *BFI2022*. The programme is due to conclude in December 2023 due to delays induced by COVID-19.
 ** As a distributor of National Lottery funding, the level of funding we receive is always dependent on National Lottery ticket sales, which can – and often does – fluctuate. Allocations of funding detailed within this Plan are based on latest available projections on National Lottery funding, and are therefore subject to change.

