

A Cinema Near You

Fostering local cinema provision where it's most needed

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

A Cinema Near You (CNY) is a two year development programme which aims to improve access to screen and cinema provision in Scotland, targeting those communities where the need is greatest, and where the benefits may be most significant. The programme is funded by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland. It will be operated by Regional Screen Scotland in partnership with Film Hub Scotland, and supported by Screen Scotland (a dedicated unit within Creative Scotland).

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'LOCAL CINEMA'?

We have an inclusive definition of local cinema, covering a spectrum that extends from DVD-based community groups to full-time, multi-screen cinemas showing new releases. We believe that local cinema should be: open and accessible, engaged with its community, committed to embracing diversity, and part of a wider cultural ecology.

WHAT DO WE AIM TO ACHIEVE?

- Development of new fulltime cinemas** where the population base can support them, and there is no direct competition.
- Multi-purpose venues** (theatres, concert halls, community centres, arts centres) and smaller operations, hosting regular screenings of new releases, whether through installing their own projection equipment (see Screen Scotland's Cinema Equipment Fund for info) becoming part of a regular touring circuit; partnering with other exhibitors within their region etc.
- Support for **community groups** of all kinds and purposes, to undertake DVD/Blu-Ray screenings for the first time, and beyond.

WHO DO WE HOPE TO WORK WITH?

As applicants, partners, and supporters:

- Film and cinema support agencies** such as Independent Cinema Office, Cinema For All and the Community Screen Forum.
- Local Authorities and Leisure Trusts** will be invited to take part in discussions and join the programme.
- Voluntary and community groups** of all kinds, who can participate in our structured programme of pilot DVD-based screenings.
- We have strong links in place with many organisations working across Scotland in the fields of **regeneration, community development, and health and well-being.**

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

We will welcome expressions of interest from anyone thinking of starting any form of screening provision. Applicants may range from community groups to local authorities or culture and leisure trusts, and screening provision could range from (but is not limited to) film societies to multi-screen cinemas.

HOW WILL WE DELIVER THE PROGRAMME?

We will work to two principles:

- We will seek consensus on the model of screen provision which will be appropriate for each community.
- Any provision should be sustainable in the long term.

WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITY WILL BE SUPPORTED?

The activity supported will be different for every project, depending on the type of organisation, the model of film exhibition, and the stage of development. However, we expect to support the following types of activity:

- Community surveys
- Feasibility studies
- Research into models of governance and ownership
- Pilot screenings to build audiences
- 'No-risk' programme of screenings to test demand
- Specialist technical advice
- Support for an in-house film programmer
- Staff training
- Programming and audience development support
- Mentoring
- 'Go and See' visits
- Demographic and economic research
- Venue surveys
- Community engagement programme
- Participation in regional and screen networks
- Pop-up cinema events

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WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

A Cinema Near You is not a conventional funding scheme. We aim to work closely with applicants to devise and agree the most appropriate, bespoke, programme of activity and funding. There will be a number of steps:

1. Complete an initial **Expression of Interest** online form (at our website <https://www.regionalscreenscotland.org/what-we-do/screen-provision/>)
2. Following a conversation with an RSS team member, you'll then be asked to complete an **Application Questionnaire**
3. The Programme Operational Group (made up of officers from Regional Screen Scotland, Film Hub Scotland, and Screen Scotland) will then either **welcome you on to the A Cinema Near You Programme**, or will explain why you're not being invited on to the programme, and recommend either alternative forms of support, or what you might do before reapplying. This decision will be based on the following criteria:
 - a) Need for provision
 - b) Opportunity for provision
 - c) Readiness of the applicant/s to lead development
 - d) Capacity of applicant/s to manage and deliver new activity (including partners involved)

We will prioritise those applications where there is the strongest evidence of a geographic lack of cinema provision, and will also take demographic factors into account.

4. We will then work with you to develop and agree a **costed programme of activity and development**. This process might include initial support from our pool of freelance experts.
5. The programme of activity and development will be submitted to our Assessment Panel for approval, and we will then support you in its delivery and evaluation.
6. If this programme is not approved by the Assessment Panel, we will discuss alternative approaches, including the possibility of reapplying with a revised programme, or seeking alternative sources of support.
7. Depending on the progress of their project, there may be the opportunity for participants to access subsequent funding from *A Cinema Near You*.

For those interested in hosting DVD/Blu-Ray screenings, we will be developing a dedicated, structured programme of training, support, and pilot screenings, under the banner of **Grow Your Own Cinema 2**. This will be based on the successful 2016 programme of that name, and we'll be delivering it with the agencies who developed it: Cinema For All and Voluntary Arts Scotland. There will be two annual cohorts for this programme, and deadlines and guidelines will be announced in the near future.

HOW WILL WE DECIDE WHO IS ACCEPTED ONTO THE PROGRAMME?

The Application Questionnaire is designed to enable an applicant to show that they meet the criteria outlined above: **need; opportunity; readiness; and capacity**. If it looks as if an applicant does not yet meet enough of these criteria, they'll be offered advice either on how to prepare for a future reapplication, or on where else they might be able to get help and support.

WHAT CAN'T WE SUPPORT?

This is not a capital programme but we will be able to advise on other sources of funding, such as Screen Scotland's Cinema Equipment Fund, where appropriate. We can't help any existing screen provision simply to expand its current activities, though we can advise on where to go for assistance, whether it be another Screen Scotland Fund, Film Hub Scotland's schemes of support, or other agencies such as the Independent Cinema Office. And we may be able to help where, for example, a group may want to use an existing film festival as a basis for more regular year-round screenings, or to convert from DVD-based screenings to gaining access to new releases.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THIS PROGRAMME?

While *A Cinema Near You* is a discrete two year development programme, with set targets and outcomes, due to be completed by March 31 2021, it complements the **ongoing work** of both Regional Screen Scotland and Film Hub Scotland, both of which are already in receipt of funding from Creative Scotland (and, in the case of FHS, the British Film Institute) to support film exhibition across Scotland. Therefore both RSS and FHS will continue to support the portfolio of clients and projects beyond the two year span of the programme.