

**Guideline for Hessian Film and Media Funding
by Hessen Film & Media GmbH**

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PREAMBLE

This guideline regulates film and media funding in Hesse by Hessen Film & Media GmbH ("HF&M"). In accordance with the articles of association of the HF&M, its key objective is the strengthening and promotion of Hesse as a film and media hub. The financial resources of HF&M are provided in accordance with the articles of association. The regulations of this guideline become binding for grant recipients through the private-law funding agreement concluded between the grant recipients and HF&M.

Projects funded according to this guideline are expected to meet qualitatively high standards that make them eligible.

HF&M undertakes to only fund projects and productions that respect human dignity, respect fundamental rights, and promote respect for life.

I. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF FUNDING

I.1. The funding aims to increase Hesse's attractiveness and capacity utilization as a film and media hub by strengthening the development, production, marketing, and exploitation of artistically and culturally high-quality films and series with significant Hessian participation in cinema, TV and VoD of all genres and formats as well as other audio-visual media projects and local film, cinema, and festival culture worthy of promotion.

I.2. The objective of the funding is the development, maintenance, and strengthening of a diverse audio-visual cultural landscape in Hesse marked by high standards and positioning of the film and media location Hesse in the national and international competition.

The funding thus makes an important contribution to the preservation, safeguarding, and creation of jobs as well as the establishment, development, and settlement of film and media companies in Hesse.

I.3. In this context, diversity, inclusion and equal opportunity of film and media professionals shall be promoted to an appropriate extent. Such measures may be incentivized by HF&M. HF&M expects fair working conditions under socially acceptable standards in compliance with industry collective bargaining agreements. Furthermore, it is expected that all funded projects develop their standards and guidelines based on their artistic responsibility, and that antisemitism, racism and misanthropy are clearly and resolutely opposed. Funding recipients are required to implement their projects in an ecologically sustainable manner. Effective measures shall be considered and deployed across all production phases. This is particularly required in the field of production. Barrier-free access to funded productions shall be ensured.

I.4 The scope of funding comprises projects falling under Sections V to XII of these guideline.

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND STATE AID CLASSIFICATION OF FUNDING

II.1. Funding may only be provided within the scope of funds made available to HF&M by the State of Hesse through the budgetary legislation, through the Hessian Broadcasting Corporation pursuant to the Act on Private Broadcasting in Hesse (Hessian Private Broadcasting Act - HPRG - Section 41, paragraph 1), and through ZDF (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen). Additional funding sources are not excluded.

II.2. There is no legal entitlement to the funding regulated in this guideline. Furthermore, funding in one of the areas listed in this guideline does not create a legal entitlement to further funding in other areas.

In principle, an application set up in the separate funding areas can be followed by an application in a subsequent section.

II.3. Funding is excluded for projects that are likely to be in breach of the German constitution or laws. Industrial, advertising, image films, and similar projects are not eligible for funding either.

II.4. HF&M's funding is based on this funding guideline, any information sheets issued by HF&M on this subject, the respective funding commitment, and the funding agreement.

II.5 For projects which receive federal funding and which are thus subject to the provisions of the law on measures promoting German film (Filmförderungsgesetz, FFG), the conditions of the FFG apply in addition to the regulations in this guideline.

II.6. Funding according to this guideline is granted pursuant to the EU General Block Exemption Regulation ("GBER"-EU Commission Regulation no. 651/2014) declaring specific categories of State aid compatible with the internal market in application of articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (EU L 187 of 26 June 2014, p. 1), in particular articles 53 and 54 GBER.

The requirements of Article 53(2) and Article 57(2) GBER regarding cultural objectives or projects, as well as the requirements of Articles 53 and 54 GBER regarding eligible costs, must be observed when granting funding.

Funding under this guideline may only be cumulated with funding from other funding institutions in accordance with Article 8 of the GBER.

In this case, the aid intensity of all subsidies granted to produce audiovisual works shall generally not exceed 50% of the respective total production costs. For cross-border productions financed by more than one EU member state and involving producers from more than one member state, the aid intensity may be up to 60% of the respective total production costs.

For the production of difficult audiovisual works (for example short films, first and second films by directors, documentaries, works with low production costs or other commercially difficult works) as well as co-productions involving countries on the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list, the aid intensity may be increased to up to 100% of eligible costs.

The aid intensity for aid for the preparation of production shall not exceed 100% of the eligible costs. If the screenplay or project is subsequently realized, the costs for production preparation shall be incorporated into the overall budget and taken into account when calculating the aid intensity for the relevant audiovisual work.

The maximum aid intensity of distribution aid shall correspond to the aid intensity of production aid.

The aid intensity of funding measures pursuant to Sections IX and X of these guidelines not exceeding EUR 2.2 million for cultural purposes pursuant to Article 53(2) GBER, in particular for cinemas as institutions for the preservation and protection of film heritage, events and festivals and similar cultural activities, may be set at 80% of eligible costs without applying the otherwise required methods for determining aid intensity (Article 53(8) GBER).

Companies which have not complied with a recovery order issued following a previous EU Commission resolution establishing that provisions are not permitted and incompatible with the internal market may not be granted any funding according to Article 1 (4) (a). Companies in difficulties pursuant to Article 1 (4) (c) in conjunction with Article 2 (18) GBER are also not eligible for funding.

Publication of the approval of projects is made in accordance with Article 9 (1) in conjunction with Annex III GBER. Each individual aid exceeding EUR 100,000 granted after 2 July 2023 shall be published in the Transparency Database (Transparency Award module, TAM) of the European Commission by the Hessian Ministry of Economics, Energy, Transport and Housing in accordance with European requirements.

Funding measures pursuant to Sections XI and XII(2)(b) and (c) of these guidelines, insofar as they are not covered by the requirements of Articles 53 and 54 GBER, shall be granted in accordance with the De Minimis Regulation of the European Commission (Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 of the Commission of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid (OJ L 352 of 24 December 2013, p. 1, as last amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/28 of the Commission of 13 December 2023). Accordingly, an undertaking may receive "de minimis" aid of up to EUR 300,000 within three fiscal years. Should this threshold already have been reached through de minimis aid received or should the funding under the respective program be exceeded, funding shall only be possible with special approval of the European Commission. In the case of de minimis aid the information and documentation obligations of funding recipients must be observed; these shall be communicated together with the funding agreements.

The funding measure pursuant to Section XII(2)(a) is not relevant under state aid rules.

II.7. The costs of the project for which the funding is requested are to be calculated in accordance with standard industry practice and to the basic principles of budgetary rigor.

II.8. Work on the project other than filing the documents required for the application may not have commenced at the time of the submission of the application. If the performance of the project is jeopardized, HF&M may grant an exception upon request exemption (so-called exemption from the prohibition of refinancing as an exception provision). Legal entitlement to funding shall not be substantiated hereby.

II.9. The implementation and presentation of funded projects must indicate an adequate reference regarding the funding by HF&M.

II.10 The requirements and incentive effect pursuant to Article 6 GBER must be observed. Likewise, the notification thresholds pursuant to Article 4 GBER are to be observed.

III. FINANCIAL FOUNDATION AND FORMS OF FUNDING

III.1 The funding is granted on a project-specific basis for the financing of the funded measure and shall be provided as a grant or as a conditionally repayable, interest-free loan. For funding amounts up to EUR 10,000.00 allocations shall be granted as fixed-amount financing; beyond this threshold, as proportional financing.

III.2. An exception to III.1 is the funding of festivals listed under point X: in appropriate cases, subsidies can be granted as fixed amount for annually recurring festivals. An appropriate case occurs if a festival is structured in the way of previous editions regarding content, finances, and organization and thus expected not to be subject to planned revenue and expenditure fluctuations.

III.3 For the purpose of verifying the appropriate use of funds, a simplified proof of use shall be accepted for allocation amounts up to EUR 10,000 (consisting of a factual report and a statement of all revenues and expenditures corresponding to the structure of the approved budget).

III.4 With the exception of Section XII (Other Measures), a de minimis threshold of EUR 1,000 shall apply to the disbursement of funding.

IV. PROCEDURE

IV.1. Funding is granted upon application. Details on the application documents to be submitted as well as information on eligible expenses are regulated in the respective information sheets for each funding area.

IV.2. The application form must be submitted in German. Upon request of HF&M, documents in foreign languages must be handed in in addition to the application as certified translation, if necessary.

If a film is not produced or dubbed in a German-language version, a final version of the film shall be provided with German subtitles.

IV.3. If expressly stipulated in the information sheet, specific projects can exclusively apply via the HF&M online application management. Each application requires prior consultation with the funding department.

IV.4. Guidelines on eligibility for applications are regulated in the respective funding areas. For companies, particularly producers, this guideline targets small and medium-sized enterprises as described in the EU recommendation 2001/361. Public-law broadcasters, private broadcasting services, promoters, and their subsidiaries do not qualify for an application if they have acquired a share of more than 25% from these companies.

IV.5. Producers under this guideline are self-employed people and companies who commercially produce films or other projects eligible for funding according to this guideline.

IV.6. HF&M decides on the admissibility of the funding application. The applications must be submitted in time and in full. Submissions will be rejected by HF&M if they are obviously unsubstantiated, incomplete, or submitted to HF&M after the according deadline has expired.

IV.7. If a funding application has been rejected, the application for the same project can only be re-submitted one more time, **exclusively upon recommendation of the jury**. Funding measures pursuant to section IX are excluded from this provision.

- IV.8. Unless otherwise stipulated in this guideline, a jury decides on the approval of a submitted funding application. The HF&M supervisory board governs the election and composition of the juries in coordination with the Hessian trade associations, whereby the trade representatives make up most of the jury members.
- IV.9. In case an application is decided by a jury, the dates for submissions will be published on the website www.hessenfilm.de.
- IV.10. A funding agreement and disbursement of the funds can only be concluded upon proof that the necessary rights of use and overall financing for the underlying project can be documented.
- IV.11. HF&M may decide that the provision of funding of individual projects may be subject to a significant contribution by the applicant. The minimum amount of this contribution is specified in the currently valid information sheet.
- IV.12. The Hesse effect to be rendered is determined in the funding approval respectively funding agreement. The Hesse Effect describes the costs incurred and recognized in Hesse in connection with a project.
HF&M can waive the Hesse effect wholly or partially if the State of Hesse has a particular interest in the project regarding culture and/or cultural industry.
- IV.13. After the approval of funding has been issued, substantial amendments to the project's artistic, technical, or financial parameters, the project's process, or other aspects laid out in the application documents require re-submission and a renewed jury decision.
- IV.14. HF&M is entitled to disburse the granted funding amounts progressively depending on the project's progress.

Furthermore, HF&M is entitled to limit or prematurely terminate the funding by decision of the managing board if, during the project's production, the success of the incentive measures or the realization chances for the funded project are at risk.

IV.15. Recipients of the funding are obliged to present an audit of the final costs to document the appropriate use of the funding granted by HF&M. HF&M may engage third parties to review the evidence of appropriate use. The related incurring charges are to be paid by the funding recipients.

In principle, the recipients must provide all the supporting documents providing evidence of appropriate use unless HF&M has renounced this explicitly and in writing. In the case of such a renouncement, the submission of numerical evidence (a summary compilation of the revenue and expenditure in line with the structure of the financing plan) and a list of individual posts alongside the report, which must indicate the date, the receiving and paying person, and purpose and individual amount of each payment, is mandatory. Nevertheless, HF&M may request submission of individual receipts/documents on a random basis. HF&M has final responsibility for all decisions concerning the project funding. In cooperation with other funding institutions, HF&M may agree on a review by one of the institutions involved.

V. STORY DEVELOPMENT AND PRE-PRODUCTION

V.1. Treatment

V.1.1 Funding may be granted for the creation of a film treatment particularly related to the State of Hesse. A treatment establishes the plot, setting and characters of a project.

V.1.2 Eligible to apply are authors with their main residence in Hesse who have already written an already filmed screenplay or directed a realized feature or documentary film.

V.1.3 The funding is provided in the form of a grant up to a maximum of EUR 10,000.

V.1.4 The decision to fund a treatment - unless granted as part of toolbox according to section V.4 - is up to the HF&M managing board. Applications may be submitted at any time.

V2. Story Development

V.2.1 Eligible for funding is the creation of screenplays for feature films or series (tv show bible plus a script for at least one pilot).

V.2.2 Also eligible are other story developments for film projects.

V.2.3 Entitled to apply are authors with main residence in Hesse or producers with office, branch office, or operating facility in Hesse and already working with authors at the time of application.

V.2.4 Story development funding can be granted up to a maximum of EUR 30,000.

V.2.5 In exceptional cases where a revision of the story is required, additional funding for further script development up to a maximum of EUR 15,000 may also be granted.

V.2.6 Funding is provided in form of a grant.

V.3. Pre-Production

V.3.1 Eligible for funding are the pre-production of films or series.

V.3.2 Producers with residence, branch office, or operating facility in Hesse are eligible for application.

V.3.3 The funding is provided in form of a grant up to EUR 50,000 max.

V.4. Toolbox

V.4.1 In this funding category, a project's funding comprises two or three of the following modules, which may be combined with one another and applied for simultaneously:

- treatment
- story development
- pre-production

Eligible for funding are the development of feature film and series projects.

V.4.2 Producers with residence, branch office, or operating facility in Hesse are entitled to apply, if they are already working with authors at the time of application.

Toolbox funding is not accessible to talent films pursuant to section VII.

V.4.3 Funding is provided in form of a grant up to EUR 80,000 max.

V.4.4 The funded modules within the Toolbox may not be combined with additional independent funding for treatment, story development, and pre-production.

V.5. Package Funding

V.5.1 Package funding may be granted for story development and pre-production for the development of three to five feature film, media, or series projects. The focus should be on the development of cinema projects.

V.5.2 Producers qualifying as micro-enterprises or small enterprises under the EU recommendation 2003/361 are entitled to apply, if they have their office, branch office, or operating facility in Hesse

V.5.3 Production companies that would be eligible for Talent Package Funding pursuant to Section V.6, or that have previously received Talent Package Funding where the final instalment has not yet been disbursed, are not eligible to apply.

V.5.4 Funding is provided in form of a grant of up to EUR 150,000 max.

V.6. Talent Package Funding

V.6.1 Producers qualifying as micro-enterprises under the EU recommendation 2003/361 with office, branch office, or operating facility in Hesse may apply for talent package funding, as long as no more than five years have passed since the business was established and they have realized at least one feature film, documentary, or one season of a series as a producer at the time of application. The realization of such a debut project must not date back more than five years.

V.6.2 Funding is granted for a package comprising the eligible business costs, costs for the story development, and pre-production of three to five media, film, or series productions. The primary focus should be on the development of cinema projects. Article 54(2) GBER must be observed.

V.6.3 Funding is provided in form of a grant of up to EUR 150,000 max.

VI PRODUCTION FUNDING

VI.1. Production

VI.1.1 Eligible for funding are films and series for cinema, TV and VoD of any length, genre, and format with fictional or documentary content, which appear to be suitable to promote the cultural standard and economy of the film and media production in Germany and Hesse. The funded projects should be expected to generate a backflow of the granted funding due to the expected economic exploitation success.

VI.1.2 A prerequisite for funding is, furthermore, the applicant's self-commitment to comply with the criteria of the "Ecological Minimum Standards for Film Productions" as set out in the information sheet issued by HF&M for the respective submission deadline in effect at the time.

VI.1.3 Producers are eligible to apply.

- VI.1.4 Funding is granted in form of a conditionally repayable, interest-free loan. For projects with production costs of less than EUR 1.5 million, the funding may be provided as a grant if the project is not expected to generate the desired success but is considered worthy of support, nonetheless.
- VI.1.5 For TV productions or other audio-visual projects which are not designated for cinema release, it must be ensured that agreements with the respective exploiters provide balanced terms of agreement, and a fair division of the rights of use and revenue.
- VI.1.6 Feature films for cinemas may be granted up to EUR 1 million max.; Other films, TV productions, series, and experimental films may receive up to EUR 500,000 max., and short films EUR 50,000 max.
- VI.1.7 In principle, at least 150% of the funding amount granted is to be spent in Hesse ("Hesse-Effect"). The expenditure in Hesse should be made in film-related areas.
- VI.1.8 Funded cinema films with more than EUR 1.5 million production costs must be submitted to the Deutsche Film- und Medienbewertung (FBW) (German Film and Media Review) for a one-time evaluation. The costs involved may be charged as Hesse-Effect.
- VI.1.9 "Der besondere Kinderfilm" ("The Special Children's Film") is a funding initiative of the public-law broadcasters, the film industry, federal and regional funding bodies, and the political sector. Within the framework of their cooperation agreement, HF&M and the Förderverein Deutscher Kinderfilm e.V. wish to lend greater visibility to original children's cinema. Thus, projects are jointly selected from amongst the participating broadcasters and film funding bodies for story development or production preparation funding and/or production funding. Notwithstanding Section IV.8, the funding of story development or production preparation is not subject to a jury decision of HF&M, but is instead granted by the management upon recommendation of the jury for the "Besonderen Kinderfilm" ("Special Children's Film"). Production funding, however, is subject to the standard funding provisions pursuant to Section IV.8.

VI.1.10. Repayment of the loan must be made from the total net revenues achieved by the funding recipients in domestic and foreign markets. After primary repayment of the applicant's contribution approved by the HF&M, and after any costs which are revenue-related copyright remunerations gained from commercial use owed by the funding recipients have been reduced, 50% of the revenues received by the recipients are to be used to repay the loan. If several funding institutions have a stake in funding the film, repayment can be agreed on a pro rata pari passu on a proportionate basis. The particulars are set out in the funding agreement. The obligation to repay the conditionally repayable, interest-free loan expires after five years following the release of the film in cinemas, the first broadcast or publishing.

VI.2. Success Loan

Funding recipients who repay a production loan granted to them under this guideline may, within a period of three years from the first loan repayment instalment, apply for a new loan in the amount of the repaid capital (Success Loan) to be used for story development, production preparation or production. The Success Loan shall be granted if the new project meets the requirements of these guidelines and the applicable information sheets. The full amount must be spent on Hesse. The decision to grant the Success Loan shall be taken by the management of HF&M. The Success Loan may be cumulated with other funding categories under this guideline.

VI.3. Post-Production

VI.3.1 Within the framework of production funding funding may also be granted for dedicated post-production measures in justified exceptional cases. Funding shall be provided as a grant. The maximum funding amount shall be EUR 30,000.

VI.3.2 Producers with a registered office, branch office, or operating facility in Hesse are eligible to apply.

VI.3.3 An application is only permissible if the project has not previously received any public production funding domestically or internationally and has not received financial support from a national TV or VoD provider, and if principal photography has already been completed at the time of application.

VI.3.4 The funded post-production measures are to be implemented in Hesse, and the demonstrable Hesse-Effect must at least amount to 100% of the received funding amount.

VII. TALENT FILM FUNDING

Fundable talent films comprise productions in the categories of narrative and documentary film of up to a second feature-length film (alternatively, a maximum total of 300 minutes in other formats) that have been produced after completion of a university degree or other vocational training, or by self-taught filmmakers, and that are intended (or have proven to be suitable) for cinema, TV, streaming or festival exploitation.

Where at least one of the productions is a different audiovisual format, in particular a serial format or a production of excessive length, talent film funding shall only be granted provided that the total running time of the productions to be assessed does not exceed 300 minutes.

The prerequisite for project development and production funding is that at least two of the three areas of authorship/directing/production are held by responsible parties meeting the criteria stated above.

Where there are multiple co-authors and co-directors, these prerequisites must be met by all responsible parties of the relevant areas.

For the field of production, the qualification of the majority co-producer is decisive.

In the field of animation, the talent film category encompasses up to two animated films of at least 24 minutes running time. All other conditions stated above shall apply accordingly.

In the field of short film, the talent film category encompasses up to two short films, whereby short films produced without public funding or other significant financing shall not be considered for the purpose of qualification as talent films. All other conditions stated above shall apply accordingly.

Talent film funding expressly also includes such first and second feature-length or short films that were not produced as part of a completed program of study at a film school or comparable educational institution (so-called self-taught filmmakers).

Should university films or productions created during vocational training under industry-standard conditions (primarily with participation of broadcasters/regional funding bodies) and have had a cinema release (or other commercial exploitation), these shall be considered in the project count.

VII.1 Talent Film

VII.1.1 Production funding for a talent narrative film with production costs of up to EUR 2 million shall, generally, be provided as a grant. For projects with production costs exceeding EUR 2 million, the provisions of Section VI shall apply in full.

Production funding for a talent documentary film with production costs of up to EUR 400,000 shall, generally, be provided as a grant. For projects with production costs exceeding EUR 400,000, the provisions of Section VI shall apply in full.

VII.1.2 Eligible to apply for the production funding of a talent film are producers who qualify as micro-enterprises within the meaning of EU Recommendation 2003/361 and who have their registered office, a branch or a business establishment in Hesse.

VII.1.3 Within the framework of their "Fifty-Fifty" cooperation agreement, HF&M and ZDF jointly fund particularly outstanding talent films. The projects shall receive parity financing from the broadcaster and HF&M, with a maximum annual amount of up to EUR 500,000 to be committed per partner. Notwithstanding Section IV.8, the "Fifty-Fifty" funding is not subject to a jury decision but is instead granted by the management.

VII.1.4 The production of feature-length cinema films and seasons of serial talent films may be funded with up to a maximum of EUR 500,000. The production of all other talent films may be funded with a maximum of EUR 50,000.

VII.1.5 A Hesse Effect is not required for talent films.

VII.2 University Graduation Film - Regular Funding

To produce university graduation films at the following Hessian institutions of higher education, grants may be provided: Hochschule Darmstadt, Hochschule Rhein Main, Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach and Kunsthochschule in der Universität Kassel.

The above-named institutions are eligible to apply for up to EUR 25,000 per institution per year.

The decision on regular university graduation film funding shall be taken by the management of HF&M.

VII.3 University Graduation Film - Excellence Funding

VII.3.1 For the production of particularly meritorious university graduation films at the following Hessian institutions of higher education, grants may be provided: Hochschule Darmstadt, Hochschule Rhein Main, Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach and Kunsthochschule in der Universität Kassel.

Eligible to apply are students of the above-named institutions enrolled in programs with an artistic aptitude examination, upon the express recommendation of their lecturers.

The projects must serve the attainment of a diploma, bachelor's, master's or equivalent artistic degree.

VII.3.2 Per submission deadline, a maximum of one project per institution may be proposed for Excellence Funding. The maximum funding amount shall be EUR 20,000. Direct application by the institution itself is not permissible.

VII.3.3 A Hesse Effect is not required for university graduation films.

VIII. DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING

VIII.1. Funding is provided for the distribution and marketing costs of films, which contribute to the development of the European film culture with a particular interest in Hesse's film culture and/or economy in the department of distribution and sales. This is particularly the case for film productions funded by the Land of Hesse.

VIII.2. Self-employed people, companies, and entities (e.g., registered associations) commercially involved in the marketing of films, series, or other audio-visual content, and in exceptional cases also producers, are entitled to apply.

VIII.3. The funding may amount to a maximum of EUR 40,000. At least 100% of the funding granted is to be spent in Hesse ("Hesse-Effect").

The funding is granted in the form of a conditionally repayable, interest-free loan. In justified individual cases, the funding of distributions may be provided as a grant if the project is not expected to generate the desired commercial success to repay the loan but is deemed worthy of funding, nonetheless.

VIII.4 The loans granted must be repaid from the exploitation proceeds of the film to which the applicants are entitled after covering the preliminary costs or sales costs not financed from subsidies and distribution and sales guarantees shown in the funding agreement. The repayment obligation ceases five years after the cinema premiere.

IX. CINEMA INVESTMENTS

IX.1. Measures of maintaining cultural heritage, of modernization and improvement of economic efficiency for cinemas in Hesse with a focus on sustainability are eligible for funding.

IX.2. Eligible to apply are self-employed people, companies, and entities (e.g., registered associations) that operate cinemas or other screening venues in Hesse and would otherwise be unable to undertake the necessary investments.

Venues must have been operated for at least two years at the time of application and demonstrate regular performance. The prosperity clause is applicable upon approval of the application.

- IX.3. Funding may be granted for investments amounting up to EUR 1.5 million. If the overall costs (construction measures, cinema-related technical appliances, and furnishings) exceed the limit of EUR 1.5 million, only investments in cinema-related appliances or furnishings are eligible as costs for the funding.

The project is not eligible for funding if the investment costs for cinema-related technical devices and furnishings exceed EUR 1.5 million.

- IX.4. Funding is provided in the form of a grant up to a maximum of EUR 150,000 of the eligible costs.

X. FESTIVALS, EVENTS, AND SERIES

- X.1. The organization of film festivals, film events, and film series are eligible for funding.
- X.2. Eligible to apply are self-employed people, companies, and entities (e.g., registered associations) qualifying as micro-enterprises or small enterprises under the EU recommendation 2003/361 that operate cinemas or other screening venues in Hesse or organize film festivals, film events, and film series in Hesse.
- X.3. The funding is provided in form of a grant. Film festivals may be granted up to a maximum of EUR 300,000, other film events and series up to a maximum of EUR 40,000.
- X.4. Due to the specific aspects of the implementation of a film festival, film event, or film series, the exclusion applies that a funding application may be eligible if the activity has already started, provided that the application for the funding has been filed prior to the festival opening or start of the event. This does not result in any legal entitlement to funding.

XI. MEDIA

- XI.1. Digital or audio-visual projects with an artistic approach and providing cultural Hesse-Effect are eligible for funding. These include virtual and augmented reality content, 360° films, media installations, web applications, and games, among others. The projects must appear eligible for funding in the cultural field and/or show market potential.
- XI.2. Self-employed people and companies qualifying as micro-enterprises or small enterprises under the EU recommendation 2003/361 with office, office branch, or operating facilities in Hesse are eligible to apply.
- XI.3. Funding for project development can amount to a maximum of EUR 10,000 and is granted by the HF&M management. Applications can be submitted on an ongoing basis.
- XI.4. The funding for a project or production of a prototype can amount to a maximum of EUR 50,000 and is granted by a jury.
- XI.5. The funding is provided in form of a grant. The demonstrable Hesse-Effect must make up at least 100% of the funding amount.

XII. OTHER MEASURES

The HF&M management decides on the allocation of the funding under the terms defined by the Supervisory Board in this guideline.

Applications can be submitted any time.

The funding is provided in the form of a grant.

XII.1 Other measures

Funding for other measures may be granted if they meet the funding objectives (section I), support or usefully supplement the funding objectives, and enrich the film and media hub Hesse. Prizes honoring great achievements are also granted in this section.

XII.2 STEP

- a) With the STEP program, HF&M promotes the mediation of practical training content in the film sector and on set through specific industry qualification measures.
- b) Furthermore, HF&M awards scholarships accompanied by mentors to authors.
- c) Other training measures are also promoted.
- d) HF&M may support the start-up phase of media companies through rent subsidies, as well as supervised stipends provided by mentors.

XIII. ENTRY INTO FORCE AND FINAL PROVISIONS

XIII.1 This guideline constitutes a successor guideline to the Guidelines for Hessian Film and Media Funding by HesseFilm und Medien GmbH (effective from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025). They shall enter into force on 1 January 2026 and shall remain in effect until 31 December 2027. It supersedes all previously applicable guidelines.

XIII.2 For funding measures pursuant to Sections V to X of this funding guideline, the duration of this funding guideline shall be limited until the expiry of the GBER (31 December 2026) plus a six-month adjustment period, i.e. until 30 June 2027. Should the temporal application of the GBER be extended without relevant substantive changes affecting the state aid provisions, the duration of this funding guideline shall be extended accordingly. Should the GBER not be extended and be replaced by a new GBER or should relevant substantive changes to the current GBER be made, a successor funding guideline corresponding to the then-applicable exemption provisions shall be enacted.

XIII.3 For funding measures pursuant to Sections XI and XII(2)(b) and (c) of these funding guidelines, insofar as they are not covered by Articles 53 and 54 GBER, the duration of these funding guidelines shall be limited until the expiry of the De Minimis Regulation.

Should the temporal application of the De Minimis Regulation be extended without relevant substantive changes affecting the state aid provisions, the duration of this funding guideline shall be extended accordingly. Should the De Minimis Regulation not be extended and be replaced by a new De Minimis Regulation or should relevant substantive changes to the current De Minimis Regulation be made, a successor funding guideline corresponding to the then-applicable provisions shall be enacted.

The funding measure pursuant to Section XII(2)(a) is not relevant under state aid rules.

XIII.4 The HMWK holds the corresponding audit rights pursuant to Section 44 of the Administrative Regulations (VV) to ensure proper administrative conduct. The Hessian Court of Audit (HRH) holds audit right pursuant to Section 84 of the State Budget Code (LHO).

Only the German version of this guideline shall be legally binding, the English translation serves for information purposes only.