



## SPRING '20 AUSTIN FILM SOCIETY GRANT CYCLE

Instructions for applying to the spring cycle of the 2020 AFS Grant, which is made up of the following opportunities for funding:

- AFS Grant for Production (pre-production, production and post), which includes:
  - New Texas Voices Grant
  - North Texas Pioneer Film Fund
  - In-Kind Production Services Grants
    - MPS Camera and Lighting
    - Stuck On On
- AFS Grant Development Fund\* (new)

### I. AFS GRANTS OVERVIEW

The AFS Grant makes annual grants to film and video artists in the state of Texas. Awards are provided to artists whose work shows promise, skill, and creativity. AFS is committed to fostering diverse and underrepresented voices in independent film. Special attention is paid to provide support to women filmmakers and those who identify with communities of color. Funded through revenues from the Texas Film Awards, the Texas Commission on the Arts and private and corporate donations, the grant serves to redress the loss of public funds for filmmakers by disbursing funds for production and distribution and offering travel stipends to Texas filmmakers. In 2020, AFS will also address the increasingly threatened environment for artist livelihoods due to the COVID-19 crisis and issue grants to artists for projects in development. Since 1996, AFS has awarded over \$2M in cash and \$340,000 in-kind goods and services to 425 artists. AFS Grant recipients have shown their films at renowned festivals like Sundance, Berlin, Cannes, Toronto, Venice, Tribeca, Rotterdam and SXSW, and have won Independent Spirit Awards and Student Academy Awards.

The Austin Film Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit media arts organization. Established in 1985, the Austin Film Society makes great film and independent filmmaking accessible in Texas. The grant was started in 1996 as the Texas Filmmakers' Production Fund, and was renamed the AFS Grant in 2013.

### 2020 AFS Grant Applications

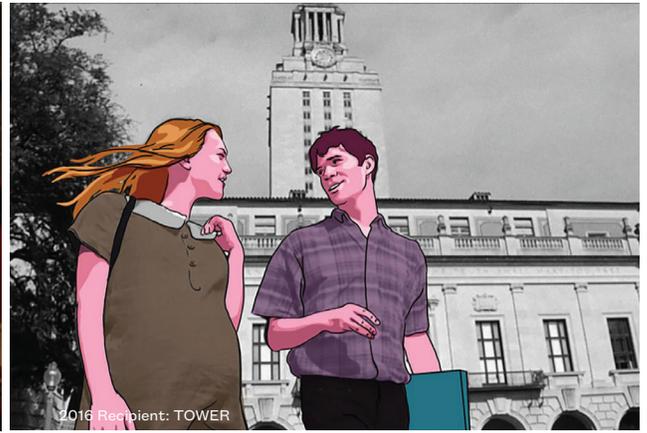
must be made through our website at [www.austinfilm.org](http://www.austinfilm.org).

For more information, call 512-322-0145 or email [filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org](mailto:filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org).





2018 Recipient: BUILDING THE AMERICAN DREAM



2016 Recipient: TOWER

## II. APPLICATION CYCLES

The AFS Grant is administered with two application periods and deadlines. The spring call for entries will be open to feature length narrative and documentary projects. For short film projects (under 40 min), the application will open in late July.

**Spring Application:** The spring application is open for documentary and narrative feature-length film projects (over 40 minutes) in any phase of production, or feature-length films in development. While deadlines and application period are the same, there is a separate application for the AFS Grant Development Fund. Applicants will not be considered both for development grant and production grants in the same cycle.

**The spring deadline is Monday, June 8, 2020.** Applications must be submitted by 5pm CST. Awards are announced at the end of August and grant disbursements are made shortly thereafter.

**Fall Application:** The fall call for entries will accept applications for short film projects only (under 40 minutes).

The application for short films will open July 29th. **The deadline for short projects is September 4th.** Applications must be submitted by 5pm CST. Awards are announced in December.

### III. Applicant and Project Eligibility

In order to be eligible to submit to the Grant, you must meet the following requirements:

- This is a grant for filmmakers currently residing in the state of Texas.
- You must be the director or co-director of the project in order to apply.
- You must be a Texas resident since June 1, 2019. You cannot apply if you are attending school full-time outside the state of Texas.

- AFS staff and Board members may not be the project applicant.
- All genres of film and video are eligible to apply, except industrial or promotional pieces, music videos and “works-for-hire.”

Projects must meet the following requirements for the **AFS Grant production fund:**

- All projects must be stand-alone single works. TV or Web series are not eligible at this time.
- Project must be in pre-production, production, post-production or distribution stages.

Projects must meet the following additional requirements if applying for the **AFS Grant Development Fund (separate from the AFS Grant production fund, new in 2020):**

- You may only submit one application (one project) for the Development Grant Fund.
- You may not apply for both the AFS Grant for Development and the regular AFS Grant, which is for any phase of production (see above).
- First feature-length filmmakers must show that they have directed previous work (short, television, etc).
- Recipients are required to submit the following at the end of the grant period, (August 31, 2021):
  1. Screenplay draft or documentary treatment  
**OR**
  2. Test or sample footage  
**AND**
  3. Production progress report (document detailing next steps for project completion).

### IV. Eligibility for Previous Recipients

If you have already received an AFS Grant the following applies to you:

- If you received two previous AFS grants for the same project, you cannot apply for

a third AFS Grant. This does not include AFS travel grants.

- If you have only received one AFS grant, you can re-apply for the same project as long as you are in good standing on your contract with us. You must include a written progress report that shows your project’s status has advanced significantly since the last time it was awarded funding. (Listed in the Required Attachments section).

### V. Applicant Responsibilities

All applicants are required to do the following after submitting their grant application:

- You must notify AFS immediately of any significant changes to your project that occur after you submit your project.
- If you are awarded an AFS grant, you are required to carry out a project that is consistent with the proposal you submitted.
- If your project changes significantly from your proposal, you must write us a written request before expenditure of grant funds. Approval isn’t guaranteed.
- AFS will send you a post-grant period questionnaire which serves as your report on your grant.

### VI. AFS Grant Awards: What You Can Apply For

Applicants can apply for any of the following cash and in-kind awards offered as part of the 2020 AFS Grant spring cycle, noting that cash grants will be awarded up to but not exceed \$15,000 per project. Please note that some cash grants and in-kind grants have their own eligibility requirements, so please read over the requirements for each grant carefully.

#### AFS Grant - Cash Grant, Production (pre-production, production and post)

Projects may apply for up to \$15,000 cash for pre-production, production or post-production through the AFS Grant fund. Projects may apply

for up to \$3,000 for distribution support. Total cash support from the AFS Grant will not exceed \$15,000. However, applicants can receive in-kind support valued in excess of the \$15,000 cash grant (in other words, applicants can apply to receive in-kind grants on top of \$15,000 cash).

The following grants are special cash grants that are part of the overall AFS Grant Fund:

#### **North Texas Pioneer Film Grant-Cash Grant, Production (pre-production, production and post)**

AFS has partnered with Oak Cliff Film Festival (Dallas), Sailor Bear film collective and Ley Line Entertainment to offer cash grants to emerging filmmakers residing in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and surrounding region. Grants ranging from \$5,000-\$15,000 be awarded for the production/post-production of feature-length films (40 minutes or greater).

#### **New Texas Voices Grant -Cash Grant, Production (pre-production, production and post)**

Affirming its ongoing commitment to supporting diverse voices and growing new talent, AFS offers \$10,000 as the New Texas Voices Grant to filmmakers who identify with a community of color traditionally underrepresented in independent film. This new grant will be accompanied by specialized consultation for the awarded filmmakers. Filmmakers wishing to be considered must have a first feature-length film (narrative or documentary) in early to mid-production and must provide ethnicity data in the application. All other regular eligibility and application requirements for the AFS Grant must be met.

In-Kind Grants

#### **MPS Camera and Lighting Austin - In-Kind Grant**

The MPS Camera and Lighting Austin Grant is a credit from Austin-based MPS Camera for up to \$10,000 in production services. This includes camera, lenses, lighting/grip and electrical, among other services. The grant does not apply to post-production services.

This grant comes in the form of a certificate from MPS Camera Austin, which is disseminated in early September. An awarded certificate must be used on the applying project and cannot be sold. Any unused certificate must be returned to the Austin Film Society. Please visit the MPS Camera Austin website for more details about what they offer. Grantees must meet MPS' minimum insurance requirements, and rentals are subject to availability. MPS must be credited in

the project credits.

#### **Stuck On On DCP- In-Kind Grant**

The Stuck On On DCP grant awards theatrical digital cinema packages (DCP) to two different AFS Grant applicant features. The project may be a theatrical documentary or narrative feature up to 100 minutes each. This grant includes one 2K DCP file creation. Cost of hard drive or digital delivery may vary depending on time of request. All other fees will be waived. Delivery requirements and scheduling for the DCP creation can be coordinated directly with Stuck On On. Please allow ample turnaround time during the busy January to April film festival season. Stuck On On must be acknowledged in the film's credits.

New Grant:

#### **AFS Development Fund**

Intended to address the lack of funds available and hardship artists have experienced as a result of the COVID 19 crisis, and to continue to support a pipeline of independent film production in Texas, the AFS Grant Development Fund will award career artists a one-time \$5,000 cash stipend towards the development of a feature-length film project, either narrative or documentary.

You may not apply for both the AFS Grant for Development and the regular AFS Grant, which is for any phase of production (see above). This is a grant for filmmakers with a body of completed works. First time feature-length filmmakers must show that they have directed previous works (short, television, etc).

#### **VII. Online Informational Workshops**

AFS Grant program staff will offer a series of live webinars via the Zoom web-based meeting application to share tips, answer frequently asked questions, and provide guidance for applicants. We strongly encourage attending a webinar if you are a first-time applicant. Because of staffing limitations due to the Covid-19 crisis, one-on-one grant consultations will not be offered in the 2020 application cycle.

#### **Webinar schedule:**

Webinars will take place via the web-based Zoom application. Advance registration is required to receive the Zoom link and instructions. Webinars will have a special focus, see schedule below for details.

- [Friday, May 8, 2020 at 4PM CST - General overview of AFS Grant and all application areas.](#)
- [Friday, May 15, 2020 at 12:30 PM CST - AFS Grant Development Fund info session](#)

- [Tuesday, May 19 at 12:30 PM CST - Documentary Feature focus info session](#)
- [Friday, May 22 at 12:30 PM CST - Narrative Feature focus info session](#)
- [Wednesday, June 3 at 7 PM CST - General overview of AFS Grant and all application areas](#)

#### **VIII. Application Preparation**

Applying for the grant is an online process. Applications and all supporting materials must be submitted online at <https://www.austinfilm.org/afs-grants-applications/> (including video sample submissions). Please refer to the application form instructions for more information on the required materials. For advice on how to best approach each of these sections, you can refer to our Grant Writing Tipsheet.

#### **Application Form Instructions :**

AFS Grant (Pre-production, production and post-production), includes the North Texas Pioneer Film Fund, New Texas Voices Grant, and all in-kind grants. (AFS Grant Development Fund begins on page 5)

Go to the grant section of our website <https://www.austinfilm.org/AFS-Grants-Applications/> (AFS Grant info's under the "Filmmaker Support" section if you don't find it on the home-page). You will be able to save and return to your application.

#### **General Information:**

- Fill out this section in its entirety.
- Use the 2nd name field if you are working with a co-director.
- Provide an email and mailing address that will be valid as of August 2020.

#### **Project Information:**

- Fill out a running time, even if it is an estimate.
- Please check all boxes for funds that you are eligible for
- Your total cash cost should only include cash costs, not in-kind totals.
- Your AFS Grant cash request should not exceed \$15,000 (in-kind request can exceed this cap)
- Project Summary: Write a short synopsis (1-2 sentences) that best describes your film's story/content.

#### **Video Sample (Required, submit links in application):**

- A 6-minute or less sample is required. An additional work sample (with no set time limit) is highly encouraged. This should be a rough cut of the proposed film if one exists. This is submitted on the application

form in the additional supporting material section.

- The video sample is the most important part of your application as this is a film grant. It must showcase your best work.
- The sample can include: a scene from the proposed project or prior work. For more information, check out the Grant Writing Tipsheet.
- For applicants requesting distribution funds: Footage from the submitted project must be part of the video sample.
- Online video links must not be replaced or changed during the application review period (June-September)

**Required Attachments:** Upload each of the attachments as PDFs with your application.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Required, Submit Online)

Project Description should not exceed 3 pages and should include:

- Description of the story of the film with details about stylistic approach, visual elements, story structure, and thematic threads. (Recommend 3 paragraphs).
- Description of your production plan, creative team, and information about project status to date. (Recommend 2 paragraphs).
- Information about your target audience and distribution plans. (Recommend 1 paragraph).
- Details regarding your fundraising strategy and how AFS Grant funds will be used. (Recommend 1 paragraph).

#### BUDGET SUMMARY FORM (Required, Submit Online)

- You must use AFS' Budget Summary form (note that this is NOT the same as your project budget), available for download on the AFS Grant home page.
- For "EXPENSES," summarize your expenses by production phase (pre-production, production, etc.) from your detailed budget
- For "RESOURCES", list out all of the income sources including your own contribution, in-kind donations, grants, individual and corporate donations, sponsors or investors, and fundraising.
- Total Resources should equal Total Expenses.

#### DETAILED BUDGET (Required, Submit Online)

- Provide a detailed budget that includes pre-production, production and post-production costs. You may use your own

budget sheet or download our form from the site.

#### PROJECT TIMELINE (Required, Submit Online)

- In bullet points, list the key stages of your production, with the time allotted to each and anticipated dates.
- Timeline should cover the project from pre-production all the way through distribution.
- Project timeline should not exceed 1 page.

#### PROJECT PERSONNEL (Required, Submit Online)

- Write up to 1 page detailing the bios of your key creative team.

#### TREATMENT OR SCRIPT (Required, Submit Online)

- Write a treatment (1-10 pages) that focuses entirely on the story and the characters.
- For narrative projects, a full script is preferred to a treatment. This is not a screenplay competition and so early drafts are fine. You can indicate how many rewrites you plan to do in your project description or timeline.

#### ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MATERIAL (Optional, Submit Online)

- Additional video samples, such as a link to a full feature or full short, are highly encouraged.
- In digital format, reviews, articles, images or letters of support that show your

project in a favorable light.

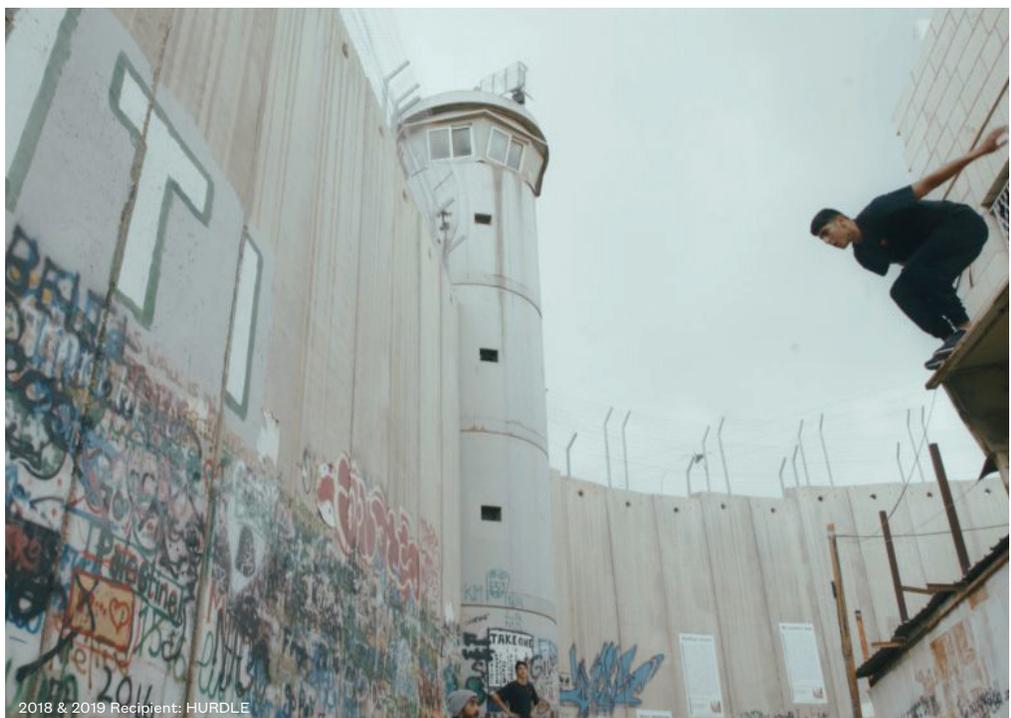
- Letters of support are encouraged but not required. You may submit up to two letters of support with your application. See "Grant Writing Tips" for advice about letters of support.
- All materials must be uploaded to your online application as a single PDF, video samples must be submitted as links in the designated space on the application.
- Additional support material must not exceed 5 pages.
- Do not send: any hard copy material, actor headshots or DVDs.

#### PROOF OF RESIDENCY (Required, Submit Online)

- You must have been a resident of Texas since June 1, 2019.
- Acceptable forms of proof of residency include:
  - A Texas voter registration card
  - A recent utility bill or receipt in your name with your Texas address.
  - Current student registration at a Texas college or university

**Note: A Texas drivers license is no longer accepted as proof of residency.**

#### STATUS REPORT (Only for projects previously funded by AFS, Submit Online)



For those applicants seeking a second round of funding for a project already awarded an AFS grant (not an AFS travel grant), or seeking funding for a different project while you are still in production on one that you received a grant for previously, we require a 1-page status report. This report should detail how the previous grant was used and where the project is on its road to completion. This will be filed with your previous application.

**Application Form Instructions :  
AFS Grant Development Fund**

**General Information (Required):**

- Fill out this section in its entirety.
- Use the 2nd name field if you are working with a co-director.
- Provide an email and mailing address that will be valid as of August 2020.

**Project Information (Required):**

- Work In Progress Title (required, even if it will change, for example, "Untitled Animal Rescue Project")
- Project Summary: Write a short synopsis (1-2 sentences) about the project you'd like to develop.

**Video Samples (Required, submit links in application)**

- You may submit up to 5 links of past work

**Required Attachments**

**ARTIST STATEMENT**

- Approximately 1 page of background describing yourself as a filmmaker, the principles driving your artistic inquiry, what you are coming from and where you are headed creatively, and where this project fits into your artistic and/or career path. This should help the committee understand why this project is the next best step for you.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

should include the following:

- Statement of Purpose - 2-4 paragraphs about the subject of the project, why and how you want to explore it
- How the funds will be used - 1-2 paragraphs about how the \$5,000 grant will advance the project (note that paying yourself to work is accepted and encouraged)
- History of project (how long project has been in development and any progress that has been made to date, 1 sentence to 1 paragraph)

**CURRICULUM VITAE OR FILMOGRAPHY**

- Should list all past works and filmography of the project director.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

- In digital format articles, images, letters of support or other relevant materials that show your project in a favorable light.
- Letters of support are encouraged but not required. You may submit up to two letters of support with your application. See "Grant Writing Tips" for advice about letters of support.

**PROOF OF RESIDENCY (Required, Submit Online)**

- You must have been a resident of Texas since June 1, 2019.
- Acceptable forms of proof of residency include:
  - A Texas voter registration card
  - A recent utility bill or receipt in your name with your Texas address.
  - Current student registration at a Texas college or university

**NOTE: A TEXAS DRIVERS LICENSE IS NO LONGER ACCEPTED AS PROOF OF RESIDENCY.**

**STATUS REPORT (ONLY FOR PROJECTS PREVIOUSLY FUNDED BY AFS, SUBMIT Online)**

For those applicants seeking a second round of funding for a project already awarded an AFS grant (not an AFS travel grant), or seeking funding for a different project while you are still in production on one that you received a grant for previously, we require a 1-page status report. This report should detail how the previous grant was used and where the project is on its road to completion. This will be filed with your previous application.

**TREATMENT OR SCRIPT - optional.** One of two end deliverables for this grant is a treatment or script, and if you have a working draft already, you may submit it with your application.

**IV. Submitting Your Application**

Once you submit your online application and supporting materials, you'll receive a confirmation email from us. If you do not receive a confirmation email within the hour after submitting, it is possible that we did not receive your application, OR your email preferences need to be adjusted. Please contact Sara Tynan at Sara@austinfilm.org so that we can correct the problem.

Please note that AFS staff will not contact you for replacement materials if:

- You fill out your budget cover sheet or budget incorrectly. We will use what you

submitted as is.

- Your project description seems incomplete

Staff will contact you if:

- There is any piece of your application missing
- Your proof of residency is invalid
- Your sample link doesn't work

**Questions?**

Contact [filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org](mailto:filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org)

Questions regarding the application will be answered during regular business hours, Mon- Fri, 10am - 6pm at [filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org](mailto:filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org). No phone calls please. If you'd like to speak with us by phone, please send an email request with the best number to reach you and times that you are available.

Award Announcements will be posted on our website at the conclusion of the panel session by early September. Follow-up letters are emailed to all applicants. Applicants whose projects are not selected or a grant may request written feedback on their application by emailing [filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org](mailto:filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org). Notifications will go out by September 1, 2020.

# GRANT WRITING TIPSHEET

## OK, NOW YOU'VE READ

the guidelines, you've visited the FAQ, it's time to begin. A word to the wise, give yourself plenty of time to complete the application. It's not something you can complete in one day, and if you try to, it'll probably show.

### PROOF OF RESIDENCY

You must have been a resident of Texas since June 1, 2019. A "resident" means someone who has lived in the state of Texas for one full year at the time of application to the AFS grant. If you are a permanent resident of Texas but are attending a college or university outside of the state for the past year or more, you would not be eligible. The Grant is intended to support the artist community in Texas and keep it thriving. As such, we are not able to award grants to previous Texans or Texas-based projects where the director is residing out of state.

### CASH REQUEST AND BUDGET INFORMATION

The Total Cash Cost will come out of your completed budget and should only include your out-of-pocket (Cash) costs, not your in-kind totals.

Note: While you can apply for multiple grants for which you are eligible, the total of the cash award allotment will not exceed \$15,000 in total. Be specific about how cash funds requested would be used towards your project. Fill this in after you've completed your full budget. This will help to show that you've thought through your project.

Regardless of what phase of funding you are applying for, include budget amounts for pre-production through distribution. Not all line items will apply to your project.

Be sure to double-check your math and balance your budget. "In-kind" refers to anything that is donated outright. For example, if a friend is loaning you a camera for the shoot, you would place a value on the use of the camera and list it in the in-kind column--likewise with donated time on the part of your cast and crew.

Be sure that the rates you list are in scale with your budget. For example, if your actual out-of-pocket costs are \$8,000 and you are not paying your actors or crew, list their services "in-kind" not at SAG or full union rates, but at a rate in scale with your budget (say \$50/day).

Note: While there are no hard budget limitations, remember that we are looking to fund projects where the AFS grant will make a difference. If your budget is over \$500,000, it is important to make the case about why the AFS Grant is important for your project to meet its

goals.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In the first round of review, the project description is the most significant written part of your application. Think of it this way - you've got three pages to make a summation of your entire proposal. The other materials (the budget, the timeline, the personnel page, the video sample, etc.) are there to expand in more detail on what you've laid out in your 1-3 page project description.

Make sure your project description does ALL of these things:

- Describes the STORY or the CONTENT of the film, with details on the stylistic approach, visual elements, story structure, characters, and thematic threads. Clearly state the format, including whether it is a short or feature, documentary or narrative, or a specific genre, early in your description so that reviewers don't have to cross-reference your application form while reading your narrative.
- Describes the production plan and provides information on the project status to-date, as well as your unique approach to the material.
- Provides information about your goals, target audience and distribution plan.
- Details your fundraising strategy and how AFS funds would be used.

#### The Story

Of these four elements, the first one is the most important. The story or contents of your film is what will make it interesting and unique. Do your best to describe the story in clear but evocative language. Don't be afraid to give away the ending. Your "audience" (the panel) needs to know what story they're funding.

In describing the story, take the advice of Strunk and White - "omit needless words," and "use the active voice." Identify who in your story (whether it's a documentary or a narrative) is active and is striving for something and describe in clear terms what they're doing and how and why they're doing it. Describe their obstacles and how they overcome them (or don't!). Then, tie this story to the themes you're hoping to explore or what ideas or issues you're hoping to illustrate or critique by making this film. Avoid getting bogged down in superfluous detail that will lose your reader. If you have a complex plot with many twists and turns, don't try to explain it all - submit a treatment or screenplay to tell the whole story. Get a friend who doesn't know the

story to read your description and see if they can follow it.

#### The "Why"

Recognize that the panel may want to know why you, in particular, want to tell this story, or why you are the best person to do so. If it's based on a personal experience, let them know, or if the subject matter is something you have some familiarity with, describe how that came to be. Especially if your story or subject is rather heady or abstract, putting a little bit of yourself into your proposal helps the panel see the person behind the project.

#### The "Look"

Let the panel know how you're going to translate this story into visual language.

If your project is a documentary about a historical event, you can explain it perfectly with statistics, anecdotal evidence and pleas for justice, but the panel wants to know what they will actually see in the finished film. Expert interview "talking heads"? Or have you uncovered an incredible wealth of archival material that is going to bring a 75-year-old story to 21st Century life? Likewise, if you're making a narrative, describe your visual strategy with your film. Feel free to name-check your influences here if you can avoid sounding overly derivative of work that already exists. What films inspire you when you think about how you want your film to look?

#### The Production Plan

Now that you've laid out your story, its themes and its visual style, describe how you're going to pull all this off. Chances are you have more ambition than you have cash in the bank, so what specific resources do you have to bring to bear that the average filmmaker doesn't? Are you attending a well-funded film school where you can get all the lights, dolly tracks and free student labor you need? For your documentary about Irish mine workers, do you have a kindly aunt in Dublin who will let your entire crew stay with you for 3 months?

Also, be sure to let us know where you're at in this process. Have you raised \$45,000 of your \$50,000 budget and secured all your cast and crew and are ready to go once you get that last chunk of funds in? Are you fourteen weeks into your post-production schedule but need to shoot for one more week with the subject of your documentary to finalize the ending of your story?

#### Target Audience and Distribution Plan

You need to make it clear that you've given some thought to how you're going to get your film out into the world, including your



back-up plan if the best-case scenario of premiering it at Sundance and selling it for \$1 million doesn't work out. Think about the communities that you engage with who would have an interest in the project. Are there any specific niche audiences that would be predisposed to like or identify with your project? How are you going to reach them? Say you're making a documentary about drag racing, perhaps you've come from that world yourself and you know that if you advertise it on drag racing websites you could sell a few thousand downloads? Maybe you've made several short films that have done well on the festival circuit, and you've made friends with programmers who will look at your first feature with some heavy interest. Or, you know of certain film focused websites who love to discover new artists. Which communities will get behind this film?

#### Fundraising Strategy

You also need to make it clear that you've got a plan to pay for all this stuff. Describe how much money you've raised and from what sources. Describe the sources of funding, which you are going to go after in addition to the AFS grant. Plausibility is important! If you are a first-time feature filmmaker and you haven't raised a dime yet for your \$300,000 budget, you'll need to make a convincing case that you have another source to supplement the \$15,000 you're asking for from AFS.

It is important to be realistic about your crowdfunding goals. While crowdfunding is now essential to almost every independent project at some phase of production, it is not a given that every project will be successful. Our juries tend to be critical of overly ambitious crowdfunding aspirations particularly when they are unarticulated in this section of the application. You must demonstrate that you have a thoughtful and

researched approach to your campaign: in the amount of money you plan to raise, the team assembled, and the timeline.

#### Project Description vs. Other Materials

As stated above, make sure that your project description and the rest of the application materials (budget, timeline, personnel page, etc.) are all working together to make it clear that you have thought this project through in full. You don't want to lay out a proposal in the project description that your other materials do not support. If you describe a Stanley Kubrick-like cinematic vision, with lots of dolly shots & crane shots & Steadicam moves all over the place, but the budget has none of those items priced out, it will look like you don't know what you're talking about.

And vice-versa – don't reference things in your supplemental materials that aren't addressed in your project description. For example, if you identify in your project timeline that you will be traveling to Australia for six weeks, the travel plans should appear in your production plan and budget as well.

#### THE VIDEO SAMPLE

In the final round of review, the video sample is the most important part of your application so think carefully about what it will be!

AFS requires a 6-minute or less video sample submitted via online link (No DVDs). We strongly encourage submitting an additional video sample as "Additional Supporting Material" with the full length of a film: a rough cut of the project being proposed, if one exists, or a previous project. We suggest using a password protected Vimeo link but will accept links from other platforms as long as they work—be sure to test your link before submitting.

You want the 6-minute video sample to give the panel a sense of what the completed proposed

project will be like. In descending order of preference, the best way to do that is:

1. Submit material from the proposed project
2. Submit a previous project you directed
3. Submit a project from someone on your production team (if you have never directed something yourself, consider submitting several examples of work from members of your production team; we recommend samples from your DP, creative producer or writer)

#### Material from the proposed project

Ideally you can submit a polished scene or two that will give the panel a good sense of what this project will be like. Even if you just have raw footage, choose some select moments that highlight your best stuff. Avoid sending in a trailer for your film. While trailers can show off your production value and the scope of your project, they won't necessarily convey the real substance, the pacing or the character development of your piece. Some of the most successful work samples have included a few selected scenes followed by the rough cut in its entirety (as additional supporting material). Just make sure you use the written description of your sample to explain and give context for what you are showing. Feel free to also use brief title cards between segments to explain what you are showing.

#### Previous projects

It is always best to submit your very best previous work as your sample in order to demonstrate your filmmaking ability. Most successful projects will have an older piece that has some rapport in style and/or subject matter to the proposed project, which makes it easier for the jury to envision the approach to the new project. If your previous work is distant from the current project, it should show that you have a special vision and approach to the material. The jury will be creative enough to see how that will apply to your next project, but only if you make a great case for this transition in your project description. If your best previous work is a very far cry from what you are doing now, but you also have a short sample of something closer in form or genre, you can submit several select scenes in that 6-minute timeline to make your case, or include as additional supporting material. Do not randomly select the first 6 minutes of your feature film unless that is definitely your strongest work. We recommend preselecting the strongest scenes for your 6-minute sample.



2017 & 2018 Recipient: 1985 (feature)

#### First time filmmakers & the video sample

If this is your first film ever, and you haven't shot anything yet, you still need to submit a work sample. You can submit a previous work from one of the key players on your production team. Again, any resemblance to the proposed project makes it easier for the panelists to assess.

Use the description of video sample area to indicate anything that is incomplete about your work sample - if the sound levels haven't been mixed, if you're using temp music or a temp narrator or uncleared music, if the image is low-resolution, whatever the issues may be. You might know that the Rolling Stones song you're using is a temporary placeholder, but if you don't tell the panelists that and your budget doesn't reflect the costs for copyright clearance, they may question the thoroughness of your application.

#### **AFS GRANT DEVELOPMENT FUND\***

##### **FAQ & TIPS**

##### **\*NEW FOR 2020**

Intended to address the lack of funds available and hardship artists have experienced as a result of the COVID 19 crisis, and to continue to support a pipeline of independent film production in Texas, the AFS Grant Development Fund will award career artists a one-time \$5,000 cash stipend towards the development of a feature-length film project, either narrative or documentary.

#### Who Should Apply?

Different from the AFS Grant, which aims to help emerging filmmakers from the earliest moments of their careers and beyond, the AFS Grant Development Fund was created to support filmmakers with an established body of work. You may or may not necessarily be "mid-career", but at minimum, two short projects as a director would establish your track record of project completion.

#### What can I use the money for?

This is an unrestricted \$5,000 grant intended to go towards any activity that advances a project in development. This includes paying yourself to work on the project. While we do not require reporting on how the money is spent, your proposal should include how the \$5,000 will help you to make progress on this project.

At the end of the granting period (August 31 2021), we will ask for a deliverable. For narrative features, this is a draft of a feature screenplay, for documentary filmmakers a sample reel or treatment. We'll also ask for a short progress report.

#### What will reviewers look for?

As with our regular AFS Grant, we are looking to support artists with vision and promise. It is especially important for this grant that you are committed in the long term to your filmmaking career and practice. Your Artist Statement

should offer depth and background about you as an artist, and the project description should show your curiosity and interest in what you are hoping to develop, and where that intersects with your work and practice.

#### Video Sample

You may submit up to five works. If you do have a sample for this project in particular, please include it. Otherwise, works should be completed past works or projects in post, and the directorial work of the applicant should be prioritized above other past work.

**GOOD LUCK!**

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



2015 Recipient: SOUTHWEST OF SALEM

There is no right way to seek funding—your approach will be dictated by your material. And there is no magic list of sources of funds. Here are some of the resources that we find ourselves recommending over and over.

#### **Overviews of filmmaker grant funds:**

Doc Society Resources

<https://docsociety.org/resources/>

IFP's Guide to Granting Organizations

<http://www.ifp.org/resources/IFPs-Guide-to-Granting-Organizations/>

Following is a sampling of organizations that can assist you in the grantwriting and planning process:

#### **Chicken & Egg Pictures**

[www.chickeneggpics.org](http://www.chickeneggpics.org)

#### **Cinereach**

[www.cinereach.org](http://www.cinereach.org)

#### **Creative Capital**

[www.creative-capital.org](http://www.creative-capital.org)

#### **Doc Society (formerly Brit Doc)**

<https://docsociety.org>

#### **Film Independent**

[www.filmindependent.org](http://www.filmindependent.org)

#### **Ford Foundation**

[www.fordfoundation.org](http://www.fordfoundation.org)

#### **The Foundation Center**

[www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)

#### **The Funding Exchange**

[www.fex.org/memberfoundations](http://www.fex.org/memberfoundations)

#### **The Grantsmanship Center**

[www.tgci.com](http://www.tgci.com)

#### **Hatchfund**

[www.hatchfund.org](http://www.hatchfund.org)

#### **Humanities Texas**

[www.humanitiestexas.org](http://www.humanitiestexas.org)

#### **IFP**

[www.ifp.org](http://www.ifp.org)

#### **International Documentary Association**

[www.documentary.org](http://www.documentary.org)

#### **Independent Television Service (ITVS)**

[www.itvs.org](http://www.itvs.org)

#### **National Endowment For The Arts**

[www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)

#### **National Endowment For The Humanities**

[www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov)

#### **P.O.V.**

[www.pbs.org/pov/](http://www.pbs.org/pov/)

#### **Roy W. Dean Film and Video Grants**

[www.fromtheheartproductions.com](http://www.fromtheheartproductions.com)

#### **Sundance Institute**

[www.sundance.org](http://www.sundance.org)

#### **Texas Commission On The Arts (TCA)**

[www.arts.state.tx.us](http://www.arts.state.tx.us)

#### **Texas Film Commission**

[www.governor.state.tx.us/film](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/film)

#### **Tribeca Film Institute**

[www.tribecafilminstitute.org](http://www.tribecafilminstitute.org)

# 2019 GRANT RECIPIENTS

## Feature Films

### **INBETWEEN GIRL**

Narrative Feature in post-production

Director: Mei Makino

North Texas Pioneer Film Grant

### **MARTINEZ**

Narrative Feature in production

Director: Maria Padilla

Warbach Lighting and Design  
New Texas Voices Grant

### **MISS JUNETEENTH**

Narrative Feature in post-production

Director: Channing Godfrey Peoples

Kodak Motion Picture Film  
Award

### **NAMES IN THE PAVEMENT**

Documentary Feature in production

Director: Jim Hickcox

Stuck On On Award

### **NAN**

Documentary Feature in post-production

Director: Zuqiang Peng

North Texas Pioneer Film Grant

### **PRAIRIE DOGS**

Narrative Feature in production

Director and writer: Dex Decker

### **RAISING ANIYA**

Documentary Feature in production

Director: John Fiege

North Texas Pioneer Film Grant

### **THE UNKNOWN COUNTRY**

Narrative Feature in post-production

Director and writer: Morrisa Maltz

MPS Camera and Lighting  
Award

### **WE REAL COOL**

Narrative Feature in production

Director: Ryan Darbonne

### **WHEN WE WERE LIVE**

Documentary Feature in post-production

Director: John Moore

## Short Films

### **BIRDS**

Director: Katherine Propper

### **CONTRAST**

Director: Tramaine Townsend

### **FLYING IN THE DARK**

Director: Annika Horne

### **GREEN WATER**

Director: Carlos Estrada

### **LOVE IS AN ACTION WORD**

Director: Liz Moskowitz & Riley Engemoen

### **MEN WHO TALK**

Director: Cristin Stephens

### **MICHELLE**

Director: Kenya Gillespie

### **THE PAINT WIZZARD**

Director: Jessica Wolfson & Jessie Auritt

### **THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME**

Director: Jonathan Caouette

### **UNTITLED CAT BACKPACK SHORT**

Director: Katie Graham & Andrew Matthews

### **WHISTLE**

Director: Rachael Acosta

See all past recipients  
at [austinfilm.org](http://austinfilm.org)