



AUSTIN
FILM
SOCIETY

2023 AFS GRANT

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEATURE FILMS

AFS Grant Applications must be made through our website at www.austinfilm.org.

For more information, call 512-322-0145 or email filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org.

LOST SOULZ

Directed by Katherine Propper





SPRING '23 AUSTIN FILM SOCIETY GRANT CYCLE

Instructions for applying to the spring cycle of the 2023 AFS Grant, which is made up of the following opportunities for funding:

- **AFS Grant for Production for Feature Projects (pre-production, production, and post-production)**
 - New Texas Voices Grant
 - North Texas Pioneer Film Fund
- **AFS Grant for Development**
- **In-kind production services grants**
 - MPS Camera and Lighting
 - Stuck On On

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 providing 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 addressed the increasingly threatened environment for the livelihoods of artists due to the COVID-19 crisis and issued grants to artists for projects in development. Development support will continue in 2023. 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) nonprofit 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.

II. APPLICATION CYCLES

The AFS Grant is administered with two application periods and deadlines.

SPRING APPLICATION:

The spring application is open for feature-length (over 40 minutes) documentary and narrative film projects in any phase of production or feature-length films in development. There is one application to apply for either development or production. Please note: Applicants will not be considered for both a development grant and a production grant in the same cycle. Additionally, filmmakers are limited to submitting one application in either category.

The spring deadline is **Monday, June 5, 2023**. Applications must be submitted by 6 PM CT. Awards are announced at the end of August, and grant disbursements are made shortly thereafter.

FALL APPLICATION:

The spring application cycle will accept submissions for short film projects only (under 40 minutes). The application for short films will open in **late summer 2023**.

2023 AFS GRANT SUPPORTERS



III. APPLICANT AND PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to apply for an AFS 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 resident of Texas and have lived in the state since June 1, 2022 or earlier. You cannot apply if you are attending school full-time outside the state of Texas.
- You must not be a part of the AFS staff or board of directors.

Projects must meet the following requirements for the AFS Grant:

- All genres of film and video are eligible to apply, except industrial or promotional pieces, music videos, and “works-for-hire.”
- All projects must be sing, stand-alone works. Television or web series are not eligible at this time.
- Projects must be in development, pre-production, production, post-production, or distribution stages.

Projects must meet the following additional requirements if applying for development support:

- The fund is geared toward filmmakers with an established body of film work. Qualifications include a previously completed feature-length film, a background in television writing and directing, or a number of completed short films.
- Applicants must provide, at minimum, two samples of previously completed work.
- You may not apply for both development and production support, even if it is for different projects.
- Recipients are required to submit one of the following at the end of the grant period (**August 31, 2024**):
 - Screenplay draft or documentary treatment
 - Test or sample footage
 - Production progress report (document detailing next steps for project completion).

IV. ELIGIBILITY FOR PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

If you have already received an AFS Grant for the same project you plan to apply with this year, these guidelines must be followed:

- If you have received two previous AFS Grants for the same project, you cannot apply for a third AFS Grant for that project. This includes AFS Grants for development but does not include AFS Travel Grants.
- If you have only received one AFS Grant, including a development grant, you can re-apply for the same project as long as you are in good standing on your contract with us. This includes having submitted required materials if you have previously received a development grant. You must include a written progress report that shows your project's status has advanced significantly since the time it was awarded funding. (see the "Listed Required Attachments" section).

V. APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

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

- You must notify AFS immediately if significant changes to your project 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 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.

VI. AFS GRANT AWARDS: WHAT YOU CAN APPLY FOR

Applicants can apply for any and all of the following cash and in-kind awards offered as part of the 2023 AFS Grant spring cycle, noting that cash grants will be awarded up to but will 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

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 \$5,000 for development support and 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, DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION (PRE-PRODUCTION, PRODUCTION, AND POST-PRODUCTION)

\$30,000 in cash grants will be awarded to emerging filmmakers residing in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and surrounding region. Grants ranging from \$5,000–\$15,000 will be awarded for the development, production, or post-production of feature-length films (40 minutes or greater). The grant aims to fund emerging filmmakers with first or second feature films and filmmakers with backgrounds that are traditionally underrepresented in independent film. Filmmakers wishing to be considered for this fund must provide proof of residency in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and the surrounding region. All other regular eligibility and application requirements for the AFS Grant must be met.

NEW TEXAS VOICES GRANT — CASH GRANT, PRODUCTION (PRE-PRODUCTION, PRODUCTION, AND POST-PRODUCTION)

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.

The following grants are in-kind grants for goods and services offered through the AFS Grant:

MPS CAMERA AND LIGHTING AUSTIN — IN-KIND GRANT

The MPS Camera and Lighting Austin In-Kind Grant comes in the form of a multi-day camera package rental from MPS Camera Austin valued up to \$10,000. The award must be used by the awarded project and cannot be sold. Grantees must meet MPS' minimum insurance requirements, and package rental is 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.

VII. ONLINE INFO SESSIONS

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, one-on-one grant consultations will not be offered.

Webinar schedule:

Webinars will take place via the web-based Zoom application. Advance registration is required to receive the Zoom link and instructions. See schedule below for details.

- **Monday, May 8, 2023, 6 PM — General Overview of AFS and all application areas**
- **Tuesday, May 16, 2023, 6 PM — Narrative focus webinar**
- **Tuesday, May 23, 2023, 6 PM — Documentary focus webinar**

VIII. APPLICATION PREPARATION

Applying for the grant is an online process. Applications and all supporting materials must be submitted online at <https://www.austin.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 the sections, you can refer to our "Grant Writing Tipsheet."

APPLICATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS:

This year, there is a single application to apply to the AFS Grant for either development or production support (pre-production, production, post-production, distribution). Go to the grant section of our website www.austinfilm.org/AFS-Grants-Application. (AFS Grant info is under the "Filmmaker Support" section if you don't find it on the home page.) You will need to register on our website and be logged in to fill out the application. You will be able to save and edit your application prior to submitting.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Fill out this section in its entirety.
- Use the second name field if you are working with a co-director.
- Provide an email and a mailing address that will be valid as of **August 2023**.

You must select the box for either development or production support. You can only choose one, and your selection will determine what other information should be included. You may only submit one

application. Filmmakers who apply with multiple projects for either development or production will not be considered.

TO APPLY FOR DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT:

PROJECT INFORMATION (REQUIRED)

- Project 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
- Indicate if you are a North Texas resident and eligible for the North Texas Pioneer Fund.

VIDEO SAMPLES

- A PDF with active links, password, and a short sentence about the work. You may submit up to five links of previously completed work as a director.

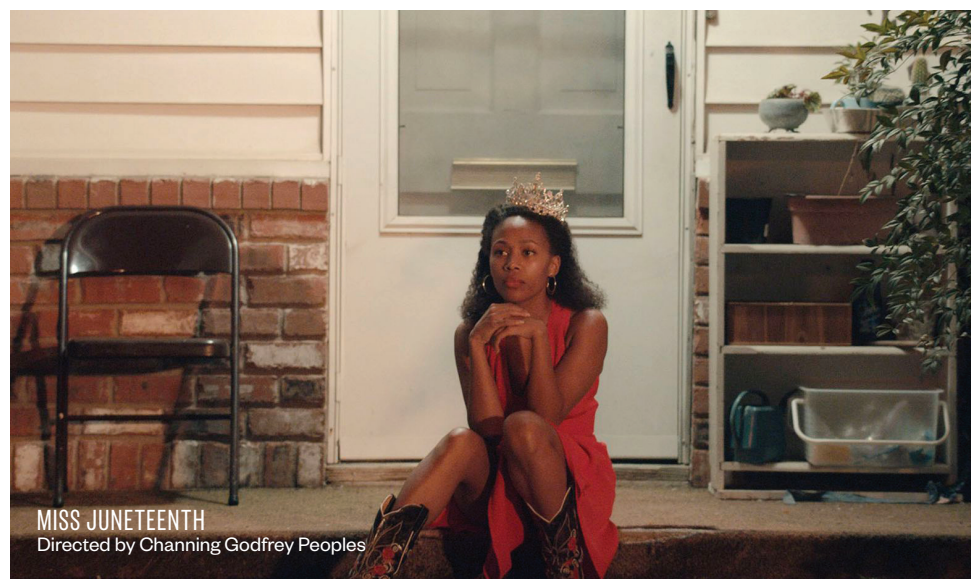
ARTIST STATEMENT

- Approximately one page of background information describing yourself as a filmmaker, the principles driving your artistic inquiry, where 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 acceptable)
- History of the project — how long the project has been in development and any progress that has been made to date (one sentence to one paragraph)

CURRICULUM VITAE OR FILMOGRAPHY

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

PROOF OF RESIDENCY (REQUIRED, SUBMIT ONLINE)

- You must be a resident of Texas and have lived in the state since June 1, 2022 or earlier.
- 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 driver's license or state-issued identification card is no longer accepted as proof of residency.

OPTIONAL MATERIALS

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Must be included with your application and will not be accepted separately after the application is submitted.

- In digital format, articles, images, letters of support or other relevant materials that show your project in a favorable light.

TREATMENT OR SCRIPT

One of two end deliverables for this grant is a treatment or script. If you have a working draft already, you may submit it with your application.

TO APPLY FOR PRODUCTION (PRE-PRODUCTION, PRODUCTION, POST-PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION) SUPPORT:

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 or \$3,000 for distribution (in-kind requests 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):

Password-protected video links are accepted as part of the video sample and must satisfy the following requirements:

- A 6-minute or less work sample is required and must be downloadable. 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)
- Downloadable links are recommended for additional work samples where possible.

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

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Description should not exceed three pages and should include:

- Description of the story of the film with details about stylistic approach, visual elements, story structure, and thematic threads (three paragraphs recommended).
- Description of your production plan, creative team, and information about project status to date (two paragraphs recommended).
- Information about your target audience and distribution plans (one paragraph recommended).

- Details regarding your fundraising strategy and how AFS Grant funds will be used (one paragraph recommended).

PROJECT BUDGET

Project budget should include the following required documents and be very specific about the applicant's plans to seek funds from sources outside the AFS Grant.

BUDGET SUMMARY FORM

- You must use AFS's 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 contributions, in-kind donations, grants, individual and corporate donations, sponsors or investors, and fundraising
- "Total Resources" should equal "Total Expenses."

DETAILED BUDGET

- 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 our website.

PROJECT TIMELINE

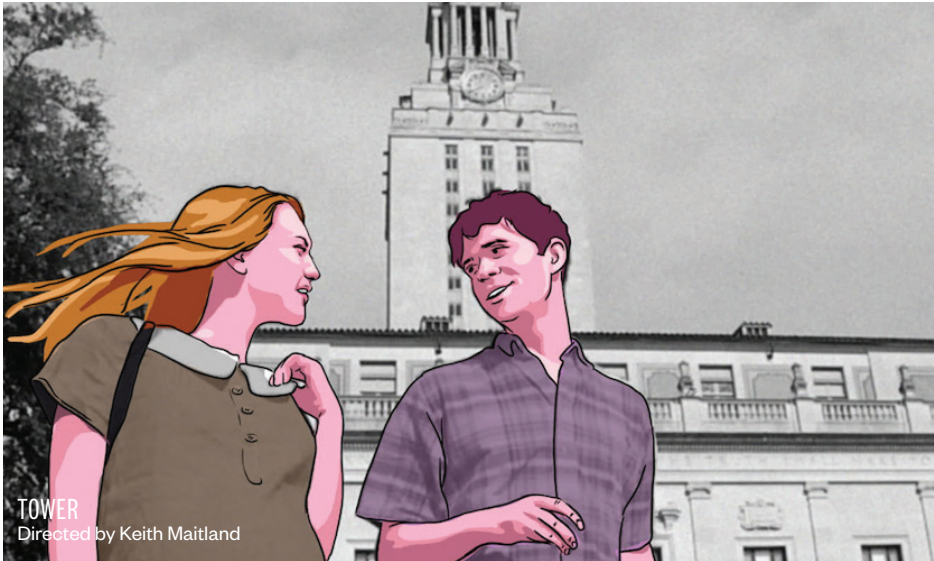
- In bullet points, list the key stages of your production, with the time allotted to each and anticipated dates.
- Timeline should cover the project from pre-production all the way through distribution.
- Project timeline should not exceed one page.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

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

TREATMENT

- Write a treatment (1–10 pages) focusing entirely on the story and characters.
- For narrative projects, submitting a script in addition to the treatment is optional. This is not a screenplay competition, and drafts are fine. You can indicate rewrites you plan to do in your description or timeline. While submitting, a script is recommended if you have one completed. Note that the reviewers are not required to read scripts in their entirety.



ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MATERIAL

(Submit Online)

- An additional video sample, link to a rough cut, or a previously completed work is preferred. This should be submitted as a link in the designated space in the application.
- You may submit a screenplay draft for narrative projects.
- In digital format, you may submit reviews, articles, or images that help put your project in a favorable light.
- Letters of support are only recommended for first-time applicants and are optional. You may submit up to two letters of support with your application.
- All materials must be uploaded to the online application as a single PDF.
- Additional support material should not exceed three pages.
- Do not send any hard copy actor headshots/photos or DVDs.

PROOF OF RESIDENCY

(Required Online)

You must prove that you are a current resident of Texas.

- Acceptable forms of proof include:
 - A Texas voter registration
 - A recent (within two months) utility bill or record with name with your Texas address
 - Your current student registration from a Texas college or university

Note: A Texas driver's license or state-issued identification longer accepted as proof of residency.

STATUS REPORT

(Submit Online, only for projects previously funded by AFS)

For 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 of one that you received a grant for previously, we require a one-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.

IX. 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 an hour after submitting, it is possible that we did not receive your application OR your email preferences need to be adjusted. Please contact filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org so 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

Questions regarding the application will be answered during regular business hours, Mon–Fri, 10 AM–6 PM, at 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.

Grant award announcements will be posted on our website at the conclusion of the panel session by mid-September. Follow-up letters are emailed to all applicants. Applicants whose projects are not selected for a grant may request written feedback on their application by emailing filmmakersupport@austinfilm.org. Notifications will go out by September 1, 2023.

GRANT WRITING TIPSHEET

OK, now you've the guidelines and visited the FAQ page; it's time to begin. A word to the wise, give yourself plenty of time to complete the application. There are several documents that you need to prepare and upload. It's not something you can complete in one day, and if you try to, it'll probably show.

PROOF OF RESIDENCY

The director or co-director must be a current resident of Texas and have been a resident since June 1, 2022. 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 award allotment will not exceed \$15,000 in total for production, \$5,000 for development, or \$3,000 for distribution. 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 "in-kind"

services at a rate in scale with your budget (say \$50/day), not at SAG or full union rates.

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 summarize 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 documentary or narrative project and whether it is a specific genre, early in your description so that reviewers don't have to cross-reference your application form while reading your narrative.
- Briefly describes the production plan and provides information on the project's 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 and contents of your film are what will make it interesting and unique. Do your best to describe the story using clear but evocative language. Don't be afraid to give away the ending. Your "audience" (the panel) needs to know the story they're funding.

In describing the story, take the advice of *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White: "omit needless words" and "use the active voice." Identify who in your story (whether

it's a documentary or a narrative project) is the active subject describe what they're doing in clear terms (as well as and how and why they're doing it). Describe their obstacles and how they overcome them (or don't). Then, tie their story to the themes you're hoping to explore or what ideas/issues you're hoping to illustrate or critique making this film. Avoid getting bogged down by superfluous detail that will lose the attention of your reviewer. If you have a complex plot with many twists and turns, don't try to explain them 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 easily understand it.

The "Why"

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

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 with statistics, anecdotal evidence, and pleas for justice, but the panel wants to know what they will actually see in the finished film. Does that include expert interview "talking heads?" Or maybe you have uncovered an incredible wealth of archival material that is going to bring a 75-year-old story to life. Likewise, if you are making a narrative, describe the visual strategy of your film. Feel free to name-check your influences if you can avoid sounding overly derivative of work that already exists. Think about what films inspire you when you envision 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 it all off. Chances are you have more ambition than you have cash in the bank. What specific resources do you need that the average filmmaker cannot support? If you describe a Stanley Kubrick-like cinematic vision or something with lots of drone and crane shots, but the budget has none of the necessary items priced out, it will look like you don't understand the scope of your budget.



And on that note, don't reference anything in your project description that isn't explained in your supplemental materials. 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. Are you attending a well-funded film school where you can get all the lights, dolly tracks, and free student labor you need? Be sure to let us know. For your documentary about Irish mine workers, do you have an aunt in Dublin who will let you and your entire crew stay with her for three months? Explain that in your supplemental materials.

Also, be sure to tell us where you're at in the fund-raising process. Have you raised \$45,000 of your \$50,000 budget and secured all your cast and crew? Are you ready to get started filming once you get that last chunk of funds? Are you fourteen weeks into your post-production schedule but need a little more time with your documentary subject to finalize the ending of your story? These types of things are extremely helpful for us to know.

Target Audience and Distribution Plan

We want to see that you've given thought to how you're going to get your film out into the world, including your backup plan if the best-case scenario (premiering it at Sundance and selling it for \$1 million, let's say) doesn't work out. Think about the communities that you engage with that might have an interest in your finished project. Are there any specific niche audiences that would be predisposed to like or identify with your work? How are you going to reach them? Say you're making a documentary about drag racing, and perhaps you've come from that world yourself. 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. Which communities will get behind this film?

Fundraising Strategy

We also want to see that you've got a plan to pay for everything. 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 of 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 AFS for.

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 crowdfunding attempt 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 a thoughtful and researched approach to your campaign in the amount of money you plan to raise, the team assembled to raise it, and the timeline.

Project Description vs. Other Materials

As stated above, it's important to make sure your project description and the rest of the application materials (budget, timeline, personnel page, etc.) all work together to make it clear that you have thought the entirety of your project through. You don't want to lay out a proposal in the project description that your other materials do not support. If you describe a cinematic vision

with lot of Steadicam moves all over the place but the budget has none of that priced out, the project's execution might seem unrealistic.

THE VIDEO SAMPLE

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

AFS requires a six-minute-or-less downloadable video sample submitted via online link. We strongly encourage submitting an additional video sample as "Additional Supporting Material" with a rough cut of the project being proposed, if one exists, or a previously completed project. We suggest using a password-protected Vimeo link but accept links from other platforms as long as they work for our reviewers, so be sure to test your link before submitting.

Your six-minute video sample should give the review panel a sense of what the completed proposed project will be like. In 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 will be able submit a polished scene(s) or an interview that will give the panel a good sense of what your project will be like. Even if you just have raw footage, we recommend you choose some select moments to highlight your best material. Avoid sending in trailers for your film as your video sample. While trailers can show off your production value and the scope of your project, they won't necessarily convey your directorial style, the pacing, or the character development of your piece. Some of the most successful work samples have included a few selected scenes and, as additional supporting material, the rough cut in its entirety. Just make sure you use the written description of your sample to give context to what you are showing us. Feel free to use brief title cards between segments as well to explain what you are showing.



FAMILY PORTRAIT
Directed by Lucy Kerr

Previous Projects

It is always best to submit your strongest previous work as your sample in order to demonstrate your filmmaking abilities. Most successful projects have been preceded by an older piece that has some style and/or subject matter in common with the proposed project, which makes it easier for the jury to envision a director's approach to the new project. If you submit a previous work that is vastly different from your current project, you should also show us that you have a special vision and approach to the new material. The review panel will be creative enough to see how you will apply your new ideas to your latest project but only if you explain those ideas clearly in your project description. If your previous projects are drastically different from what you are doing now but you also have a short sample of something closer to your current work, in form or genre, you can submit several select scenes in your six-minute video sample (or you can include them as additional supporting material). Do not randomly select the first six minutes of a feature film unless that is definitely your strongest work. We recommend preselecting the strongest scenes for your six-minute sample.

First-time Filmmakers and 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 previous work from one of the key member of your production team. Again, any resemblance to the proposed project makes envisioning the final result easier for the review panel.

Use the description area of the video sample to indicate anything that is incomplete about your work sample — like if the sound levels haven't been mixed; if you're using temporary music, a temporary 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 cost of copyright clearance, they may question the thoroughness of your application.

ADDITIONAL FAQS & TIPS FOR APPLYING FOR DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Intended to address the lack of funds available and the hardships 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 will award two career artists a one-time \$5,000 cash stipend towards the development of a feature-length film project, either narrative or documentary.

Development funds are geared toward supporting filmmakers with an established body of work. You may or may not necessarily be "mid-career," but two completed projects as a director (at minimum) would establish your track record of project completion. You cannot apply for both development and production support even if it is for different projects.

What will reviewers look for?

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.

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, 2023), we will ask for a deliverable. For narrative features, this is a draft of a feature screenplay, and for documentary filmmakers, a sample reel or treatment. We'll also ask for a short progress report.

GOOD LUCK!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



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/>

The Gotham'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.chickeneggspics.org

Cinereach

www.cinereach.org

Creative Capital

www.creative-capital.org

Doc Society (formerly Brit Doc)

<https://docsociety.org>

Film Independent

www.filmindependent.org

Ford Foundation

www.fordfoundation.org

The Foundation Center

www.foundationcenter.org

The Funding Exchange

www.fex.org/memberfoundations

The Gotham

www.ifp.org

The Grantsmanship Center

www.tgci.com

Hatchfund

www.hatchfund.org

Humanities Texas

www.humanitiestexas.org

International Documentary Association

www.documentary.org

Independent Television Service (ITVS)

www.itvs.org

National Endowment For The Arts

www.arts.gov

National Endowment For The Humanities

www.neh.gov

P.O.V.

www.pbs.org/pov/

Roy W. Dean Film and Video Grants

www.fromtheheartproductions.com

Sundance Institute

www.sundance.org

Texas Commission On The Arts (TCA)

www.arts.state.tx.us

Texas Film Commission

www.governor.state.tx.us/film

Tribeca Film Institute

www.tribecafilminstitute.org

2022 GRANT RECIPIENTS

2022 AFS GRANTS FOR FEATURE FILMS GRANT RECIPIENTS

- Adriane McCray, STATE CHAMPS EAT FREE — North Texas Pioneer Film Grant and MPS Camera and Lighting Austin Grant
- Katharine Propper, LOST SOULZ — Stuck On On DCP Grant
- Estefanía Contreras and Silvia Castaños, HUMMINGBIRDS — New Texas Voices Award and Stuck On On DCP Grant
- Don Swaynos, PROFESSIONAL TEXAN
- Hammad Rizvi, PRECIOUS CARGO
- LaTasha Taylor Starr, STEM ROOTS
- Lucy Kerr, THE CHRISTMAS CARD
- Huay-Bing Law, THE MOTION
- Andrew Richey, TONKAWA: THEY ALL STAY TOGETHER
- PJ Raval, UNTITLED PHILLIPPINES PROJECT
- Alexis Franco, WHERE THE TREES BEAR MEAT

AFS GRANT FOR SHORT FILMS 2022 GRANT RECIPIENTS

- Ramina Ramazani, BURY ME SOFTLY IN THIS WORLD — Harrison McClure Endowed Film Fund Grant
- Amy Bench, BREAKING SILENCE
- Monika Watkins, DABNEY
- Kenya Gillespie, GIVE
- Anne Lewis, ON DYING OF DEMENTIA IN A CAPITALIST SYSTEM
-
- Diffan Norman, PASTURE PRIME — MPS Award
- Hang Nguyen, ROOFTOP LEMPICKA
- Isaac Garza, THE SON WHO CAN'T PLAY TRUMPET
- Robert Hope, TUSHURAI (THOSE WHO STAY)

