



SUNDANCE DOCUMENTARY FUND PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

PROPOSAL MUST CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

Logline (1 to 3 Sentences)

Provide a brief summary of the film.

Story Synopsis and Structure (up to 1000 words)

Give an overview of your story, introducing the main characters and potential plot points. Describe the anticipated story structure and narrative trajectory, or potential character arcs for your film.

Topic Summary (up to 1000 words)

Explain the relevant cultural, historical, political or social context for the film. Detail the topics, issues, themes, challenges, stakes, or questions that your project will cover.

Connection to the story: (up to 500 words)

What is the creative team's connection to the story? Why is the core creative team uniquely positioned to make this film? What is your creative team's personal connection to the specific communities your story is about? Discuss the access to the story and characters. Explain the collaboration with the protagonists and reflect on the film team's engagement with the community.

Director Statement (up to 500 words)

Explain who you are as a filmmaker, and if applicable, how this film is expanding or evolving your creative practice. What does success look like for you as an artist? What challenges are you facing?

Artistic Approach (up to 500 words)

Describe your creative vision for the finished project. What are the visual and audio elements that will bring your film to life? Explain your intended use of cinematic language or any particular artistic approach that informs the storytelling. Describe your creative process.

Project Stage and Timeline (up to 500 words)

Explain the current status of the project. Outline the projected production timeline from the project's current state to the anticipated completion date. Your timeline should detail major project activities, production schedules, and anticipated post-production and release dates. If you have applied to this fund previously, please share how your project has progressed.

COVID-19 Considerations (up to 500 words)

Please reflect on how COVID has impacted your film and how you plan on moving the project forward with COVID-specific limitations in place.

Intended Audience (up to 200 words)

Describe the audience you'd like your film to reach and why. How do you plan to reach your target audience?

Impact (if applicable)

Required for applicants applying for support through the Sundance Institute | Luminate Fund and the Sundance Institute | Keneda Fund only.

What is your impact strategy? What are your social, cultural, or policy change goals? How are you building partnerships with organizations in your issue area?

Key Creative Personnel (approximately 1 paragraph/bio)

Provide brief biographies for the director(s), and if attached, the producer(s), cinematographer, and/or editor. For each key creative team member, include information about relevant expertise and the individual’s role in the project. Bullet list names and titles of any confirmed advisors who are attached.

Who has creative control over the project? (1 to 2 sentences)

Financial Information (1 paragraph for each)

Fundraising Strategy

Describe the overall fundraising strategy for the film.

Funding to Date

Include all sources and amounts raised to date. Clearly distinguish between potential sources of funding and secured amounts. List the status of other sources of funding currently under consideration, whether to be applied for or pending.

Example:

Foundation A	\$X	Secured
Private Investment A	\$X	Secured
Foundation B	\$X	Applied
Broadcast License A	\$X	In Negotiation
Crowdfunding	\$X	In Process (Campaign end date MM/DD/YY)

Grant Impact

Should you receive a grant, describe how any granted funds would be spent and how the funds would help you move forward with your project.

Comprehensive Line Item Expense Budget

Please provide a breakdown of your project's projected expenses, from development through release, in U.S. dollars, including a budget total. Provide budget notes for any areas that may be viewed as out of the ordinary or require further explanation.

Visual Samples

Please provide links and passwords for both samples in your written proposal. Links and passwords should be valid for at least six months from the date of your submission. Sundance Institute guarantees watching up to 30 minutes of submitted visual material.

Director's Prior Work (optional, up to 200 words)

We encourage applicants to include a link to a previous work (any length or genre) by the director. Emerging filmmakers with no previous directing experience may also apply without a previous directing sample.

Discuss the relevance of the work to the current project. If the current project is a departure from the previous work, how will this film differ?

Current Sample/Rough Cut (up to 200 words)

What should reviewers be looking for in your sample? Explain what is present and absent in the sample, and how it will differ as a finished film. Describe how it is representative of the intended story, style, subject, or other aspect of the project.

- Development applicants are encouraged (but not required) to include visual material such as scene selects, teasers, or other edited footage (up to 15 minutes);
- Production and Post-production applications require a sample that demonstrates characters, story arc or structure, and visual treatment. This should also reflect the current stage of the project (e.g. a minimum of 10 minutes of edited footage for production and 20 minutes of edited footage for post-production).