



Women Make Movies | Production Assistance Program

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION AND GUIDELINES

Fiscal Sponsorship is the largest component of Women Make Movies Production Assistance Program. Through Fiscal Sponsorship, WMM lends our 501(c)(3) non-profit tax-exempt status to individual artists' projects, opening up a whole world of fundraising options. Projects fiscally-sponsored by us also receive individualized consultations and access to extensive resources via our website.

What is Fiscal Sponsorship?

Fiscal Sponsorship allows your non-commercial project to apply for funding from organizations that require non-profit tax-exempt status. Non-profit status is required by many foundations, corporations and government agencies in order to be eligible for funding since many do not accept application proposals directly from individuals. Additionally, 501(c)(3) status allows you to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions from individuals—a major incentive for individuals considering making a donation to your project.

As your fiscal sponsor, Women Make Movies (WMM) acts as an umbrella organization for your project and accepts and administers funds on your behalf. WMM is legally responsible for the funds received on behalf of fiscally sponsored projects and must insure that the funds are used for charitable activities, as agreed upon between the donor and recipient, and that the donor reporting requirements are met and in a timely fashion.

Fiscal sponsorship broadens the available avenues you can pursue for funding of your project. It does not mean that we are your producers, fundraisers, or in any way connected to the content or actual production of your project. Fiscal sponsorship does not provide grants and we do not do research for individual project funding. All artistic and proprietary rights, title, interest in and to the completed project will belong to the Project Director and may be copyrighted in Project Director's name.

DEADLINES + NOTIFICATION

Application Deadline Date (in-office)

March 15, 2006
May 15, 2006
October 15, 2006

Approximate Notification Date

April 15
June 15
November 15

2007 Deadlines Will Be:

February 15, 2007; May 15, 2007; October 15, 2007, all with notifications within one month.

Application Delivery Information

Applications must be delivered to our office by 6:00 pm on the deadline date. (No faxed or emailed applications will be accepted.) Incomplete or late submissions will be not accepted. Please be advised that our offices are open from Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. EST for deliveries.

Application Notification + Return of Materials

All accepted applicants will be notified of acceptance via email by the date above. Upon acceptance, you will be required to participate in an orientation meeting, or conference call if you live outside the New York area. All rejected applicants will be notified via USPS on the date above. Sample tapes will be returned if a SASE is included.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Fiscal Sponsorship Program is a competitive application process. Generally, less than half of applications are accepted. You are strongly encouraged to contact the Program well in advance of the submission your application if you have any questions about the application process. All inquiries should be directed to Production Assistance Program Administrator.

MAIL

Women Make Movies
Fiscal Sponsorship Program
462 Broadway, Suite 500
New York, NY 10013

PHONE

212-925-0606 x302

EMAIL

fsprogram@wmm.com

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES

Women Make Movies is a national non-profit media arts organization which facilitates the production, promotion, distribution and exhibition of independent films and videotapes made by and about women. Women Make Movies was established in 1972 to address the under representation and misrepresentation of women in the media and provides services to both the makers and users of independent women's media.

The Fiscal Sponsorship Program is part of our Production Assistance program and accepts projects which reflect the following mission of our organization:

- To support and encourage women working in film and video.
 - To expand networks and broaden audiences for women's media.
 - To educate the general public about the quality and variety of women's media.
 - To encourage discussion and debate about issues of concern to women.
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ELIGIBILITY + CONSIDERATIONS

In order to be eligible to apply to Women Make Movies Fiscal Sponsorship Program, you must meet the following criteria:

- Your project must be a film, video or multimedia project.
At this time, we do not sponsor film festivals or film related events.
- The project director must be a woman.
Please be advised that for fiscal sponsorship, the content of your project does not need to be about women's issues to be eligible for the program.
- The project director must have a U.S. Social Security or have a production company with a U.S. Federal ID number.
- Reflect a similar commitment to the goals set forth in Women Make Movies mission, outlined on above.
- The project proposal should reflect the ability to develop a quality proposal and the sample tape should reflect the strength of the director through a previous completed work or a sample tape of the project in development.

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PROGRAM BENEFITS

The following is a list of benefits you are entitled to receive through our Fiscal Sponsorship Program:

- **NON-PROFIT STATUS FOR FUNDRAISING PURPOSES**

Fiscal sponsorship allows you to apply for grants from foundations and government organizations that can only fund non-profit tax-exempt organizations.

- **INDIVIDUALIZED ON-GOING CONSULTATIONS**

Throughout your project's development you can meet with the program staff to discuss your fundraising strategies, individual proposals or the distribution plan for your completed film.

- **WORKSHOP DISCOUNTS**

These workshops are offered in the Fall and Spring of each year. You are eligible for the discounted rate for all WMM workshops (up to 20%) on the business aspects of filmmaking, and a 50% discount for one WMM fundraising or proposal writing workshop. If you live outside of New York City area, we do prepare information resource packets for a number of our workshops which you can request for a reduced fee. In this way, you are still able to helpful insight through our workshop series.

- **CONFERENCE AND SCREENING ROOM AVAILABLE**

Scheduled use of WMM's conference in New York City if need to arrange a meeting in an office setting. You can also have access to our in-house screening room for viewing WMM titles or use of our PAL deck.

- **STAFF SCREENING OF WORK-IN-PROGRESS**

The program staff can offer constructive feedback and advice on your sample tape or rough cut. Additionally, if you are considering submitting your film for acquisition consideration to Women Make Movies once the film is completed, you can schedule a screening of the rough cut with the staff on the Acquisitions Committee.

- **ONLINE PROJECT LISTING**

You have the option of listing your project on WMM's website offering your donors the option of making online credit card donations via our secure server, while profiling and publicizing your project to potential funders and audiences.

- **ONLINE RESOURCE LIBRARY**

Through a password protected section of our website, you will have access to a wealth of information and over 150 downloadable documents, interviews and sample proposals on fundraising, production, marketing, and distribution.

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REVIEW CRITERIA

Projects are accepted by Women Make Movies after being reviewed through a competitive process using the following criteria:

- **RELEVANCE + SIGNIFICANCE OF PROJECT TO WOMEN MAKE MOVIES**
Does the subject matter and project meets the goals of Women Make Movies mission, as outlined on page 2?
- **LIKELIHOOD OF PROJECT COMPLETION**
Does the proposed project have a very high likelihood of being successfully completed and is the project feasible?
- **STRENGTH OF STORYTELLING + AUTHORITATIVENESS OF SUBJECT MATTER**
Is the overall quality of the proposal clearly written and engaging to the application review panel? Does the proposal express a deep and clear understanding of the subject matter?
- **BUDGET**
Is the budget well developed and realistic for the project? Does the proposal budget match the needs of the project and appropriate?
- **FUNDRAISING ABILITY**
Are funds already secured or likely to be secured? Has the project director identified appropriate sources of funding for the project? Are the potential funders appropriate for the project?
- **DEMONSTRATED ABILITY OF KEY PROJECT PERSONNEL**
Does the applicant and the proposed personnel have the ability to successfully complete the proposed project?
- **DISTRIBUTION POTENTIAL**
Is there evidence of a distribution and outreach plan for the completed project that is realistic and appropriate?
- **QUALITY OF THE SAMPLE TAPE**
Does the sample tape support the project well? Does it indicate the solid ability of the director to fully execute the proposed project?

TYPES OF FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

GENERAL SPONSORSHIP

\$35 Annual Fee

Women Make Movies serves as the project's exclusive fiscal sponsor throughout the production of the project.

If you are applying for general fiscal sponsorship, you must apply at one of the quarterly deadlines. We cannot review applications in-between deadlines dates unless you are currently part of our Fiscal Sponsorship Program or your film/video is currently distributed through our Distribution Service. However, you must still submit an application package and allow approximately two-weeks for review of the materials.

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PASS THROUGH SPONSORSHIP

\$35 One-Time Fee

For pass-through fiscal sponsorship, we will review, on an extremely limited case-by-case basis, applications in-between deadline dates. Women Make Movies serves as the project's fiscal sponsor for one grant from a single funding source, or for a committed single donation of \$10,000 or more.

For pass-through fiscal sponsorship you will be required to submit to us your proposal package, a statement explaining your need for fiscal sponsorship on an urgent basis. Please be advised that not all requests are granted and we need at least 2 weeks to review your request.

If you are in need of assistance in-between our deadline dates, please contact the Fiscal Sponsorship Program via email at fsprogram@wmm.com or by phone at 212/925-0606 x302.

HOW FISCAL SPONSORSHIP WORKS

Once the project is awarded a grant or receives a contribution, the funds are made payable to Women Make Movies and mailed to WMM. We deposit the funds in our tax-exempt bank account until the Project Director requests them.

Upon request from the Project Director and once funds have cleared, a check is disbursed in the Project Director's name or in the production company's name. Checks are disbursed to one name only. You are responsible for paying your own bills and consultants. As the Project Director, you must maintain your own bookkeeping records and report to Women Make Movies how the funds were spent by submitting copies of receipts, invoices, cancelled checks or similar documentation.

Administrative Fee

For this service, Women Make Movies deducts a 5% administrative fee from all contributions you receive at the time of deposit. The only exception is grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts, and State Humanities Councils and government grants which are charged a 7% administrative fee.

For pass-through accounts, Women Make Movies takes the 5% administrative fee and issues the Project Director a 1099 Independent Contractor tax form at the end of the year for the entire amount of the grant. It then becomes the responsibility of the Project Director to account for the money as income and expenses for all tax purposes.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

The following application checklist lists the items which must be included in your Application Package to our Fiscal Sponsorship Program:

- ___ APPLICATION COVERSHEET, the coversheet is included on page 10.
- ___ PROJECT PROPOSAL, including Project Budget guidelines are included below. Please be aware that we want to see exactly what you anticipate sending to funders. If there is a specific grant you will be applying to, feel free to send us the proposal you will use for that funder. However, your proposal must include all the items listed in our Proposal Guidelines. (Two copies.)

___ SAMPLE TAPE + SAMPLE TAPE DESCRIPTION FORM, included on page 11, which details how the sample relates to your current project. The sample tape may be submitted in VHS or DVD format (one copy).

___ APPLICATION FEE (non-refundable)

SUBMIT TWO (2) COPIES OF THE ABOVE, STAPLED, IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:

- 1) Application Coversheet
- 2) Proposal
- 3) Budget
- 4) Sample Tape Description Form

Please do not bind your proposal materials, and do not use heavy binders or expensive presentation folders.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Every proposal varies in format, but the following elements must be included. Please note that the following elements should serve as guidelines but not a required format. If you use a different proposal format, please be sure to include the information detailed below in order to present a strong and competitive proposal. The proposal submitted to Women Make Movies should look exactly like if you were submitting a proposal to a funder.

INTRODUCTION

Length: 1-2 paragraphs

Describe why your project is important and sum up what you are trying to do in a sentence or two. This paragraph should contain a concise description of the project that clearly states the length of finished piece, whether it will be color or black & white, the original format, and the medium of the completed project.

- ▶ Demonstrates that the project is well-conceived and well-planned.
- ▶ Convinces the reader to keep reading and that the project is compelling.
- ▶ Convinces the funder that the applicant is qualified and credible.
- ▶ Convinces the funder that you provide important services and have the respect of the community you wish to serve.

NEEDS STATEMENT

Length: 1-2 paragraphs

Why is the project needed and how did you become involved with it? Have there been other projects on the same topic? If yes, how is yours different and why is it needed?

- ▶ Helps the reader understand the nature of the problem your project will address.
- ▶ Convinces the reader that you are not making this up: the problem really exists and there is evidence to support you.
- ▶ Convinces the reader that the project is in harmony with its funding priorities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + TREATMENT

Length: 1 to 3 pages

This section should include the format and style of your project, content, needs statement and visual treatment.

- ▶ Describes the big picture vision and explains how you envision translating your story from page to screen.
- ▶ Discuss the structure of your story and how you will organize the elements into a coherent and interrelated dramatic whole from beginning to middle to end.
- ▶ Convinces the reader that you have a well-conceived structure and plan for your project.

FUNDRAISING PLAN

Length: 1 paragraph and a List of Potential Funding Sources

How are you going to fund this project? Include a comprehensive list of potential donors that specifies the amounts you are planning on requesting from the sources you identified. *The total amount listed must add up to or exceed the total amount of your budget.* Detail any funds you have already received or that are secured. Be sure to explain if you are going to individual donors for solicitations, or if you are planning a fundraiser. If available, please include information on funds you were able to successfully raise for other projects.

- ▶ Describes a plan for the successful completion of the project.
- ▶ Convinces the funder you have a well-conceived plan for securing adequate funds for the completion of the project.
- ▶ List any funds raised to date and grants pending.
- ▶ List in-kind contributions and make sure that cash grants and in-kind donated services are clearly separated.
- ▶ List potential funding sources from government, foundations and individuals. Be specific.
- ▶ Indicate any sources that have funded you in the past and to which you are reapplying.

Applications without a thorough fundraising plan will not be considered.

Additionally, if you have not already identified appropriate sources of funding for your project, we strongly encourage you to apply at a later date once you have a complete fundraising strategy.

TIMELINE + CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT

Length: 1 paragraph

This section should clearly articulate at what stage the project is currently at in production. While it is not necessary to delineate a section specifically to this information, be sure it is very clear in your proposal what the current stage of the project is and your projected timeline to completion.

- ▶ Describes the length of time needed for each phase of production.
- ▶ Clearly state at what stage your project is currently at in production.
- ▶ Can be written as a list, does not need to be in narrative form.
- ▶ Convinces the reader that you are well-planned and have realistic goals.

DISTRIBUTION PLAN

Length: 2-3 paragraphs

Who is your primary audience and how will you reach them? Describe them in as much detail as possible. What venues, distributors or alternative strategies will you use and why? Funders want to see who will benefit from the work they fund so be sure you are as specific as possible in this section.

It is extremely important to include detailed information and avoid generalizations about your audience.

- ▶ Convinces the reader that you have a well-conceived and well-planned strategy for delivering your project to your audience.
- ▶ Clarifies who the audience is and how you are going to reach them.
- ▶ Reassures the funder that their support will be disseminated to those who you have identified as being able to benefit from the project.
- ▶ List plans for all territories that are applicable including: theatrical, television, educational, home video, and multimedia applications.
- ▶ Discuss specific community groups, constituencies or partnerships that will work with you to promote the project.
- ▶ Name a distributor, if possible and discuss their track record.
- ▶ Consider contacting distributors or broadcasters early in the production and request a letter of support from them to strengthen your proposal.
- ▶ Discuss steps you'll take to produce and promote any ancillary activities for the project, for instance a website or study guide.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Length: 1 paragraph per person

Even if this is a very personal project, film/video production is a group effort. Funders want to know the credentials of those working with you. If you do not have previous experience as director/producer, make sure the rest of the personnel associated with the project are highly qualified. Try to consider how you would feel giving money to someone without a track record, and then plan the rest of your team accordingly to bolster your proposal.

You may also attach a comprehensive bio or resume for yourself and additional primary personnel, if you like.

- ▶ Bios of principle production personnel, including producer, director, cinematographer, writer and editor. Include significant credits for each, and any major awards.
- ▶ Brief bios (two or three sentences) of any advisors and/or scholars you have on the project.
- ▶ Convinces the funder that you have assembled a team of personnel who are adequately experienced and able to assist in the successful completion of the project.
- ▶ Reassures the funder that if do not have a specific skill set you have identified persons who can assist you.

BUDGET

Length: 1 to 3 pages

The total budget for your project needs to include all phases of production from pre-production through post-production. What are your crew costs, equipment, etc? Please make it as detailed as possible, but also include a summary sheet with grand totals for each category as your first page. Try to be as realistic as possible. Consider the viability of the project and it's fundability.

Make sure your budget is consistent with your narrative. The amounts you list will be reviewed for accuracy and for any omissions that may be present based on the activities, travel, and so forth that you discussed in your narrative.

- ▶ Detailed line item budget divided into pre-production, production, and post-production.
- ▶ Use general headings and sub-totals for each income and expense category.
- ▶ Show funds raised to date and in-kind contributions in separate columns. Anticipated revenue and expenses of the project should also be clearly identified.
- ▶ Convinces the funder that the revenue and expenses have been well thought out, are reasonable, necessary and adequate to carry out the project.

DRAMATIC OR NARRATIVE PROJECTS

Please also include a detailed treatment and/or the first 10 pages of your script.

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Please include three names and email address for three professional references. You do not need to include a formal letter of support from these sources. They will be contacted via email if we have any questions or concerns about your filmmaking experience or proposed project.

SAMPLE TAPE CONSIDERATIONS

The sample tape you include should be a work-in-progress for the project for which you are currently applying for fiscal sponsorship.

If you have not made a sample tape, submit a sample of your previous work as a director. (Sample tapes of the producer or director of photography will not be accepted. The tape must be a film/video of the director's work.) The previous work should relate stylistically or thematically to your current project and you should explain how on the sample tape description form.

SAMPLE TAPE DESCRIPTION FORM, see page 11

This form includes the space for you to make a statement on how the sample tape relates to your current project. The sample tape is crucial in the fundraising process and is often required by funders. A strong sample can work to strengthen your overall request tremendously. At the same time, a weak sample tape will reflect negatively on your abilities as a director and on the quality of the finished project.

Images on the front of the Fiscal Sponsorship Application are from selected recently completed projects from the Fiscal Sponsorship Program. The projects from left to right are as detailed below:

- *Love & Diane* by Jennifer Dworkin
Selected screenings include: Sundance Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Locarno International Film Festival (Golden Leopard Award) and released theatrically in the U.S.
- *Double Exposure* by Kit-Yin Snyder
Screened at the Tribeca Film Festival and broadcast on PBS series "Independent Lens"
- *Chisholm '72: Unbought and Unbossed* by Shola Lynch
Premiered in January 2004 at the Sundance Film Festival

**Women Make Movies
FISCAL SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION**

Application Deadline Date: _____

General

Pass-Through

Project Title

Project Administrator (or primary business contact for the project)

Role in Project: Producer or Co-Producer Director Other: _____

Organization _____ n/a

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone

(w)

(h)

Fax

Email

** All applicants must have an email address*

Website

Director of Proposed Project (if different from Project Administrator)

n/a

Director phone and email

Description of Project (1-2 sentences)

Genre

Documentary Narrative Experimental

Anticipated Length of Project _____ minutes

Shooting Format film video

Stage of Production

Pre- Production Production Post-Production Distribution

Total Project Budget \$ _____

Amount Raised to Date In Cash \$ _____ In-Kind Donations \$ _____

▶ Is this your first independent film/video project? yes no

If no, amount of cash raised for previous film/video project: \$ _____

▶ What is your filmmaking background (i.e. editor; first-time director, etc.)?

▶ Have you been fiscally sponsored before by WMM?

yes

no

If yes, for what project and year?

How did you hear about our fiscal sponsorship program, please choose:

Internet Search Screening of WMM Film WMM Representative WMM Email Newsletter

Referral from Organization Referral from a Colleague Other: _____
