



# 2026-27 ONTARIO CREATES SCREEN MARKETING AND DISCOVERABILITY PROGRAM

**Deadline: Continuous, closes December 16, 2026 – 5:00PM ET**

The Screen Marketing and Discoverability Program (SMD Program) documentation includes:

- SMD Program Guidelines (this document)
- [Ontario Creates Program Policies](#)

Applicants must review the documents listed above prior to submitting an application.

This program is open to projects that have received Production funding from one of the following programs:

- Film Fund
- IDM Fund
- IP Fund

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### 1. Introduction

The Screen Marketing and Discoverability (SMD) Program is designed to increase audiences (players, users, viewers, etc.) and revenues for screen content projects that received Production investments from Ontario Creates.

Ontario Creates is committed to:

- supporting diversity and gender parity;
- providing enhanced accessibility support to people with disabilities, people who are Deaf and people who have barriers to accessing technology to complete an application; and

- fostering respectful workplaces in all the sectors and companies we support.

Please see [Program Policies](#) for important details.

## 2. Eligible Applicants

Applicants **must be the recipient of Production funding through the Film Fund, the IDM Fund or the IP Fund** for the project for which they are requesting SMD Program support. They must maintain their status as an eligible applicant for the relevant Fund for the duration of the SMD Program activity window.

## 3. Eligible Activities

Eligible activities must have a demonstrable impact on **audience awareness/engagement** and **revenue generation** in the domestic and/or international market. They must be separate and distinct from Production activities and deliverables and intended to maximize commercial impact of Public Launch/Release<sup>1</sup> of a screen content project that has received Production funding from the Film Fund, IDM Fund or IP Fund. Where a third party channel partner is engaged (distributor, licensor, publisher) the activities should complement and leverage their efforts.

	<b>Linear Content</b> (Film Fund, IDM Fund – Linear, IP Fund – Linear)	<b>Interactive Content</b> (IDM Fund – Non-Linear, IP Fund – Interactive)
Eligible Activities	Examples of eligible activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creation of marketing materials (website, trailer, EPK, giveaways, posters, social media assets, etc.);</li> <li>• advertising, marketing, PR, social media campaigns;</li> <li>• festival screenings, private screenings, red carpet “event” screenings, other publicity events and innovative marketing strategies;</li> </ul>	Examples of eligible activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creation of marketing materials (website, trailer, press kits, giveaways, posters, social media assets, etc.);</li> <li>• advertising, marketing, PR, influencer/streamer, social media campaigns;</li> <li>• launch events;</li> <li>• community development and management;</li> <li>• project-related live operations;</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Public Launch/Release occurs when a product is made publicly available to an audience.

- For Interactive Content this may include releases commonly known as early access, soft-launch, beta release and full launch. The project should be in a position to generate revenue once Public Launch/Release has occurred. Release of a demo is not considered a Public Launch/Release.
- For Linear Content this refers to the date that a project has been delivered and entered into commercial exploitation for public viewing and sales. Festival and premiere screenings are not considered Public Launch/Release.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• travel for talent, producers and key creatives to attend marketing events and screenings for promotional purposes (i.e. festivals, premieres, press days and other marketing events); and</li> <li>• versioning into alternative languages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development of DLC; and</li> <li>• porting to additional platforms.</li> </ul>
Ineligible Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities that are being supported through other Ontario Creates programs (IDM Fund/Film Fund, IP Fund, Global Market Development, etc.) are not eligible.</li> <li>• Activities where costs are incurred directly by the distributor or licensor.</li> <li>• Activities where costs are covered by other funding entities (such as Telefilm, Bell Fund).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities that are being supported through other Ontario Creates programs (IDM Fund/Film Fund, IP Fund, Global Market Development, etc.) are not eligible.</li> <li>• Activities that typically take place during Production including post-production polish, testing, bug fixes, certification and ports to additional platforms, demos, and DLC that are released at the time of Public Launch/Release.</li> </ul> <p>Activities that take place <u>prior to delivery of the Production Final Report</u> are eligible for IDM Fund Concept Definition and Production program and IP Fund Pre-Production and Production stream support. See relevant Budget and Financing Guidelines and Template for details.</p>

**4. Budget, Financing and Timeline Requirements**

Budgets and financing plans must be submitted on the template provided and include all costs through to completion and delivery of the activities.

	<b>Linear Content</b> (Film Fund, IDM Fund – Linear, IP Fund – Linear)	<b>Interactive Content</b> (IDM Fund – Non-Linear, IP Fund – Interactive)
Eligible Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 – minimum request</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$15,000 – minimum request</li> <li>• \$50,000 – maximum request</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$25,000 – maximum request<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Non-repayable contribution of up to 75% of eligible expenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-repayable contribution of up to 50% of eligible expenses</li> </ul>
Budget Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal, external and related / labour and non-labour costs are eligible provided they are directly attributable to the SMD Program activity.</li> <li>• Administration costs are capped at 15% of the budget.</li> <li>• Ineligible expenses include costs that are incurred prior to submission of the application, alcohol, ongoing/general corporate operational costs.</li> <li>• Where possible, Ontario suppliers should be used.</li> </ul>	
Financing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 10% of the total budget must be in the form of a cash contribution.</li> <li>• Realistically valued non-cash contributions (deferrals, donations, in-kind services) may be included in the financing plan.</li> </ul>	
Timeline Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications can be submitted 6 months before Public Launch/Release.</li> <li>• For Feature Films only, projects that have completed Public Launch/Release are not eligible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications can be submitted 6 months before and up to 16 months after Public Launch/Release.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant must begin incurring expenses no later than 60 days after notification of a successful application.</li> <li>• Activities must be completed with all expenses incurred and all deliverables provided to Ontario Creates within one year of notification of a successful application.</li> </ul>	

Each project may receive a single contribution from the SMD Program. Subsequent applications will not be accepted. In addition, projects that received funding from the Marketing and Distribution Initiative or the Discoverability and Commercialization Program may not receive further support through the SMD Program. Projects that were not successful may be resubmitted with the permission of Ontario Creates provided substantial changes have been made. A project may be submitted a maximum of 3 times, after which applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

**5. Application Process and Evaluation**

Applications must be submitted to Ontario Creates by 5:00 pm ET on the applicable deadline via the Online Application Portal (OAP) at <https://apply.ontariocreates.ca/>.

The applicant must request approval to apply by sending an Application Inquiry from their Production project page in the Online Application Portal (OAP). Approval will be based on

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<sup>2</sup> Exceptions may be made for Linear Series that received support through the former IDM Fund. Please email [ipfund@ontariocreates](mailto:ipfund@ontariocreates.ca) for details.

the current status of the project and timing for the planned Marketing and Discoverability activities. Please consult Ontario Creates if you have any questions.

Applications are evaluated by Ontario Creates staff on an ongoing basis. Decisions will be communicated to applicants within eight weeks of the application submission. Applicants are encouraged to submit their application at least sixteen weeks prior to requiring funds to provide sufficient time to process the application.

**6. Decision Criteria**

This is a competitive program. The number of applicants who will receive funding and the amount awarded will depend on the availability of funding and the individual needs of each applicant. Applications will be evaluated on a first come, first served basis.

Ontario Creates applies a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the evaluation criteria for this program, and directs jury members to do the same. Applicants proposing projects/activities that support, reflect and strengthen diversity and gender parity in Ontario are expected to tangibly demonstrate a genuine and sustained commitment to these equity-deserving communities. Ontario Creates may identify particular underrepresented communities within a sector. The provincial definition of diversity includes but is not limited to: ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion (creed), sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. In assessment of all projects, Ontario Creates uses and directs industry jurors to refer to key resources: On Screen Protocols and Pathways: <https://iso-bea.ca/advocacy-resources/on-screen-protocols-pathways/> and Being Seen: Directive for Creating Authentic and Inclusive Content: <https://www.beingseen.ca/>, Reelworld #HerFrameMatters Research Study and Protocol Guideline: <https://www.reelworld.ca/research>, and Disability Screen Office Industry Resource Hub: <https://www.dso-orphe.ca/hub>.

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting	Considerations may include
Track Record	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>company experience with similar activities/projects</li> <li>capacity, skills, knowledge and expertise of the team</li> <li>company performance on previous Ontario Creates funded projects and activities</li> <li>diversity among senior leadership, staff and/or contract employees and evidence of company policies and/or initiatives that support diversity, equity and inclusion</li> </ul>
Feasibility and Risks	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarity of activities and deliverables</li> <li>accuracy of budget and cost allocations</li> <li>suitability of project planning and timelines</li> <li>mitigation of challenges and risks</li> </ul>
Activity Impact	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>likelihood of the activities driving project success and generating a positive return on investment</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• suitability of activities to reach and engage an audience</li> <li>• availability of research and rationale to support the strategy</li> <li>• clarity and accuracy of projected results</li> </ul>
Economic Benefit	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impact of the contribution on applicant company</li> <li>• likelihood of critical and commercial success</li> <li>• size and scope of the opportunity</li> <li>• demonstration of other benefits to the company and/or the Ontario economy</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**7. Successful Applicants**

Successful applicants who are Deaf or disabled may be eligible for supplementary funds for accessibility expenses required to complete their project deliverables.

Successful applicants will receive funding as follows:

- 60% on execution of the Ontario Creates agreement;
- 40% on completion of all activities and delivery of a final report.

**8. More Information**

Linear Content – Digital Series	Linear Content- Feature Film	Interactive Content
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**These guidelines are for the 2026-27 deadline only. This document is subject to change for future deadlines .** Applicants are advised to consult the Ontario Creates website for any relevant Frequently Asked Questions documents and Ontario Creates Bulletins for clarifications and alterations to these guidelines.

Ontario Creates is an agency of the Government of Ontario that facilitates economic development, investment and collaboration in Ontario’s creative industries including the music, book, magazine, film, television and interactive digital media sectors.  
[ontariocreates.ca](http://ontariocreates.ca)