

WICKLOW SHORT FILM AWARD 2026

Guidance Document

Screen Wicklow and Wicklow Arts Office are pleased to announce the Wicklow Short Film Award for 2026. The purpose of the award is to support Wicklow filmmakers to make high-quality, original films in the county. Narrative films, documentary, digital film and animation are all eligible to apply. The Wicklow Short Film Award is funded by Wicklow County Council and the Arts Council.

For 2026, there will be a maximum of 2 grants of up to €15,000 each for the production of a short film or documentary. Films should be approximately 10-15 minutes in duration, although animation projects may be shorter. The total fund therefore for award in 2026 is €30,000.00.

This is a film production award, and scripts must be fully developed prior to application. This award cannot be used to develop scripts or ideas, and films must be ready to go into production within two months of funding being awarded. Films must be shot in County Wicklow.

We are seeking applicants who have a track record of filmmaking, and who can demonstrate involvement in high-quality, creative and original film. Applicants may apply individually but priority will be given to applicants who have already assembled a core creative team (including writer, director & producer). We encourage applications from teams which are representative of the diversity of cultures and backgrounds in County Wicklow, including those from communities that are currently under-represented within the screen sector.

Wicklow County Council has a strong history of supporting the development of the film industry in the county and is proud to be host to a burgeoning professional commercial film sector. It is our intention that making these two awards will have a significant impact on career progression for two film makers and their teams within the screen industry.

Please note that successful applicants must have be associated with a registered production company in order to draw down the funding, and appropriate insurance must be in place prior to the commencement of filming. In collaboration with Clermont Screen Hub, successful applicants will also receive additional supports including access to co-working space.

Screen Wicklow will also assist grant recipients with locations, permits etc. and where possible, Wicklow Arts Office and Screen Wicklow will seek to facilitate screening opportunities for the two successfully funded films.

Questions and enquiries about the Wicklow Short Film Award may be directed to filmaward@wicklowcoco.ie and an FAQ document will be published online.

The closing date for applications is **Thursday 5th February 2026 at 4pm**.

The primary applicant must be native to County Wicklow or residing in County Wicklow for the past three consecutive years. For all further eligibility criteria and funding guidelines please see: <https://wicklowcountycouncil.submittable.com/submit>

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA & FUNDING GUIDELINES

- The primary applicant must be native to County Wicklow or residing in County Wicklow for the past three consecutive years.
- Part-time or full-time students are not eligible to apply.
- Previous winners of the Wicklow Short Film Award are eligible to apply as lead applicant or as part of a team, but it is preferable if they fulfil a different professional role on the new application.
- The main applicant must apply through a registered limited company. Company registration details will be requested in the Application Form.
- Applicants must be fully tax compliant and must provide a Tax Clearance Access Number within their application form.
- Projects that require significant additional finance (unless this is already in place) are not eligible.
- Films that have either been part-shot or fully shot are not eligible.
- Only a single project may be submitted by any applicant.
- Applicants must have a track record of involvement with film-making and should highlight any roles in previous productions.
- The majority of each film must be shot in County Wicklow.
- Shortlisted applicants must be available to attend an interview/pitching session on Thursday 26th March 2026 (to be confirmed). Specific dates and times will be confirmed and communicated when applicants have been shortlisted.

Projects must be able to address align with the core priorities values of Screen Wicklow, Wicklow Arts Office, Wicklow County Council and the Arts Council, including equality, diversity and inclusion, in all aspects of production and the subject matter of the film.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Application Process will involve two stages, with shortlisted applicants being required to attend an interview/pitching session with a panel of industry specialists.

All applications must be submitted through the Wicklow Arts Office online application platform: <https://wicklowcountycouncil.submittable.com/submit>

Applicants will be required to submit the following:

- Completed Application Form (online)
- Project Synopsis (500 words) to include an outline of the plot
- Logline (50 words max)
- Copy of the full script/screenplay (please ensure the writer's name has been removed from this document)
- Project Plan (include proposed film schedule, filming locations, proposed casting etc.)
- Film Festival/Screening Strategy (please provide information about your planned submissions to film festivals, or other screening opportunities)
- Project Budget (including all production costs, cast, crew, travel, logistics, music etc.). If additional finance has been secured, please provide proof of funds.
- CV of the Primary Applicant and for any other confirmed member of the creative team (e.g. director, producer, cast etc.)
- Links to showreel, or samples of previous work (including main applicant and other confirmed team members).
- Director/Producer's Notes and Insights (include considerations on visual style, treatment, approaches etc.)
- Evidence/Confirmation of Ownership of Rights
- In the case of animation projects, please include visual samples (characters, backgrounds etc.) where possible.
- In the case of a documentary which focuses on another person's life story (or similar topic), please submit a signed statement from the relevant person/people verifying that they have given their permission for the film.
- Additional relevant supporting material may be submitted at the discretion of the applicant.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed against 5 assessment criteria with weightings applied as below.

· The creativity/quality of the project proposal.	[40/100]
· Production Plan and Budget.	[20/100]
· The track record of the main applicant.	[10/100]
· Ability of the creative team to deliver the project.	[20/100]
· Proposed Film Festival/Screening Strategy	[10/100]

TERMS OF FUNDING

- All films must be shot in County Wicklow. In exceptional circumstances approval may be granted for alternative locations outside of Wicklow at the discretion of the Screen Officer/Arts Officer. Where possible, post-production should also take place in County Wicklow. Screen Wicklow and Clermont Screen Hub will provide support to successful applicants in this regard.
- Appropriate insurance must be in place prior to filming take place, and proof of insurance will be requested by the funders.
- If production has not commenced within 2 months of the grant being awarded, the funders reserve the right to award the funding to another candidate instead (allocated in order of application scoring).
- The legal rights to all materials submitted (including scripts, screenplays, treatments, characters etc.) must be fully and completely owned by the applicant. Scripts/screenplays must be the original work of the applicant. If a script/screenplay is an adaptation of an existing work (e.g. short story), relevant legal documentation must be submitted proving that the applicant owns all underlying rights to make the adaptation.
- Applicants will be required to have completed all filming, editing and post-production by **Wednesday 30th September 2026**. Please ensure your filming schedule allows for this timeframe.
- Wicklow County Council, Wicklow Arts Office, Screen Wicklow and The Arts Council must be acknowledged in the film credits, as well as on all related websites, social media,

publicity and marketing materials. The relevant logos must be included in the final cut of the finished films.

- Health & Safety Regulations, Equal Opportunities Policies, Child Protection & Safeguarding, Garda Vetting and other relevant policies and legislation must be in place and adhered to at all times.
- If shortlisted, the main applicant must attend an in-person interview where they will be invited to pitch their film to a panel of industry specialists. It is advisable that all members of the core creative team (writer, director, producer) also attend this interview.

DISCLAIMER – please read carefully

It will be a condition of any application for funding under the terms and conditions of the Wicklow County Council – The Arts Council project that the applicant has read, understood and accepted the following:

1. Wicklow County Council shall not be liable to the applicant or any other party in respect of any loss, damage or costs of any nature arising directly or indirectly from:
 - The application or the subject matter of the application.
 - The rejection for any reason of any application.
2. Wicklow County Council shall not be held responsible or liable, at any time in any circumstances, in relation to any matter whatsoever arising in connection with the administration of activities. In respect of monies provided by Wicklow County Council, the Council does not undertake the role of 'Client' or 'Employer' as defined in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.
3. By submitting an application, applicants agree to the processing and disclosure of the applicant's information by Wicklow County Council, and to other third parties if required for Fund administration, reporting, evaluation and audit purposes; and successful applicants further consent to the disclosure of this information (e.g. name of successful applicant, amount of award, event details, etc.) by these parties in connection with the marketing or promotion of the Fund. Personal data will be processed only in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection legislation.

Awards maybe divided or withheld at the discretion of Wicklow County Council. The assessment panel decision is final.

Late and / or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Funded by Wicklow County Council