



Developing world class talent

Skills Investment Fund

Call for co-investment

The Skills Investment Fund is a collective investment in the skills of the Creative Industries for the future.

Working in partnership with industry and informed by leading research, Creative Skillset directs this collective investment to create new and innovative training in priority skills and in-demand roles to ensure industry growth. We co-invest in organisations and individuals to support them to develop, deliver, or receive training. [Read more about the Skills Investment Fund.](#)

Company Co-investment Grants (Challenge Fund)

For animation, children’s TV, games, high-end TV, film and VFX

This call for co-investment supports companies to develop skills in their business. Your company can receive co-investment to deliver ambitious training which responds to your industry’s priority skills needs.

Who can apply?

Companies from industries eligible for Government tax credits which have contributed to the Skills Investment Fund via their industry’s levy or make a contribution at the point of their co-investment offer.

Check your eligibility on page two or find out how your company can make a contribution in Annex A.

What co-investment is available?

Our Skills Councils are composed of key industry figures covering the Creative Industries. Through them, the industries shape, direct and drive our work. In consultation with the relevant councils we have allocated the following:

| | | Allocation available |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Animation | | £122,000 |
| Film | Co-investment of up to £50,000 for companies to train their talent | £122,000 |
| Games | | £122,000 |
| VFX | | £122,000 |
| Children’s TV | | £150,000 |
| High-end TV | Co-investment of up to £20,000 for companies to train their talent | £122,000 |

Key information

Apply by 12 noon, the first Thursday of every second month

Award announcements usually within seven weeks of the application deadline

Total allocation for this call for co-investments: £760,524.15

How to use this programme

Please read this programme alongside our [Co-investment Guide for Organisations](#). Please then call to discuss your project with your industry's **partnership manager** before applying.

[Find your partnership manager's contact details on our website and in Annex A of this document.](#)

Is my company eligible?

- You are a company with a project eligible for Government tax credits within **film, high-end or children's TV, animation, games or VFX** or a consortia of these companies looking to make an application.
- **All employers named** in the application must demonstrate they **will or have contributed to the Skills Investment Fund** within this financial year as specified in Annex A.
- Applicants must demonstrate they can co-invest **at least 50%** of total project costs, and **at least 60%** if they have **250 or more employees**.

Please consult Annex A on page eight for further information and check your eligibility with your partnership manager.

Who cannot apply?

- Training providers cannot apply but may be identified as a partner in training delivery. [Find out more about our grants for trainers and educators.](#)

What training are we looking to support?

We invite companies to propose an ambitious training project that works for their business while delivering training in **priority skills** and for **in-demand roles**¹ needed by the UK's Creative Industries to ensure industry growth. Priority skills and in-demand roles are identified in our research and partnership with creative companies in our Skills Councils convened by industry leaders for each creative sector. (See Table 1, page four: Priority skills and in-demand roles)

In 2014-15 creative companies co-invested with us to deliver a wide range of training for priority skills and in-demand roles in their industry in distinctive and innovative ways.

Activities supported may include but are **not** limited to:

- Intensive training programmes
- Management and leadership programmes
- Shadowing and mentoring and 'stepping up' programmes
- Professional development of employees and freelancers

¹ Priority skills are skills needed to solve skills gaps where the skills of existing workforce are not fully proficient; in-demand roles are skills shortages (insufficient people to resource the demand for these roles).

We encourage companies to consider a portfolio of training activity which will combine to deliver a substantial leap forward in skills for their company, whether this is a 'stepping up' programme to progressively build your company's skills in in-demand roles or a multi-strand training project to equip your company in the priority skills needed for your next productions.

For inspiration from examples of projects we supported last year, please see **Annex C**.

Key dates

| Application deadline | Awards announced |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 3 March 2016 | w/c 18 April 2016 |
| 5 May 2016 | w/c 20 June 2016 |
| 7 July 2016 | w/c 22 August 2016 |
| 8 September 2016 | w/c 24 October 2016 |
| 3 November 2016 | w/c 19 December 2016 |

The deadline for applications is **12 noon** on the dates listed above

You can apply for a grant at any time but your application will not be assessed until the **deadline** has passed.

Award announcements will be made within **seven weeks** of the **application deadline**

Please note there is a high demand for our grants and only a finite amount of funding available. We would encourage you to submit your application as soon as you are ready.

Delivery criteria

Your training should:

- Address priority skills or in-demand roles, or provide an evidence-based case for a new industry skills need confirmed in discussion with your Partnership Manager;
- **Be no more than 9 months duration;**
- Be accessible for and include both freelance and employed staff;
- Embed our **delivery values**, including for evaluation, as outlined in Section 3 of the **Co-investment Guide – What to include in your application**.

Project dates

- All training must **conclude by 29 January 2017;**
- **All final reporting must be delivered to Creative Skillset no later than 12 February 2017.**

Diversity

Creative Skillset is committed to significantly improving the diversity of the Creative Industries' workforce to better reflect the UK's diverse population.

We expect to see a clear plan for how you will ensure access for participants from as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible, even if the initiative is not a positive action scheme.

A positive action scheme would be considered to be training focused on supporting access to training for specific groups for which we have evidence of under-representation in certain areas: women, people from BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) background, or people with a disability.

We encourage you to become aware of roles in which representation is most unbalanced. [Read more about diversity and priority skills for your industry on our website.](#)

Cross-sector priorities

We will give additional credit to applications that impact a number of sectors or any of the below cross-sector priorities:

- Increasing need for fused skills of business acumen and technological knowledge
- Impact of changing business models
- Impact of technology
- Management and leadership focusing on change management: corporate strategy and developing new business models, developing funding models and identifying sources of finance, company sustainability and growth
- Increasing strength and depth of the skills and talent base in the nations and regions
- Training for specific groups who are under-represented in certain areas.

Table 1: Priority skills and in-demand roles†

| Industry | In-demand roles | | Priority skills | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Animation | Visual storyboarding Production management Production staff Compositing artist CGI Animators Rigging | Editors Screen-writers Background artists Trainee/assistant roles Writers | CelAction Maya Nuke Storyboard Pro StopMotion Pro Lightwave | Flash Muvizu TV Paint Redboard Toon Boom |
| Children's TV | 1 st and 2 nd Assistant Director Director Live Gallery Director Editor Producer Live Gallery Producer | Line Producer Gallery PA Script Supervisor Location Manager Script Editor Production Accountant | Content creation for multi-platform Self-shooting for online creation | |
| We are particularly keen to see applications addressing diverse talent (BAME, LGBT, disabled and those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds). | | | | |
| Film | Producer Line Producer Production Accountant Costume Supervisor DITs Production Manager 1st AD Assistant Production Accountant Steadicam | Digital Asset Management Studio Management Script Editors Script Supervisors 3D Rigging High-calibre trainees across departments Feature-film HoDs in nations and regions | Make-up in HD Period hair Sound recording Editing 3D Pre-visualisation Wig application Prosthetics Art department software skills | Digital asset management Health and safety awareness 3D rigging |
| Games | Coders, including network programmers Artists, including cinematic & technical | Designers, including Technical Designers VFX | Production / Project management Quality assurance certification Leadership and people management Translating / Localisation | Discoverability and monetisation Brand and marketing Financial and legal Programming Community Management Data / Business analytics |
| High-end TV drama | In-demand roles: Line Producers Location Mangers Production Accountant Assistant Production Accountant | | Script Editors Script Supervisors | |
| We are particularly keen to see applications addressing diverse talent (BAME, LGBT, disabled and those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds). | | | | |
| VFX | In-demand roles needing priority skills: Multi-skilling Client handling On-set experience | | Document writing / Presentation skills FX Management and leadership New technologies | Trainers / Tutors Compositing Virtual Reality |

The skills and roles identified reflect growth and future trends in the marketplace, are not exhaustive and may be subject to change. We will consider applications on a portfolio basis to reflect such

† Priority skills are skills needed to solve skills gaps where the skills of existing workforce are not fully proficient; in-demand roles are skills shortages (insufficient people to resource the demand for these roles).

changes and will welcome applications in which companies make a convincing evidence-based case for a new skills need.

Planning your application

- All applications should be submitted and led by an eligible single named employer;
- Partner organisations (including training providers) can be included in the application and can be nominated to take a lead role if we award co-investment.

How much should you ask for?

The amount you request should be the amount you need to deliver your project efficiently and effectively. We pay close attention to value for money over all our co-investments. The maximum grant we will award and allocation available varies due to the overall portfolio of projects we are supporting in your industry.

- **The minimum grant of public investment we will award is £10,000.**
This means that your minimum **total project budget should be £20,000.**
- **Animation, film, games and VFX** companies may apply for up to **£50,000 investment**, with a maximum total project budget of up to £100,000.
- **Children's** companies may apply for up to **£30,000 investment**, with a maximum total project budget of up to £60,000.
- **High-end TV** companies may apply for up to **£20,000 investment**, with a maximum total project budget of up to £40,000.

Your project co-investment

We expect you to provide a proportion of the money you need for your project. This is your **project co-investment**. The levels of co-investment are dependent on the size of your organisation.

Example project budget:

| Companies that employ under 250 people | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Creative Skillset grant | £50,000 | 50% |
| Cash project co-investment | £40,000 | 40% |
| In-kind project co-investment | £10,000 | 10% |
| Total project budget | £100,000 | 100% |

Plus contribution to the Skills Investment Fund

Please see Annex B for a guide to eligible cash and in-kind co-investment.

Companies which employ **under 250 people must co-invest a minimum of 50% of the total project budget**. A minimum of 40% of total project costs must be made up of cash investment and a maximum of 10% of total project costs can be in-kind.

Example project budget:

| Companies that employ over 250 people | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Creative Skillset grant | £40,000 | 40% |
| Cash project co-investment | £50,000 | 50% |
| In-kind project co-investment | £10,000 | 10% |
| Total project budget | £100,000 | 100% |

Plus contribution to the Skills Investment Fund

All companies which employ 250 people or over must co-invest a minimum of 60% of the total project budget. A minimum of 50% of total project costs must be made up of cash investment and a maximum of 10% of total project costs can be in-kind.

For all applications, no more than **20%** of the total project budget should be allocated to the research and development for the training.

Eligible cash and in-kind expenditure and co-investment

The Skills Investment Fund combines industry and public co-investment; because our grants are partially provided from a public source, we are unable to include expenditure and co-investment which are ineligible for public funding.

To guide you in completing your **Project and Budget Report**, we provide a guide to eligible cash and in-kind project co-investment and budget expenditure in Annex B.

Successful applications and contributing to the Skills Investment Fund

The Government believes that investment in UK skills and talent development is a critical element to sustaining and accelerating growth. Industry contribution is key to achieving sustainability for future investment in skills and talent development beyond public investment.

All successful applicants are required to make a contribution to the Skills Investment Fund which supports this sustainability.

The different ways to contribute

Companies from film, high-end and children's TV make their contribution by paying the levy on relevant productions (please note that the animation levy is directly invested in training and does not have any allocation for sustainability of the Skills Investment Fund).

Companies from games, animation or VFX make their contribution at the point of accepting a successful co-investment offer. This contribution is equivalent to 10% of your **company's investment**.

Please refer to **Annex A** for for more information.

How to apply

Step 1

[Please download and read the Creative Skillset Co-investment Guide for Organisations](#). This guide contains essential information about how to apply and what to include in your application.

Step 2

You should discuss your project with your partnership manager (see Annex A of this document).

Step 3

Complete the **Project and Budget Report** template. Guidance for the completion of the Project and Budget Report template can be found in Tab 1 of the form itself. See download link below.

Step 4: When you are ready, [click here to start your online application](#).

Step 5: Attaching your supporting documents

When you have completed the online form you will be asked to attach the following supporting documents. Please attach as Microsoft Word documents except the Project and Budget Report where you should download the template provided from the link below:

- [Project and Budget Report template](#)
- Detailed course outline and schedule
- Trainer/tutor CVs or biographies
- Company financial information. *If you have applied to Creative Skillset in the last 12 months, please contact a fund co-ordinator as we may not require further financial information.*

Advice sessions

We will be running advice sessions throughout the application period providing application support and advice on what to include in your application. We encourage you to book a session to discuss your application paperwork and run through any project queries you may have. If you would like to book in for an advice session please contact Holly, Emma or Francesca as below.

Contact us

For more information or queries about the co-investment process, please contact:

Tanya Masih

Grant Officer

e: tanyam@creativeskillset.org

t: 020 7713 9800

Katie Baldock

Grant Officer

e: katieb@creativeskillset.org

t: 020 7713 9800

Thank you for making your application. Awards announcements will usually take place within seven weeks of the application deadline. If there are any delays in processing your application we will let you know in writing.

Annex A: Eligibility and Skills Investment Fund contributions

The Government believes that investment in UK skills and talent development is a critical element to sustaining and accelerating growth. Industry contribution is key to achieving sustainability for future investment in skills and talent development beyond public investment.

All successful applicants from games, animation and VFX are required to make a contribution to the Skills Investment Fund which supports this sustainability. This contribution is equivalent to 10% of your **company's investment**.

Film, high-end TV or children's TV companies make a contribution via their specific levy. **Please contact Fergal McBride, Production Liaison Manager, in the first instance** to find out how your company can pay the levy on productions – fergalm@creativeskillset.org / 020 7713 9800.

To apply, you should fulfil the criteria for your sector in both columns of the table below.

| Industry | Your company is eligible AND | You have made or will make the Skills Investment Fund contribution below |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Animation | You are a production company with productions in scope for tax credits | You have either paid, or intend to pay, the levy on all relevant productions within the financial year in which you are applying; AND/OR You agree to make a contribution to the Skills Investment Fund equivalent to 10% of your company's investment if your grant is awarded. For example, if your company's investment is £30,000 you agree to make an additional contribution of £3,000 to the Skills Investment Fund. |
| Games | Your company is one of the below: Games developer (creates games); Games publisher (commissions games); Games service company (supports the production of games) Games distributor (involved in promoting, selling and the commercialisation of computer and video games and interactive entertainment). | You agree to make a contribution to the Skills Investment Fund equivalent to 10% of your company's investment if your grant is awarded. For example, if your company's investment is £30,000 you agree to make an additional contribution of £3,000 to the Skills Investment Fund. |
| VFX | The business activity of the companies involved has a significant VFX element and the training is directed at staff working on VFX related projects; AND | |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Your company has a significant base in the UK, and your application supports the needs of the VFX industry. | |
| CONTACT | Helen Brunson Animation, Games and VFX Partnership Manager e: Helenb@creativeskillset.org t: 07860 753895 | |
| High end TV drama or Children's TV | You are a production company with children's or high-end TV productions in scope for tax credits; OR TV production company or broadcaster working in partnership with a levy paying TV company where the levy payer is the lead applicant. | You have paid the children's' TV or high-end drama levy on all relevant productions in 2016/17; OR You have confirmed in writing your intention to pay the children's TV or high-end drama levy on all relevant productions in 2016/17. |
| CONTACT | Ruth Palmer TV Partnership Manager e: ruthp@creativeskillset.org t: 020 7713 9846 | |
| Film | You are a production company with productions in scope for tax credits; | You have paid the levy on the relevant production/s in 2016/17; OR You have paid or have confirmed in writing your intention to pay the levy in 2016/17; |
| | If you are a company in another area of the film industry, for example, sales, distribution, exhibition or archive, you may be eligible to apply if you agree to make a contribution to the Skills Investment Fund equivalent to 10% of your company's investment if your grant is awarded. For example, if your company's investment is £30,000 you agree to make an additional contribution of £3,000 to the Skills Investment Fund. | |
| CONTACT | Jeremy Parkinson Industry Partnerships Co-ordinator e: jeremyp@creativeskillset.org t: 020 7713 9800 | |

Annex B: Eligible project co-investment and expenditure

When planning your project budget, you will need to take into account the following as regards eligible cash and in-kind co-investment and budget expenditure. You will be asked to supply evidence of your co-investment and expenditure if your grant is awarded.

| Project co-investment |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Co-investment eligible as ‘cash’ – can be included in your co-investment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct cash co-investment from the applicant and/or partner organisations. This cash must not be accounted for in any other activity; • Course fees paid by individuals; • Labour costs – evidence of hourly rate should be provided by the organisation/individual donating time. This can include time spent by staff who are already on the payroll working on the project and therefore not on any work that is income generating or commercially valuable. Please note that participants should receive at least minimum wage for the time they are training. |
| Co-investment eligible as ‘in-kind’ – can be included in your co-investment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research or professional activity (e.g. mentoring, consultancy) – evidence of hourly rate should be provided by the person donating time; • Donation of goods/services: actual evidence of third parties donating goods or proof of value should be provided; • Meeting space. |
| Not eligible as co-investment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources that equate to public funding. For example if you or any of your partners are in receipt of National Lottery funding, this cannot be used as co-investment. • Certain types of ‘in-kind’ investment are not eligible: wages for apprenticeships and trainees, attendance at short one-off meetings, volunteer time, or discounted sale of equipment. |

| Project expenditure |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Eligible – can be included in your project budget |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel costs, such as trainee personnel costs subject to compliance with State Aid and speakers (e.g. industry experts to lead courses); • Training workshops, including accredited training courses that address skills shortages; • Industry mentoring programmes, including grants for management and leadership courses up to £1,000. |
| Not eligible as a project budget cost |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrospective investment and costs made prior to the contract/project start date; • Company-specific learning aims such as induction processes or the development of skills that offer no wider benefit other than those created for the specific employer; or training specific to the employees of one company, that does not address industry-wide priorities; • Activity which has been funded in the past and would otherwise continue to be funded; activity that is being fully funded from other sources, or activity that includes other sources of public funding; • Personnel costs including staff benefits (e.g. pension, holiday and sick pay, overtime and bonus payments) and staff overheads; • Financial expenditure unrelated to the project including investment to build up a profit or surplus, make loan repayments or interest on debts; investment in tangible fixed assets e.g. property and |

equipment over £1,000 (this is not eligible for public funding but can be considered as part of the employer contribution); recoverable VAT; inflation;

- **Contingencies;**
- **Payments for gifts and donations;**
- **Peripheral costs** including entertainment and hospitality costs, advertising and marketing costs or activities, membership of professional bodies, project audit or legal costs, accommodation costs (except for the minimum necessary accommodation costs for trainees who are workers with disabilities); hire purchase interest and any associated service charges; evaluation of training activity (organisations are required to pay for their own internal evaluation and external audit of project training);
- **Higher education activities** (e.g. degree courses, diplomas, higher national diplomas, certificates in education etc);
- **Profit earned by a subsidiary** or an associate undertaking work sub-contracted out under your project;
- **Value of existing assets** such as Inward Processing Relief (IPR), data, software programmes and other exploitable assets that any of the collaborators contribute towards your project.

Please note if you include expenditure outside what is outlined above, this will not be taken into consideration for inclusion in your grant, as this cannot qualify for Government match-funding.

Please book an advice session or speak to a fund co-ordinator who will be happy to help with any questions about eligible expenditure or co-investment.

Annex C: Examples of projects funded in 2014-15

| Example 1: Multi-strand training through production | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Award amount: | £50,000 |
| Length of project (including preparation and delivery): | 4 months |
| Length of training: | 3.5 months |
| Number of participants: | 24 |
| <p>A seven-strand training project to address immediate skills needs linked to a live production. Training included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two week intensive training course in animatic storyboarding for three mentors and five trainees; • A two week internal training session on flash design with one mentor and five trainees; • On-the-job producer mentoring with one trainee having access to two mentors for the equivalent of 28 days over a three month period; • Internal production management mentoring for two trainees who each had 15 days access to a mentor over a 3.5 month period; • An intensive 2 day pitching and scripting workshop for six in-house directors run by two external industry experts. | |

| Example 2: Step up training | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Award amount: | £19,000 |
| Length of project (including preparation and delivery): | 4 months |
| Length of training: | 3.5 months |
| Number of participants: | 3 |
| <p>An intensive training project to develop an experienced Production Manager, Assistant Producer and Researcher with a view to each making the next step in their career and taking on more senior roles.</p> <p>The training was delivered through a combination of different activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-the-job shadowing with senior members of the production team; • One to one mentoring of at least 10 days per trainee; • Attendance on internal structured training of varying lengths from one day to one week covering areas such as budget, production contracts, scheduling; • Week long placements within different departments across the company. | |