APPENDIX 1: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND REGULATIONS

HBF+Europe: Minority Co-production Support

Eligibility criteria

Eligible projects

- Narrative feature films with a potential for theatrical release (minimum length 60 minutes).
- Film projects by filmmakers and main producers with a nationality from a country in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East or parts of Eastern Europe, that are mentioned on the HBF+Europe: List of eligible countries document (to be found here).
- Film projects also have to be shot in one of the eligible countries.
- The general timeframe of the project should allow all conditions and requirements as mentioned in the contract (see selection process, contacts and payments below) to be finalised before 1 April 2028.

Eligible applicants

- Projects must be submitted by audiovisual entities established in one of the countries participating to the Creative Europe MEDIA programme or to the list of non-EU Participating Countries, and owned directly or by majority participation by nationals from such countries.
- Projects should be produced with a minimum of two co-producers. The co-production structure should consist of at least:
    - One co-producer from a country participating in the Creative Europe MEDIA programme (the applicant);
    - One co-producer from a country as explained in the HBF+Europe: list of eligible countries document (to be found here), which is not participating in the Creative Europe MEDIA programme (the main producer).
- The share of the co-producer(s) coming from countries participating in the Creative Europe MEDIA programme must amount to a minimum of 20% and should not exceed 70%. Please note that the division of shares is not necessarily defined in monetary terms.

Applicant regulations

- The applicant should be a production company that is constituted and active for at least two years in a country participating in the Creative Europe MEDIA programme or to the list of non-EU Participating Countries, and owned - directly or by majority participation - by nationals from such countries.
- The track record of the applicant should demonstrate a (majority or minority) participation in at least two completed feature films, including one international or European co-produced feature film. Applicants should include in the application a list of film titles, coproduction structure, financial contribution, release dates and sales/distribution results.

Financial regulations

- Only projects with a maximum total budget of € 1,500,000 are eligible for support.
- Only projects with 50% or more of the total budget confirmed by the application deadline are eligible for support.

- Of the HBF+Europe grant, at least 25% should be spent in the applicant's country of origin.
    - A maximum of 10% can be included for overhead and producer's fee combined;
    - At least 15% of the awarded grant spent in the applicant's country of origin should demonstrate the co-producer's artistic involvement in the project.
- The budget should reserve costs for an external auditor.
- The expenditure of the HBF+Europe grant can only include costs that are incurred after the selection process has finished and communicated to the applicant producers.
- The grant must be spent on:
    - Pre-production costs such as expenses for key crew, location scouting or other costs involved in the production of the film, that are incurred after the selection announcement and not belong to the development phase
    - Production costs such as expenses for key crew and cast, travel, accommodation, transport, art direction, catering, location, equipment, film stock/tapes, insurance or other costs involved in the production of the film.
    - Post-production costs such as expenses for editing, sound mixing, colour grading, mastering, subtitling, deliverables, publicity or other costs involved in the post-production of the film.
- The HBF+Europe: Minority Co-production Support cannot be combined with the following schemes also funded by Creative Europe:
    - Hubert Bals Fund: HBF+Europe: Post-production Support
    - World Cinema Fund: WCF Europe Programme
    - Torino Film Lab: TFL Co-production Fund and TFL Audience Design Fund
    - IDFA Bertha Fund: IDFA Bertha Fund Europe

Regulations on audience awareness and distribution

To further support applicants in building strong audience awareness before the principal photography is taking place, the HBF now also requests an audience awareness strategy, next to the release and distribution strategy. Please review the guidance below on reflective questions that can inform and inspire the development of an audience strategy. The applicant is required to include answers to at least the first three points, but it is recommended to include more topics.

- How can you identify and define the key audiences for your film? Who constitutes your primary audience (in terms of demographics, behaviors, and preferences) and why? Beyond your core niche, are there additional or secondary segments that could connect with the film?
- Which elements of your film—such as themes, characters, tone, or visual style—are expected to resonate more strongly with each identified audience segment?
- In what ways might the film's positioning, communication, or marketing approach be adapted to engage different audience groups effectively?
- How might you extend your reach beyond the core audience, and which aspects of your story could serve as entry points or 'hooks' for broader appeal?
- What are the key messages or central ideas you wish to convey about the film, and how could these be tailored for different audience segments or markets?
- Which elements might be emphasized or framed differently to align with the interests and expectations of each audience?
- Which communication channels, communities, or media platforms are the most relevant for reaching your target audiences, and how might the messaging vary across them?

The applicant should address the following topics in the Release and distribution strategy section:

- The territories or regions that are being prioritized for release (and the rationale behind these choices);
- The potential market for the film given the genre and story type;
- Include contracts or letters of intent of sales and distribution partners, if applicable.

Regulations on sustainability

At HBF, sustainability means more than just caring for the environment — it's about creating lasting, positive impact on people, communities, and the film industry as a whole. Our approach is built around three key pillars:

- Social sustainability – supporting fair, inclusive, and respectful working conditions.
- Economic sustainability – encouraging responsible budgeting and fair pay practices.
- Environmental sustainability – reducing the environmental footprint of film productions.

We encourage producers to think about sustainability at every stage of the filmmaking process — from development to production and beyond — so that each project can create social, economic, and environmental value. In the context of this approach, the sustainability strategy should be embedded throughout the entire application dossier; maximizing economic, social and environmental values of film productions and of industry at large.

Please review the guidelines below that can inform and inspire the content of your sustainability strategy, and how to effectively present it throughout the application dossier. It is important to note that not all sections might be applicable to your project. Focus on the sustainability elements that are most important to your project.

1. Sustainability in artistic quality of the film project:

- This concerns whether the production has thought of the sustainability impact of the story being told. It can entail both elements of climate narratives and sustainable storytelling, but also the impact of different narrative choices that are made during the development process.
- Guiding questions: Has the project included elements of climate storytelling, ethical indigenous representation, or any form of environmental context? Equally, has the impact (environmental, social, economic) of producing this script been considered in relation to their feasibility and economic viability in implementation [i.e. liters of water for a rain scene, emissions for a car chase, synthetic fabric waste for dozens of identical doubles]?

2. Sustainability in financial feasibility of film project:

- HBF is looking for sustainability considerations in the budget of the project. It can entail a specific line in the budget for sustainability implementation (service providers, auditors, energy cost, etc.). It can also be a budget without any specific sustainability line detailed, but with considerations about how some of the sums allocated to individual departments (energy, waste, locations, etc.) have been rethinked, in order to be better allocated towards sustainability actions to be implemented.
- Guiding questions: Have the costs related to sustainability implementation been considered? It can entail both savings and additional costs alike. In case the budget doesn't present a specific line for sustainability, please clarify the approach in the written financial strategy. It is encouraged to evaluate quantitative shifts, but also strategic approaches to save and reduce both cost and emissions.

3. Sustainability in production impact of film project:

- This is looking at how major impact areas (locations, materials, energy, governance, waste, emissions) have been identified. Which ones do you see as the major obstacles and opportunities (for example, if you decide to shoot in a natural reserve, you may think that lighting will be minimal in order to use daylight, but you may be disrupting the wildlife or local water stream due to catering, temporary tents, etc.)? How do you plan to tackle them and/or address their compensation in other areas of improvement?
- Guiding questions: How is the production of this project intended to act upon issues of energy, waste, biodiversity, materials management, transportation, logistics, etc.? How -if at all- will the production be working to set a sustainability policy and action plan that are coherent and feasible with the shooting schedule that will result from this script? Do you see any major obstacles or advantages already?

4. Sustainability in quality of co-production structure:

- This revolves around the risk of power imbalances and inequitable co-productions that should be addressed. It includes ensuring equitable compensation of non-financial contributions, that marginalized communities (and landmarks) used have been fairly represented etc. The aim is to see more intention and programming on how you evaluate these imbalances and plan to strengthen some points of the strategy to bridge those gaps.
- Guiding questions: How has the production company structured its agreements and contracts to ensure that fair remuneration and contribution is being attributed to low capacity countries? How have the funding and cashflow structures taken such considerations into account? Similarly, will there be minority communities or environments affected by the production of this project? And if so, how will the former be preserved and/or compensated?

5. Sustainability in strategy for audience outreach:

- This includes thoughts around how the production can make sure that all their sustainability efforts are correctly communicated to the distribution phase, avoiding accidental and/or intentional greenwashing when promoting the film as a "sustainable project". For example, this could also include planning around some training of press offices, including transparent data in their press books, signalling any certificate taken in their credits, etc. How do you plan to make sure that all sustainability efforts have a true and truthful long-term effect?
- Guiding questions: The production should address whether all actions mentioned above will be accounted for and how, whether any specific tool or certifying methodology will be put in place to ensure impartiality and validity to the outcoming data. Out of these -more or less proven- results, how is the production envisioning transparency around this data? Will it be provided freely for audiences to read/research upon? Will there be any visibility of results in the credits, on productions' websites? And will there be a proactive distribution and communication strategy to ensure that concrete and proven sustainability performances are truthfully and transparently conveyed by press offices?