



SLFW Professional Finishing Grant

SLFW mission:

St. Louis filmworks mission is to train, equip, and support emerging filmmakers so they may have a sustainable career that grows the entertainment industry. Our mission is fulfilled through grants, fiscal sponsorship, and mentor programs on concept development through pitching.

What is the professional finishing grant and is it right for your project?

Does this sound familiar:

- › *You're almost done with your project. Except you need to go back and do ADR...and you're out of budget so you just have to wait until you can pick-up some extra shifts, freelance to cover the costs...which may take another six months.*
- › *To save costs, you're doing your own color correction. It's okay but you'd rather hire a professional colorist who would nail it, go 'above-and-beyond' in an afternoon but you don't have the funds. So you're wasting time and energy on a 'meh' outcome.*
- › *You really should hire an experienced marketing creative/designer to develop the concept for posters, key art and marketing materials but are cobbling something in Canva that's 'good enough.'*

This grant offers financial support to filmmakers in need of small funding to complete a project in late production phase at a professional level. In other words, stop settling for 'good enough.'

Grants are given for completion or near end phase completion; therefore, projects must have 80% of production finished and be in the post-production phase or ready to begin post as soon as funding is in place.

Grant funds may be used for 'professional-level finishing' costs such as closed captioning and audio descriptions, editing, special effects, graphics, music licensing, and photo licensing.

Note: Projects in development, script development, pre-production will not be considered. See FAQs at the end of this document.

SLFW Professional Finishing Grant stages:

SLFW follows the four grant stages: (1) application; (2) review; (3) grant payment; and (4) analysis.

Grant eligibility:

To be eligible, filmmakers must be:

- 18 years of age
- Living in the Greater St. Louis MSA. This comprises the City of St. Louis plus Missouri counties: St. Louis, St. Charles, Jefferson Franklin, Lincoln, Warren, and the following Illinois counties: Madison, St. Clair, Monroe, Clinton, Jersey, Bond, Macoupin, and Calhoun.
- Provide samples of finished work, completed project (see FAQs at the end).
- SLFW will accept applications from individual artists who also have LLCs.
- You may only receive a single award per year.

Project criteria

- Project must be original work owned by the applicant or demonstrate provenance or permission from owner.
- Scripted work must be copyrighted. SLFW is liable for legal disputes regarding copyright or intellectual property infringement.
- Grants are given to individuals with creative and financial control of the project. In the case of collaboration, a sole project director must be designated as the applicant.
- Filmmaker must articulate/demonstrate specific need/end result, and dollar amount needed.
- Filmmaker must provide tangible result to demonstrate success of grant. Tangible testimonies are required to demonstrate program success. (provided example of what we consider tangible)

How much can you apply for?

- The maximum amount you can apply for and receive is \$2,500. This is the total pool available for our 2024 pilot year and we expect to increase this pool each year. SLFW will make an effort to divide the pool among multiple applicants.

Tip: requests in the \$800-\$1000 range have a better chance of being awarded.

Grant application process:

Link to online application is at www.slfw.org/grants.

Any applicants involved with SLFW must notify the Board of Directors. *See Conflict of Interest policy.*

Applicants will need to provide:

- Name
- Email
- Phone
- Mailing address
- Project description
- Logline
- Genre
- Purpose of finished product
 - Feature
 - Scene (from a feature/series)
 - Short documentary
 - Other (describe)
- Description (project must fit within SLFW content guidelines. See FAQs)
- Project need/s (if multiple needs, prioritize project and associated dollar amount.)
- Upload media/pdfs if necessary to demonstrate need.
- Amount requested (up to \$2500)
- Are you able to provide SLFW with tangible results of the grant?
- Date tangible result will be available.

Timeline

SLFW finishing grant application period will be approximately 30 days.

Winners will be announced 40 days from application deadline.

Conflict of interest policy

To avoid conflict of interest, advisory board, and board of directors of SLFW are ineligible to apply for grants.

As many members of the film community volunteer and assist SLFW in informal ways, such individuals are eligible but 1) must recuse themselves from any activity involved in selection process. Applicant will inform the board of directors who will as well as the subcommittee head in writing (via email) at the time of the application. 2) applicants who are involved with SLFW are requested to not disclose they have applied to avoid any favoritism among the selection committee.

Grant review process:

Compliance, initial review

Applications will be reviewed by the Grant Selection Committee (GSC) for compliance. If the GSC feels there was an error, you will be contacted to correct, modify your application. If attempts to contact you are not successful or application is deemed unsatisfactory after contact, it will be removed from consideration.

Distribution for review

After compliance, applications are be distributed to the judges on the GSC. The judges have two weeks to make their recommendations to the board for review. Recommendations will include nominees and alternatives. The board will review to ensure projects are in line with SLFW mission and content guidelines. The SLFW Board of Directors do not participate in the selection nor awarding of grants.

Grants will be approved by the following criteria:

- Filmmaker's caliber of work.
- Quality of story/concept
- Amount requested.
- Impact of funds on project? Completion or next phase?
- Does request create a separate creative entity: e.g. Music, artwork, prop, costume?
- Is there a demonstrable outcome?
- Project value: does the project have potential to create significant impact in the region?
(potential feature, series)

Notification

All applicants will be notified by email and letter of the Grant Selection Committee's decision. Grant recipient(s) will be notified by email and letter

Terms and conditions acceptance

If awarded a grant, you will be asked to sign a terms and conditions agreement. This is mandatory must be signed for grant funds to be allocated to project expenses.

Grant payment process:

Allocation

SLFW will pay submitted invoices up to awarded amount.

Publicity and SLFW acknowledgement

Recipients will be announced via social media: instagram, linkedin, facebook and possibly publications such as RFT, St. Louis Magazine.

Recipients acknowledge SLFW on the finished piece of media with the statement: Made possible with support from St. Louis Filmworks.

Record-keeping and reporting:

As SLFW is paying invoices directly, funds will not go directly to the recipient, therefore record-keeping is satisfied by 1.) Submission of invoice(s) to be paid and 2.) Result of service and/or product resulting from the invoice.

Recipients will be asked to provide:

- Tangible example (finished project/phase) per application.
- Video or written testimony of grant impact

Grant Analysis:

Pilot adoption/evaluation process:

Please note this is a pilot program. Things may not go as smoothly as intended. To improve this grant experience, you will be asked to either fill out a survey and/or conduct an interview after you have satisfied the reporting criteria.

The evaluation will cover:

- Technology: did it work? Can it streamline the process? Is there a weak link in the case of down website, lost password, system upgrade, too few user seats, that would cripple the process.
- Timeframe: was it too compressed? Too long? Can the entire process be shortened? Would that be advantageous?
- Guidelines: were the guidelines clear? Did you feel you had enough information to provide useful answers?
- Judging criteria: (For the judges) Does the rubric need evaluation? Did you feel the judges understood what was expected of them, did they have enough information and understanding to feel like they made the right decision?

FAQs

What type of projects are eligible?

Projects that are in post-production, nearing completion. These may include:

- A feature film (70+ minutes)
- A short film (3-12 minutes) that is a finished piece and is a contained story or scene.
- A teaser, sizzle for a feature/series. The project must be comprised of mostly original content, not a rip-off.
- Documentary, feature or short
- Student project

What types of projects are not eligible?

- Paid or spec projects for a client, brand (includes music videos)
- Self-promotion reel
- Experimental, abstract or high art pieces
- Projects in development phase or pre-production
- 'Fan Films' or projects with unlawful use of copyright/intellectual property.

SLFW content guidelines

St. Louis Filmworks does not support projects with the following content:

- Content affiliated with or promoting a political party.
- Content affiliated with a religion/religious denomination or promoting their beliefs.
- Lobbying, content promoting public policy (in support of/opposition of a bill).
- Promoting hate speech, bigoted viewpoints.
- Promoting racism or racist ideology.
- Pornography
- Commercial/advertising content selling or promoting a product, venue, service, etc.