Screen Cornwall Equity Production Investment (SCEPI)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – updated 1st July 2026

see also SCEPI Guidelines

What is SCEPI?	SCEPI is a discretionary production investment scheme, managed and delivered by Screen Cornwall. SCEPI offers equity investment for projects which have a significant shoot in **Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly (CIOS)**.
Is SCEPI soft money?	No, SCEPI is not soft money, it is a recoupable investment. It is a blend of public and private money to make equity investments on commercial terms and with an expectation of **Return on Investment** (ROI).
Who finances SCEPI?	SCEPI is jointly financed by Cornwall Council's Good Growth Fund (Shared Prosperity Fund) and private investors, administered by Screen Cornwall.
Is SCEPI a public fund?	No, SCEPI is not a public fund. SCEPI is public private investment raised from council resources and from private investors, to make equity investments on commercial terms and with an expectation of Return on Investment.
Will you prioritise CIOS projects?	We will prioritise **CIOS** projects, provided they meet the SCEPI Minimum Requirements and offer realistic potential for Return on Investment. See SCEPI Guidelines for the definition of SCEPI Minimum Requirements. However, we have modelled the scheme based on the assumption that there will be a number of incoming film & TV productions funded as well.
What is **CIOS**?	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (**CIOS**) is the most south westerly region of the UK. Along with other Celtic people in the UK, such as Scots, Welsh and Irish, the Cornish have national minority status in the UK under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The indigenous language of the region is Kernewek (Cornish).
What constitutes a significant shoot?	We will prioritise productions which: • majority shoot in the region; or • whose Qualifying Spend significantly exceeds the 4:1 minimum; or • have intrinsic links to the region; or • highlight the culture, language or geography of the region; or • will appeal to global trade press as well as national and regional UK press. A shoot of a week or less is highly unlikely to be supported because it will not have the required local impact.
What is Screen Cornwall?	Screen Cornwall is a Community Interest Company established in 2019 to drive inclusive and sustainable sector growth in the region by providing a 'one stop shop' Film Office, talent & skills development and advocacy for authentic Cornish representation on screen.
Who reviews applications to SCEPI?	Expressions of Interest (EOI) will be reviewed by the internal team. Full Applications will be reviewed by the internal team, then the Investment Committee who will decide whether to recommend the project to the Board for consideration and final investment decision.
How long does it take to get a decision?	Once we have all the information we need, we aim to respond to Expressions of Interest within ten working days and to Full Applications within twelve weeks.

What if I need a quick decision?	To ensure a level playing field every application will be reviewed using the same process. Responses may be faster than the timings above depending on the availability of decision makers and are not guaranteed. You should take into account our timeline and not rely on an expedited response.
What is the application deadline?	We accept applications on a rolling basis. Applications for this time limited scheme will close in September 2027 or sooner, if our resources are fully committed before that date.
Can I speak to someone about my project?	If you want to say a quick hello and introduce your project, please seek out our team at markets and festivals. We will hold regular informational webinars, which you will be able to register to attend.
Can I send someone my script or deck?	No, do not send an unsolicited script or deck, we will not acknowledge or review it. The team focuses exclusively on projects which are in active financing and packaging. We unfortunately do not have the resources to track potential projects or give feedback on projects that have not been formally submitted to us.

INVESTMENT PARAMETERS

Is there a spend ratio for investment?	Yes, there is a minimum 4:1 Qualifying Spend to Investment, but productions which spend in excess of 4:1 will be prioritised.
Do you have a cap and a ceiling on investment?	Investments will be between £50,000 and £500,000. Most investments will be between £150,000 and £400,000 and any investment above or below that range is likely to have intrinsic links to the region and/or significantly exceed the 4:1 minimum Qualifying Spend ratio.
Will the amount I'm applying for, affect the investment decision?	We'll consider the amount you are asking for relative to the rest of your finance plan and the potential for ROI.
What are you looking for?	Please see SCEPI Guidelines which set out how we define Qualifying Production(s); SCEPI Minimum Requirements and Assessment Criteria.
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How detailed should Qualifying Spend breakdown be at **EOI** stage?	We don't expect a line by line spend breakdown at EOI stage, but you should have an overall sense of how many days you will shoot in CIOS and how much spend you are aiming for.
How detailed should Qualifying Spend breakdown be at **Full Application** stage?	We expect you to break out qualifying spend in a detailed budget at this stage and after EOI you will have access to our Film Office who can help with suggestions and contact details for service companies and crew so that you can estimate costs more accurately.
Will you fund a recce in the region?	No, unfortunately, we cannot fund location scouting or recces but we can put you in touch with local landowners and location managers who are experts in the region.
Is the investment recoupable?	Yes – our investment is recoupable, after any Gap or Sales Advance.
What are the terms of investment?	We recoup our investment, then an industry standard premium on the investment and if the project recoups, we will share a proportion of net profits. Your budget should include the legal costs of papering of our investment. Our legal costs may range from £7,500 to £12,500 depending on the complexity of your finance plan.
Do you take on screen credits?	Yes, we take Executive Producer credits.
Can you help with development costs?	No, we only support production.

How much of my finance plan should be confirmed before I submit an Expression of Interest?	50% of your budget must documented before you submit an EOI. Do not apply before you have 50% of your budget because we are unlikely to allow a producer to submit the same project twice. The confirmed 50% may include a reasonable UK tax credit estimate provided that your project will qualify as British under the BFI cultural test, but should not include any investment you are requesting from Screen Cornwall.
Why do I need 50% of finance confirmed before I can submit an Expression of Interest?	With limited resources, we are not able to commit to projects at a speculative or early stage. We are only able to consider projects with a significant proportion of finance in place which are more likely to advance from EOI to Full Application and into production.
Why do you need 20% contribution from market sources to proceed to Full Application?	Realistic potential for a return on investment, is a requirement of our investors so we can only invest in projects which the market supports.
What do you mean by Market Sources?	By market sources, ideally, we mean third party finance from an end user i.e. a commissioner, broadcaster, theatrical distributor or streaming platform. In the absence of any financial commitment from an end user, pre-sales and a significant sales advance are good. Servicing deals, gap and equity contribute but on their own will not be a strong application.
What is the timeline for investment?	We invest 90% on close of finance and hold back an industry standard 10% of investment.
Can you take EP fees from the 10% holdback rather than on Principal Photography.	No, we can't – these fees form part of our business model and as per the terms of the third-party investment, they are due on Principal Photography.

APPLICANT

Who can apply for funding?	A UK production company.
Does my company need to be based in the region?	No, while we welcome applications from producers in CIOS, applicants may be based outside the region. We have highly experienced producers, cast, crew and servicing companies in CIOS and we will prioritise qualifying projects which tap into regional resources and especially any genuine co-production with a local producer.
What do you mean by producer track record?	SCEPI is aimed only at experienced producers. Applicant should have verifiable lead Producer credits on IMDb across several productions in the medium for which they are requesting support. We will not accept associate or executive producer credits in lieu of producer credits. Awards nominations/wins, and/or audience success by way of viewing figures or box office admissions, and/or public screenings in major international festivals, may further strengthen your application. A less experienced producer may apply if they have attached a highly experienced hands-on Executive Producer who fully meets the criteria.
Does the creative team have to be based in CIOS?	No, an applicant may be based anywhere in the UK.
Do you support international productions?	Yes, provided they have a genuine UK co-producing partner and the project will qualify as British under the BFI cultural test.
May I submit more than one project?	Yes, there is no limit to how many Qualifying Productions you can submit while this scheme is active. We will, however, pursue a varied slate with a balance of scale, genres, budgets and partners so if your projects have

	similar elements, they may end up competing with each other, as well as other projects.
Will you fund more than one project from the same producer?	We have limited funds and applicants would have to score very highly to be funded more than once.

LOCAL TALENT

Will you favour projects with Local Talent?	While every project must meet SCEPI REQUIREMENTS including audience and market appeal, projects with Local Talent can come in earlier for an EOI and in exceptional circumstances may receive an investment over 25% of budget or less than £150,000.
What do you mean by Local Talent?	We consider an applicant or an application to be local if: 1) the application is from a production company registered and staffed in Cornwall or the Isles of Scilly; OR 2) the project is produced, written or directed by a person born and educated at primary and/or secondary school level in the region*; OR the project is produced, written or directed by a person whose primary residence is in the region

QUALIFYING PRODUCTION

Do you invest in feature films?	Yes, we support live action and animation, narrative and documentary features which will run at 70 minutes or more.
Do you invest in television projects?	Yes, but they must be scripted and produced to play in a slot of at least 30 minutes. By television, we mean broadcast television or SVOD, linear or on demand. We're prioritising scripted drama and scripted comedy with major commissioning partners. We do not invest in unscripted, documentary or other TV formats.
Do you invest in interactive and immersive content?	Yes, we support interactive and immersive provided always that it is produced for a ticket buying audience. Content which is available to view or experience without a purchased ticket, will not be eligible to apply to SCEPI
Do you invest in content aimed at children and families?	Yes, we are genre agnostic so long as a project has a clear path to market and realistic potential for return on investment.
Do you invest in other formats?	No, we don't invest in any other audiovisual format – you can find a list of what we do and don't fund under Qualifying Productions in the SCEPI Guidelines.
Do you have a minimum or maximum budget for the project?	No, but bear in mind our minimum investment is £50,000 and realistic potential for return on investment is a requirement of our investors. Even a low budget project must meet ROI requirement to secure investment.
Do I need an interim certificate for British Cultural certification?	No, while it would be good to have at EOI stage you can apply without it. An interim certificate is required at Full Application stage.

PROCESS

Can I submit an EOI before speaking to your team?	Yes, we suggest you review these FAQ and the SCEPI Guidelines in detail before you apply as it is unlikely you will be allowed to resubmit a declined project.
Why can't I resubmit the same project twice?	With limited investment resources and a small team, we are focusing on applications which make a compelling case for support at EOI stage. To assist producers to make the best case for support, we have set out investment requirements and priorities in detail in the SCEPI Guidelines and in these FAQ. An application which does not actively engage with the parameters we have set out, is highly unlikely to be invited to full application and will not be allowed to apply twice.
How do I apply?	Stage one is **Expression of Interest** (EOI). Once you have documented contributions amounting to no less than 50% of your budget, you may submit an EOI form. If we decline your EOI you cannot submit the same project twice, so please make sure you are familiar with SCEPI Guidelines before you submit an EOI.
What happens if my EOI is successful?	Stage two is Full Application. If your EOI is successful, we will invite you to Full Application. Once you have documented contributions amounting to no less than 70% of your budget, you may submit your Full Application. If your Full Application is declined, you cannot submit the same project again.
What happens if my Full Application is successful?	If your Full Application is successful, we will send you an Offer Letter and ringfence the investment we have offered you for a period of six months. If you have not fulfilled our conditions of investment and closed finance in six months your offer will expire and the ringfenced amount will be redeployed to another project.
How can I contact your team with questions?	We will respond to questions which are not answered in the SCEPI Guidelines or in these FAQ via investment@screencornwall.com
Do you issue letters of interest or support?	No, we don't issue letters of interest. If your EOI is successful you will have a Letter of Invitation to Full Application which you can share with potential financiers. If your Full Application is successful, you will have a time limited Offer Letter, which will clearly set out the scope of our commitment to your project.
What is the response time for an EOI?	Once we have all the information we need to evaluate an EOI, you should hear from us within ten working days. We will not respond to incomplete EOI forms.
Why are Full Applications by invitation only?	We cannot commit our investment to projects unless they are ready to go and we want projects to advance quickly from EOI to Full Application and into production. The EOI process helps us ensure your project is advanced enough before your project goes into the Full Application stage which can take up to twelve weeks. If we turn you down at EOI stage, you are highly unlikely to be allowed to resubmit a declined project.
What is the response time for a Full Application?	Once we have all the information we need to evaluate a Full Application, you should hear from us within twelve weeks. We will not respond to incomplete applications.
How long is an Offer Letter valid?	Six months from date of issue.

What are the SCEPI conditions precedent?	The SCEPI Minimum Requirements set out in the SCEPI Guidelines are a good indication of the particular requirements of our investment. Beyond these, we have industry standard requirements.
Can SCEPI fund prep or expenses prior to closing?	No.

CREATIVE MATERIALS

Do I need a deck or presentation?	To have the best chance of success, we would expect some visual materials – moodboard, director's statement, key team bios, the comps etc... to offer a vivid description of how the project will look and feel.
Do I need a script?	Yes, at EOI and at Full Application the most recent script must be included in the application.
Do I need a series outline and an idea of potential future seasons?	Yes, unless a project is a defined mini-series, the returnability of a series will be a factor we take into consideration.

KEY TALENT

Can I submit an EOI if we have not yet attached a director?	An EOI for a Feature Film must have a director attached. An EOI for a TV project, should include information on which directors are in discussion or shortlisted.
Can I submit a Full Application if we have not yet attached a director?	No, at Full Application your project needs to have key elements in place, including the director(s).
Do you want to watch samples of a director's work?	Yes, please supply password protected links with your application for their most recent project and the most relevant prior project, if the most recent project is not the most relevant sample.
Does it help if we attach experienced talent from the region?	Yes, we are keen to see as much local talent as possible. Please contact talent@screencornwall.com if you are looking to connect with local creative talent.
I'm in discussions with A list talent, will you take this into account?	You should flag who is in discussion and whether you are pitching them or negotiating terms because they are interested. Long lists of cast are helpful as an indication of ambition but won't be a deciding factor until they are secured, particularly if other funding is contingent on them.