RIP IT UP: Funding Guidelines

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Key Facts

- Activity timeframe: May – October 2026
- Amount of funding available: £125 - £15,000 - see below for more details
- Deadlines:
    - **First deadline for Bespoke and Cross FAN Proposals – Monday 13 April 2026**
    - **Final deadline for Bespoke applications – Wed 1 July 2026**
    - **Menu applications open until Mon 7 Sept 2026 (subject to funds remaining)**

Introduction

The 2026 BFI FAN UK-wide season – *Rip It Up* – explores and celebrates the changing face of youth rebellion, culture and expression – from joy to heartbreak - on screen in the UK.

Youth culture in the UK has a wide and varied history, from the defiant rebellion of Teddy Boys, mods and rockers and the many activist movements that have shaped our society to hedonistic self-expression in the music and fashion scenes and the emotional rollercoaster that simply is being a teenager – all of which have been portrayed on screen in a multitude of ways.

With Southbank marking the 75th anniversary of the Festival of Britain, a landmark moment of post-war cultural renewal; and the 50th anniversary of Punk Rock being celebrated in 2026, BFI FAN members are invited to join in these UK wide celebrations and explore how youth scenes and counterculture have impacted and resonate to this day inspiring new generations and beyond.

The ***Rip It Up*** season has two core elements, both of which need to include big screen moments and offer audiences opportunities to reflect on the evolution of generational rebellion from the 1950s through to today here in the UK.

- *Activity involving young programmers/creatives focussing on youth scenes and/or counterculture that they themselves are part of or can relate to with clear potential to engage their peers.*

- *Activity celebrating the transformative energy and evolution of youth culture over the past 75 years tapping into a selection of key suggested titles with potential to engage a range of audiences across generations.*

We recognise that there needs to be space for bespoke approaches that reflect distinct regional and national identities and perspectives and explore how notions of youth rebellion map onto these.

Please see the Creative Brief which sets out our creative and cultural vision for the season and contains more information about the season elements and the programme scope.

Refer to the **Film List** for booking details including theatrical and non-theatrical formats and access materials where available.

As part of the UK wide Film Audience Network (FAN), each Film Hub has been awarded funding from the BFI National Lottery to support activity that delivers against the priorities set out in the BFI's Screen Culture 2033 strategy

In 2026, FAN members can seek financial support directly from their Film Hub to participate in ***Rip it Up,*** a BFI FAN wide programming initiative supported by National Lottery.

There are three types of funding available, depending on the type of activity you want to deliver.

Menu:

You can pick from the menu of key titles available from assorted distributors in the UK and request support of up to £125 per film for programme enhancement, wraparound activity and audience development;

This has a very straight-forward expression of interest requirement and is ideal for FAN members with limited capacity.

To find out more about the titles, formats available and for booking details, please consult the season title list or look at the below key titles for the season elements.

The Menu Expression of Interest process is very simple. You will be asked to list which films you would like to screen, expected number of in-person screenings and admissions, along with top-line information on how you will spend the budget to enhance your activity - e.g., marketing costs or a guest speaker. Please note: this funding is not to cover minimum guarantees.

The Menu fund will stay open until Mon 7 Sept 2026 (subject to funds remaining) but note that for your activity to be included in initial listings announcement, you will need to submit your expression of interest by the end of April 2026.

Bespoke:

You can request up to £15,000 (average awards likely to be circa £5,000 based on previous activity) to develop unique programming activity within the parameters defined in the Creative Brief.

We encourage these proposals to take one or more of the menu title(s) as a jumping off point but are open to other approaches particularly if those involve young programmers and creatives as part of the planning team. If your planned activity includes 'Menu' titles (see above), please include costs associated with those screenings within your activity budget rather than applying separately for the menu.

Projects can include bespoke youth led elements as well as menu titles and stretch over the period of activity, so that you can incorporate key titles into your offer. For example, *Ish* and *Trainspotting* which are due to be released in late July and late August respectively.

This funding type will require more detailed information and is best suited to larger or more experienced FAN members who have a track record of reaching audiences with unique and bespoke programming and/or of running activity with young programmers and creatives.

Cross FAN:

You can seek up to £15,000 for a Programme and/or Marketing/Outreach activity taking place in more than one Hub with the potential to tour or multiply its impact across the UK. For example, a touring programme celebrating under-represented talent (or with talent involved!) that is often over-looked or a short film programme with wraparound activity that can take place in various locations around the UK.

Cross FAN activity is suited for FAN members with a proven track record of delivering more complex projects in multiple locations and/or those with experience of delivering activity with and for young people.

Please note that we won't be funding many cross FAN projects this year, so they will need to have a clear audience development and outreach plan as well as confirmation from five or more venues about their participation to be considered.

If you are interested in submitting an application, you should contact BFI FAN season producer Ti Singh as soon as possible to discuss your ideas.

Note that if your Cross-FAN activity includes Menu titles, please include costs associated with those screenings within your activity budget rather than applying separately for the menu.

All project proposals should take an inclusive approach to audience development, setting out how they will respond to the BFI Diversity Standards. This means giving clear consideration to fair and diverse representation on screen, in the workforce (where applicable) and ensuring that audiences feel welcome in your cinema spaces. Engaging young audiences in the season is also a key priority for this season, particularly activities targeting and involving 16-25 demographics.

Additional guidance for bespoke and/or Cross FAN programmes:

FAN members can either programme from the Menu titles listed in the three season sub-strands or use them as inspiration for a Bespoke programme/season.

You can also refer to the longer list of titles of titles provided, including some new theatrical restorations and non-theatrical offerings.

We are looking for distinctive programme/audience development initiative with clear marketing/PR hooks taking one or more of the menu title(s) as a jumping off point.
You will need to highlight the added value that your approach will bring to the UK-wide season. We welcome local and regional connections that might help generate press and interest as outlined below.

Given the focus of the season, we are interested in approaches that – where appropriate – involve young programmers, creatives and content creators to create programmes that have the potential to reframe perceptions of UK youth culture; and/or connect with new, underserved, and underrepresented audiences.

If any part of the project budget goes towards young people's training/costs, there will be flexibility with regards to the project's overall cost per head expenditure.

To find out more about the Menu titles (as well as a longer list of indicative titles for each strand), please refer to the Title Listing Document

To suggest additions to the list, please contact season lead Timon Singh: ti.s@watershed.co.uk.

Timeline

Proposals can be submitted at any time between March and September 2026 and decisions will be made as soon as possible by the respective Hub teams.

Please allow enough time between the decision date and the start of your activity to ensure you have a long enough run-in period for marketing, promotion and finalising your plans etc.

For Bespoke projects, this should be at least four weeks and for Cross-FAN projects, it should be at least six weeks.

- First deadline for Bespoke and Cross FAN Proposals – Monday 13 April 2026
- Final deadline for Bespoke applications – Wed 1 July 2026
- Menu applications open until Mon 7 Sept 2026 (subject to funds remaining)
    - Menu Expressions of Interest can be submitted until Mon 7 September 2026 (but note that for your activity to be included in initial listings announcement, you will need to confirm your bookings by the end of April.)

- Period of Activity: May-October 2026

Accessing funding:

FAN is committed to making its funding accessible for all its members. If you have access requirements that mean you need assistance when seeking funds, you may be able to request this through the BFI Access Support scheme.

Eligibility

Start by reading the Creative Brief as well as these guidelines to ensure your activity fits the eligibility criteria and priorities outlined.

You must be a member of the BFI Film Audience Network to access support from this programme. If you are not a member, please contact your local Film Hub Lead Organisation.

- Find your local BFI Film Audience Network film hub | BFI

If your activity is taking place across multiple Film Hubs, you can seek Cross FAN support from a central fund which is managed by Watershed (Film Hub Lead organisation for the South West.)

Decisions will be made in consultation with Film Hub teams in the region/nation where your organisation is based and where your proposed activity is taking place.

We only expect to support a very small number of especially strong projects from this strand of funding.

Focus of the Fund: Public Engagement

Audience development and wraparound activity should be an integral part of any proposal, making the collective big screen experience unique and memorable and/or offering routes into and a deeper engagement with this unique celebration of UK culture.

Hybrid and online activities are not a priority but will be considered where they add value and create meaningful engagement (for example, by removing barriers and improving access for disabled audiences)

Refer to the Creative Brief for more guidance and remember that the focus for FAN is on UK independent and international films and moving image works (such as TV and archive materials.) Given the focus of the season, screen materials such as music videos, short films by young creatives, and online content could also form part of the activity providing rights have been cleared. These would need to be presented as part of a wider programme that primarily has film and cinema at its core.
Projects which support audiences to experience broader screen activity such as VR, AR and XR will be considered where this represents a valuable opportunity for audience development.

We want to support ambitious and inclusive programmes that reflect a diversity of lived experiences and perspectives, to broaden audiences' horizon and allow them to develop personal and meaningful relations with screen culture.

Activity will need to target specific audience groups and show how our funds are necessary to reach those identified audiences.

For example, you can get support for wraparound activity, marketing/outreach campaigns, access costs and/or any other initiative that has the potential to help you connect with new and diverse audiences or for wider outreach.

Other Fund Priorities:

Priority will be given to projects which effectively respond to one or more of the following two focus areas which reflect the BFI Screen Culture 2033 strategy:

Creating opportunities for young audiences

Engaging young audiences in the season is a key priority for this season, particularly activities targeting 16-25 demographics. You might want to involve a local influencer, design a targeted promo campaign and/or build on an existing festival or cinema slot programmed with and for young people.

Refer to the Creative Brief for more guidance and prompts.

Tackling barriers to inclusion:

'*Rip It Up*' has lots of potential to connect with diverse audiences and improve access to screen culture for people across the UK: be that on our screens, in the workforce (where appropriate) or among audiences. Particular attention will be paid to projects that address social, economic and geographical barriers for audiences in new and meaningful ways.

For example, activity led by and for communities (such as people of Black and Global Majority heritage, those that identify as Deaf and disabled or working class and/or are experiencing economic hardship) and activity that prioritises outreach with community engagement at their heart. This might also include (but is not limited to): sliding scales and discounted tickets; pay what you can afford schemes; relaxed screenings for audiences with autism; dementia-friendly screenings; accessible screenings where possible particularly for d/Deaf audiences.

BFI Diversity Standards

All project proposals should take an inclusive approach to audience development, setting out how they will respond to the BFI Diversity Standards. This means giving clear consideration to fair and diverse representation on screen, in the workforce (where applicable) and ensuring that audiences feel welcome in your cinema spaces.

You should particularly focus on **Standard D** - how your proposal provides inclusive audience development opportunities and **Standard E** - showing conscious commitment and tangible actions to improve overall accessibility.

Larger awards will be expected to respond in more detail. Get in touch if you need help interpreting the Standards and here are some resources that you might find useful:

- BFI FAN Access Directory
- BFI Diversity Standards Resources
- Inclusive Cinema
- 7 Principles for an Inclusive Recovery
- SQIFF Deaf + Disabled Access Guide

Find more resources and guides on the BFI FAN website: https://www.bfi-fan.org.uk/resources/

Budget guidance

For menu requests, there is no need for you to fill in a budget template. You will be prompted to provide top-line information on how you plan to spend the funding as part of the Expression of Interest.

For Bespoke and Cross FAN, you will be asked to complete an application form online and submit a budget in the template provided. Use the 'notes' section to show your calculations. (e.g., £200 x 3 days – producer.)

Note that if your Bespoke or Cross-FAN activity includes Menu titles, you should include costs associated with those screenings within your activity budget rather than applying separately for the menu.

We expect to see box office income and other partnership support - whether in cash, volunteer time or other in-kind contributions - included in the budget (circa 20%.)

Requests for larger amounts will need to have significant audience reach, strategic impact and match funding. Each organisation will have its individual needs - however, broadly speaking, we can support the following costs.

Eligible expenses

- Marketing, Advertising and PR
- Bespoke asset creation where there is a clear case made (note: funded projects will need to follow brand guidance and use the adequate logos, provided assets and wording)
- Wraparound activity costs (such as co-curator, host and speakers' fees)
- Venue hire and activity-specific equipment hire costs
- Activity-specific staffing costs – e.g., curation, marketing or project management including fees for young creatives/programmers
- Audience development expenses – e.g., young programmers' workshop
- Screening licences, film rights costs and print transport
- Captioning or other access costs, such as BSL interpretation, providing transport for isolated audiences
- Event documentation that can be used to raise awareness of your activity and can be shared with your Hub (such as photography and filming)

This list is not exhaustive and other items may be considered.

Ineligible Expenses:

All proposed spend should contribute to the activity proposed. Beyond this, there are some areas not suitable for support from the fund. These include:

- Support for filmmakers to develop or distribute their own work, or for programmes that exclusively engage filmmaker audiences
- Capital costs
- Programmes entirely comprised of free events, unticketed events or screenings where audience numbers cannot be reported
- General running costs of organisations not specifically related to the activity
- Activity that should be covered by statutory education, including events taking place on school grounds/in school hours
- Events not primarily focused on film exhibition or screen culture
- Activity covered by existing funding arrangements

- Programmes that duplicate provision in the same area
- Activity taking place in a venue not open to the public - for example members only venues

Please note: proposals must be for additional activity not covered by any support your organisation receives from your local Film Hub or by other National Lottery programmes such as BFI's Audience Projects Fund or BFI Film Academy.

Budgeting and subsidy per head

We want our projects to reach as many people as possible and try to make pragmatic judgements around costs and impact when we are allocating funds.

As a guide we suggest the following amounts would aim to reach the accompanying number of audiences.

Please note that this is a guide, and there is flexibility particularly if your project is targeting under-served audiences, clearly addressing access issues or if part of your project budget is supporting young people's training and development.

We ask you to be realistic about audience projections and to share your rationale.

Amount allocated per minimum admissions
£500 / 60+ admissions
£2,500 / 300+ admissions
£5,000 / 600+ admissions
£7,500 / 800+ admissions
£10,000 / 1,000+ admissions

12,500 / 1,250+ admissions
£15,000 / 1,500+ admissions

Additional Considerations:

Underpinning our work are the following **cross-cutting principles** that **all BFI National Lottery supported activity** will need to address.

Environmental Sustainability

BFI FAN is committed to minimising the negative environmental impact of the work we support and ask all funding recipients to contribute to this aim. In your proposal, please summarise steps your organisation is taking to minimise the environmental impact of your activity. Due to the limited resources available, and FAN's commitment to environmental sustainability, drive-in screenings will not be supported through this fund.

For more information, see this Simple Guide to Making Your Cinema Greener and the BFI and Julie's Bicycle have a number of recommended resources that may be useful when planning around sustainability.

Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Racism

Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Racism Bullying, harassment and racism have no place in our industries, and we expect all organisations we fund to share our commitment to this principle.

The BFI and BAFTA have developed a set of principles and zero tolerance guidance in consultation with organisations, unions and industry bodies across the film, television and games industry in response to urgent and systemic issues. These documents can be found in the BFI Bullying and Harassment Prevention Hub.

We ask all applicants to engage with these principles by, as a minimum, reading these documents and sharing them within your organisation. Applicants for all types of funding support are asked to confirm that they have, or intend to put in place, an anti-bullying and harassment policy for their organisation. If you do not currently have a policy in place, please get in touch with your Film Hub to be signposted to additional resources to help you to develop your policy.

Safeguarding

For initiatives involving children, young people 18 or under or vulnerable adults, members will be asked to confirm that they have safeguarding and child protection policies in place. If you do not currently have a policy in place, you can also refer to the BFI FAN Audience Network's guide to safeguarding for film exhibitors. This includes definitions, tips for working with both children and adults, how to create code of conduct policies and much more information on how to create a safer environment as a film exhibitor.

Read the guide

How to submit your proposal

- Read the Creative Brief, and the guidance above, to make sure your proposal responds to the fund's priorities, is taking place within the relevant timeframes and is eligible for support.

- Contact your Film Hub if you have any questions or if anything is unclear

- If you are thinking of a Cross FAN project, please contact Film Hub South West as soon as possible at ti.s@watershed.co.uk

- To access the menu support, you just need to fill in a short expression of interest (please see your Hub's website for more details)

- To access Bespoke/Cross FAN funding, download and complete a project budget using this template and submit your proposal online. For accessibility purpose and those that want to fill in offline first, a view only Word version of the form can be found here.

- If your proposal involves working with young people or audiences, please submit any relevant additional materials such as a Safeguarding policy and Risk Assessment if applicable.

- For CrossFAN touring programmes specifically, we ask for confirmation of venue partners' participation.

How we assess your proposal

For Bespoke and Menu proposals, your regional/national Film Hub team will review the proposals and may refer to external programme advisors for a second opinion.

For Cross FAN proposals, the Cross FAN Programme lead Timon Singh (Film Hub South West) will consult with the Film Hub teams (in the regions/nations where your organisation and activity is based) and assess proposals with two external programme advisors.

All proposals will be reviewed against the following criteria:

- **Activity eligibility:** does the proposed activity meet the eligibility criteria?

- **Meeting the Creative Brief:** how well the project meets the creative brief and the creative quality of the idea?

- **Audience Reach:** are projected admissions realistic? Is there audience potential in line with BFI's Screen Culture 2033 priorities such as engaging young audiences and/or tackling under-representation?

- **Organisational capacity & feasibility:** the strength of the team behind it and partners involved; relevant experience and evidence of a proven track record. Are the plans outlined realistic and achievable?

- **Budget:** Does the budget balance and are all costs eligible? Have access costs been included? Does the project represent value for money (Is the subsidy-per-head over £10 – if so, you may be asked to re-assess your budget)?

- **Partnerships & Match-funding**: this fund is not able to support 100% of costs and would expect to see a minimum of 20% partnership support. Whether in cash, volunteer time or other in-kind contributions this is an important demonstration that there is genuine support for the activity and potential added value.

- **Legacy:** how does the activity fit into the organisation's longer-term audience development plans?

- **Geographical spread**: we seek to ensure a wide range of organisations and areas are receiving support, to enable audiences to benefit from increased access to a broader screen culture where they live.

- **Access & Inclusion**: does the proposal address under-representation among audiences, on screen or - where applicable - in the workforce or in terms of creating skills/professional development opportunities? Does it respond to the BFI Diversity Standards?

Please note: We expect this funding to be oversubscribed and even those proposals that meet the guidelines may not be successful.

What Happens Next?

If your project proposal is successful

If your proposal is successful, you will be sent an offer detailing target audience and any grant conditions, which will then form the basis of the funding agreement.

If there are any required amendments, the Film Hub / Cross FAN teams may wish to see a revised plan and budget before confirming funding. This process can take additional time. Activity timelines will need to accommodate this. After you accept your offer and any targets or conditions, we will send an agreement to confirm the terms of your award, and the project you will deliver.

If your project proposal is unsuccessful

If we're unable to support your project, we'll let you know and then offer feedback and advice to help you move forward.

Payment schedule

- Your funding agreement will include a payment schedule and any conditions that need to be met before payment is made.

- As a rule, we stage payments 80% on receipt of signed contract and 20% after completion, when we have received your reporting information.

- We reserve the right to vary these ratios for larger-scale or risky projects.

When you receive a funding agreement it will contain clauses on the following:

Branding

You must use the BFI Film Audience Network and BFI logo plus season-specific branding on your website and marketing materials. This includes prominent acknowledgement of the National Lottery, as it is crucial that we promote to the public how well The National Lottery supports film in the UK.

Evaluation and Reporting

We need to evaluate projects and programmes to make sure they are fit for purpose and so that we can make them better.

If you screen titles from the Menu, reporting requirements will be minimal, but you will be asked to fill out the Project Log and share the Film Audience Network online audience survey (see Demographic and Survey Data.)

Project Log; a list of screenings, admissions data and further information (event type, number of accessible screenings, type of accessibility, etc...) and a short narrative about your experience of the fund and the impact of the activity on your practice.

If you receive funding for a Bespoke or Cross-FAN project, you will also be asked to supply the following at the end of your project in addition to a project log:

Final budget: a complete expenditure report in the template provided, to make sure the funds have been spent how we agreed, and to show our funders any leverage on the programme overall.

Demographic and Survey Data: you also must use the Film Audience Network online audience survey provided by our team, to capture information back from your audience. This is in the form of a QR code or custom URL. We only ask for this data in an aggregated form and won't be asking you to transfer any personal data about your audience.

We are, of course, happy to provide you with the feedback collected for your events.

Contact us:

To discuss any aspect of your project proposal, your ideas, please contact your local Film Hub.

Complaints and Appeals

In relation to this fund, the FAN team's decision is final. Inevitably, proposals will be declined, and some applicants may be disappointed by this result. Formal appeals against the final decision will not be considered unless the applicant has good cause to believe that the procedures for processing the proposal were not adhered to or applied in such as a way as to prejudice the outcome of the process.

For Menu and Bespoke proposals, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your regional/national Film Hub team in the first instance. However, if this is not appropriate for any reason, please refer to your Film Hub's Complaint Policy.

For CrossFAN proposals, if you have any questions or concerns, your first point of call is Timon Singh at ti.s@watershed.co.uk

However, if this is not appropriate for any reason, please contact the Watershed's Head of Film Maddy Probst in the first instance: maddy.p@watershed.co.uk

You can also refer to Watershed's Complaint Policy.