

# DOCLAB Micro Documentary Film Commission 2026

## GUIDELINES

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These guidelines relate to the **DOCLAB Micro Documentary Film Commission 2026**. Please read them carefully before submitting your application.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Exeter Phoenix recognises that moving image plays an important role in reflecting our culture, establishing individual voices and can help filmmakers and artists develop new skills and long-term relationships with cast, crew and cinema audiences, both locally and nationally.

Exeter Phoenix has awarded over 100 short film commissions and for many the process has helped establish film careers and played a vital role in building relationships within the creative industries.

The commissions support the production of short films from all genres of film, live action or animation, fiction and nonfiction. Our aims for the commissions are to;

- Support new and emerging talent within the south west
- Connect filmmakers and creative individuals to a wider cultural network in the region
- Offer a platform and opportunities for work to be shared and seen
- Recognise new, fresh and inspiring ideas from a range of perspectives.

Exeter Phoenix will offer one DOCLAB Micro Documentary Film Commission 2026 award of **£500** for the development of an original documentary film up to 3 minutes in length.

## WHAT CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

Exeter Phoenix is looking for concise, innovative stories that can be delivered as an engaging narrative in only 3 minutes. Successful applicants will be awarded £500 to support the production of the film. You can apply for support with all genres of film, live action or animation, fiction and nonfiction.

Exeter Phoenix is not restricting how the award is spent but you will be expected to provide a brief budget if you are invited to interview. Costs might include fees for cast and crew, travel costs, covering personal time, location fees and materials.

The successful applicants will also receive in kind support to the value of £1500, which will contribute towards the production. This includes:

- Hire of [Exeter Phoenix film and sound equipment](#)
- Exeter Phoenix studio hire
- Access to Exeter Phoenix film production facilities
- Support and mentoring from industry experts
- Training and workshops in camera skills, post-production and script development provided by Exeter Phoenix.

The finished films will be premiered at [Two Short Nights Film Festival](#) and advice will be given in festival strategy and developing audiences.

## WHO CAN APPLY?

The commission is open to individuals or groups who reside in Devon, UK.

The commission is aimed at those looking to develop their documentary filmmaking skills and experience, whether they have made documentaries before, are new to documentary film or are new to filmmaking. Writers, producers, directors, with a variety of experience are also encouraged but it is not essential to be specialised at this stage.

Applicants must be able to prove they have a permanent Devon address and must be aged 18 years or over. The selected filmmaker may be expected to make occasional visits to Exeter, therefore please consider this when applying.

## COMMISSION TIMELINE

Applications open **Wednesday 18 Feb 2026**.

Applications close **5pm, Sunday 22 March 2026**.

Decisions made by **2 April 2026**.

Interviews will take place on **20 to 24 April 2026**.

Training and workshops will take place from **May 2026, dates TBC**

Projects are to be completed and delivered by **Tue 04 January 2027**.

## APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT

All applications must be submitted via our online submission form.

Applicants will be asked to submit an original and concise proposal, outlining the tone, themes, genre and strategy of your ideas.

Exeter Phoenix will accept ideas to be presented in written form (up to 400 words) or as a video (up to 3 minutes).

Applicants will have the opportunity to include a link to a show reel and attached supporting material. This could be examples of previous work, stills, writing samples or visual aids.

Applicants will also be asked to complete a [Diversity Standards form](#) when applying.

All applicants will receive a confirmation email to state we have received your application. Applications will be presented to the commission panel after the deadline.

Decisions will be made by 02 April 2026. All applicants will be notified of the outcome via email.

If you are invited to pitch your application at an interview you will be asked to present your ideas to the panel and discuss them in more detail. You will also be asked to provide the panel with a brief budget and examples of how your production will meet our aims and objective outlined above.

***Disclaimer** The offer of this commission is correct at time of launch. Exeter Phoenix reserves the right to amend or withdraw elements of the commission offer. The commissions are subject to terms and conditions as stated in the final contract, which will be presented to the successful applicant.*

## CONTACT US

If you still have questions regarding the DOCLAB Micro Documentary Film Commission 2026 or if you would like assistance with your application please email [Digital@exeterphoenix.org.uk](mailto:Digital@exeterphoenix.org.uk)