



# Inaugural Development Grant Submissions Overview

July 2025





## ABOUT THE FUND

### **Powering Africa's Next Narrative**

The Next Narrative Africa Fund is a \$40 million mission driven content and media fund to invest in commercially viable audio-visual content made on the Continent by African and African-diaspora storytellers.

The Next Narrative Africa Fund aims to change the narrative about Africa and people of African descent by telling African stories for global impact. It will also fuel the growth of the creative industries in Africa, empower artists by promoting business and intellectual property ownership, and contribute to sustainable livelihoods across Africa and its diaspora.



# Goals of the Inaugural Development Grant Submissions Process

## 1. Narrative Change

NNA Fund is looking for projects that allow for new and different stories about and images of Africa to be seen by the world

We want to defy and challenge stereotypes about Africa and Africans while we entertain

We are looking for projects and filmmakers who have something interesting to say about the impact areas we identified and, as a result, the world and the time we are living in

We are especially interested in projects that have applied a gender lens, whether that be confronting gender tropes/stereotypes or showcasing healthy masculinity. Ultimately, we want to positively influence norms in ways that benefit young people around the world, but especially women and girls.

**In short, we want to support the kinds of projects that the world should see about Africa and Africans**



# Goals of the Submissions Process

## 2. Pipeline Building for Equity Fund

NNA Fund is looking for projects that will potentially enter the commercial equity fund's pipeline.

We want stories and projects that can travel; stories that an audience around the world can relate to it while maintaining the authenticity of the storyteller(s) and the time and place in which the story is told.

We want to select projects from a cohort of filmmakers and production companies that can be great ambassadors for the brand—we can depend on them to deliver and be great partners to the Fund now and in the future.

We manage reputational risk by working with partners who align with our values.

**In short, we want projects that will make money and win awards**

## (Approximate) Timeline

Early July: Submissions open

Early August: Submissions close

Mid August- October: Greenlight Committee will review top 50 projects

November 6: Advisory Board meeting, slate approved

Mid November: Applicants notified of outcomes

Late November: Grant agreements finalized and grants disbursed

Early December: Announcement and publicity of slate

June 2026: Slate Progress Report/Check Ins



# Criteria for Development Grants

## Overall NNA Fund Investment Criteria

The Fund will invest in elevated audio-visual content projects, specifically narrative feature films and episodic series, that fit the following criteria:

Commercially viable- there needs to be an identifiable commercial case for the project

Global appeal and distribution potential

\$1-5+ million budget per project- there is no hard cap on the project's budget but the sweet spot for the NNA Fund will probably be around \$3-\$7 million per project and we will look to cap our equity investment at 20% of the project's total budget

African and African-diasporan creatives at the helm- whose story is this and from what perspective?

Narrative shifting content focused on select social impact storytelling themes  
(gender/racial equity; democracy/governance; climate; health; and inclusive economic growth)

Influences norms in ways that improve outcomes for women and girls around the world

50% or more production in Africa, including principal photography. In addition to filming/production in Africa, there must be an Africa nexus to the story.

# Criteria for Inaugural Development Grants

## Development Grant Criteria

We anticipate funding between 6 and 10 projects that receive between \$20,000 and \$100,000 to complete the development of the project. This includes:

- Script writing and editing
- Research and/or subject matter consultants to contribute to the script
- Content testing/audience research

Projects should generally be able to use the funding amount requested in a 6-12 month period to complete a script that is ready for production

Episodic series or feature film projects may be selected but television project proposals will receive heightened scrutiny around distribution plans

No documentaries or reality television projects will be considered for development grants in this round—grant funding is for narrative story telling only at this time

All genres accepted (drama, comedy, horror, animation etc.)

Projects about war, disease, extreme poverty or other topics that are frequently the subject of Africa-focused narratives will receive heightened scrutiny around the potential of narrative change

# Development Grant Application Process

**We will ask applicants to submit the following by no later than August 1:**

**Required**: Completed application form with contact information and general information about the project and how it meets the NNAF criteria

**Required**: Treatment Deck that includes the following elements:

Executive Summary (include information as it relates to creatives, genre, budget, location, timeline)

Logline

Synopsis

Inspiration (Optional)

Comps

Story World

Tone

Character breakdowns

Episode breakdown (TV/Episodic)

Audience/Marketing

Team

Any distribution plans/deals in place

**Required**: Proposed Timeline/Budget

**Optional**: Draft Script

**Optional**: Stand Alone Treatment

**Optional**: Trailer, 2 minutes or less



# Terms of Development Grant Agreement

## **We will ask filmmakers to agree to the following conditions:**

Confirm they are the exclusive owner of the project

Complete the project's development within 9-12 months but no more than 2 years. If project development is not completed within 2 years, we may recoup the grant funds.

Provide a "Right of First Negotiation" for follow on equity investments into the project

Provide "In association with Next Narrative Africa Fund" credit on the project

Provide reasonable accounting and auditing rights after 12 months of fund disbursement

Provide or use reasonable efforts to obtain the consent of any relevant licensee or distributor of the project to the free use and exhibition by Next Narrative Africa Fund of the project for non-commercial charitable purposes

Provide or use good faith efforts to cause the distributor to provide to Next Narrative Africa Fund at least one invitation to the official premiere of the project and any main screenings of the project at each festival in which the project is in competition

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Will you accept unscripted projects such as reality series or documentaries?**

No, we are currently making script development grants with a focus on producing well written and authentic narrative feature length films and television/episodic series.

## **Will you consider short films?**

Not at this time.

## **The social impact areas seem very policy oriented, can you give some examples of projects that meet your social impact criteria?**

We are definitely looking for entertaining content. Some, if not all, of the most popular films and tv series have an impact theme at heart. Parasite is about class/economic inequality. Supacell is about health. Hunger Games is about authoritarianism (democracy/governance). Sinners explores themes around racism. Forever featured some of the best depictions of masculinity and gender norms on t.v. We are not going to tell you how to incorporate these themes but we think it would be hard to make something great that doesn't touch on these themes.

## **When will I find out whether my project has been funded?**

We will inform the funded projects and applicants in early-mid November.

## **Will you let me know if my project is not accepted?**

Given the anticipated volume of submissions it may not be possible to respond to everyone who applies.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Can I submit more than one project?**

We are looking for one submission per writer. A production company may submit multiple projects but there needs to be a different writer attached for each project and we will be evaluating that writer's ability to deliver. Please carefully consider the stage your project is in and our criteria and submit the project you think best fits.

## **Who will make decisions about funding and project selection?**

Projects are evaluated and selected by our Greenlight Committee with approval by our Advisory Board. Once your project is submitted, please don't reach out to members of the Greenlight Committee or Advisory Board to discuss your project outside of the review process.

## **What if my project budget is less than \$1 million or over \$5 million?**

We won't be rigid about budgets but projects with budgets under \$1 million will need to make a case for how production quality will meet global standards. Larger budgets will be considered, but we will only invest equity of up to 20% of the project budget. Budgets over \$10 million would need to make a strong argument about commercial viability and risk.

## **How will you determine whether a project has global appeal?**

If audiences outside Africa can understand and relate to the story you are telling and the way you are telling it, it has global appeal. We especially encourage by stories that weave in the diaspora experience.

## **Should I apply if my script is finished and the project is in production?**

Probably not since this is a script development grant. You will need to submit a budget and timeline proposal as part of your application.

## **Do I have to be African or of African descent to apply?**

We will prioritize projects that tell stories from the perspective of Africans or people of African descent.





Want more info? Visit us at:  
<https://nextnarrativeafricafund.com/pitch/>

Have questions or feedback? Contact us at:  
[submissions@nextnarrativeafrica.com](mailto:submissions@nextnarrativeafrica.com)

