

Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions

Before applying to the NSI Drama Prize training program you must read the full list of frequently asked questions. If you can't find an answer here, email your question (along with an email address where we can reach you) to dramaprize@nsi-canada.ca with "NSI Drama Prize question" in the subject line. The NSI Drama Prize program manager will answer your question. You can also telephone (800) 952-9307 and ask to speak to the NSI Drama Prize program manager.

OVERVIEW

NSI Drama Prize is an ambitious training program. It provides emerging filmmakers with a year of professional support and training in the various stages of filmmaking while they develop and produce a short film (maximum of ten minutes in length).

Up to four teams of aspiring Canadian filmmakers will be selected to receive customized training in writing, directing and producing, coordinated through the leadership of NSI Drama Prize Program Advisor, E. Jane Thompson and Program Manager, Joy Loewen. Following training each team will have two months to complete an assignment to be delivered no later than May 15, 2010.

Following assessment of the assigned work, selected teams will be eligible to receive \$10,000 in cash support; over \$30,000 in services; and mentoring from established industry leaders. All teams will not necessarily move forward following a review of the assigned work.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM?

NSI Drama Prize has two main objectives:

1. To provide successful applicants with training opportunities that will enhance the knowledge base and skill sets they will need to make their short films.
2. To work closely with filmmakers to help them from pre-production and production through to completion of their films and to prepare them to launch their films in the marketplace.

WHAT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES DOES NSI DRAMA PRIZE OFFER?

Do you think it would help to spend time with a professional director to work on your storyboard and go over your shot list? Perhaps you would like to understand production cost reporting and budgets a little better. Would you like to workshop your script with a professional story editor? Create a list of the things you wish you knew and the NSI Drama Prize team will work with you to get some first-hand answers.

The fundamental goal of the NSI Drama Prize training program is to help emerging Canadian filmmakers begin their filmmaking careers by meeting and working with established filmmakers and industry professionals.

NSI Drama Prize begins with teams being brought together from across Canada for specific week long workshops for producers, writers and directors. This intensive workshop series provides participants with training and project development workshops and seminars that prepare them for their respective role on the team in the development, production and post-production process. Taught by senior professionals active in the industry, these training sessions give participants the chance to hone their scripts, workshop with actors, improve their budget and production plans.

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM TIMELINE?

NSI Drama Prize is comprised of three distinct phases. Each phase must be completed in full in order to qualify for the next phase.

Phase one - TRAINING

NSI Drama Prize teams will be selected and notified in early January, 2010. Shortly after the successful teams are notified, they will fly to Winnipeg in early March, 2010 where they will participate in intensive training sessions with industry professionals.

Each week-long training session for writers, directors and producers will be led by an industry-experienced facilitator and will cover a wide range of topics such as script re-writes, preliminary casting, preliminary budgeting, scheduling, networking, finessing financing and marketing plans, preparing and shooting a short scene from your script and any other preparatory work specifically required to help you develop and produce your film.

Each team member must attend each day-long session and participate in all training workshops and seminars applicable to their role on the team (producer, writer, director). If you decide not to participate in the training, you and your entire team must withdraw from the program.

The NSI Drama Prize training program will pay for your flight and accommodation in Winnipeg while you attend the training sessions.

Specific dates for the workshops will be set once teams are selected and will not be available until January, 2010.

Phase two - ASSIGNMENT

Following the workshops, participants will return home where they will have two months to complete an assignment which will require delivery of the following materials:

- Final script;
- Budget & financing scenario;
- Project timeline;
- Letter of commitment from mentor candidate or a list of 3 possible mentor candidates (see Phase 3 below re: mentor);
- List of key creative personnel & their resumes (Director of Photography, Production Designer, Editor);
- Other requirements which may arise during the training week.

The assigned work must be delivered no later than May 15, 2010.

Assigned work will be reviewed to determine which teams are ready to proceed to production. NSI reserves the right to provide cash and services for the production phase of the program only to teams which have successfully completed their assignment. All teams will not necessarily move forward following assessment of assigned work.

Phase three - PRODUCTION

Once approval on the assigned deliverables has been received and your team has been green-lit, you can start preparing for principal photography.

To help you navigate the obstacles of production, as well as to parallel the realities of the industry, with the approval of NSI, each team will select a mentor from their region. Teams are guided through the mentor selection process and are asked to consider ease of communication and previous experience in the genre or theme of their scripts. Once mentors are confirmed, they will provide on-the-ground follow-up and direction for teams as they work through every stage of production, from development to post.

Throughout the following nine months, each team will work together under the guidance of the NSI and their chosen mentor to work through the various stages of pre-production, production and post-production of their short film.

Each NSI Drama Prize team must deliver the final digital master copies of their final cut to NSI by no later than February 11, 2011. Failure to deliver the master tapes by the deadline may result in a forfeit of the drawdown associated with delivery of the master tape.

The NSI Drama Prize training program culminates with delivery of the completed film to NSI by February 11, 2011. NSI reserves the right to present the completed film at a showcase event, if it so chooses.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO COMMIT TO THE PROGRAM?

Although we recognize the need to hang on to your day job, you are going to have to make considerable personal time available for the program. Project and professional development plans will be created with the maximum flexibility given to each team member's particular circumstances but the workshops will all take place in Winnipeg during the day and attendance at the training sessions is mandatory. Failure to attend each day of the workshops will result in the entire team having to withdraw from the program.

You will work with the NSI Drama Prize program manager to plan milestone dates for project development work, and those deadlines must be met. **NSI Drama Prize is a training program, not a funding program**, and by applying you are agreeing to meet the deadlines identified for you under the program.

A contract will be signed with each team outlining the professional development plans, the team and NSI commitments.

Preparing a short film for production within 10 months is a huge amount of work. If you're concerned you won't be able to commit the time, apply when you know you can.

WHO CAN APPLY?

NSI Drama Prize is aimed at emerging filmmakers who wish to develop and produce a short film. In order to be eligible, you must have:

- A minimum of one year of experience working in the film and television industry.
- Graduated from school a minimum of one year prior to the deadline of November 12, 2009. Please note this does NOT include participation in professional development programs.
- A maximum of two hours of on-screen, produced credits in the discipline applied for (not including student productions). For example, if you have produced documentaries, but never drama (or less than 2 hours of drama) you are eligible to apply. However, if you've produced and received more than two hours of on-screen credit for a dramatic production, you cannot apply as a Producer to NSI Drama Prize.
- A complete production team of two or three people (writer, producer, director) from the same region/city. You may apply as a writer/director or a writer/producer, but not as a producer/director or as a writer/director/producer. Please note that your project will become ineligible and your prize will be revoked if any of the team members identified on the application form change at any point after selection.
- You may submit more than one application but you must provide a complete separate application along with a \$30.00 application fee.

ALL APPLICANTS

- Must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, reside in Canada and be over the age of 18.
- Must maintain creative and financial control over the project as well as all copyright in the project.
- Must not be a previous participant of NSI Drama Prize, unless you are applying in a discipline different from the last time (eg. Previously participated as a director, and are now applying as a producer).
- Must not currently be enrolled in any full-time school or university program.
- Must not be participants in any other training program that would conflict with your ability to commit 100% to NSI Drama Prize.
- Must have determined ownership and decision making control between team members.
- Must be part of a complete production team (i.e. producer, writer, director) of two or three people.

WHAT PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

- Project must have a finished running time of no more than ten minutes.
- Projects must be dramatic in nature, which includes comedies. Experimental, animation and documentary films are not eligible.
- Projects can be completed in any medium provided it meets standard broadcast requirements. For more information, please visit the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) website at www.crtc.gc.ca. You are required to deliver two digital Betacam masters and a DVD copy to NSI.
- Theme and subject matter are up to the applicants, although NSI will not accept any project that contains excessive foul language, violence, sexual violence or sexual exploitation. All proposals must conform to the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' Code of Ethics and to all other programming standards endorsed by the CRTC including those related to sex-role portrayal and violence. For more information, please read the Canadian Association of Broadcasters Code of ethics at www.cab-acr.ca.
- Projects will be selected based on their creative and commercial potential. Both the project and team members must be suitable for the program (it is possible to have a good project, but a team which is not yet ready to produce a short film, or a great team with the wrong project).
- Commissioned works are ineligible.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Only fully completed applications will be considered. This means that you must fill out ALL sections of the application form in full and must include ALL the documents listed below.

Your application will be immediately disqualified if any of the sections are incomplete or missing. **Please check all copies of your application very carefully before you send it to us.** It is **your** responsibility to ensure that the application is complete and delivered on time. A check list has been provided for your use on page 13 of the application kit. (see separate Application Kit)

- A complete script with a projected running time of no more than ten minutes.
- Fifty word synopsis.
- Director's notes. Provide detail on stylistic approach, setting, overall tone, etc.
- Preliminary marketing plan that demonstrates a clear idea of the film's target audience and your understanding of its market potential; where do you see your project going?

- **Proposed production budget and financing structure.** Please complete budget template provided. List your proposed and/or confirmed sources of revenue for financing the project including cash, deferral and in-kind service amounts.
- **Complete chain of title documentation.** Chain of title refers to the underlying rights for your story. You will need to provide documentation that you have the right to develop your script whether it is a story idea of your own creation or an adaptation. To view a sample chain of title document, see www.cifvf.ca/English/cifvf_resources_chain_title.html.
- **Curriculum vitae** of each applicant. Please ensure your film/TV industry experience is clearly outlined.
- **Expectations.** A short paragraph from each team member describing what you are hoping to gain by participating in NSI Drama Prize.
- **A letter of reference** for each team member from recognized industry professionals currently working in the industry. A "recognized industry professional" could be someone you would look to as a mentor in the industry or someone who can speak to your readiness to participate in this program.
- **Description of the formal relationship between team members.** Have you incorporated a company? Have you worked together before? How confident are you that you can work together on this short?
- **Four unbound and single sided copies of the complete proposal.**
- **\$30 non-refundable entry fee.** Make your cheque or money order payable to the National Screen Institute - Canada. Cash payments will not be accepted.

HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANTS BE SELECTED?

- All applications will be assessed for eligibility and completeness. Incomplete applications will be rejected.
- Complete applications are reviewed by qualified readers who evaluate and rate each proposal based on standard script reviewing criteria. The NSI Drama Prize program manager will read each proposal using the same script reviewing criteria and approve the overall application. Together, the program manager and readers will create a short list to forward to the jury for final decisions.
- The short list will be distributed to a jury made up of industry representatives with senior level experience in the film and television industry. The directors of the shortlisted teams will be asked to submit a sample of their work, if available.
- Based upon the strength of the script, team members and support documentation, the jury will select up to four teams to participate in NSI Drama Prize 2010.
- Because NSI is a national organization, regional representation will be a consideration in the selection of the final four teams.

WHEN WILL WE KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN SELECTED?

Selection will be complete by mid January, 2010. Only those teams selected for NSI Drama Prize will be contacted by phone. Unsuccessful applications will be notified by email no later than January 31, 2010.

WHAT ABOUT INTER-PROVINCIAL TEAMS?

Inter-provincial teams are not eligible. All team members must reside in the same province.

CAN TEAMS OR INDIVIDUALS SUBMIT MORE THAN ONE PROPOSAL PER YEAR?

Yes you may, provided you send a separate and complete application package and entry fee. You may apply twice with the same project within a three year period.

WHO IS THE NSI DRAMA PRIZE PROGRAM ADVISOR?

E. Jane Thompson is a two-time Gemini award-winning director. She has directed dramatic prime time television in Canada, award-winning short films, and a movie of the week. Jane is currently developing two feature films, *The Berliner Complex* (Katherine Collins, writer; Dan Bekerman, co-producer) and *Mathilde* (Dan Bekerman, co-producer). Jane has led directing workshops for the Canadian Screen Training Centre and NSI.

WHO IS THE NSI DRAMA PRIZE PROGRAM MANAGER?

Joy Loewen has experience as a broadcaster, producer and trainer in the Canadian film and television industry. She was the acquisitions manager responsible for programming and scheduling movies, documentaries, lifestyle series and shorts on WTN. Joy negotiated acquisition and pre-license agreements on behalf of the network in addition to producing several seasons of an international fashion series, *In Fashion*. Prior to joining NSI, she was an associate producer at CBC Television responsible for developing and producing regional programs. Joy also manages the NSI StoryTellers Directors training and previously co-coordinated NSI Pitch Your TV Project 360! at the 2006 & 2007 Banff World Television Festival.

WHAT DO THE SELECTED NSI DRAMA PRIZE 2010 PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE?

Each team will receive:

- Professional training delivered by some of Canada's top industry professionals at the producing, writing and directing workshops.

Phase 3 approved teams will receive:

- A cash award of \$10,000.
- In-kind services worth over \$30,000 in the form of film stock, equipment rental and post-production facilities. Insurance coverage and legal counsel will also be provided through NSI.
- Access to an established industry professional who will act as your mentor, offering advice, expertise and support.

Please note that each team must invest, at minimum, \$2,000 cash in the project. This will give a total cash budget of at least \$12,000 (\$10,000 cash from NSI plus \$2,000 team investment = \$12,000 total cash budget).

WHAT STRINGS ARE ATTACHED TO THE DEVELOPMENT MONEY?

The National Screen Institute - Canada (NSI) and the NSI Drama Prize program investors will receive specific head and tail credits on all copies of the film and prominent credit on all publicity materials related to the project.

Details of credit size, NSI Drama Prize program investors, etc. will appear in the contract to be signed between participating teams and NSI.

WHAT RIGHTS DOES THE NATIONAL SCREEN INSTITUTE HAVE ON THE PROJECT?

NSI and its sponsors will retain the right to exhibit (non-commercially) completed productions for promotion and will use best efforts to notify the producer of any such screening prior to its occurrence. NSI will have the right to screen completed productions at a showcase event if it so chooses. NSI may also use productions' publicity materials to promote the NSI Drama Prize Program and NSI.

NSI encourages the production team to develop a marketing plan with a target audience in mind and to initiate activities that will generate audience interest.

All copyright in the project shall belong to the applicant. NSI reserves the sole right to disqualify any team that does not fully own all rights in and to the project.

WE HAVE FINANCING/DEALS LINED UP - HOW DOES THAT AFFECT OUR APPLICATION?

Any application that can demonstrate deals already made by the marketplace is clearly a viable project. However, although NSI Drama Prize teams may apply for grants and funding programs there may be some restrictions associated with them, which may prevent you from applying to NSI Drama Prize. It is your sole responsibility to check the guidelines of the programs/funding agencies carefully to ensure they do not pose a conflict with the NSI Drama Prize program.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

All creative and financial control must remain with the applicant team. While having confirmed financing or distribution speaks to the project's credibility, it does not guarantee selection for the program.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NSI AND THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS?

The relationship between the applicant and NSI shall not be deemed to constitute a partnership or joint venture. The applicant shall not have the right to incur any debts nor to make any commitment of or on behalf of NSI.

All copyright in the project shall belong to the applicant.

CAN I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION BY FAX OR EMAIL?

No. All applications must be mailed, couriered or hand-delivered to NSI's office at 400 - 141 Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0R3.

WHERE DO I SEND MY APPLICATION?

Complete applications (forms and support materials) should be mailed/couriered to:

NSI Drama Prize Program
National Screen Institute - Canada
400 - 141 Bannatyne Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0R3

NSI must receive your complete application by **Thursday, November 12, 2009, 4:30pm Central Time**. No extensions.

I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS. WHO DO I CONTACT?

Email your question (along with an email address where we can reach you) to dramaprize@nsi-canada.ca with "NSI Drama Prize question" in the subject line. The NSI Drama Prize program manager will answer your question. You can also telephone (800) 952-9307 and ask to speak to the NSI Drama Prize program manager.

NSI Drama Prize is made possible by Presenting Sponsor Telefilm Canada; Program Partners Canwest and The Brian Linehan Charitable Foundation; Strategic Sponsors; Rogers and Women in Media Foundation; Provincial Sponsor British Columbia Film; Award Sponsors Rogers, The NSI Alumni Fund, The Brian Linehan Charitable Foundation and Telefilm Canada; Service Sponsors Deluxe, Kodak Canada Inc. and PS Production Services Ltd.; Risk Management Consultants Multimedia Risk Inc.; as well as William F. White International Inc.

PROJECT PRODUCTION BUDGET

Must be completed even if a separate budget is submitted

CASH IN-KIND DEFERRALS GRAND TOTAL

Writer				
Producer				
Director				
Actors				
Art Direction				
Rights				
SUBTOTAL A				
Set design/construction				
Rehearsal space				
Location rental				
Studio rental				
Special effects				
Wardrobe labour				
Wardrobe supplies/rental				
Make-up/hair labour				
Make-up/hair supplies				
DOP/Cinematographer				
Lighting labour				
Camera labour				
Grip labour				
Continuity				
Sound labour				
Production assistants				
Production stills				
Transportation				
Craft (meals)				
Travel expenses				
Art supplies				
Props				
Lighting equipment rental				
Camera equipment rental				
Grip equipment rental				
Sound equipment rental				
Film stock/tape				
Film processing				
Miscellaneous				
SUBTOTAL B				
Editor (picture)				
Editor (sound)				
Editing facility (picture)				
Editing facility (sound)				
Video post-prod. (picture)				
Music				
Sound mix				
Mastering				
Dubbing				
Marketing				
SUBTOTAL C				
Legal/insurance				
SUBTOTAL D				
SUBTOTAL A+B+C+D				
TOTAL PRODUCTION COST				

AMOUNT REQUESTED

PROJECT FINANCING SOURCES

Please identify the source and whether the funding is committed OR projected

List NSI Drama Prize contributions as To Be Confirmed

A) FINANCING SOURCES	Projected \$	Committed \$
<u>FEDERAL AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION</u>		
RESPONSE TO BE RECEIVED BY:		
<u>PROVINCIAL AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION</u>		
RESPONSE TO BE RECEIVED BY:		
<u>BROADCASTER</u>		
RESPONSE TO BE RECEIVED BY:		
<u>PRIVATE INVESTMENT</u>		
RESPONSE TO BE RECEIVED BY:		
<u>OTHER ASSOCIATIONS, FOUNDATIONS</u>		
RESPONSE TO BE RECEIVED BY:		
TOTAL		

B) For all the funding sources listed above please list a contact person, address and telephone number:

SOURCE _____
 CONTACT NAME _____
 TELEPHONE _____

SOURCE _____
 CONTACT NAME _____
 TELEPHONE _____

SOURCE _____
 CONTACT NAME _____
 TELEPHONE _____