

Documentary Exploration Grant Application Information

What you'll need:

Contact Information

Names, emails, phone numbers for your entire team

Working Title

Logline (1 sentence)

Your elevator pitch! Think: what would go on a movie poster/advertisement?

Synopsis (1 paragraph)

Overview, characters, anticipated plot, narrative trajectory

Qualifications (1 paragraph)

Relevant coursework and/or filmmaking experience

Topic (1-2 paragraphs)

What is your relationship to the subject matter/what made you want to tell this story? Why is now the right time for this story? Why are you well positioned to tell it? Describe how your film, through character, theme, or setting, explores important issues of our time.

Artistic Approach and Access (2 paragraphs)

Outline your project's creative vision and style. Will your documentary be observational? Interview-based? How will the film look and feel, and why is this approach appropriate? What access have you confirmed to your story and its character(s)?

Intended Audience, Distribution Plan, and Outcome (1 paragraph)

What audience(s) are you trying to reach? How will ensure your film is seen once it is completed? How will you evaluate your project's personal/social/cultural impact?

Work Sample (Link)

Provide a link to a video work sample. You should choose the ONE sample you feel best reflects your ability to undertake the proposed project. If it is a team project, please explain your role on the project. If you do not have a video, please provide a link to another form of creative work and explain why it is relevant to the application.

Collaboration (1 paragraph)

If this is a team project, please outline how the collaboration will work and what strengths each member brings to the project.

Mentorship (up to 1 paragraph)

What qualities do you seek in a project mentor? If there is a specific alumna/us you believe would be a good fit for the project, please let us know who and why.

Grant Amount Requested

Grants will range from \$500 - \$10,000 based on the budgetary needs of the proposed project.

Comprehensive Budget

Full budget with rationale. There will be a place to upload a file with a breakdown of expected costs. This is optional, but highly recommended.

Optional Documents

Above mentioned budget breakdowns, look books, or other documents that clarify the goals of your project

Timeline

Projected timeline, with dates, for pre-production, production, post-production.

Letter of Support

Please include the name and email address of the faculty member or alumnus who will be providing a letter of support for you. REMEMBER to share the CC Documentary Exploration Grants webpage with your recommender; they will submit their letter of support via the button on the left of the page. Your application will not be considered complete until we have received this letter.

Application FAQs

Q: What can I do to ensure my application is as competitive as possible?

A: Focusing on the elements below as much as possible will significantly prove your application.

1. *Subjects*: Get in touch with your subjects. Show us they are not just strangers. Have solid plans (A, B, C) for access. We need to be convinced it won't be a problem.
2. *Specifics*: Give us something beyond the concept. What is the story here? The narrative arc? Don't just tell but visualize and show. Make use sample footage, if possible.
3. *Teams*: Filmmaking is a collective endeavor and we always appreciate a good team that makes best use of everyone's strengths.

Q: Do I need to propose an outdoor adventure or travel documentary to be granted?

Nope! Granted documentaries can be of any type, style, or subject matter. However, your documentary should tell a compelling, character-driven story that has the potential to engage an audience both cinematically and narratively. A sense of character and story is crucial to a successful proposal. If you don't have a compelling central character yet, your proposal should describe how you propose to find one.

Keep in mind: if you *do* plan on an outdoor adventure or travel documentary, the committee is unlikely to grant a project that seems like a veiled subsidy for a filmmaker's hobby or vacation (e.g. a road/hiking trip with your pals).

Q: I don't know exactly how much this is going to cost. How detailed does my budget need to be?

Do your best, and do some research. The budget should give us a clear idea that you understand what will be needed to make your documentary. It can include time/travel for scouting purposes; gear rental costs; travel costs; editing and post-production costs; licensing costs; finishing funds; and outreach costs, among others. The committee may grant you less or more than you request, given the scope of your proposed project.

Q: I don't have a team. Can I propose to make a documentary by myself?

A: Yes, but collaborative teams are encouraged. It's hard to make a good documentary, and other people help. Reach out to others.

Q: How does the mentorship process work?

You will be assigned a project mentor or mentors shortly following your grant award. You must meet with your mentor(s) prior to any filming and at various key milestones during the project. You must submit your project to your mentor at the rough cut stage for feedback and advice. Your mentors are there to support and help you – let them!

Q: When do I need to finish the project, and what kind of reporting or updates do I need to provide?

All projects are expected to be finished within a calendar year. Grantees are expected to provide status updates and production photos to Film and Media as requested during the process; to showcase their completed projects at an annual screening event in Cornerstone; and to provide us with access to the final project for our records. And of course, if your project screens at festivals or other venues, we want to know! Finally, please acknowledge the “Colorado College Documentary Exploration Grants Program” in your final credits.

Q: I have more questions. Whom do I talk to?

Check the Documentary Grants page for the most recent contact information. You can also reach out to askfilm@coloradocollege.edu.