

## 2014 Chicken & Egg Pictures Open Call – Guidelines, Criteria, & FAQ

**PLEASE NOTE:** This document is just to help you get started preparing your answers and gathering your materials. You should plan to submit your final application through our online system, which will be available starting June 1, 2014.

### GRANTS

Since 2005, Chicken & Egg Pictures has awarded \$3.3 million and 5,000 hours of mentorship to over 160 films. We are interested in films that tackle human rights, social justice, and environmental issues in a nuanced, original, and compelling way. We're looking for new voices, powerful stories, and filmmakers who are committed to working in tandem with social movements.

Details about our annual open call process are below. Grants are available to documentary or hybrid documentary films, as well as new forms of transmedia and interactive storytelling that expand the documentary form. We accept both feature-length and short films, and we make grants to filmmakers living and working in both the U.S. and around the globe. We accept filmmakers at all stages of their careers and projects at all stages of the filmmaking process.

Films must be directed or co-directed by a woman (including female-male co-directors and transgender/gender-non-conforming individuals). Generally, films need not focus on women's issues or female characters, but please read our [Current Priorities](#) below for more details about our special emphasis on women characters for 2014 only.

### 2014 DEADLINES

- ★ Early-bird application (\$20 fee): Before Tuesday, June 17, 2014, at 6:00 PM EST
- ★ Final application (\$35 fee): Before Tuesday, July 1, 2014, at 6:00 PM EST

All applicants will be notified by November 15, 2014.

### PRIORITIES

As always, we are open to films dealing with a wide range of human rights, social justice, and environmental subjects and issues. However, **for this year's Open Call, we are prioritizing projects that feature women and girls on screen as prominent characters** and storytellers of their own lives and lived experience. We are celebrating Chicken & Egg Pictures' upcoming tenth anniversary with this new, special focus, designed to make sure women are both behind and in front of the camera. We're taking inspiration from past grantees with strong female protagonists, such as *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs*, *Freeheld*, *The Forest for the Trees*, *Lioness*, *Private Violence*, *Sepideh - Reaching for the Stars*, and *Saving Face*, amongst many others.

We look forward to discovering new voices that continue to address the global justice, human rights, and environmental issues of our time — with women and girls at the center.

## PROCESS

Our review process is rigorous. A panel of expert screeners, including the Chicken & Egg team, reviews every application, looking at prospective projects thoroughly, fairly, and from multiple perspectives. Our expert screeners include working and award-winning filmmakers and industry professionals, who share a commitment to community, risk-taking, and discovering new voices.

## CRITERIA

We're looking for:

- ★ **Innovation:** Filmmakers with unique voices and projects that take risks.
- ★ **Vision:** A new perspective on an issue, unique access into the story, and the ability to make the universal accessible, personal, and resonant.
- ★ **Storytelling:** Original story, tone, style, and structure.
- ★ **Craft:** Inextricable links between the driving story and the production values, sound, cinematography, and other craft decisions.
- ★ **Resonance:** Timely, urgent, or compelling issues at stake.
- ★ **Impact:** Films with the potential to help shift culture, practices, and even policy, as well as to build and support grassroots movements for change.
- ★ **Diversity:** In all its forms, including geography, age, subject matter, ethnicity, career level, and more.

## GUIDELINES

- ★ **Genres:** We support nonfiction feature, nonfiction short, hybrid, new media/multiple platforms, and other genres on a case-by-case basis.
- ★ **Not accepted:** We don't support fiction (unless otherwise solicited), student projects, or any projects not directed or co-directed by a woman. (Female-male co-directors and transgender/non-gender-conforming individuals may be accepted).
- ★ **Engagement funding:** While we do make grants for outreach and community engagement funding, these are *only* available to projects that have already received support from Chicken & Egg Pictures. Please read our [FAQ](#) below for more details.
- ★ **International Applications:** International filmmakers may apply. However, if you are offered a grant, you must arrange to be represented by a fiscal sponsor that supports international filmmakers.

- ★ **Re-granting:** Current Chicken & Egg Pictures grantees with films still in production/post production may apply for additional funding, but the reapplication process is NOT handled through this system. \*If you are a current grantee, please do not apply here for a regrant.\* Instead, contact us directly for more information.

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

### Filling out the Online Application

- We recommend you download the application questions well in advance of the deadline to prepare your answers.
- Review the protocols of the application form in advance of the deadline as well. Look at word count for the sections and the tech specs for the documents and links you'll be uploading.
- Note that our system won't save your work, or give you a copy of your application after it's complete. Be sure to save a copy of your final answers separately.

### Work Sample

- To apply for a grant, you must submit a **current work sample** for the project you're applying with. Depending on your experience or on the format of your current work sample, you may also need to submit a **prior work sample** to add to your application. Please check the [FAQ](#) for our requirements and recommendations around prior work samples.
  - The goal of your **current work sample** is to help the review panel understand your proposed project visually and stylistically. It can be anything from a storyboard to a fine cut.
  - You may also submit a **prior work sample** from a film you directed or worked on in the past, to further elaborate on your style and approach.
  - First-time filmmakers must include **both** a current and prior work sample; in this case, a prior work sample can be other people's projects on which you worked as A.D., cinematographer, editor, sound recordist, producer, co-producer, consulting producer, line producer, or outreach/engagement coordinator.
- There are no strict rules for minimum or maximum run time for current or prior works. We recommend you submit at least 3 minutes and no more than 2 hours.
- Work samples should have English subtitles; if they don't, please also send us a translated script of what's being said on screen.
- Work samples may take any number of forms:
  - **Rough-cut:** If you have one, we would love to see a rough cut. Our decision process does take a few months, so we recommend you submit early — don't wait until it's in fine cut!
  - **Trailer:** Trailers can often be slick, fast, and energetic, so they may not give us an accurate sense of your film's tone, character development, setting, or story structure. If you're submitting a trailer, we encourage you to also attach a couple of scenes or even a small amount of raw footage to further fill out your narrative and give us better insight into your style.
  - **Concept Sketches:** Even if you're in early development and haven't yet started filming, we need to see what you see. Give us some visual idea of

your current project. This can be a single interview you filmed yourself on a digital camera, or even a storyboard. Be creative.

- A few important tech notes to keep in mind when submitted your work samples:
  - All work samples must be accessible via a live URL (vimeo, YouTube, or private hosting site). You'll provide us with a link and password to review the sample.
  - Make sure your link and password work all the way through the sample, and make sure it will stay live and be accessible through November!
  - If you are absolutely unable to submit online, you may email [info@chickeneggpics.org](mailto:info@chickeneggpics.org), with the subject line, "DVD submission request." Always include your project title name in the subject line of your email.

### Budget

- Each application must also have a budget attached. They system will accept PDF, XLS, and CSV formats.
- If you are in development, pre-production, or production, send an overall budget. Please be sure to include a line item for director and producer salaries; we feel it's very important for filmmakers to factor in their own payment in the budget.
- If you are applying for completion funds, a post-budget is acceptable.

### Fiscal Sponsorship

- You do not need to have a fiscal sponsor before applying. However, you must have one in order to receive a grant, so we urge you get one lined up soon after completing your application.
- A fiscal sponsor is a 501(c)(3) organization that shares its tax-exempt status with individual filmmakers, meaning you are able to accept charitable grants. In exchange for this service, they may take a percentage anywhere from two to eight percent of the incoming funds.
- A few examples of 501(c)3 organizations that offer fiscal sponsorships to filmmakers:
  - New York Foundation For the Arts - Artspire - <http://bit.ly/1nP17jX>
  - The Center for Independent Documentary - <http://documentaries.org/>
  - Independent Filmmaker Project - <http://www.ifp.org/programs/fiscal-sponsorship/>
  - Film Independent - <http://www.filmindependent.org/>
  - Fractured Atlas - <http://www.fracturedatlas.org/>
  - International Documentary Association - <http://www.documentary.org/>
  - San Francisco Film Society - <http://www.sffs.org/>
  - Women Make Movies - <http://www.wmm.com/>

### Application fee

- When your application is complete, the confirmation page will give you information on how to submit payment.
- The fees are \$25 if submitted by 6:00 PM EST on Tuesday, June 17, 2014, or \$35 if submitted by 6:00 PM EST on Tuesday, July 1, 2014.

- The fee is payable by credit or debit card when you submit online, via Paypal. You will receive a receipt by email.
- If you need to send a check or other payment, you may email [info@chickeneggpics.org](mailto:info@chickeneggpics.org) with “Application Payment Request” in the subject line to discuss it individually. Always include your project title name in the subject line of your email.

## FAQ

### *How many applications receive funding?*

We have historically been able to fund about 10 to 15 new projects each year via the Open Call.

### *How much are your grants?*

The average grant is around \$10,000.

Additionally, we offer follow-up grants to some existing projects, either for community engagement efforts or other strategic funds. This process is handled outside of the online system; please do not submit an application, but contact us directly for more info.

### *How do I get Chicken & Egg Pictures to Executive Produce my film?*

Occasionally, we deepen our relationship with a current grantee by joining her project as Executive Producer. This decision is made on a case-by-case basis for currently supported projects only.

### *Can I apply with more than one project?*

Please only apply with the one project you feel is the best fit for Chicken & Egg Pictures. Read [our guidelines](#) above to get an idea of our interests. If you are really in a pickle and can't choose between two projects, you can email us at [info@chickeneggpics.org](mailto:info@chickeneggpics.org) with a short description of both films and ask our advice (this advice will not impact your application). Always include your project title name in the subject line of your email.

We urge you to follow your instincts and make the choice yourself!

### *Does my proposal have to be written in English?*

Yes.

### *Can I get feedback on my application?*

We are a small staff with limited capacity, and cannot provide one-on-one feedback to applicants (except for those whose projects are shortlisted). However, we believe wholeheartedly in the importance of feedback, and are constantly searching for ways to offer more support to all our applicants.

### *Do I have to submit prior work with my application?*

You must submit prior work if you are:

- a first-time director;
- in development on a film, and have no other footage to show;

- only submitting a trailer, with no extra scenes or character strands to add; or
- fit into any combination of the above.

If you are a first-time director, prior work can include projects you have worked on as A.D., cinematographer, editor, sound recordist, producer, co-producer, consulting producer, line producer, production coordinator, or outreach/audience engagement coordinator. Please see our [Application Checklist](#) above for more info.

*I'm a first-time director, and have not shot anything yet for my proposed project. I have a great idea, a character, and access. How can I apply?*

We are excited to learn more. We ask that you submit **both** a current and prior work sample with your application:

1. Current work sample. Submit some form of visual media representing your proposed project, even if it is a “sketch” filmed on a digital camera or a storyboard. We have been moved to support projects that needed development funding after seeing interviews a filmmaker shot herself, with a small digital camera and no crew. Be bold. Be creative.

2. Prior work sample. As a first-time director, this means experience gained while working on other people’s projects. We accept excerpts from films on which you served as A.D., cinematographer, editor, sound recordist, co-producer, consulting producer, line producer, production coordinator, or outreach/audience engagement coordinator. Please be sure to describe your role in the creation of the completed work submitted.

*What makes a good logline?*

A logline is a concise, story-driven description that explains the heart of your project in one or two sentences. Nearly every film festival, producer, distributor, or other industry professional will want to see one, so you should spend time developing a strong logline for your project. A good logline introduces your central character, her world, her goals, and the forces standing in her way. It should also resonate, in concert with your title and tagline, and offer a bit of double meaning and mystery that compels the reader to want more.

A few examples from projects recently funded by Chicken & Egg Pictures:

- *Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry*: Can an artist change China? *Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry* follows two tumultuous years in the life of Ai Weiwei, when he became a superstar, a dissident of the art world, in the headlines, a first-time father and an online god to tens of thousands of Chinese citizens, all while trying to stay out of prison.
- *Black Out*: A literal and metaphorical journey towards enlightenment, *Black Out* shows how children reconcile their daily lives in Guinea, one of the world’s poorest countries, with their desire to learn.

*Where can I find more information on audience engagement?*

Several of our partner organizations and colleagues have created excellent papers, reports, and other materials explaining audience engagement strategies. We recommend the following resources:

- Working Films - <http://bit.ly/1IkFbYI>
- BRITDOC.org - <http://britdoc.org/>
- Fledgling Fund - <http://www.thefledglingfund.org/>
- National Center for Media Engagement - <http://mediaengage.org/tools>

*I identify as transgender/gender-non-conforming. Can I apply?*

Yes, our application is open to women, female/male co-directing partnerships, and transgender/gender-non-conforming individuals.

*If I applied in the past but my project was not selected, can I reapply?*

If your project has evolved and developed since your last submission, and if that progress is clearly evident in both your proposal and work-in-progress, then we encourage you to reapply.

*If I've received a grant from Chicken & Egg Pictures in the past, can I reapply?*

Grantees with films still in production or post production may apply for additional funding, but the reapplication process is NOT handled through this system, so please do not submit an application here. Instead, contact us directly for more information.

If you have completed a project that received a grant from Chicken & Egg Pictures and are beginning a new film, you are welcome to apply.

*What if I can't afford the application fee?*

We will waive the application fee in select situations for filmmakers in need. Please contact [info@chickeneggpics.org](mailto:info@chickeneggpics.org) for further information.