

**For information  
on 27 May 2013**

**Legislative Council  
Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting**

**Briefing on the First Feature Film Initiative**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the First Feature Film Initiative (FFFI).

**Details of FFFI**

2. The Chief Executive announced in the 2013 Policy Address the launch of the FFFI as the Government's latest measure to support the film industry. Through a competition on screenplay and production proposals, Create Hong Kong (CreateHK) seeks to identify new filmmakers from among tertiary students and practitioners of the film industry who have no previous experience in directing commercial films. Funding will be made available from the Film Development Fund (FDF) for the winners to make their first feature films<sup>1</sup> on a commercial basis, thereby nurturing talents for the local film industry.

***Competition on Screenplay and Production Proposals***

3. The competition is divided into a Higher Education Institutions Group (HEIG) and a Professionals Group (PG). The HEIG will offer two prizes and the PG will offer one. Directors in both groups shall not have previously shot<sup>2</sup> any commercial film<sup>3</sup> with a running time of 80 minutes or longer. The producer must have previously worked in Hong Kong as a film executive at the level of production manager or above (e.g. producer, production designer, production coordinator, line producer, etc.). The director and the producer of a participating team shall both be a Hong Kong permanent resident aged 18 or above. At least one Hong Kong permanent

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<sup>1</sup> A feature film is a fictional narrative. It must be a film or digital film suitable for release in commercial cinemas and is not shorter than 80 minutes in running time. Animation films are not covered by FFFI.

<sup>2</sup> "Shall not have previously shot" means not having shot any commercial film as a director, co-director or executive director.

<sup>3</sup> "Commercial film" means a fictional narrative that has been shown at local commercial cinemas.

resident shall hold each of the other key positions including scriptwriter, leading actor, leading actress, cameraman, action designer, art director, editor, etc.

4. To ensure that participating teams possess reasonable knowledge and skill in film production, the director of a participating team in the HEIG shall be a student or graduate from film/television (TV) production or similar disciplines of a post-secondary college or a vocational education institution, and the team shall be screened and nominated by one of the seven local institutions of higher or vocational education with film/TV production or similar disciplines<sup>4</sup>. The director of a participating team in the PG shall possess filmmaking or related experience or has previously won in a local major short film competition, and the team shall be nominated by a film association/body or a body which has organised local short film competitions before<sup>5</sup>.

5. Each participating team is required to submit a screenplay and production proposal, which shall include: a brief on the selling points of the film, a full script, a detailed production plan, names of cast and crew members, production budget and marketing forecast. An assessment panel comprising representatives of the Film Development Council (FDC) and veteran members of the film industry will select the winning teams.

### ***Film Production***

6. The FDF will make available funding to cover the full production costs of the films by the winning teams. The production expenses for the winning teams in the HEIC will be capped at \$2 million per film while that for the winning team in the PG will be capped at \$5 million. The production company formed by the director and the producer of the winning team shall enter into a funding agreement with the Government.

7. The winning teams will have to complete the whole film production and sales process involving planning, shooting and distribution, acquiring experience in planning for film production. It is expected that planning, production and distribution will take some 12 months for each film.

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<sup>4</sup> The relevant educational institutions are the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, City University of Hong Kong, the Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education and the Hong Kong Design Institute.

<sup>5</sup> The relevant bodies are Federation of Hong Kong Filmmakers and its member bodies, the Hong Kong Motion Picture Industry Association, Movie Producers and Distributors Association of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chamber of Films, the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society, Ying E Chi and Hong Kong Arts Centre.

8. To ensure completion of film production on schedule, within budget and at a standard meeting the requirements of commercial films, CreateHK will engage an industry member experienced in film production as the project manager, and charge him/her with monitoring the progress and financial positions of the film production as well as providing timely assistance. CreateHK will release the funds to the production companies according to the key production stages. Since this Initiative is a new endeavor, we cannot preclude the risk that the production company cannot complete the production of a film due to various reasons. If the production company cannot complete the production of a film, the film copyright and production materials will all revert to the Government.

### ***Film Copyright and Distribution***

9. The copyrights of the film projects and the films being made shall be vested in the Government. Upon completion of film production, the Government will, pursuant to the terms of the agreements, assign the film projects and the rights of the films to the production companies at no cost as part of the incentive. The Government will not recover the costs of the film production and the related administrative expenses. Nor will the Government seek to recover the funds expended on production of the film or share the profits.

10. The production companies are required to sell the film copyright for the first five years through a bidding process. CreateHK will arrange pre-screening and pre-sale promotion and sale sessions. Local major distribution companies will be invited to send representatives to watch the films and submit written bids for the copyright of the films.

### ***Commitment of FFFI***

11. We expect the production costs of the three films to be \$9 million in total. Together with \$150,000 for promotion and \$800,000 for contingency, the total estimated expenditure for FFFI is \$9.95 million, to be met by the FDF.

### ***Review***

12. The FFFI is pilot in nature. CreateHK will conduct a review on completion of the FFFI to consider whether to continue with the Initiative.

## **Implementation Schedule**

13. The FFFI will span 20 months, starting in March 2013 and ending in October 2014. The implementation schedule is at **Annex**.

## **Publicity and public reaction**

14. The FDC and CreateHK announced the details of FFFI at the launching ceremony held on 19 March 2013. Prior to the announcement of the Initiative, CreateHK had briefed relevant members of the film industry and representatives of higher education institutions on the concept and content of FFFI. Details of the FFFI were worked out having regard to their views expressed during the briefings. After the announcement of the Initiative, CreateHK mounted a series of promotional activities, including the setting up of a publicity website for the FFFI and distributing publicity leaflets at various District Offices and public venues throughout the territory.

15. The FFFI has drawn positive feedback from film industry bodies and post-secondary institutions which run film-related disciplines. They take the view that the FFFI will help identify and nurture promising film talents and fulfill the wishes of new generation in joining the film industry and those of existing practitioners of the film industry in switching their career track to that of a director/scriptwriter/producer.

Communications and Technology Branch  
Commerce and Economic Development Bureau  
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**Implementation Schedule of  
the First Feature Film Initiative (FFFI)**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Tentative Date</b>
FFFI press conference and announcement of application procedure	19 March 2013 (already held)
Enrolment of participating teams	March to August 2013
Formation of the assessment panel	April to June 2013
Stage 1 assessment to shortlist participating teams	September 2013
Improvement of production proposal by shortlisted teams	October 2013
Stage 2 assessment to select the winning teams	November 2013
Pre-production of the films	December 2013 to February 2014
Filming	March to April 2014
Post-production	May to July 2014
Sale of film copyright and distribution right by bidding	August 2014
Exhibition of the films	October 2014