



CPB-PBS Digital Studios Support for Digital Programming

Application for Digital Programming Funding – Grant Opportunity for Stations Request For Proposals / Station Submission Criteria

With support from The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS Digital Studios aims to increase the amount of member station digital content in order to advance PBS programming to new audiences. Funding from CPB will enable PBS Digital Studios to co-develop and fund the first season of 3 new YouTube channels, with 3 different member stations. PBS Digital Studios wants to help strengthen stations' digital-first capabilities, and develop stations' capacity to create and distribute compelling digital content. This original programming will focus on social and cultural themes that are relevant to member station communities, but appeal to national audiences. Member stations are invited to apply for this grant using the below application.

Through this application process, member stations will pitch series concepts, submit target audience details and marketing plans for a new digital-first YouTube series. PBS Digital Studios will narrow down the submissions to 5 top choices, and fund a pilot episode for each of the 5 selected concepts. Each of the 5 stations chosen will receive \$6,500 to produce the pilot episodes as well as consultation from the PBS Digital Studios team throughout production. Once the 5 pilot episodes are submitted and assessed, PBS Digital Studios will then narrow the selection down further, and fund and co-develop the first season of 3 new YouTube series. The stations chosen will be granted up to \$100,000 each to fund the production of a full-length, first season. This partnership will include weekly collaborative conversations on editorial and marketing strategy with the PBS Digital Studios team throughout production.

In order to be eligible for the pilot and full season awards, concepts need to meet the following criteria:

- Concepts must be digitally oriented and appropriate for YouTube
- Concepts should target 18-34 year old/millennial demographic
- Concepts should center on social sciences, civic themes and/or multicultural issues and topics

In addition, concepts will require a minimum of 2 of the following (Member stations

who embrace all 3 criteria will be given additional consideration):

1. Station will consult with local and/or national public media diversity focused organizations that can provide research, guidance and expertise in the chosen series topic, as well as assistance in sourcing on camera talent, creators and community thought leaders as needed. (e.g., the National Minority Consortia, Latino Public Broadcasting, NALIP, ITVS, public television stations, Firelight Media (“Diversity Partner(s)”). These organizations will serve in an advisory capacity only and will not have creative approval.
2. Station will have diverse on-camera talent, or culturally appropriate talent for the topic and/or theme of the series and/or individual episodes.
3. Member stations will have diverse production crews, or will strive to make production crews diverse depending on local resources and availability of local crew and personnel.

Requirements and Submission process for initial pilot funding application:

If interested in participating, please submit your proposal via Google form:

<https://goo.gl/forms/GPrL1yYYmGUrQp2I2>

Applications will be accepted until July 28th, 2017. Stations awarded funding for pilots will be notified by August 7th. Collaboration with PBS Digital Studios to develop and produce the chosen pilots will start no later than **August 14th**. Full series funding will be awarded for 3 of the pilots in November of 2017. Production of the 3 chosen will commence in March 2018 with distribution to follow.

The following questions will be asked.

1. Name and contact information.
2. Station call sign, common name, and location.
3. Tell us about your series idea! What content areas would you explore? How are episodes structured? How many would be in a season? How does the series relate to both a local and a national audience? How does the series meet the minimum eligibility requirements? We're looking for series that can be co-developed with PBS Digital Studios, so if there are elements of your series that you're unsure about, that's okay. Let us know which areas will need to be developed further.
4. What audience are you hoping to target with this series?
5. Describe to us (with links and examples when possible) the type of digital-first production your station has executed in the past. If your station has not completed a digital video project, describe in some detail the production workflow and equipment available that would be used on a funded series.
6. Describe the team that would be involved with this production, including any producers, crew members, or on-screen talent that is already attached to the project. Through this grant, PBS and the CPB are hoping to bring focus to content

- that is culturally diverse, as well as content that is produced by a culturally diverse cast and crew. Please make note of how the diversity of your production team would reflect the type of social and cultural content your series would deliver (age, race, religion, gender, disabilities, etc.).
7. How prepared is your station to film a pilot episode of the above series? We are not expecting an immediate launch of content, but rather we want to gauge your readiness to work with PBS Digital Studios and commit to the above series (on a 1-10 scale, 1 being Very rough, development has hardly begun to 10, production is ready to start and my station is fully committed).

If your station is awarded pilot funding after submitting the initial application, in order to then receive full season funding, the following will also be required:

Treatment and Overview:

- Complete overview and explanation of the first seasons' editorial (and the possible directions of subsequent seasons)
- An overview of the amount of episodes for the first season, and frequency of publishing these episodes on YouTube.
- Please explain what metrics will be used by your station to measure the success of the series and it's first season. The metrics can include the amount of views per episodes, subscriber count, engagement rates, etc. or qualified information like the impact.
- Please include what your station hopes to learn from the overall experience in producing this series, and the partnership with PBS Digital Studios.

Audience Details:

- An audience should be clearly identified with an understanding of how the audience will benefit from the digital content and the cultural and/or social value of the project.
- Include demographic information, including age range

Production Details:

- Overview of the complete production team including producers, writers, director, camera operators and post-production staff capable of carrying out the digital production

Budget:

- A line item budget for the first season. The first season cannot exceed \$100,000.

Marketing and Promotions

- A basic marketing plan that explains how the series will reach intended audiences.

Sustainability

- A sustainable model with potential for future seasons and episodes beyond the scope of this grant, as well as the potential for future underwriting or sponsorship.

Questions & Informational Webinar

We will be holding a webinar to further explain this funding opportunity and answer questions in regards to scheduling, eligibility requirements, etc. This will be held on July 11th, at 2pm EST. The link to register to join is:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2471307797873959938>

If you have any questions about this application process or the programming funding grant itself, please contact Dan Levy: dhlevy@pbs.org.