EVALUATION GUIDE 2005

SLATE FUNDING 2ND STAGE

INTRODUCTION

1. Aim of the Evaluation Guide

The aim of the **Evaluation Guide** is:

- to help assessors to understand the different stages of the evaluation process;
- to define the role of each assessor;
- to provide standard evaluation forms for the assessors. The use of these forms is mandatory for all assessors;
- to provide a glossary to facilitate and to harmonise the understanding of the evaluation guide. The glossary is based on the **guidelines,** which contain a detailed description of the entire support scheme. As applicants have prepared their applications on this basis, assessors should in any case have a thorough knowledge of these guidelines.

2. Assessors

For Slate Funding 2nd stage applications, the assessors are:

- **the technical assistance office of the Commission (TAO)**, in charge of checking the eligibility of applications and assessing the selection criterion relating to the financial capacity (only for the companies which have been pre-selected) (**parts A and B.1 of the evaluation guide**).

- **two experts**, (for business and content aspects). The two experts provide an assessment of the selection criteria and the award criteria (**parts B.2 and C of the evaluation guide**).

- an evaluation committee, with at least 2 officials from the MEDIA unit + 1 official from another directorate + 2 to 4 independent experts. The evaluation committee validates the eligibility check and checks the assessment of the selection and award criteria. The evaluation committee also assesses the subsidiary criteria **(part D of the evaluation guide)**. The evaluation committee provides a clear justification for all its decisions. Minutes of its meetings are taken and transmitted to the Member States (MEDIA Committee) and to the Commission for decision.

- **the European Commission,** which takes the **final decision** regarding the selection of proposals**.**

3. Organisation of the evaluation process

Evaluation phase	Assessor	The application
Eligibility criteria	TAO	**Is eligible** ⇒ is assessed against selection criteria **Is not eligible** ⇒ is eliminated from the selection process
Selection criteria	TAO + Experts	**Meets the selection criteria** ⇒ is assessed against award criteria **Does not meet selection criteria** ⇒ is eliminated from the selection process. If the selection criterion concerning the financial stability is assessed as not fulfilled, the application is

		eliminated or can be supported subject to the provision of a bank guarantee or without pre-financing.
Award criteria	Experts	**Is scored**
	Evaluation Committee	**Is finally assessed and scored.**
Final decision	The Commission	**Is selected or rejected**

4. Ranking of the projects

The Evaluation Committee checks for each application the consistency between the scores given by the experts and their justification. It may change the scores if it doesn't agree with the experts, but must always justify its decisions.

On the basis of the final scores for the award criteria and of the scores for the subsidiary criteria, the applications are ranked by order of merit and the best ones are funded. The total budget available for the call for proposals cannot in any case be exceeded at the end of the selection process. However, the **final** breakdown of the budget between the first and second selection rounds on one hand and between single projects and slate funding applications on the other hand is decided on the basis of the number and quality of the projects received in each round and on the basis of the proportion of single projects/slate funding applications received.

5. Decision regarding the amount of support

The evaluation committee can decide to lower the amount of support requested by the applicant. The evaluation committee must justify its decision on the basis of the development budget, by indicating which items are overestimated, or on the basis of the final number of eligible and accepted projects in the slate.

6. Decision by the Commission

On the basis of the proposals from the Evaluation Committee and after consulting the MEDIA Committee, the Commission adopts a decision granting support to the best applications. The total budget available for the call for proposals cannot in any case be exceeded at the end of the selection process.

7. Information of the applicants

In case of non eligibility or rejection, applicants are informed by the Commission. **The expert's evaluation is not communicated as such to applicants.**

8. Confidentiality and conflicts of interest

The names of the experts are confidential. Upon reception of the first submission, experts are asked to sign a declaration of honour by which they commit themselves to respect this confidentiality.

In order to avoid any conflicts of interest, experts involved in the submitted projects and/or with the applicant companies will not be retained for participation to the evaluation process. Experts are also asked to sign a declaration of honour to confirm their independence.

A: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Assessor: TAO

A.1. ELIGIBILITY OF SLATE FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Applications must comply with each of the criteria below. Failure to comply with one of them entails the elimination from the selection process. **Only eligible applications qualify for the next stage of the evaluation process.**

In case of non compliance with one or several of the criteria below, the application is ineligible and is eliminated from the selection process. The Commission does not ask applicants for missing documents.

If the documents provided by the applicant company don't allow a complete and final assessment of the eligibility, the Commission requires additional information in order to be able to confirm whether or not the application complies with the eligibility criteria. For example, the Commission asks to the applicant company:

- a document confirming the shareholding/nationality/authorised signatory/creation date when the official documents enclosed in the original application don't provide such information
- a document confirming that the annual accounts enclosed in the application have been certified
- the balance sheet and/or profit and loss accounts if Form E has been duly filled
- Form E, duly filled, if the annual accounts have been provided
- if the declaration on the honour and/or Form E are enclosed but not signed, a copy signed by the authorised signatory

LIST OF THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (1):

APPLICATION FORMS

1. Duly filled in application forms specific to the call for proposals and to the scheme (single project/MEDIA New talent/Slate funding 1st stage or 2nd stage)

2. Application submitted before the closing submission date

3. Respect of number of applications per call

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANT COMPANY

4. A recent extract from the company's registration stating the date of registration, the legal full name, the registered office address, the legal status, objects and the names of its authorised legal representatives and an up-to-date memorandum of association or equivalent official document

5. The applicant is a European company

6. The applicant is a production company

7. The applicant is an independent company

8. The applicant company is registered for at least 3 years

9. Complete annual accounts of the last two financial years

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SLATE FUNDING 1st STAGE

10. 100% of the support under the first slate funding contract has been allocated to approved projects

11. At least 75% of the support has been paid out to the dedicated bank account

12. The minimum number of projects supported under the Slate Funding 1st stage has entered into production at the date of submission of the Slate Funding 2nd stage

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

13. The applicant does not fall within one of the cases of exclusion listed under chapter 3.6 of the guidelines (Art. 93 and 94 of the financial regulation): the company has to provide a signed declaration on honour stating that it is not in any of the mentioned cases. The criterion is considered to be fulfilled when the declaration is signed by the legal representative of the applicant company.

A.2. NUMBER OF PROJECTS SUBMITTED AND ELIGIBILITY OF PROJECTS WITHIN THE SLATE

For Slates 1 and 2, minimum and maximum numbers of projects per Slate are defined. Each project within a Slate must comply with the eligibility criteria below.

In case of non compliance with one or several of the criteria below, the proposal is ineligible and is eliminated from the selection process. The Commission does not ask applicants for missing documents.

If the documents provided by the applicant company don't allow a complete and final assessment of the eligibility, the Commission requires additional information in order to be able to confirm whether or not the application complies with the eligibility criteria. For example, the Commission asks to the applicant company:

- a full detailed budget in case only a summary has been provided in the original application
- a revised budget when there is a clear mistake in the original budget (for instance in relation with the exchange rate)
- a confirmation of the duration of a project
- a confirmation concerning a change of title

If, as a result of the non eligibility of a project, less than 3 projects are left, the Slate is considered non eligible and is eliminated from the selection process.

The assessor must indicate which project(s) is (are) non eligible and the consequence on the Slate.

LIST OF THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (2):

ELIGIBILITY OF PROJECTS WITHIN THE SLATE (IF APPROPRIATE, INDICATE WHICH PROJECT(S) DO(ES) NOT FULFIL THE CRITERION)

14 Only expenses and operations relating to the development phase of the project are submitted for support

15. Project falls under one of the eligible category of projects

16. Running time of the project is adequate

17. Ownership of rights is demonstrated as being held by the applicant company

18. Project not already financed by Media Development

19. Requested amount per project is eligible and total requested amount for the slate of projects is eligible and does not exceed 50/60 % of the total development budget

NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS WITHIN THE SLATE

20. For Slate Funding 1 applications: between 3 and 6 projects; for Slate Funding 2 applications: between 3 and 10 projects

TABLE USED TO CHECK THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

		Eligibility criteria n° (Y/N)																			Conclu-sions (Accepted or Rejected)	Com-ments
Company	Project Reference	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	

B. EXCLUSION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

For the evaluation of selection criteria, the assessors are asked to give a global evaluation regarding the ability of the applicant company to carry out the Slate Funding application, from operational and technical points of view.

LIST OF THE SELECTION CRITERIA:

1. Stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain activity throughout the period during which the slate of projects is carried out

2. Professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the slate of projects

3. Experience required to complete the slate of projects

B.1 SELECTION CRITERIA ASSESSED BY THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE

Assessor: TAO

1. Stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain activity throughout the period during which the slate of projects is carried out: this criterion is checked on the basis of Form E "Financial status of the applicant company". For the protection of the financial interest of the European Communities, the financial capacity of the applicant companies which have been pre-selected for development support (after assessment of the award criteria) is assessed on the basis of:

- the balance between capital and reserves and liabilities
- the annual profitability
- the proved co-financing
- the level of the total development budget and the requested contribution.

This evaluation is complemented by the evaluation of the financial capacity by the experts (see B2).

If, the company is assessed as not able to implement the project from a financial point of view, the project is eliminated or supported by MEDIA without pre-financing or subject to the provision of a bank guarantee.

B.2 ASSESSMENT OF SELECTION CRITERIA BY THE EXPERTS

Assessor: Experts

1. Stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain activity throughout the period during which the slate of projects is carried out: experts are asked to give an opinion on the financial capacity of the applicant companies, on the basis of their accounts for the last two years. If, on the basis of the TAO assessment (see B1) complemented by the information provided by the experts, the company is considered as not able to implement the slate of projects from a financial point of view, the application is eliminated or supported by MEDIA without pre-financing or subject to the provision of a bank guarantee.

2. Professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the project: this criterion is assessed on the basis of the CV's of the company staff, and particularly the staff who will be responsible for the project, as well as of the key members of the creative team.

3. Experience required to complete the project: this criterion is assessed on the basis of the list of the principal projects carried out by the applicant company, specifying the category, cinema release or television broadcast or support/platform, production budget, names and nationality of co-producers/distributors/broadcasters

EVALUATION OF THE SELECTION CRITERIA BY THE EXPERTS

Selection criterion n°1: Stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain activity throughout the period during which the slate of projects is carried out

	Yes	No
Stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain activity throughout the period during which the slate of projects is carried out		
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)		

Selection criterion n°2: Professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the slate of projects

Names of the producer(s) and head of development	

	Yes	No
Does the company's team have the necessary skills and track record to achieve the proposed slate and the necessary European and international experience to get a trans-national co-production off the ground?		
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)		

CONCLUSION

	Yes	No
Professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the slate of projects		
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)		

Selection criterion n°3: Experience required to complete the slate of projects

	Yes	No
Do the proposed creative teams (author(s), director(s), director(s) of photography, others) on the projects have the necessary experience to complete the slate of projects?		
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)		

CONCLUSION

		Yes	No
Experience required to complete the slate of projects			
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)			

TABLE USED TO SUMMARISE THE ASSESSMENT OF THE SELECTION CRITERIA:

Company	Project Reference	Selection Criteria n°: (Y/N)			Recommendation of the Committee (yes/no)	Comments, conditions if applicable
		1	2	3		

C. AWARD CRITERIA

Assessor: Experts

For award criteria, projects are scored by the assessor from 0 to 10 (half points are not allowed). **A clear justification must always be given by the assessor.**

Criterion n°1: Quality and originality of the concept, script and/or narrative structure of the projects

Please answer to the questions for each project of the slate which, if selected, will be developed with the requested MEDIA support (Project 1 to x)

PROJECT 1

Summarize the content of the Project		
	Yes	**No**
Does the project promote violence, racism or pornography? If yes, the project is eliminated from the selection process.		

	Poor	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**
Quality and originality of the project (narrative structure/dramatic potential/visual style/creative approach)				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

Only for a multimedia project

	Poor	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**
Inter-activity and technology of the project				
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)				

Only for an animation project

	Poor	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**
Graphics/Art work (backgrounds, main characters model sheet…) of the project				
Justify your appreciation				

(max. 5 lines)	

PROJECT 2

Summarize the content of the Project		
	Yes	**No**
Does the project promote violence, racism or pornography? If yes, the project is eliminated from the selection process.		

	Poor	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**
Quality and originality of the project (narrative structure/dramatic potential/visual style/creative approach)				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

Only for a multimedia project

	Poor	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**
Inter-activity and technology of the project				
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)				

Only for an animation project

	Poor	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**
Graphics/Art work (backgrounds, main characters model sheet…) of the project				
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)				

PROJECT 3

Summarize the content of the Project		
	Yes	**No**
Does the project promote violence, racism or pornography? If yes, the project is eliminated from the selection process.		

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Quality and originality of the project (narrative structure/dramatic potential/visual style/creative approach)				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

Only for a multimedia project

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Inter-activity and technology of the project				
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)				

Only for an animation project

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Graphics/Art work (backgrounds, main characters model sheet…) of the project				
Justify your appreciation (max. 5 lines)				

CONCLUSION: Global appreciation on the quality and originality, script/narrative structure of the projects

	Poor (0 to 3)	Average (4 to 6)	Good (7 to 8)	Excellent (9 to 10)
Final Score				
Justification (minimum 3 lines)				

Criterion 2: Quality of the development strategies

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Development timetables and adequacy with the projects' needs				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Consistency of the development budgets and adequacy with the projects' needs				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Co-development strategies and matching funds in place[1]				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

CONCLUSION:

	Poor (0 to 3)	Average (4 to 6)	Good (7 to 8)	Excellent (9 to 10)
Final Score				
Justification (minimum 3 lines)				

[1] Experts must take into account the fact that projects are still at the development stage and that MEDIA does not require any matching funds in place. Already existing matching funds should therefore be considered a "plus".

Criterion n°3: Quality of the financing strategies and the production potential of the projects

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Financing strategies and their orientation (national, international, private, public)				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Potential of the projects to enter into the production stage				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Realism of the estimated production budgets				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Letters of interest or co-production agreements already in place (national, international…)[2]				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

CONCLUSION:

	Poor (0 to 3)	Average (4 to 6)	Good (7 to 8)	Excellent (9 to 10)
Final Score				
Justification (minimum 3 lines)				

[2] Experts must take into account the fact that projects are still at the development stage and that MEDIA does not require any letters of interest and/or co-production agreements in place. Already existing letters of interest/co-production agreements should therefore be considered a "plus".

Criterion n°4: European and international exploitation potential and quality of the marketing/distribution strategies

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
European/International potential and sales potential				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Marketing and distribution strategies				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Choice of territories for co-production and/or distribution				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Exploitation letters of interests or distribution agreements already in place[3]				
Justify your appreciation (max. 10 lines)				

CONCLUSION:

	Poor (0 to 3)	Average (4 to 6)	Good (7 to 8)	Excellent (9 to 10)
Final Score				
Justification (minimum 3 lines)				

[3] Experts must take into account the fact that projects are still at the development stage and that MEDIA does not require any letters of interest and/or distribution agreements in place. Already existing letters of interest/distribution agreements should therefore be considered a "plus".

AWARD CRITERIA - SUMMARY

Award criteria	Score	Score justification
1. Quality and originality of the projects		
2. Development strategies		
3. Financing strategies and production potential		
4. International exploitation potential and marketing / distribution strategies		
Total :	**---- / 40**	

As an indication, would you recommend the rejection or the selection of the project?

Recommendation for selection	
Recommendation for rejection	

If you recommend the selection:

Amount of support requested by the applicant company	
Amount of support recommended by the expert The support recommended by the expert cannot be higher that the support requested by the applicant company. A reduced amount can only be justified on the basis of the development budget (please indicate which items you consider overestimated).	

Reasons for recommendations

(Personal and comprehensive appreciation of the proposal)

Please note that your evaluation will not be transmitted to the applicant.

D. SUBSIDIARY CRITERIA

Assessor: EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Evaluation Committee can give additional points to projects meeting one or several of these criteria.

How do you assess the results of the Slate Funding 1st stage (results in terms of progress of the projects funded under SF 1st stage, whether the projects have already entered into production, the production budgets, the financial partners, the marketing planned etc., the co-development, co-production and distribution contracts concluded for projects funded under SF 1st stage, the compliance with the contractual obligations)?
SCORE (0-2)
JUSTIFICATION

How do you assess the contribution of the project to the development of the potential of countries or regions with a low production capacity and/or a restricted geographical and linguistic area[4] ?
SCORE (0-2)
JUSTIFICATION

How do you assess the contribution of the project to the development of a small and medium-sized enterprise?
SCORE (0-2)
JUSTIFICATION

[4] For the purposes of the current call for proposals, these countries are:

- Austria, Bulgaria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and the new Members States as of 01/05/04.

GLOSSARY FOR SLATE FUNDING APPLICATIONS EVALUATION

CASES OF EXCLUSION

Financial support may not be awarded to applicants who:

(a) are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

(b) have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;

(c) have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the authorising service can justify;

(d) have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the authorising service or those of the country where the project is to be performed;

(e) have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;

(f) following another grant award procedure or procurement procedure financed by the Community budget, have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

(g) are subject to a conflict of interest;

(h) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the authorising service or fail to supply this information.

COUNTRIES WITH A LOW PRODUCTION CAPACITY AND/OR RESTRICTED GEOGRAPHICAL AND LINGUISTIC AREA

For the purposes of the call for proposals, the countries with a low audiovisual production capacity are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden.

DEVELOPMENT

All operations prior to the pre-production of an audiovisual project.

The development phase includes in particular:

- the acquisition of rights;
- research;
- archive or stock footage research (for productions exploiting Europe's television, film and digital heritage);
- all script writing, including treatments, up to and including the final draft;
- storyboards;
- research and identification of key cast and crew;
- preparation of the production budget;
- preparation of a financing plan;
- research and identification of industry partners, co-producers and financiers;
- preparation of the production schedule up to delivery;
- initial marketing and sales plans (attending markets and attracting buyers, preferred initial releases, festivals and markets to be considered, etc.).
- for creative documentaries: the realisation of a video treatment;
- for animation projects: graphics research and production of a pilot;
- for multimedia projects: the creation of programme content (treatment), creation of basic audio and video graphic elements, software programming necessary to run the project, programming logic (flow-chart), production of the demo.

ELIGIBLE CATEGORIES OF PROJECTS

Submitted projects must belong to the following categories: **fiction, creative documentary, animation (**for cinema and/or television) **and multimedia concepts**.

For **creative documentaries**, the creative character of the submitted project must be explicitly demonstrated and argued by the company in the application.

News programmes, magazines, talk-shows, reality shows, docu-soaps, schools and "how to" programmes, productions intended to promote an institution or its activities are ineligible for support.

Multimedia concepts designed for Internet, Digital television, CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, Hybrid DVD, Game consoles, Mobile devices, etc. can be:

- concepts for animation series specifically designed for online release (excluding individual short films);
- edutainment programmes for children/teenagers, character-based adventure games for individual or multiple players;
- new interactive concepts for fiction, games or formats for digital television, the Internet or portable devices;

EUROPEAN COMPANY

The applicant company must be **registered** in one of the countries participating in the MEDIA Programme and it must be **owned** directly or by majority participation by nationals from these participating countries.

INDEPENDENT COMPANY

The applicant company cannot be controlled by a television broadcaster either

- through shareholding (for a single broadcaster no more than 25% of the production company's share capital or no more than 50% in case of several broadcasters)

or

- in commercial terms (over a three-year period more than 90 % of a production company' s revenue cannot be generated through a single broadcaster).

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS PER CALL

A production company is allowed to submit one application per call for proposals.

In case of rejection, the same application may be resubmitted only under a future call for proposals (2005 or later) provided that substantial modifications have been made.

NUMBER OF SUBMITTED PROJECTS WITHIN THE SLATE

For SF1 the slate can include 3 to 6 projects.

For SF2 the slate can include 5 to 10 projects. Applications not fulfilling this criterion are automatically considered Slate Funding 1 applications if minimum 3 projects are eligible.

OWNERSHIP OF RIGHTS

The applicant company must demonstrate with signed and dated documents that it holds at least 50% of the rights to the submitted projects. The whole chain of rights must be covered (i.e. in case of adaptation : the primary work and its adaptation, in case of co-authors : all the authors involved, co-development and co-production agreements).

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

The Member States of the European Union plus Bulgaria, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

The principal activity of the applicant company must be audiovisual or multimedia production (e.g. universities, service providers are excluded).

RUNNING TIME

The total running time of the proposed project must be no less than:

- for creative documentaries (individual projects and series): 25 minutes;

- for fiction (individual projects and series): 50 minutes;
- for animation (individual projects and series): 24 minutes;
- for multimedia, the time criterion is irrelevant