

ULSTER-SCOTS BROADCAST FUND PRIORITIES

The Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund (USBF) aims to support the development and production of television, radio and digital content that focuses on Ulster-Scots heritage, culture and language.

The primary audience is the people of Northern Ireland but the USBF is also interested in the presentation of Ulster-Scots to audiences beyond Northern Ireland and, where possible, the Ulster-Scots diaspora.

The USBF will consider any genre including documentary, landmark programming, magazine series, animation, drama, light or factual entertainment and content aimed at education (all Key Stages). Education content designed to support school-based learning should have clear and explicit links to the Northern Ireland curriculum.

This includes content that will:

- Challenge misconceptions about the nature of Ulster-Scots and which describe its role/relevance for local communities;
- Explore the meaning and nature of Ulster-Scots identity;
- Explore the contemporary links between Ulster and Scotland - social, religious, economic and artistic;
- Promote and support lifelong learning about Ulster-Scots culture, heritage and language.

Young audiences

The USBF particularly welcomes content across television, radio and digital that will engage younger audiences with Ulster-Scots themes and use formats and approaches which appeal to/involve them.

The USBF is also interested in projects that provide a significant learning environment and contribute to the growth of a skilled community of Ulster-Scots content creators.

Digital Content

The USBF welcomes digital content projects aimed at supporting learning about aspects of Ulster-Scots such as language, culture and heritage. These projects should be delivered online and maximise potential for this medium. This may include interactive elements that support engagement and active learning. Proposals for projects intended for a range of audiences will be considered. The next call is expected to be announced in Spring 2024.

Language

The USBF is seeking creative and contemporary presentation of Ulster-Scots Language and will consider approaches that target the fluent as well as learners and the general population.

Development

In addition to production funding the USBF also offers development funding for projects.

Key points across all projects:

- The quality of research is a key factor in the Committee’s decisions. The most successful content supported by the USBF has been underpinned by high quality research.
- The USBF will continue to require pre-agreed Consultants and may seek further direct engagement with them. The USBF will also wish to see that the Consultants are engaged during each of the 3 main phases of production – pre-production, production and post-production, as well as the development phase.
- In heritage, culture and history programming, advisers and on-screen experts should not be limited to political historians but should also include social and community historians.
- There is flexibility in relation to funding ratios where projects have a relevance to the USBF up to a maximum of 75% of production costs.
- For television projects, as a broadcaster must be attached, the USBF encourages early dialogue with both the USBF and the relevant broadcaster.
- The USBF is open to co-production opportunities depending on the nature of the project.

Additional information is provided in Appendix A as guidance. This guidance is for illustration purposes and is not exhaustive.

For further information on the USBF please refer to the [USBF Guidelines](#).

For further information, please contact:

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Appendix A

Please see below for additional guidance on potential content for illustration purposes. This is not exhaustive.

Calls for specific content such as anniversary and digital content will include further details on the type of projects sought. Details of each call will be on the USBF section of Northern Ireland Screen's website.

Documentary & Factual/Entertainment

- Explore the development of Ulster-Scots culture and language including new research and informed debate and the ways in which it has impacted on wider society;
- Ulster-Scots music, literature and poetry;
- Challenge misconceptions about the nature of Ulster-Scots and which describe its role/relevance for local communities;
- Explore the meaning and nature of Ulster-Scots identity;
- Explore Ulster-Scots in both urban and rural environments and involve people from different socio-economic and community backgrounds;
- Explore Ulster-Scots connections within Nature and Landscape, for example the use of placenames, placement of Ulster-Scots words within these and farming;
- Seasonal output for example Halloween, Christmas, Hogmanay.

Contemporary themes

- Explore the contemporary links between Ulster, Scotland and the global diaspora with an Ulster-Scots focus - social, religious, economic and artistic;
- Have strong and apparent connections with Ulster-Scots sectoral and community groups;
- Engage younger audiences with Ulster-Scots themes using formats and approaches which appeal to/involve them;
- Raise awareness about Ulster-Scots backgrounds in ways that encourage people to find out about their Ulster-Scots heritage and understand what it means to be Ulster-Scots.

Landmark Content

- Explore significant historical themes or events;
- Utilise anniversaries to maximise relevance and appeal to audiences for example 250th anniversary of the Signing of the US Declaration of Independence in 2026.

Language

- The USBF has prioritised Ulster-Scots Language programming for some time but the levels of Language programming supported remain low set against the USBF's aim. The USBF is seeking creative and contemporary presentation of Ulster-Scots Language and will consider approaches that target the fluent as well as learners and the general population across all age ranges.