



We let you know earlier this month about some changes Telefilm had made to their Development Funding Guidelines. Since that time, there have been further changes and clarifications that agents and writers need to be aware of, and below is a brief update. We will keep you informed of further changes as we work with Telefilm on these and other issues.

“Treatment” stage name change. We previously reported that as part of the application process they have shifted the funding continuum from “Outline to Treatment” to “Treatment to Draft.” Because Telefilm’s definition of “Treatment” was not in line with the industry understanding of a “treatment,” they have now changed their terminology for this stage to **“Story Outline”** in the Guidelines.

This Story Outline stage corresponds to the IPA definition of Development Proposal in Article A212, which requires a maximum of 10 pages and presents the basic story elements and general description of the characters for the feature. Since we last wrote you on the subject, Telefilm staff have confirmed that a writer is not required to do more than 10 pages for a Story Outline. If a writer is being asked to write a 30-page Story Outline, it’s not a Story Outline/Development Proposal – it’s a Treatment under the IPA (see more below).

WGC members should not be writing this Story Outline stage on spec. According to Telefilm’s guidelines, this stage of writing is a service that requires a contract (to show chain of title). Development Proposals are found under the IPA in Article B201. The fee for a Development Proposal is negotiable; there is no minimum under the IPA. Writers and their agents should consider the time it will take to write a Development Proposal for a feature film and charge accordingly. In order to get Insurance and Retirement on this fee, it must be an IPA contract.

It is also important to note that the negotiated fee for a Development Proposal is *not* a Script Fee, as defined by the IPA. It is a pre-script stage not included in the definition of Script Material in A249 of the agreement. Therefore, the Development Proposal fee is *not* deductible from the Production Fee on a project.

Application with Story Outline or Treatment. A producer may apply to Telefilm at this first stage with *either* a Story Outline as a minimum, or a Treatment as defined by the IPA. To clarify, Treatment is defined in Article 260 of the IPA as a scene-by-scene breakdown, in 20,000 words or less. This is a stage worth a minimum of \$20,074.

Telefilm’s new guidelines are up on their website at:
http://www.telefilm.gc.ca/03/311.asp?doc_id=126&fond_id=1

We will continue to work with Telefilm, as we have been doing, and are involved in the Working Group meetings and conference calls to ensure that writers are properly financed at the development stage. We’ll continue to keep you informed as things develop.