

**Screen
Producers
Ireland**

Pre-Budget Submission 2027



17 June 2026

Growth and Resilience in the audiovisual industry in Ireland

Screen Producers Ireland (SPI) is thankful for the Government support shown to the sector over the past number of years through reforms to Section 481, introduction of Section 487a, guaranteed investment in public service media, and the increased capital budget of Screen Ireland. These policy changes have had a positive effect on the overall sector and its ability to attract productions to Ireland and produce domestic stories for the screen.

Ireland must continue to safeguard its burgeoning screen industry, which over the past number of years has gained a reputation as an excellent filming location for both indigenous and incoming productions. The following measures will support the industry's continued growth; protect the development we have already seen and empower the industry to continue to provide vital cultural expression and economic growth on behalf of Ireland.

In brief, the Screen Producers Ireland (SPI) recommendations for Budget 2027 are below.

Recommendation 1: Regional Development:

- **Introduce an 8% Section 481 uplift for all productions filming outside the main production hub within the Dublin Metropolitan Area incorporating Ashford (DMAA).**

Recommendation 2: Screen Ireland Capital Funding:

- **Increase Screen Ireland (SI) capital funding by €5M specifically for increased investment in indigenous Irish productions with explicit IP retention for Irish independent producers, across production and development.**

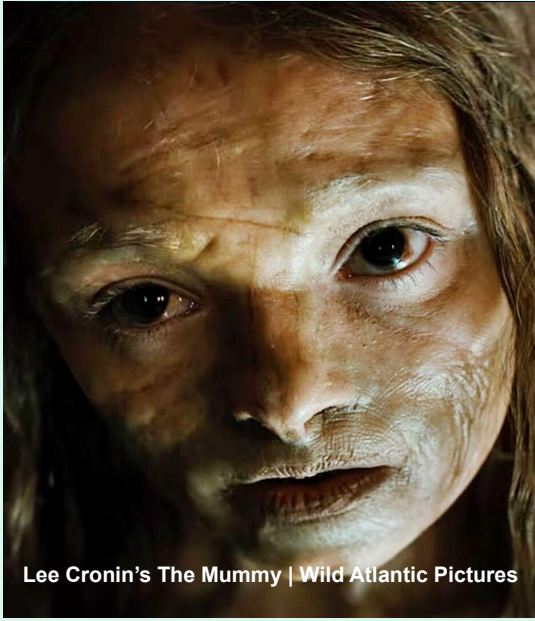
Recommendation 3: Multi-Annual Funding for Public Service Media:

- **Commit to continued multi-annual funding for RTÉ and TG4 from 2028 to 2030 to comply with the European Media Freedom Act (2024).**

SPI believes that by Government implementing these measures, the independent production sector will be supported by:

- Increased indigenous productions being developed and produced by Irish based producers.
- Increased levels of indigenously created stories/content and indigenously owned IP produced.
- Increased investment in skills and talent through incoming productions.

Note: Throughout this document, we use the term 'DMAA' which refers to Dublin Metropolitan Area including Ashford. The Dublin Metropolitan Area extends beyond the city and suburbs to include portions of the neighbouring Fingal, Meath, Kildare, and Wicklow. Link: <https://www.emra.ie/rses/dublin-masp/>



Lee Cronin's The Mummy | Wild Atlantic Pictures



Help Me Buy A Home | All Kind Media



Born That Way | Curious Dog Films



Leonard and Hungry Paul | Subótica



LGFA @ 50 | Nemeton TV



My Father's Shadow | Element Pictures

Cover images:

- Dancing with the Stars | ShinAwiL
- Wednesday | Metropolitan Films
- A Quiet Love | Curious North Productions



Crá | Fíabín Media

About Screen Producers Ireland (SPI)

Screen Producers Ireland (SPI) is the all-island national representative organisation of independent film, television, animation, and digital production companies. With more than 250 independent production company members, we are recognised as the voice of independent production in Ireland.

Our members have produced programmes and films such as celebrated Irish Language Feature Films *Kneecap* and *An Cailín Ciúin*, world-renowned creative documentaries such as *Blue Road*, *The Farthest* and *From This Small Island*, high-rating TV dramas like *Kin*, *The Dry*, *Crá*, and *Mix Tape* and audience favourites like *Dancing with the Stars*, *Traitors*, and *Room to Improve*.

The independent production sector is an integral element in the delivery of public service media and content to audiences across Ireland, and independent producers are the largest creative partners both to public service broadcasters, RTÉ, TG4 and to Virgin Media TV.

Economic impact of the Screen Sector in Ireland

The creative industries in Ireland accounts for 3.73% of Ireland's gross value added.

Recent figures from Screen Ireland show that:

- the Irish audiovisual industry provided €1 billion in GVA for 2021 to 2023,
- with over 15,000 full time equivalent roles supported through the sector each year.

Figures from RTÉ and TG4 show that:

- In 2024, through RTÉ's IPU account the broadcaster invested €46.9M in independent production companies for TV, creating 499 hours of television.
- TG4's 2024 annual report shows that the broadcaster invested €32.1m in the independent production sector. 80% of TG4's independent production expenditure is in the regions, and over 70% in Gaeltacht areas.

‘Creative industries are also a key employment sector for Ireland, accounting for 8.9% of national employment, placing our creative industries employment quotient as the second highest in Europe.’

Digital Roadmap (Creative Ireland)

Recommendation 1: Regional Development:

Introduce an 8% Section 481 uplift for all productions filming outside the main production hub within the Dublin Metropolitan Area incorporating Ashford (DMAA).

Last year, SPI welcomed the Minister for Culture, Communications, and Sport's public commitment to exploring a regional uplift for Section 481 as part of Budget 2027. Introducing an 8% uplift for productions filming outside the Dublin Metropolitan Area and Ashford (DMAA) would strengthen Ireland's international competitiveness while supporting more balanced regional economic development.

Despite longstanding policy ambitions to achieve balanced regional growth, screen production activity remains heavily concentrated in the DMAA.

Section 481 project data demonstrate the scale of this imbalance:

- In 2024, only 14% of Section 481-supported projects filmed in Munster, Connacht and Ulster.
- Those projects accounted for only €70 million of a total national Section 481 spend of €502 million.
- In 2025, more than 77% of all production activity took place in Leinster, with approximately three-quarters of that activity concentrated within the DMAA.

Rationale

Regional scripted productions are typically lower-budget feature films, often with budgets in the €1 million–€3 million range. While these productions make an important contribution to regional activity, they do not provide the volume or continuity of employment required to sustain long-term industry growth. Higher-budget, returning television drama productions are more likely to create the conditions necessary for sustainable regional ecosystems by generating consistent employment, supporting local suppliers and enabling the retention of experienced crew.

A long-term 8% regional uplift would help address the additional costs and logistical challenges associated with filming outside established production centres, making regional locations more competitive and encouraging a greater proportion of large-scale scripted productions to locate across Ireland. This would support the development of a truly national audiovisual industry and maximise the economic benefits of Section 481 throughout the country.

Significant public and industry investment has been made in developing screen sector skills and talent in the regions through training initiatives and studio-led programmes. However, these investments cannot deliver their full value without a consistent pipeline of production activity to sustain employment locally. In the absence of regular production opportunities, many newly trained scripted crew members are compelled to relocate to Dublin and Wicklow, where the majority of screen production activity is concentrated. As a result, regional skills development programmes often strengthen the national workforce but do not create a sustainable regional talent base.

Rationale (continued)

The Department of Finance's 2022 cost-benefit analysis of Section 481 found evidence that the incentive contributed to increased sector capacity through talent and crew development. The report recorded 245 participants in skills development programmes in 2020 and 224 participants in 2021, representing almost 500 individuals receiving training across a range of screen industry disciplines over a two-year period.

However, when the previous regional production uplift was phased out, production activity became increasingly concentrated in established production centres. Without sufficient regional scripted production volume, many trained crew members followed employment opportunities elsewhere, reducing the availability of experienced audiovisual workers in the regions and limiting the long-term impact of regional skills investment.

Ultimately, a regional uplift would:

- Encourage greater scripted screen production activity across Ireland, increasing national production capacity and reducing pressure on the over-subscribed DMAA production hub.
- Support the retention of skilled crew in regional areas by creating sustainable employment opportunities closer to where they live, reducing the need for workers to relocate to Dublin to pursue careers in the sector.
- Stimulate local economies through increased production spending, employment, skills development and supply-chain activity.

A long-term regional uplift would support the development of a truly national audiovisual industry and maximise the economic benefits of Section 481 throughout the country



Recommendation 2: Screen Ireland Capital Funding Increase

Increase Screen Ireland (SI) capital funding by €5M specifically for increased investment in indigenous Irish productions with explicit IP retention for Irish independent producers, across production and development.

Screen Ireland plays a central role in developing and sustaining Ireland's audiovisual sector. In 2025, the agency's capital budget stood at €40.85 million, supporting the development, production and promotion of Irish film, television and animation.

Screen Ireland investment acts as a critical catalyst for indigenous productions and European co-productions, enabling projects to attract additional financing and progress to production. For many Irish projects, Screen Ireland funding is the essential first investment that unlocks wider public and private sector support.

As global demand for screen content continues to grow, competition for audiences, investment and talent is increasing. At the same time, a greater proportion of screen content is being commissioned for international markets and based on international intellectual property (IP). Against this backdrop, it is increasingly important to ensure that Irish creative talent is supported to develop and produce distinctive Irish stories that reflect our culture, identity and creative ambition.

Additional investment in Screen Ireland should be targeted towards:

- Supporting indigenous production companies to retain ownership of intellectual property, strengthening the long-term sustainability and growth potential of the sector.
- Increasing the agency's television drama funding, enabling the development and production of high-quality Irish scripted content.

Rationale

Investment in Screen Ireland's capital budget must also be matched by an increase in its current budget. As the scale and complexity of funding programmes continue to grow, the agency requires sufficient staffing and operational resources to manage and administer these investments effectively.

SPI therefore advocates for an additional €5 million in current funding to ensure that Screen Ireland can continue to support the sector efficiently while delivering maximum value from increased capital investment. This targeted investment would strengthen Ireland's indigenous audiovisual sector, support Irish creative talent, enhance the international competitiveness of Irish production companies, and ensure that Irish stories continue to reach audiences at home and abroad.

It is increasingly important to ensure that Irish creative talent is supported to develop and produce distinctive Irish stories that reflect our culture, identity and creative ambition.

Recommendation 3: Multi-Annual Funding for Public Service Media:

Commit to continued multi-annual funding for RTÉ and TG4 from 2028 to 2030 to comply with the European Media Freedom Act (2024).

SPI welcomes the Government's commitment to strengthening Ireland's media landscape through the recently introduced Broadcasting Amendment Bill 2026. In July 2024, SPI welcomed the current RTÉ funding model, which included the retention of the TV licence, alongside additional Exchequer support each year. The total public funding for RTÉ now amounts to €225 million in 2025. That will rise to €240 million in 2026, then €260 million in 2027.

To build on this progress, Government should provide certainty of funding for Ireland's public service media organisations beyond the current funding period.

SPI has long advocated for a multi-annual funding model for public service media. Funding certainty is essential to enable RTÉ and TG4 to plan strategically, commission content on a longer-term basis, invest in Irish creativity, and fulfil their public service remit in an increasingly competitive and fragmented media environment.

Rationale

Ireland's public service media funding remains below the European average.

In 2023, average public service media funding across the European Union represented 0.14% of GDP, compared with just 0.08% of GDP in Ireland. This funding gap, combined with uncertainty beyond 2027, creates challenges for broadcasters and for the wider audiovisual ecosystem that depends upon public service commissions.

The independent production sector is a critical partner in the delivery of public service media. Independent producers create a significant proportion of the programming commissioned by RTÉ and TG4, supplying audiences with Irish stories, perspectives and cultural content across a wide range of genres. As the largest creative partners to Ireland's public service broadcasters, independent producers rely on stable commissioning environments to invest in talent, skills and business growth.

Multi-annual funding for Public Service Media

Providing multi-annual funding certainty for RTÉ and TG4 from 2028 to 2030 would deliver benefits across the wider audiovisual sector. It would support sustainable commissioning, strengthen indigenous production companies, promote employment and skills development, and help ensure a diversity of voices and perspectives within Ireland's media landscape.

RTÉ

SPI welcomed the current RTÉ funding model, which included the retention of the TV licence, alongside additional Exchequer support each year.

By providing certainty of funding for RTÉ for three years, it allows the broadcaster to invest more sustainably in the independent sector, this improved investment strategy allows our members to develop their business and deliver more ambitious and culturally significant programming to Irish audiences.

TG4

In recent years, TG4's budget has increased substantially due to continued Government support and investment, with its annual budget rising to €60 million in 2025. The outcomes of this investment can be seen on screens worldwide – such as the success of 'An Cailín Ciúin' and 'Crá'.

However, TG4 remains one of Europe's lowest funded PSBs – the low level of funding is made more striking when compared to Sianel Pedwar Cymru (S4C) in Wales. S4C, which operates similarly to TG4 and has a similar function in growing a national language, receives £88.85M per annum, and this will increase with CPI inflation from 2024 – 2028.

SPI recommends that TG4 is given multi annual PSM funding commitments as set out in the Europe Media Freedom Act (2024).

Multi-annual funding certainty for both RTÉ and TG4 will strengthen public service media, support indigenous production, and ensure Irish audiences continue to have access to high-quality Irish content.



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