

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

FTII–NER Script Lab and Short Film Grant

Applications invited from Directors (FTII Alumni) and Writers (North East Region) — Phase 1: Script Lab

About the Scheme

FTII, Pune invites applications to commission ten short films (< 72 minutes), rooted in the culture, history, traditions and folklore of the eight North Eastern states, under the North East component of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting's DCDFC scheme. Each selected film carries a production grant of up to Rs. 16,00,000/- (Inclusive of all applicable taxes as per rules and norms). FTII retains ownership of all commissioned works; directors and writers receive screen credit.

The scheme runs in two phases — Phase 1: Script Lab, and Phase 2: Production — described below. This call is for Phase 1 only, and is open to two categories of applicants — Directors and Writers.

A total of 10 short films (<72 minutes) will be commissioned cover 8 states from North East Region (minimum 1 from each state). These guidelines are being issued for calling applications from eligible interested Directors and Writers. A total of 10 Directors and 10 Writers will be selected and will require to work in a team of 2 for individual projects. The overview of the project is as under:

Phase 1 — The Script Lab

Selected director-writer teams spend approximately one month developing their script, in a hybrid format across three components:

- **Online** — orientation with mentors, briefing on the scheme, and preliminary research into the assigned state's history, traditions and folklore.
- **Offline, in the assigned NER state** — on-ground immersion — meeting local community members and cultural resource persons, and developing the story premise firsthand.
- **Offline, at FTII, Pune** — a writing intensive, converting the researched premise into a full script (story, screenplay, dialogue) under direct mentor supervision.

Pairing: Each shortlisted director is paired with one shortlisted writer and assigned to one NER state, with pairing finalised early in the process based on participants' interests and the state's material.

Mentorship: Teams are mentored throughout — through group sessions early on, and one-on-one guidance through research and writing.

Stipend & other support: Selected directors and writers each receive a stipend of Rs. 35,000/- (Inclusive of all applicable taxes as per rules and norms) for the duration of the Script Lab. In addition, travel, accommodation and fooding/lodging — for both the NER-state leg and the FTII, Pune leg — will be provided or reimbursed by FTII, up to a prescribed ceiling.

Review & successful completion: Each team presents its finished script to the Selection Committee at the end of the Script Lab. Only scripts accepted at this presentation proceed to Phase 2 — selection for the Script Lab is not, by itself, a commitment to fund production.

Phase 2 — Production

Directors whose scripts are accepted move to Phase 2. FTII and the director sign a commissioning agreement setting out the production grant up to Rs. 16,00,000/- (Inclusive of all applicable taxes as per rules and norms), timeline and deliverables.

Timeline: Production is expected to be completed within 3 months of commissioning; principal photography must begin within one month of signing the agreement.

Team composition: At least two Heads of Department other than, must be FTII, Pune alumni. At least 50% of the key cast and crew should be either FTII alumni (preferably recent graduates) or belong to one of the eight NER states.

Crew support: Each production is additionally assigned two trained crew members (from North East region) by FTII, working under the director on any technical department as needed.

Review: Funds are released in stages, linked to production milestones (project initiation, start of shooting, rough cut, and final delivery), with each stage cleared by FTII's Project Monitoring Committee.

Successful completion: Final delivery includes the completed film with subtitles, CBFC certification, and the required production accounts. FTII retains ownership of the finished work; the director and writer receive screen credit.

Who Can Apply

A. Directors (10 to be selected)

Open to alumni of FTII, Pune who satisfy one of the following:

- A direction-course graduate (Film Wing or TV Wing) from one of the last seven batches; or
- A graduate of any other FTII course who has directed at least one short film of 20+ minutes outside FTII.

B. Writers from the North East Region (10 to be selected, minimum one per state)

Open to writers who:

- Hold domicile of one of the eight NER states — Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim or Tripura;
- Are more than 18 years and less than 35 years of age (as on 5th August 2026);
- Have a lived, rooted understanding of their state's history, traditions, art, folklore or social life. Prior screenwriting credit is desirable, not mandatory.

What to Submit

Directors:

- Duly filled application form (Google Form)

- Biodata / CV
- Links to previous work
- A short essay on your interest in the project and approach to regional/cultural storytelling
- Details of awards or recognition, if any

Writers:

- Duly filled application form (Google Form)
- Biodata / CV
- Writing samples (If the writing is in an original North Eastern language, kindly provide an English translation of the same.)
- A recommendation letter, from a filmmaker of repute (encouraged, not mandatory)
- A short essay on your connection to your state's culture and your interest in the project
- Details of awards or recognition, if any

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a five-member Selection Committee appointed by the Vice Chancellor, FTII. Shortlisted candidates will be announced on the FTII website and informed individually by email. Selection is based on merit; no telephonic queries regarding application status will be entertained.

Important Dates (tentative)

Milestone	Date
Announcement of the scheme	5 August 2026
Submission deadline	25 August 2026
Final selection	15 September 2026
Script Lab / script development	by 15 October 2026
Commissioning agreement (Phase 2) with selected filmmakers	by 35 October 2026
Project completion (final delivery)	31 January 2027

How to Apply: Applications must be submitted online through the Google Form linked below. Please read these guidelines carefully before applying.

Application Form:

For Directors: [GOOGLE FORM LINK — <https://forms.gle/JVNyXzgaimi9d1Mw8>]

For Writers: [GOOGLE FORM LINK — <https://forms.gle/DzHLBFZic8hkjKHg6>]

For queries, write to: [CONTACT EMAIL — film.projects@ftii.ac.in] (In Subject line clearly mention: **FTII–NER Script Lab and Short Film Grant Scheme**)