

Foreign Shootings

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION FOR FILMING IN SRI LANKA BY FOREIGN NATIONALS

- The National Film Corporation of Sri Lanka (NFC) is the main competent authority to grant permission for filming in Sri Lanka by foreign nationals. The following rules and regulations are stipulated by the NFC for this purpose. All foreign nationals who wish to engage in professional filming in Sri Lanka should go through the process below.
- By signing this document, the signing party accepts to abide by Sri Lankan laws and regulations, particularly those relating to granting permission to film in Sri Lanka. NFC as the main competent authority on filming by foreign nationals, has the right to approve, reject, inspect, observe and/or decide on all filming related projects of foreign nationals in Sri Lanka.
- The filming process and final production shall not adversely affect national security, public order, religious and communal harmony, environment, culture and dignity of Sri Lanka. The filming shall also be free from pornography, violence, direct or indirect marketing of dangerous drugs, alcohol or tobacco, children, women or animal abuse, impinge religious and cultural beliefs of the people of Sri Lanka or any other country.
- Requirements based on the categories:
 - **Feature Film > TV Drama > Short Film > Docudrama > Co-production**
 - Required to submit the complete final script for approval at least 2 weeks prior to filming with Rs. 2,000/= non-refundable payment.
 - Required to assign a professional local production company or fixer for the entire shooting period
 - Recommended to apply visa through the local agent after receiving the script approval
 - **Approval fee for Feature Film: Rs. 75,000/=, TV Drama, Short Film, Docudrama, Co-production: Rs. 60,000/=**
 - **NFC Officer fee: Rs 1,000/= per day with food, lodging and transportation (If appointed)**
 - **Reality Series >Commercials>Music Video >Film Song**
 - Required to submit the program description/storyboard/product and company profile/ lyrics as applicable
 - Required to assign a professional local production company or fixer for the entire shooting period
 - Recommended to apply visa through the local agent after receiving the approval
 - **Approval fee (any category given above) Rs. 40,000/=**
 - **NFC Officer fee: Rs 1,000/= per day with food, lodging and transportation (If appointed)**
 - **Documentary >Sports >Travel, Tourism and Lifestyle >Photo Shoot**
 - Required to submit the storyline/ program description/ profile of the project as applicable
 - Required to assign a professional local production company or fixer for the entire shooting period
 - Recommended to apply visa through the local agent after receiving the approval
 - **Approval fee (any category given above) Rs. 12,500/=**
 - **NFC Officer fee: Rs 1,000/= per day with food, lodging and transportation (If appointed)**
 - **News and Current Affairs >Diplomatic Delegation >Governmental Aid Project Review**
 - Not required to follow this process
 - Contact the relevant Sri Lankan mission abroad or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs directly
 - No approval charges required
 - **Religious/ Pilgrimage**
 - Required to submit the documents of proof as applicable
 - Required to assign a professional local production company or fixer for the entire shooting period
 - No approval charges required
- All foreign nationals who wish to engage in professional filming related to one or more categories mentioned above are required to obtain media visa to enter Sri Lanka. It is a punishable by law for foreigners to be engaged in professional filming in Sri Lanka without a valid visa. Any category applicant can submit this application to the relevant Sri Lankan mission in your country directly. For more details <http://www.mea.gov.lk>
- However, you can directly apply to NFC by assigning a local professional production company or fixer for a speedy process. The NFC encourages all foreign applicants to use professional local production companies/ fixers for the entire filming period in Sri Lanka. For more details: <http://www.nfc.gov.lk>
- The NFC permission is the main permit required for filming in Sri Lanka. It shall not supersede any other permission or approval needed to be obtained based on the locations or production nature. In such an event, the applicant or his/her local agent should obtain the necessary permissions from any other government or private institution as required. Any stipulated cost, agreement or condition acceptance in this regard with such institution shall also need to be borne by the applicant separately. Locations under direct purview of the Department of Archeology, Central Cultural Fund, Department of Wildlife, Department of Forest, National Zoological Gardens, National Botanical Gardens, Civil Aviation Authority, Sri Lanka Ports Authority, Police and Ministry of Defense etc should require separate permissions by using NFC filming permit.
- Filming projects considered as a potential for Sri Lanka tourism promotion, could coordinate with Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) for mutually benefiting contra agreements and assistance through a recognized local agent. For more details <http://www.srilanka.travel>

- All applicants should not commence filming without prior approval of NFC. Filming should only be limited to the applied category. The NFC should be informed by the applicant or the local agent well advance should there be any change of category, script, location or crew.
- Equipments intended to be brought for used in filming should use a carnet, bank guarantee or NFC letter of guarantee to be declared to Sri Lanka Customs at the arrival and departure.
- NFC has the right to appoint an officer to monitor filming in Sri Lanka. The monitoring officer's duty is to observe the filming and advise the production crew based on the guideline. Per Diem payment for the officer plus his/her food, lodging and transportation need to be provided by the applicant or the local agent. Decision to exclude the monitoring officer is solely decided by the NFC. If a direct recommendation is given by the relevant Sri Lankan mission abroad, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau or any other government ministry, department or institution involving the project, it would be considered by the NFC to include or exclude the monitoring officer's service.
- In case a complaint is received regarding the filming content, NFC shall summon the foreign crew, local agent or any other parties involved to preview/ review all footage/ photographs. NFC has the right to cease any such footage/ photograph/ equipment containing the objectionable or NFC guideline violating content to be taken away from the country. Legal action, fine, warning, blacklisting or deportation would result if proved of any misconduct. The NFC shall not be liable for any loss, either financial or otherwise caused in this regard.
- It is advised to insure the foreign crew for the entire filming period in Sri Lanka. However, the NFC may request the foreign applicant or the local agent to insure the NFC monitoring officer based on the locations or the nature of the production. >
- In case of co-production, at least 50 percent of the total number of technicians and artistes should be Sri Lankan. The local producer needs to provide the certified copies of legal agreements entered into with the foreign producer, business registration and details of shareholders, directors of all parties, artiste and technician agreements, production/ownership ratio, financial declaration and intended foreign exchange component to be brought to Sri Lanka etc. Co-production which intends to commercially release in Sri Lanka should be done in Sinhala, Tamil or English languages. Co-productions done in other languages which are intended to commercially release in Sri Lanka, should not dub its versions in Sinhala, Tamil or English. Such productions could be permitted to be subtitled with a national language in Sri Lanka.
- After completing the production, the final edited version should be submitted to the relevant Sri Lankan mission where the applicant applies at least one week prior to broadcast or publish. Any objection raised by the Sri Lankan mission should reasonably accommodate and/or a right of reply should be given to the Sri Lankan mission, in the same production with equal priority. The same footage should not be used for any other production without properly acknowledging the Sri Lankan mission.

However, film, television and media companies who have signed mutual agreements with the NFC, SLTPB and Sri Lankan missions abroad shall be given exemption on mutual understanding for above clause.

