

DEADLINE

UK Industry Responds To \$646M Emergency Production Insurance Fund; Details Of Scheme Revealed

Jake Kanter | July 29, 2020



Sex Education is set to go back into production in the coming weeks. Netflix

The UK government has listened to months of industry lobbying and launched an emergency £500M (\$646M) film and TV coronavirus production insurance fund, which will effectively underwrite the cost of shoots closing in the event of a second lockdown.

The insurance solution is a significant boost to producers who have been looking for a way to return to production without exposing themselves to potentially catastrophic financial risk. It's also good news for countless out-of-work freelancers, with Pact CEO John McVay reckoning it could open the floodgates to a backlog of shoots worth an estimated £1BN (\$1.3BN).

Here are the main details of the Film And TV Production Restart Scheme:

- The fund only covers delays relating to coronavirus
- The cash will only be available until June 2021, but losses can be backdated
- Compensation for COVID delays will be granted up to a value of 20% of the production budget. Compensation for abandoning production will cover up to 70% of the budget
- There will be a £5M cap on claims per shoot
- Producers will need to purchase insurance to cover non-coronavirus risks
- Producers will need to provide evidence that they cannot return to work because of a lack of insurance

UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak said: "The UK's film and TV industry is the envy of the world, and it's vital that productions get the help they need to restart as part of our plan to kickstart jobs following the lockdown.

"This targeted scheme, which will help fill the gap created by the lack of available insurance, will help protect tens of thousands of jobs, from actors and directors through to camera operators, costume designers, and runners. The sector is worth over £12 billion to the UK's economy, so it's right that we do what we can to help them reopen and get back to making the films and shows that we all love."

Unsurprisingly, key industry figures have responded warmly to the news. Below is a selection of comments:

"This very welcome news shows that the UK Government has listened to one of our key industries and has taken unprecedented steps to support our highly successful indigenous film and TV production and broadcasting industry to get back to what we love most — making TV programmes and films enjoyed by UK audiences and many more millions around the globe." - **Pact CEO John McVay**

"The UK indie sector had a very strong 2019, making award winning series for both the UK and US markets. We have been very badly hit by COVID-19 and the support of the Government at this time is critical and hugely appreciated. Our sector now has every chance of a return to being the successful global industry that we are renowned for." - **All3Media COO Sara Geater**

"This is the greenlight the industry needs to get back into production. The Government has taken a significant step to support the UK's world-leading indie sector, helping to get cameras rolling again on the nation's favourite TV programmes." - **Sky Studios CEO Gary Davey**

"This is exactly the shot in the arm the TV and film industry has been waiting for. This intervention will allow production companies to get going again and thereby ensure that hundreds of millions of pounds worth of production spend can be applied to British jobs and services." - **See-Saw Films COO Hakan Kousetta**

"This is a decisive and timely intervention which turns the lights back on and is an absolute gamechanger for recovery of the TV and film industries and the thousands of people who work in them." - **Kudos MD Martin Haines**

"This is a welcome development for the army of dedicated freelancers who are the backbone of the UK film and TV industry. The pandemic created an unprecedented situation cutting off many people's income overnight and thousands have fallen through the gaps of income support schemes. Any move that gives the industry the confidence to return to work as quickly as possible must be supported as our members' livelihoods depend on joined up and progressive thinking to ensure that production resumes." - **Bectu head Philippa Childs**

"This is very welcome support from the UK government, which will re-launch productions at a critical time for the industry." - **Fremantle UK CEO Simon Andreae** ■