

Buenos Aires Launches International Shoot Rebate

By John Hopewell, Holly Jones



Credit: Netflix

Putting itself on the big shoot radar, the City of Buenos Aires is set to offer Argentina's first incentive for international shoots, a 20% cash rebate on productions' expenditure in the Argentine capital.

Capped at Pesos 75 million (\$600,000) per title, the BA Cash Rebate requires a minimum spend of Pesos 80 million (\$680,000) and an at least four-day shoot in Buenos Aires.

Whether shooting totally or partially in the city, both co-productions and totally foreign titles are eligible for incentives. Reimbursement must be made via an Argentine co-producer or service company on a totally overseas shoot. That company can be based anywhere in Argentina.

BA Cash Rebate, as the new incentive scheme is called, is set to launch October, said Buenos Aires City Culture Minister, Enrique Avogadro.

Total moneys for a first tranche of funding come in at Argentine Pesos 491 million (\$4 million), he added. The new incentive will be presented in Buenos Aires on May 17 at Buenos Aires' emblematic Teatro Colon.

The rebate takes in films and fiction series and can be awarded at pre-production, production and post-production stages, said Avogadro.

Applications will be especially valued if they feature Buenos Aires and its iconic landmarks in their storylines.

Buenos Aires rebate funding pales before top global offers such as France (30% of spend, capped at €30 million (\$31.5 million) per title) or Spain's Canary Islands (50% of a first €1 million (\$1.05 million) expenditure).

But "this is a point of departure," Avogadro argued. "If you look at other places in Latin America – Uruguay or Colombia – they all scale up over time. Our incentive will grow in the light of experience," he added.

The rebate is also only the second municipal incentive in Latin America history, after 2021's SP Cine São Paulo cash rebate.

It joins other undeniable lures of Buenos Aires, led, by its deep and proven talent pool, which makes it one of the region's film-TV production leaders.

Traditionally the Latin American country which scores most big selections at the Cannes Film Festival, Argentina is now a leader on its premium TV scene, Netflix's "The Kingdom," produced by Buenos Aires' K&S Films, winning best series at this month's Platino Awards; Daniel Burman's "Yosi," the Regretful Spy," an Amazon Studios-Oficina Burman production, was reckoned one of the standout titles at February's Berlinale Series.

"The first thing producers ask in international markets is if Argentina has a rebate. Having one allows us to compete, given the talent in Buenos Aires," said Avogadro.

"Our aim is not to compete by being the cheapest place in the world but rather the one with greatest talent," he added.

"The rebate is a pioneering tool for our country," he continued. It marks a path for the promotion of the international reach of the city's audiovisual industry which is important in two ways, he argued: Highlighting our culture, our identity, our capacity to tell our own stories; and for its impact on economic growth. Audiovisual creates a lot of jobs and generates high added-value employment."

The rebate will be launched by the Buenos Aires Film Commission, itself re-launched in 2019.

A Buenos Ministry of Culture press release also listed the city's multi-culture nature, connectivity, good climate, great hotel offer and varied and broad culture as further attractions. An online catalog displays locations in the city, a directory profiles local talent.