

Channel 4 Production Process

The key stages in the production process for Channel 4 are:

- 1 – Submit
- 2 – Development
- 3 - Editorial Approval
- 4 - Budget Approval
- 5 - Contractual Issues
- 6 - Production
- 7 - Delivery and Transmission

1 – Submit

Take an idea that is right for Channel 4.

Think about who would watch it, the schedule, how it will be made, who will be in it, who will make it, how long it'll be and why it should be made now.

Make sure you know about the Channel's commissioning priorities and requirements. You can find out this information in the Commissioning section of this website. This'll give you an idea as to the commissioning editor you should approach

Watch Channel 4! It's a good way to figure out if something is right for the Channel

Write a clear proposal

The proposal shouldn't be longer than 500 words and it should have a very clear proposition - you should be able to sum up the programme in a few sentences.

Submit your idea

Use the Online proposal system, which is on the main navigation of the 4producers site.

We'll respond with a 'yes' or 'no' or 'maybe' within 4 weeks.

2 - Development

If the answer is a 'yes' make sure you've read the C4 Code of Practice - This outlines how the commissioning and commercial affairs processes work and who has responsibility for what throughout the process. You can access this in the resources section of the 4 Producers website.

If it's a 'yes', the commissioning editor will call you in for a meeting and you can both decide if the idea would work on any other platforms

Channel 4 Interactive will help decide if it has cross-platform appeal, or if you have contacted other platforms directly, they'll direct it to the relevant commissioning editor.

If it's a 'maybe', you might be asked to develop the idea further and submit a treatment

3 – Editorial Approval

Once go-ahead is given, a project form is raised

The form should be raised 6 weeks before production is due to begin – you'll be informed by the commissioning editor's assistant that this has been done.

Negotiations about the budget and rights issues should now begin.

You should now submit an Editorial Specification form

You can find a blank form in the resources section of the 4 Producers website. The form's purpose is to pin down details of the programme, which will form the basis of negotiations with Commercial Affairs. The price we will pay is determined by tariffs set for each genre of programming, which can be found within the Code of Practice.

4 – Budget Approval

There are 3 stages of Price approval:

- 1 Commissioning Editor & Commercial Affairs Manager**
- 2 Head of Department**
- 3 Programme Finance Committee or Business Approval Board**

Before the final stage, you'll need to determine whether the project requires deficit funding. If the project does, it will be your responsibility to find the funding.

5 – Contractual Issues

Whilst the price is being agreed, you'll also be negotiating the contract details and rights with a Commercial Affairs Manager. Before pre-production begins the contract should be signed and agreed.

Your project is not fully commissioned until the budget and contract have been signed and agreed by both parties.

6 - Production

Whilst the production is underway you will discuss the Press and Marketing potential of your programme. Press and Marketing possibilities will be explored in line with Channel priorities.

The commissioning editor will attend viewings during post-production according to an agreed timetable. If appropriate, the Interactive Editor will work on the online content

7- Delivery and Transmission

Delivery of completed programme

Make sure that your programme meets all delivery requirements – you must have read and adhered to the programme end credits guidelines and the programme delivery guidelines, both of which can be found in the Resources section of this site. If relevant you must also

ensure all online deliverables meet the technical specification established by the interactive department.

Transmission and go live!

Feedback

You should have a follow up meeting with the commissioning editor to discuss how the project went. This should include ratings performance, editorial strengths and weaknesses, business issues, the team, programme vs proposal, press & publicity and marketing issues and user traffic.

