



## Publishing checklist

# This factsheet steps project managers through the key stages involved in developing and publishing a video resource

## Needs and accessibility analysis

A needs analysis can help you to determine the appropriate format for your audience.

For example, there is evidence to support the view that people in emerging communities with low literacy levels do not respond to printed information. These communities often come from oral traditions that use storytelling to pass on information. So, if you want to communicate legal concepts in plain language to an audience of newly arrived migrants and refugees, a video may be the most appropriate format. See information about particular groups on the Foundation's Access to Research Hub and through our Evidence Bank.

## Where to begin

- Consult with your audience to determine what type of resource will be most effective in providing information about the legal system. Is a video appropriate for this group? Will it be used? How will it be used? Will a video make the information to be provided more engaging and accessible for the intended audience?
- If a video is appropriate for your audience, consult further to determine other key factors. How long should it be? What level of information do they require? Is the resource for the client or their service provider? Don't let the content dictate the length. Decide on the length and make the content fit.
- Consider the accessibility requirements of your audience. To make it accessible for deaf and hearing-impaired people, it is recommended that videos are captioned, and an audio description is included.
- Consider how you might use the material from your video on the web. Would it be suitable to upload to YouTube so you can distribute a link? Could you add it to your website? Will it be shared on social media? Different platforms work best for videos of different styles and lengths.

## Project planning

Clarify your aim: It is important to have a clear and concise aim for your project. For example:

**"This video will raise awareness amongst employers about the benefits of hiring older people."**

**"This video will provide newly arrived members of the Vietnamese community with information about driving and traffic offences in NSW."**

**"This video will provide information about changes to the Disability Discrimination Act and illustrate both good and bad practice in employing people with a disability."**

## Plan your evaluation strategy

How will you know if you've succeeded in your aim?



## Publishing checklist

### Talk to a production company at planning stage

Seek assistance from an experienced video producer at the outset. They will work with you to develop the story boards, locations for filming, timeframes, etc.

A video can easily end up costing much more and taking far longer than originally anticipated.

For example, if your planned day of shooting is postponed due to weather conditions or your lead actor becomes unavailable, you may incur additional costs and your project may be delayed.

- **Develop a project plan around key stages and set clear and realistic timeframes.** See the Foundation's factsheet on project management. Your project plan should include these stages:
  - Stage 1: Research and script development
  - Stage 2: Pre-production and rehearsal
  - Stage 4: Editing and post-production (including translation into other languages, if relevant, and/or captioning)
  - Stage 5: Video launch, marketing and promotion
  - Stage 6: Evaluation
- **Plan each stage in detail.** Think out each stage of production carefully and what it will involve. For example, filming may take place over many different locations (courts, prisons, government offices, homes etc), so time needs to be allocated in the project plan to obtain clearance to film in these areas.
- **Plan for unexpected delays.** For example, there may be a hold up waiting for sign off on the script or the legal accuracy of the material, or it may take longer than anticipated to have material translated, or your preferred actor/s may not be available.

### Advisory group and responsibilities

A single agency needs to manage the overall process and take responsibility for production of the video. However, it can be very useful to establish an advisory group.

An advisory group can provide expert advice on:

- the quality of the content
- whether it meets the aim of the project
- the accuracy of the legal content
- promotion and distribution strategies
- production quality
- budget control

When working with an advisory group its important to:

- **Outline roles:** It is important that members of the advisory group understand what their roles are (and aren't). Depending on the number of agencies involved in the project, and the scale and length of production time, it may be useful for each participating organisation to nominate two representatives to ensure that there is always someone available to speak for their agency.
- **Keep written records** of responsibilities, decisions made, timelines and contact details.
- **Obtain project sign-off:** At the start of the project, determine who is going to approve the final product. Ensure that each representative on the advisory group has the appropriate authority to sign off on behalf of their





## Publishing checklist

agency.

- **Check legal content for accuracy:** Ensure the representative who takes on this role can work with your timeframe otherwise waiting for their approval could significantly delay the project.

## Budget planning

- **Develop a budget based on actual quotes:** Seek written quotes for all of the work that needs to be outsourced, which may include: scriptwriting and/or editing, script translation, casting, actors' fees, filming, equipment hire, studio/location hire, production, promotional material, distribution and postage. Don't be surprised if a large proportion of the budget goes toward the film and lighting crews.
- **Contingency funds:** Have contingency funding available as costs can change quite significantly. For example, the script may need to be lengthened to include more information, which will require a longer shoot schedule and therefore cost more. Increased funds may then also be needed to translate the longer script. Contingency funding can also cover incidentals, over expenditure and any unforeseen expenses.
- **Planning for demand:** Consider the best way to distribute your video and the cost impact of increased demand. If your film is only available in hardcopy DVD format and it is very popular, you may need to do a reprint sooner than expected. Planning to make your film available as an online resource (e.g. from your website or YouTube) may be a more cost-effective and accessible method of distribution.
- **Think about insurance:** Who is responsible for this? Will the production company provide insurance for their crew when on location? What insurance arrangements apply if you are using amateur actors? A clause that clearly explains insurance arrangements should be included in all of the contracts.

## External production companies

Audiences respond to quality and the resource will have greater credibility if you engage a production company that:

- has experience in scriptwriting and film production for not-for-profits
- has worked on projects comparable in scale to your project
- can demonstrate a track record in producing quality videos (they should be able to send you a 'showreel', as a resumé of their work)
- is professional in their approach and able to communicate effectively with you as a client

To find a good production team:

- Prepare a detailed brief before you start approaching companies, so they can quote you as accurately as possible
- Ask the companies to submit a tender or quote by an agreed deadline
- Arrange a time for a face-to-face interview

Once you have selected your production company make sure that:

- All decisions are in writing
- The aims of the project and the intended audience are clear
- The desired outcome and the feel/tone of the video are clearly articulated
- Any specific requirements such as a particular location, are made clear
- All costs involved are clear and agreed.



## Publishing checklist

### Actors

The decision as to whether to use professional actors (paid or unpaid) or amateurs will be determined by the level of quality you seek and your budget.

Regardless of whether you are paying or not paying for your actors:

- Always attend filming to oversee production and make decisions about changes (e.g. if a script change is needed).
- Ask all actors to sign a model release form to allow their photo/still image to be used in promotional material (if hiring professional actors, this can be included in their contract) and an agreement to state they understand and are aware of the subject matter, end-use of the product, and distribution. This is particularly relevant when dealing with people from non- English speaking backgrounds and for sensitive subject matter.

### Professional actors

Using a professional has several benefits – they are accustomed to filming, they know what to expect and how to prepare, and more importantly, they are trained to act. This will vastly increase the credibility of your video. This expertise will usually come at a fee however so you should contact a few agents at planning phase to get an idea of cost.

- Professional actors can be auditioned and hired either directly or through a casting agency. As with any employee or contractor, you should ensure the actor/s terms of engagement are agreed upon and documented before filming commences. You may wish to consider the following for inclusion in your contract: overtime arrangements, availability/fee should the timeline change, per diem (a daily allowance for expenses), and unlimited/limited use of photographs across promotional material.

### Non-professional actors or staff

- Using amateur actors, staff or 'real people' can add sincerity to your product, and it is likely to cost less than hiring professionals.
- However, some of the drawbacks of using non- professional actors include:
  - It may affect your timeline (eg you may need to allow more time for rehearsing/filming).
  - There is no contractual obligation for them to go through with the filming.
  - If using staff, they may leave the organisation and they may not wish for the video to be used once they have left (although you may be able to cover this with a release signed before filming commences that allows use for an indefinite period).
  - If they are close to the subject matter, they may have opinions or feedback on the script that may require consideration.

### Script development

You will need to provide the scriptwriter with a written brief to guide the content, tone and what is appropriate language. It is useful for your brief to include:

- the key messages and information to be conveyed
- a structure for the content and sequence (if relevant)
- an estimate of the length and level of detail for each section

Once you are in the script development phase, the script writer from the production company should work closely



## Publishing checklist

with your legal adviser to ensure the legal information is communicated correctly and in a way that is clearly understood by the target audience. Before filming, user-test the script with the intended audience and have it reviewed by experts in the subject matter. This may be a lengthy process so factor this into your timeframe.

You may also need to think about how you will keep the script current. If it is an area that changes frequently you may wish to provide a general overview of the topic in the video and then more specific information on a slide screen that would be easier and cheaper to edit.

## Occupational health and safety (OH&S)

- Undertake a risk assessment for a proposed location to ensure it meets OH&S standards. Your assessment should include travel to and from the location, accessibility and any safety issues. With public locations, you will need to check with the local council about whether a development application is required to film there.
- Your project plan should include time to assess the location and report on it, time to arrange for problems to be remedied or a new location selected and assessed.

## Copyright and contracts

- Build into the contract with the production company a reasonable amount of control over the process (covering issues like the concept, scriptwriting etc).

## Promotion and distribution

- Effective and well-planned promotion and distribution of your video is very important and it should start at the beginning of the project. You may find your advisory group and user testing groups a good source of information and ideas in this respect. Sharing the video on your social media channels and including it on your organisation's website will ensure that it is seen by your target audience.
- Refer to the Foundation's factsheet: 'How to promote your resource'.
- Other factors to consider:
  - How widely are you going to distribute your video?
  - Who are all the groups that might find it useful, and who might be willing to promote it within their networks?
  - How will your audience find your product? Think about where your audience might start looking for this information.
- Once you are in post-production stage, revisit, refine and implement your promotion and distribution strategies.

## Keep it going

- Have a system in place to update the video when there are changes to the law.
- Keep up the marketing.
- Monitor key metrics to understand usage
- Evaluate your resource (refer to the Evaluation plan developed at the beginning of the process to guide this).