BAFTA ROCLIFFE

NEW WRITING COMPETITION & SHOWCASE

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The BAFTA Rocliffe TV Comedy Writing Competition seeks outstanding new television comedy writing - this is sitcom, comedy-drama that is more funny than drama, sketch show.

Three finalists will be showcased at BAFTA in London in November. By entering, all named writers agree to these Terms and Conditions.

Writers or teams of writers may apply.

1. Key dates

- **Bursary applications are now closed** and all bursaries have been awarded
- **Early Bird and bursary submission deadline:** 11.55pm BST, 5 September 2026
- **Standard-rate applications reopen:** 3pm BST, 6 September 2026
- **Competition closes:** 11.55pm BST, 16 September 2026
- **Rocliffe Assessments issued:** November 2026
- **Finalists' event at BAFTA, London:** 30 November 2026

2. Entry fees and payment

- **Early Bird fee:** £58
- **Standard fee:** £65

All fees include VAT and are non-refundable.

To qualify for the Early Bird rate, entrants must submit by 11.55pm on 5 September. Payment instructions will be provided immediately after submission. Payment must be made immediately and received within 24 hours. An entry is not complete or eligible for consideration until Rocliffe has received and matched the payment. Late payment may result in the entry being withdrawn or charged at the standard rate.

3. Bursaries

A limited number of free entries were available to writers who could not otherwise afford the fee.

Bursary applications closed at 10am on 26 August. Successful applicants were contacted directly and were required to accept their bursary within 24 hours and submit their complete entry by 11.55pm on 5 September. Unused places could be offered to another writer.

Anyone who had received a Rocliffe bursary within the previous 36 months was ineligible. Places were limited and Rocliffe's decisions were final.

4. Eligibility

Entrants must be aged 18 or over by the final closing date. At least one named writer must be a UK tax resident, currently residing in the UK, or hold a UK passport. A UK postal address alone does not establish eligibility.

Entrants must be emerging writers, you can have written on an existing series however, you must not have had an original show which you created or originated broadcast on a major broadcaster or streaming platform. You can have written on existing shows and you can also have made your own work which you self broadcast.

Direct full time employees of Rocliffe, BAFTA or any partner directly involved in the competition are ineligible. Rocliffe may request evidence of eligibility, identity, age, UK tax residency or passport status at any stage.

Each entry may contain only one project.

Writers may enter more than one project, but each requires a separate application and fee.

Scripts entered in previous years may be resubmitted, either in their original form or as revised drafts.

5. Submission requirements - NEW FOR THIS CALL

Submit one English-language PDF of no more than **10MB and no more than 13 pages**, containing the following in this order:

1. **One-line synopsis:** maximum 25 words
2. **Series treatment or overview:** maximum 800 words
3. **Extract introduction:** maximum 100 words, explaining where the extract appears in the pilot and providing any essential context
4. **Script extract:** maximum 10 pages in standard screenwriting format

The treatment should explain the series, including its central premise, key characters, story engine and direction. We no longer require separate episode guides or character breakdowns.

Name the PDF:

SCRIPT TITLE_DATE

Example: **BEACHES_05.09.2026.pdf**

The PDF must not contain the writer's name or any identifying information.

We are aware that Google Forms automatically adds the uploader's name to the filename. We will remove this before the submission is sent to readers, the panel or the jury.

Do not include additional documents, links, images, artwork, casting suggestions, mood boards, pitch decks or other supporting material. Submissions must be text only.

Entries that are late, incomplete, incorrectly ordered, improperly formatted, over the permitted length or otherwise non-compliant may be disqualified without refund.

Full scripts are not required at entry stage but if you are a winner - you may be asked for a full episode.

6. AI policy

The script and all supporting materials must be the entrant's own original creative work.

Generative AI must not be used to create, generate, summarise, rewrite or substantially edit any submitted material, including its premise, plot, storylines, characters, dialogue, jokes, scenes, synopsis, treatment or extract introduction.

Basic spelling, grammar and formatting tools may be used only where they do not generate creative content or substantially rewrite the entrant's work. By entering, writers confirm that the submitted work is their own and that any automated tools were limited to permitted spelling, grammar or formatting checks.

Rocliffe may ask entrants to explain how their project was developed. A breach of this policy may result in immediate disqualification without refund.

7. AI use by Rocliffe Readers

All submissions will be read and assessed by human readers.

Readers will not upload, copy or paste entrants' intellectual property into generative AI or third-party AI systems. They will not use AI to read, summarise, assess, score or rank entries, or to write Rocliffe Assessments.

All assessments will be written by the readers themselves to protect writers' confidentiality and ensure fair human evaluation.

8. Selection process

Selection takes place in stages:

1. Eligible entries are assessed by Rocliffe readers.
2. The strongest entries are considered by a selection panel.
3. Approximately 10 to 12 script packages are submitted to the jury.
4. The jury selects three finalists.

Rocliffe may decide not to shortlist, select or award any entry if the required standard is not met.

All decisions are final. Rocliffe cannot enter into correspondence about individual decisions, scores, judging or assessments.

9. Judging criteria

Entries will be assessed on:

- Originality
- Voice
- Character
- Storytelling ability
- Comic strength
- Commercial and creative potential
- Strength of the concept as an ongoing television series

10. Feedback

Every entry will receive a written Rocliffe Assessment: a structured first-round evaluation against the competition criteria, intended to support the writer's development rather than provide a definitive assessment of the project's potential.

Assessments are expected to be issued by November 2026, but Rocliffe may extend this period if necessary.

Assessments will be retained for six months after issue. Writers who have not received theirs by 10 December 2026 should contact Rocliffe.

11. Finalists' event

The three finalists will be invited to a live showcase at BAFTA in London in November. Their work may be performed, presented, discussed or otherwise showcased. Attendance is required. Rocliffe may change the date, venue, format or delivery method if circumstances require.

12. Finalist prizes

Each of the three finalists will receive:

- A live showcase at BAFTA in London
- One year's access to BAFTA Connect following the event, subject to BAFTA's eligibility requirements and terms
- A written Rocliffe Assessment
- A copy of *Rocliffe Notes for Screenwriters*
- A one-to-one Rocliffe Power Session

Travel arrangements and any available support will be communicated separately. Finalists may be required to attend in person and participate in reasonable publicity. BAFTA may be able to assist with travel. No cash prize is offered unless otherwise stated.

13. Anonymity and conduct

Entrants may say publicly that they have entered the competition but must not reveal their script title or share identifying details about their entry, including on social media, until the winners have been officially announced. See our social media links on the last page.

Entrants must not attempt to identify or contact any reader, panellist, juror or other person involved in the selection process about their entry.

Any attempt to compromise the anonymity or integrity of the process, or any abusive or inappropriate communication with staff, readers, judges or participants, may result in immediate disqualification without refund.

14. Intellectual property and publicity

Copyright remains with the writer.

Entrants confirm that their submission is original, that they own or control all necessary rights and that it does not infringe any third-party rights. Entrants agree to indemnify Rocliffe against claims, losses or damages arising from a breach of these warranties.

Entrants grant Rocliffe permission to use their name, project title and synopsis for competition administration and publicity. Finalists may also be asked to participate in reasonable publicity relating to the competition and event.

15. General

Rocliffe may amend these Terms and Conditions; reject any non-compliant entry; or cancel, postpone or amend the competition, selection process or event where reasonably necessary, including due to circumstances beyond its reasonable control. Late entries will not be considered. Submission of an entry constitutes acceptance of these Terms and Conditions.

Submission checklist

Before submitting, confirm that:

- The PDF is named **SCRIPT TITLE_DATE**.
- The synopsis is no longer than 25 words.
- The treatment or series overview is no longer than 800 words.
- The extract introduction is no longer than 100 words.
- The script extract is no longer than 10 pages and uses standard screenwriting format.
- Everything is contained in one PDF of no more than 10MB and no more than 13 pages, in the required order.
- No writer names or identifying information appear in the PDF.
- There are no links, images, artwork, casting suggestions, mood boards, pitch decks or additional documents.
- The submission complies with the AI policy.
- Payment will be made immediately and within 24 hours of submission.

Top five tips for television comedy writers

1. **Put the comedy on the page.** A comic premise alone is not enough. Include jokes, comic reversals, funny behaviour, sharp dialogue or laugh-out-loud moments. The extract is the basis on which the script is judged; the supporting material provides context.
2. **Make the comic premise clear quickly.** Show what is funny about the world, situation or characters.
3. **Build comedy from character.** Give characters clear wants, flaws, blind spots and contradictions.
4. **Let conflict drive the comedy.** Comedy works best when characters are trapped by their desires, habits, relationships or circumstances.
5. **Show the series engine.** Make clear why these characters keep coming together and how the comedy can repeat and escalate across a series.

USEFUL SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

Follow us for competition announcements, deadlines, writing advice, opportunities and everything happening behind the scenes.

Website: www.rocliffe.com

Instagram: Rocliffe Productions | BAFTA | Farah Abushwesha

Facebook: BAFTA Rocliffe

LinkedIn: Farah Abushwesha

TikTok: @farahabushwesha

YouTube: Rocliffe Productions

Substack: Rocliffe Power Notes

X / Twitter: @rocliffeforum