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A PRODUCER'S HANDBOOK · 2026 EDITION

Jordan Film Production Guide

Wadi Rum · Petra · the Dead Sea · Amman · Aqaba

The RFC cash rebate, the points system, permits, customs and
production logistics

Built on the Royal Film Commission cash-rebate programme published at film.jo, for producers, agencies,
studios and international production companies planning a shoot in Jordan.

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2025 UPDATE

In 2025 the Royal Film Commission raised its cash rebate to a headline **up to 45%**, cut the minimum spend to **USD 250,000**, and set the cap at **USD 5.25 million** per project. The rate is set in two layers, a spend tier and a points score, which is why most productions earn between 30% and 36% rather than the headline figure.

This handbook is planning guidance, not legal, tax or financial advice. Rebate terms, thresholds and permit processes are set by the Royal Film Commission and other authorities and change periodically. Confirm current details with the RFC before committing a budget. Figures here reflect the RFC cash-rebate programme as published at film.jo.

SECTION 1

Why Jordan, and what the rebate really pays

Jordan advertises a 45% cash rebate. Most productions never receive 45%. They land between 30% and 36%, and the gap has nothing to do with how much they spend. It comes down to a second scoring system that most budgets ignore, and to a permit chain that either runs cleanly through one office or stalls for weeks.

Two things make Jordan unusually navigable, and unusually unforgiving. Everything runs through the **Royal Film Commission (RFC)**, a single office that coordinates the base permit, location approvals, customs, drone clearance, military cooperation and the rebate audit. And the money is real: a rebate that pays reliably 150 days after audit, layered over tax exemptions that push total savings toward 56% of eligible spend.

What changed in 2025

The RFC overhauled the incentive. The headline rate rose to up to 45%, the minimum qualifying spend was cut from one million dollars to **USD 250,000**, opening Jordan to mid-budget productions for the first time, and a per-project cap of USD 5.25 million was set. A points system was formalised to determine how far above the base rate a production can climb.

WHAT JORDAN OFFERS

Wadi Rum and Petra, a single-window commission that actually coordinates, a genuine local crew base built over two decades of studio features, and a rebate that disburses on a fixed timetable.

WHERE IT SITS

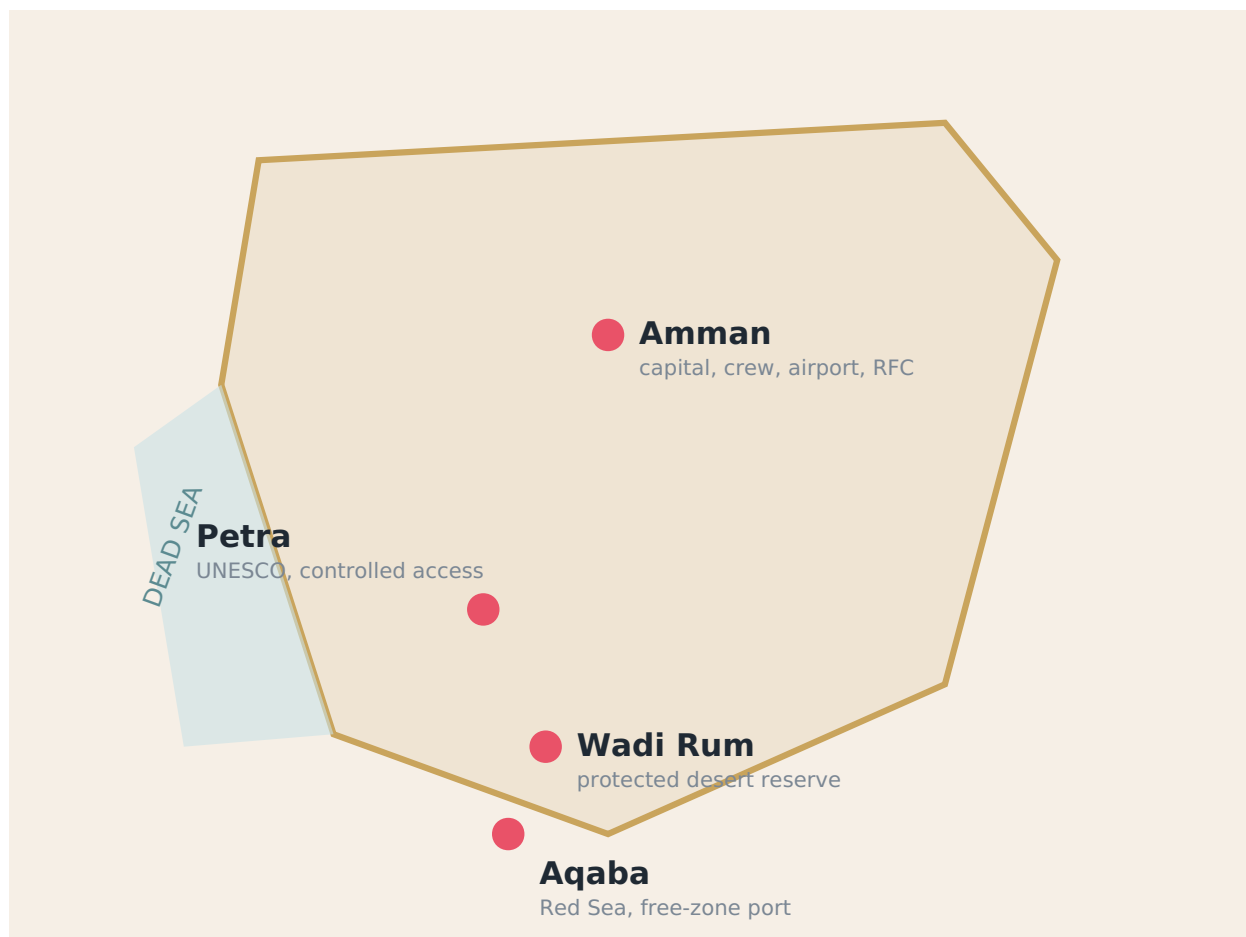
Between Morocco, which has the deepest crew and no cap but a higher entry, and Saudi Arabia, which posts a bigger headline rate but a thin crew base. Jordan is the certainty option in the middle.

The one-line summary: Jordan pays generously and predictably, but the number in the press release belongs to a large, high-scoring production. Budget the rate you will actually earn, not the headline, and register before the camera turns.

SECTION 2

Production regions

A compact country by regional standards, Jordan lets a single Amman base reach most of its signature looks without the long company moves a Gulf or Indian schedule demands. Five location families carry almost every international shoot.



Jordan's principal production regions (schematic, not to scale).

The next pages take Wadi Rum, Petra, the Dead Sea, Amman and Aqaba in turn: the look, the approval weight, and the logistical reality of each.

SECTION 2 · REGION

Wadi Rum

Southern desert · protected reserve · the signature look

Wadi Rum is the reason many productions come to Jordan. Its sandstone valleys and red desert have stood in for Mars, Arabia and deep space across a run of studio features, from *Lawrence of Arabia* to *The Martian*, *Dune*, *Aladdin* and the *Star Wars* saga. Nothing else in the region delivers the same scale of untouched desert with this level of on-screen recognition.

Best for: desert epics, science fiction, biblical and ancient-world stories, and any sequence whose entire point is monumental, unpeopled landscape.

The catch: Wadi Rum is a protected area. Access runs through the reserve authority alongside the RFC, with conditions on vehicles, camps and the resident Bedouin communities who live and guide there. It is a managed environment, not an open location, and support logistics, fuel, water, comms, heat, are the shoot.

SECTION 2 • REGION

Petra, the Dead Sea, Amman and Aqaba

PETRA

A UNESCO World Heritage Site of rock-cut Nabataean facades. Access is tightly controlled, timed around visitor hours, and negotiated well ahead; the monuments cannot be rigged or lit like an ordinary set. The signature "historic Arabia" location, and the most conditional.

THE DEAD SEA

Salt formations, mineral flats and the lowest exposed surface on earth, backed by resort infrastructure that makes it one of the more comfortable bases in the country. A landscape found almost nowhere else.

AMMAN

The production capital: the crew pool, the equipment houses, the airport and the RFC itself. Its Roman theatre, citadel and dense urban quarters double for the wider region, and it is where a unit stages before moving out.

AQABA & THE DESERT CASTLES

Aqaba adds the Red Sea coast and a free-zone port useful for equipment. Ringing the capital, the desert castles and eastern basalt country extend the palette beyond the postcard sites.

The advantage: distances are short. A single Amman base can cover most of Jordan without the long company moves a Saudi or Indian schedule demands, which is a real cost and scheduling edge.

SECTION 3

The RFC cash rebate explained

This is the section to get right. The rebate is generous, but it is not a flat 45%. It is set in two independent layers, a spend tier and a points score, and misreading that is how budgets over-project the recovery.

HEADLINE

25% to 45%

cash rebate on eligible spend in Jordan, capped at USD 5.25 million per project, paid within 150 days of an audited report.

The base rate is set by how much you spend in Jordan

Eligible spend in Jordan (USD)	Base cash rebate
250,000 to 1,000,000	25%
1,000,000 to 10,000,000	30%
10,000,000 and above	35% to 45% (above 35% by cultural test)

Jordanian films and series spending above USD 500,000 qualify at 30%. A 10% advance against a bank guarantee, capped at USD 100,000, is available before wrap.

What counts as eligible spend

Eligible spend covers Jordanian crew and cast salaries, travel to and from the Kingdom on a national Jordanian carrier, equipment and facility rentals, accommodation, catering and transport within Jordan, studio rental and set builds, and up to 15% of post-production for work performed in Jordan. Non-qualifying spend is anything paid outside Jordan or to vendors without Jordanian trade registration.

Layered savings: on top of the rebate, an automatic exemption from Jordan's 16% VAT and 10% withholding tax pushes total savings toward 56% of eligible spend for a qualifying production. Model the rebate and the tax exemptions together, not separately.

SECTION 4

The points system that lifts the rate

The step from the base rate toward 45% is earned, not automatic. A production is scored out of 120 points and must reach a minimum of 70 to unlock any uplift. This is the layer most budgets ignore, and the reason the headline rarely lands.

THE SIX SCORING CATEGORIES (OF 120)

Category	Points
Cultural and regional representation	35
Employment and capacity building	30
Co-production	20
Economic contribution	15
International and strategic promotion	10
Environmental and social responsibility	10

HOW THE SCORE CONVERTS TO AN UPLIFT

Score (out of 120)	Added to the base rate
70 to 79	+2%
80 to 89	+4%
90 to 99	+6%
100 to 109	+8%
110 to 120	+10%

Read it honestly. The 45% figure belongs to a large-budget production scoring high on Jordanian content and hiring. A mid-budget shoot spending USD 2 million with a modest score lands nearer 30% to 34%. A line producer who tracks the points criteria and the Jordanian crew ratio from day one, rather than reconstructing them at wrap, protects the number.

SECTION 5

Permits: the RFC single window

Jordan's advantage is that one office coordinates almost everything. The RFC issues the base permit and facilitates the approvals that in other territories require separate applications to separate ministries.

What the RFC coordinates

- **Base filming permit** — the master clearance that unlocks the shoot, issued by the RFC.
- **Location approvals** — Petra, Wadi Rum and site-specific clearances, coordinated with the relevant authorities.
- **Customs and temporary import** — facilitation letters that remove duty exposure on production equipment.
- **Drone and aerial** — CARC approval under the civil aviation regulator, with any army escort for restricted areas.
- **Military cooperation** — armoured vehicles, uniforms and access, coordinated through the RFC's standing relationships.
- **Crew visas** — support letters to accompany embassy applications.

REGISTER BEFORE YOU SHOOT

The rebate application is filed by a registered local production-services company, before principal photography. A production that has not registered with the RFC before the shoot cannot claim the rebate, however much it spends. The single window is the reason the whole chain moves; use it early rather than approaching each authority cold.

SECTION 6

Customs, carnets and equipment import

Jordan's customs environment for film equipment is one of the more production-friendly in the region, precisely because the RFC can issue facilitation letters for temporary imports.

An ATA Carnet is preferred wherever the originating country supports it, because it shortens customs inspection time compared with a temporary-import bond and gives one internationally recognised document for the whole kit list. Where a carnet is not available, the RFC's facilitation letter removes the duty exposure that burdens productions elsewhere.

PLAN CAREFULLY FOR

- Wireless and RF gear, which needs frequency clearance
- Drones, which need CARC approval and import handling
- Lithium batteries, declared for air freight
- Weapons props, blanks and replicas, handled under strict conditions

WHAT CAUSES DELAYS

- Incomplete equipment manifests
- Serial numbers that do not match the carnet
- RF gear without frequency clearance
- Arrivals over weekends or public holidays

The rule: a detailed manifest with matching serials, RF and drone clearances pre-arranged, and a competent local agent will prevent the overwhelming majority of customs problems. Aqaba's free-zone port is a useful entry point for heavy equipment.

SECTION 7

Building a Jordan budget

Day rates move with the shoot, so the durable thing is the structure of the budget and how the rebate reshapes it. The rebate is paid on qualifying Jordanian spend, so where you spend matters as much as how much.

THE LINE-ITEM STRUCTURE

- Local production-services fee
- Jordanian crew and cast
- Accommodation, catering and per diems
- Ground transport and fuel
- RFC permits and location fees
- Equipment rental, local and imported, with carnet
- Studio rental and set construction
- Military coordination and security
- Insurance and desert safety
- Post-production, up to 15% in Jordan

HOW THE REBATE RESHAPES IT

Split the budget into spend that lands with Jordanian vendors, on Jordanian days, after RFC registration (qualifying) and everything else (non-qualifying). Apply the base tier to the qualifying spend, add the points uplift, and cap the result at USD 5.25 million.

Every dollar moved from a foreign vendor to a Jordanian one enlarges the base the rebate is paid on, and can lift the points score at the same time. The rebate quietly rewards local hire, which is also what makes the shoot run better.

The advance: a 10% advance against a bank guarantee, capped at USD 100,000, can ease the cash-flow gap before the 150-day disbursement. Build it into the financing plan rather than discovering it at wrap.

SECTION 8

The production calendar

Jordan is a cool-season desert shoot. The window is wide, but the desert and the Dead Sea run hot for much of the year, and the shoulder seasons are the prize.

Months	Conditions	Shootability
October to November	Cooling, clear, stable light	Prime
December to February	Cool days, cold desert nights	Good
March to April	Warming, comfortable; spring light	Prime
May to June	Hot, especially in Wadi Rum and the Dead Sea	Hard
July to August	Desert extremes; limit midday exteriors	Difficult
September	Easing from peak heat	Good

DESERT HEAT

Wadi Rum and the Dead Sea basin run hotter than Amman. Summer work is limited to early and late in the day, and heat is a crew-safety issue, not a comfort one.

RAMADAN

Ramadan shifts about eleven days earlier each year. Expect shorter working hours and adjusted crew availability; plan the calendar around it rather than through it.

SECTION 9

Locations by script type

Working back from the page is the fastest route to a Jordan location plan. Here is where each kind of story tends to land.

If your script is...	Go to	Because
Sci-fi / other-world / Mars	Wadi Rum	Monumental untouched desert, proven across studio features
Historic / biblical / ancient Arabia	Petra & Wadi Rum	Nabataean rock architecture and desert on one corridor
Desert epic / action / journey	Wadi Rum & the eastern desert	Scale and severity with support infrastructure nearby
Modern city / corporate / urban	Amman	Contemporary and old-town looks, closest to suppliers
Coastal / marine / resort	Aqaba & the Dead Sea	Red Sea coast and unique mineral landscape
Commercials	Amman, Wadi Rum, Dead Sea	Range and iconic looks within short drives

Most features combine two or three, an Amman base with a Wadi Rum block and a Petra day, say. The art is sequencing them to keep the qualifying spend inside Jordan and the points score climbing.

SECTION 10

Crew, visas and equipment

Two decades of studio features have built a real crew base in Jordan, deeper than a first-time producer expects, but the senior layer and specialist kit still travel in.

AVAILABLE IN JORDAN

- A trained local crew base built on major features
- Grip, lighting, base camp and support through Amman
- Location, desert and Bedouin liaison in Wadi Rum
- Studio space and set-build capacity

USUALLY IMPORTED

- Senior heads of department for the largest units
- High-end and specialist camera packages
- Depth of grip and lighting for big features
- Often via regional hubs and on qualifying carnets

For Indian crews: Indian nationals are eligible for a visa on arrival at Queen Alia International Airport for a short tourist stay, subject to conditions such as a confirmed return ticket. For a working production, arrange the appropriate film or business visa in advance through the Jordanian embassy rather than relying on a tourist arrival visa. Begin applications three to four weeks before the shoot; the RFC can provide support letters but cannot shorten embassy processing times.

Remember the rebate arithmetic: imported crew and kit are spend that leaves Jordan, so it earns nothing back and does not lift the points score. The commercial sweet spot is a lean imported HOD layer over a genuinely local crew and supplier base.

SECTION 11

Jordan against Morocco and Saudi Arabia

Producers rarely choose Jordan in isolation. When the script says desert, fort or ancient world, the shortlist is usually Jordan, Morocco and, increasingly, Saudi Arabia. The three do not compete on the same axis.

	Jordan	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
Cash rebate	25% to 45% (tier + points)	30% flat	Up to 60%
Per-project cap	USD 5.25M	Uncapped	No published cap
Minimum spend	USD 250,000	~USD 1M and 18 shoot days	SAR 750,000 (feature)
Signature look	Wadi Rum, Petra, Dead Sea	Sahara, Atlas, Ouarzazate	Empty Quarter, AIUla, NEOM
Local crew depth	Deep, RFC-built	Deepest in the region	Thin; imports from Dubai
Admin body	RFC (single window)	CCM	Saudi Film Commission (NOC)

Read it by what a production actually needs. Saudi Arabia posts the highest rate but the thinnest crew base, so a shoot there imports most of its senior team and loses the difference to travel and freight. Morocco has the deepest crew and no cap, which suits the largest features, but a higher entry threshold. Jordan sits between them, and its edge is not the headline number. It is the single-window RFC, a genuine local crew, Wadi Rum and Petra in one compact country, and a rebate that pays reliably 150 days after audit.

SECTION 12

The producer's checklist

One page for the wall. If every box is ticked before principal photography, the shoot and the rebate are both on solid ground.

REBATE & REGISTRATION

- ☐ Local production-services company engaged
- ☐ RFC rebate application filed before the shoot
- ☐ Spend tier and points target modelled honestly
- ☐ Qualifying vs non-qualifying spend split in the budget
- ☐ 10% advance against bank guarantee arranged if needed
- ☐ Audited-report process set up from day one
- ☐ 150-day disbursement built into cash flow

PEOPLE

- ☐ Crew visas begun (Indian crew: 3-4 weeks ahead)
- ☐ Jordanian crew ratio tracked for the points score
- ☐ Accommodation and per diems confirmed

PERMITS & KIT

- ☐ RFC base permit issued
- ☐ Petra / Wadi Rum location approvals in hand
- ☐ ATA Carnet or RFC facilitation letter for equipment
- ☐ CARC drone approval and any army escort
- ☐ RF frequency clearance for wireless gear
- ☐ Military-cooperation and weapons handling arranged

SAFETY

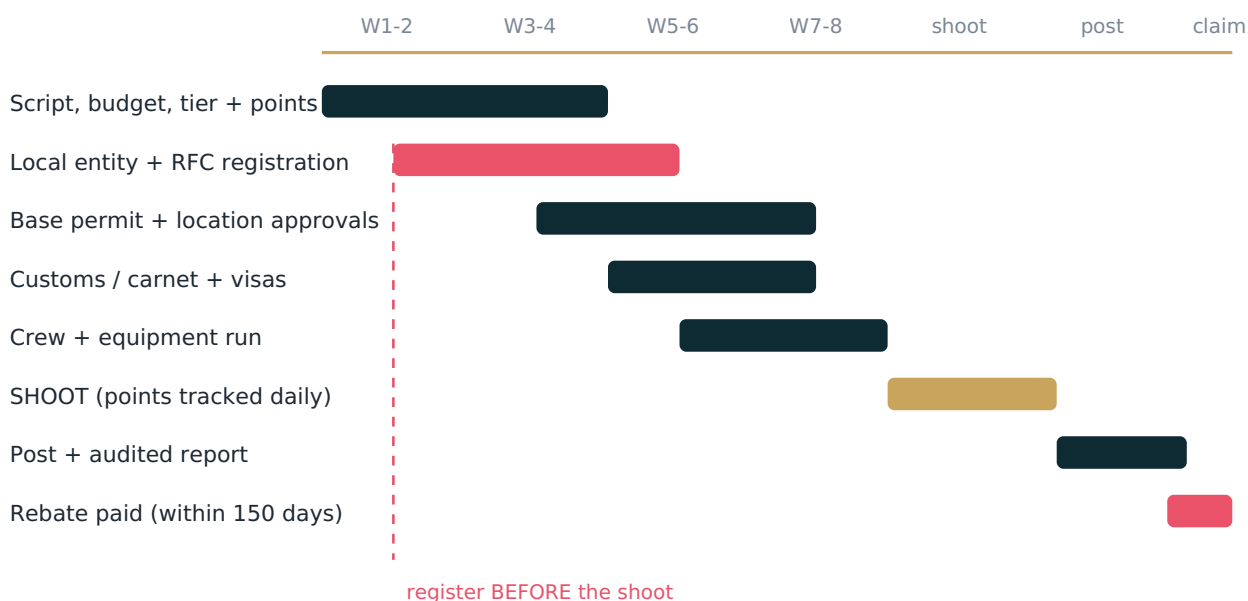
- ☐ Production, equipment and liability insurance bound
- ☐ Desert heat, water and medical plan (Wadi Rum)

The one that sinks claims: RFC registration must precede principal photography. A late application generally cannot be recovered, whatever the qualifying spend.

SECTION 13

Prep to rebate: the timeline

The RFC single window compresses what elsewhere takes months, but the rebate still lands well after wrap. Plan the runway around the approval chain, not the shoot days.



Indicative runway. The RFC compresses prep; the rebate lands within 150 days of the audited report.

The critical dependency runs through the red bar: RFC registration must be complete before principal photography, and everything upstream exists to make that deadline. The points score is built during the shoot, not reconstructed at wrap, which is why the daily tracking of the Jordanian crew ratio and qualifying spend matters as much as the call sheet.

Plan Jordan with people who have filed the claim.

This handbook gets you to an informed budget and a realistic schedule. Turning it into a shoot, and into a paid rebate, is the line producer's job. Talk to us before you lock the budget: lineproducersindia.in

KEEP GOING

Further reading and contact

This guide is part of a wider library covering line production across the Middle East and beyond:

- **Film Permission in Jordan** — the full RFC permits and rebate guide
- **Line Producer Jordan** — the service page for a Jordan shoot
- **Line Producer Middle East** — regional overview and cross-border planning
- **Worldwide Film Rebates & Incentives** — how Jordan compares globally



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International line production, permits, crew and rebate administration across Jordan, the Middle East and beyond. From RFC registration to the audited claim, start a conversation at lineproducersindia.in.

Sources & verification. Rebate tiers, the USD 5.25M cap, the USD 250,000 minimum, the six-category points system and its uplift bands, the 150-day disbursement and the eligible-cost list are drawn from the Royal Film Commission cash-rebate programme published at film.jo. Location and production details reflect RFC guidance and public production record. Terms change; confirm current details with the RFC before committing spend. This handbook is planning guidance, not legal, tax or financial advice.

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