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PROMOTING FILM AND MEDIA TO ENHANCE STATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thriving film, television, and related media arts industries offer states and localities in the United States not only cultural benefits but also significant economic benefits and opportunities. According to an economic impact report from the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), more than 1.3 million Americans were employed by the motion picture industry in 2005 and the total payroll that year exceeded \$30 billion. The industry spent an additional \$30 billion in direct payments for goods and services provided by U.S. businesses in 2005. Thus, direct economic benefits of filmmaking in the United States exceeded \$60 billion in just one year.

The attraction and support of film, television, and related media arts is now part of many states' economic development strategies. Studies have shown that the motion picture industry benefits state and local economies by:

- Attracting out-of-state investments;
- Creating high-paying jobs;
- Contributing to the economic and civic vitality of communities; and
- Stimulating cultural tourism.

Today, states compete to attract film productions and reap economic rewards. Strong production workforces around the globe have enticed many American productions to locate in other countries, taking millions of dollars in payroll and expenditures on goods and services out of the United States—a phenomenon called “runaway production.”

To capture these dollars, states are adopting strategies to make it easy to create, produce, and distribute film and other media productions from start to finish. State strategies that have proved successful include the following:

- Offer financial incentives to attract film industry activity, such as tax credits on in-state expenditures;
- Support the development of a state workforce with the skills to contribute to film activity through university-based and other training programs;
- Market the state to the film industry through state film office Web sites and other means;
- Facilitate the film production process in the state by creating production guides or providing scouting programs; and
- Cultivate local film activity and audiences by encouraging homegrown filmmaking and supporting film festivals and other events that engage the community.

INTRODUCTION

Thriving film, television, and related media arts industries offer significant economic benefits and opportunities to states, while energizing the cultural life of residents. The ways in which film, television, and media arts business can boost a state economy include the following:

- Attracting substantial out-of-state-investments to the local economy;
- Creating high-wage jobs and diverse employment opportunities;
- Contributing to the economic and civic vitality of communities; and
- Stimulating cultural tourism.

Today, the attraction and support of film, television, and related media arts activities is a part of many states' economic development strategies. To capitalize on the economic benefits of the film industry, states are adopting policies and programs designed to attract film activity and foster a climate that encourages a broad variety of creation, production, and distribution activities.

Strategies to enhance local film and media activity can boost states' employment and revenue in addition to providing positive publicity for the state and enhancing its cultural climate. As discussed in this *Issue Brief*, states compete against one another—and, increasingly, with locations overseas and in Canada—to attract the film industry, which can contribute millions of dollars to a state's economy and create thousands of jobs. State strategies that have proved successful in attracting and developing the film industry in a state include the following:

- Offer financial incentives to attract film industry activity;
- Support the development of a state workforce with the skills to contribute to film activity;
- Market the state to the film industry;
- Facilitate the film production process in the state; and
- Cultivate local film activity and audiences.

This *Issue Brief* outlines key benefits of film, television, and related media arts activity and describes state strategies to create, promote, and attract this industry's business. It is divided into three sections:

- **Economic Benefits of Film and Media** – The first section provides background on the economic benefits of film industry activity. By taking advantage of a range of policy actions, as well as the resources of state film offices and state arts agencies, states can secure many economic benefits.
- **Global Competition in Film Production** – This section offers a brief discussion of the impact of “runaway production” on the U.S. motion picture industry.
- **State Strategies to Attract Film and Media Activity** – The final section highlights strategies states are using to attract film productions and grow local film workforces.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF FILM AND MEDIA

Since the advent of silent film and the birth of Hollywood in the early 20th century, the motion picture business has brought economic and cultural benefits to the states and communities that host projects of all sizes. Behind the glitz and glam of the red carpet is a vast workforce of film technicians, editors, sound engineers, and others who work together to weave the individual pieces of a film into a working whole. According to the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), in 2005, more than 1.3 million Americans were employed by the motion picture industry on a total payroll of more than \$30.24 billion. The industry spent another \$30.2 billion for goods and services from U.S. vendors and suppliers, for a total economic output of \$60.44 billion as a result of motion picture industry activity.¹

Several states have conducted or commissioned statistical analyses to determine the impact of the film, television, and other media arts industries on state and local economies.* In 2006, for example, **Louisiana** commissioned a study to evaluate film and music industry trends, the impact of the state's incentive program for attracting film projects, and potential next steps for growing the state economy by expanding film and music initiatives. The investigators found that in 2003, state investments in film added approximately \$7.4 million to Louisiana's economy. The number of film projects in Louisiana increased from 19 in 2003 to 29 in 2005, and, in 2005, Louisiana's investment in film added \$343.8 million to the state economy.² Louisiana's investment also supported growth in film industry jobs—from 5,437 in 2003 to 13,445 in 2005.

A study commissioned by the state of **Arizona** revealed that the film industry had a significant economic impact on the state, generating \$201.5 million in economic activity and wages totaling \$56.6 million in 2003³ when the industry supported 1,704 jobs in the state. The report included estimates that between 10.9 percent and 25.7 percent of revenues from the 427 film projects produced in Arizona in 2003 came from out-of-state-sources. Its recommendations were that the state promote local film projects and adopt policies to protect the economic gains offered by the film industry.

Top 10 Film Production States**

1. *California*
2. *New York*
3. *Nevada*
4. *Arizona*
5. *North Carolina*
6. *Montana*
7. *New Jersey*
8. *Louisiana*
9. *New Mexico*
10. *Illinois*

Source: [MPAA, 2006](#)

New York has long been a major hub of film, television, and related media arts activity. According to an analysis by Cornell University, film, television, and commercial production added approximately \$11.7 billion to the state's economy in 2003. The production industry grew an estimated 7.2 percent in 2004 and another 6 percent in 2005, adding \$12.5 billion and \$13.3 billion respectively to the state economy each year.⁴

The analyses on the next four pages examine important economic benefits of the film, television, and related media arts industries, including:

- Attracting out-of-state investments;
- Creating high-wage jobs and diverse employment opportunities;
- Stimulating cultural tourism; and
- Contributing to the economic and civic vitality of communities.

* For a list of selected state analyses on economic impact of the film industry, see Appendix A.

** Based on the number of films produced in 2005 according to data supplied by state film commissions.

Attracting Out-of-State Investment

In the age of advanced digital technology, it has become easier for production companies to film on location, rather than on sound stages in Hollywood and New York City. States are eager to capitalize on the mobility of film production to take advantage of the large-scale, diversified economic activity that is stimulated by the infusion of out-of-state funds through capital, tax revenues, investment in infrastructure, and payments to local vendors and suppliers.

The successful production of a motion picture requires expenditures on many goods and services, most of which are provided by local vendors and suppliers. Typical expenses include construction materials, and electronic equipment, as well as supplies for costumes and set design. Producers also turn to local service providers for food, lodging, transportation, and other accommodations. Other common expenditures may include payroll, rent, location fees, dry cleaning services, transportation fees, vehicle rental, gas, electricity and other utilities, and wardrobe. In 2005, the motion picture industry generated approximately \$30.2 billion in revenue to vendors and suppliers in the United States.⁵

States that host film productions also see a significant revenue boost from taxes on the goods and services purchased by film and television productions. In 2005, sales taxes on goods and services paid by the entertainment industry generated \$700 million in revenues. Payroll taxes paid by industry workers generated \$9.3 billion in revenue.⁶ The industry also generates revenue through corporate income tax, property tax, business license taxes, and payroll taxes through indirect employment. In **Oregon**, for example, the film industry paid \$46.2 million in 2005 through state and local tax and other government revenues.⁷

Jobs in the Film Industry

Above-the-Line jobs in the motion picture industry are typically associated with filmmaking. Workers travel with projects to production locations. Above-the-Line jobs include the following:

- Actors
- Directors
- Writers
- Administrative Coordinators
- Producers

Below-the-Line jobs are behind-the-scenes but critical for the production of a film. Production companies often hire below-the-line workers locally. Job areas include the following:

- Production
- Art/Set Design
- Construction
- Props
- Cameras
- Sound
- Electrical
- Grip
- Wardrobe
- Make-up
- Editorial
- Transportation
- Special Effects
- Food
- Film Laboratory

Post-Production jobs are required to put a film together once all the filming and recording is complete. These jobs include:

- Music
- Sound
- Film/Lab Work

Other jobs in the industry include publicity, insurance, and legal work.

Source: *Library of Congress Report to U.S. Department of Commerce (Chapter 2)*

Creating High-Wage Jobs

Film, television, and other media arts industries create a diverse range of high wage employment opportunities in both the high-tech market and in service industries that support production, post-production, and distribution work. Film production is labor-intensive and requires a wide array of employees—not just actors and directors, but also technicians, truck drivers, caterers, construction crews, architects, and attorneys.

Jobs in the motion picture industry, as illustrated in the box on page 4, are characterized as “above the line” jobs and “below the line” jobs. An estimated 70 to 80 percent of below-the-line workers—behind the scenes workers involved in technical and hands-on work needed to produce a film—are hired locally.⁸ Moreover, these below-the-line workers often earn a higher hourly wage than workers employed in other private sector industries. In 2005, for example, direct employees of the film and media industries earned an average salary of \$73,000 (excluding highly paid talent)⁹—a figure 80 percent higher than the \$40,677 average annual salary of American workers that year.¹⁰

A 2004 study of **Arizona’s** film and video industry found that the film industry paid \$21.9 million in wages to workers directly employed in film occupations in the state. The film industry created 612 direct jobs in Arizona, along with 665 indirect jobs (jobs that supply goods and services to the film industry) and 427 induced jobs (jobs supported by wages spent through direct and indirect jobs) in Arizona. Overall, the film industry generated \$56.6 million in wages in the state.¹¹

Film projects in **Oregon** have created high wage jobs and contributed significantly to the state’s economy through payroll. In 2005, the Oregon film industry employed 3,534 direct employees who earned a total of \$146.3 million. These workers earned an average of \$41,403 in 2005, an amount 13.2 percent more than the average employee’s earnings in Oregon. The film industry also employed 1,987 freelancers and other self-employed individuals, who earned another \$46.4 million.¹²

In 2005, **Louisiana’s** film industry supported 2,695 full-time equivalent employees and paid approximately \$89 million in wages.¹³ That year, the state hosted 10 Movies of the Week (MOWs), 8 low-budget features, 5 feature films, and 6 other film projects. In 2006, film production in the state rose overall, resulting in 8 MOWs, 21 low budget features, 5 feature films, and 11 other projects. (For a description of types of film production, see box, right.)

Stimulating Cultural Tourism

Film, television, and related media arts provide popular opportunities for cultural participation by residents and tourists. Film events can stimulate cultural tourism, drawing visitors to take part in film

Types of Production

State and economies benefit from all types of film, television, and related media arts production:

Feature-length films, or theatrical releases: These are the typical, full-length films produced by major and independent studios. In 2006, 607 feature-length films were released, which is the most ever released in the history of filmmaking. Independent studios, or those studios that are not members of the Motion Picture Association (which comprises the major film studios), released two-thirds of feature-length films in 2006.

Movies of the Week (MOWs): Also known as “made for TV” movies, MOWs became a popular area of film production following the rise in cable television stations.

Other production areas: These include series television programming, television commercials, music videos, documentaries, and informational or educational films.

festivals and other media arts events. Increased tourism and efforts to spark community participation, such as local marketing, volunteer opportunities, and film education can stimulate economic activity.

Film festivals are useful tools that both engage the community and draw out-of-state tourists. In **Colorado**, for example, film festivals in 2001 attracted 87,000 attendees, generating \$12.6 million in direct spending.¹⁴ In **Utah**, the 2006 [Sundance Film Festival](#) brought \$61.5 million in economic activity to the state.¹⁵ The majority of Sundance attendees—70 percent—were from states other than Utah, and these attendees spent heavily on lodging, meals, and transportation. Many out-of-state attendees also took advantage of other attractions in Utah (e.g., 32 percent of out-of-state attendees skied while in the area for the film festival).

Some states have marketed film festivals in conjunction with the state tourism department to extend the economic impact of the festival. In **Rhode Island**, for example, the [Rhode Island International Film Festival](#) coordinates with local nonprofits to offer tourism opportunities in conjunction with the annual festival. Links to Rhode Island attractions such as historical sites, area restaurants, and inexpensive activities are featured on the film festival Web site, and festival-goers can take advantage of several discounted hotel and travel packages offered online.

Investing in Communities

In addition to contributing immediate benefits through the purchase of goods and services, film and media industry activities can yield long-term benefits for the states and towns that host industry projects. Production companies often invest significant resources developing a community's built environment to create the look needed for a film project. Such efforts may entail painting and repairing buildings, paving roads, and making aesthetic improvements such as planting gardens and landscaping. These improvements remain long after the filming ends.

The film industry frequently invests in physical infrastructure in communities to enable future productions to return to those locations. According to the MPAA, [Metro Productions](#), which provides multimedia and production services to private companies and government agencies, built a \$1 million production studio in Richmond, **Virginia**, that includes a soundstage, a green room, and editing, audio, and graphics suites.¹⁶ [Stone Five Studios](#), a **Utah**-based production and distribution subsidiary of [HaleStorm Entertainment](#), began work in 2005 on a new production and post-production facility in Provo. These facilities, and others like them, leave a lasting legacy and build the capacity of the state to attract further film industry projects.

In rural or economically challenged communities, film and media activity can ensure the economic and civic vitality in a variety of ways including improving infrastructure, leading beautification efforts, purchasing goods and services from local businesses, involving residents in the filmmaking process, and providing employment opportunities. Film festivals, which promote cultural tourism and generate economic activity, can also be a tool to revitalize distressed communities.

The film industry has been key to economic recovery in **Louisiana** since Hurricane Katrina devastated parts of the state in 2005. New investments in human capital and infrastructure through free training programs and the construction of new state-of-the-art soundstages in New Orleans aim to expand the film industry and rebuild the community. [LIFT Productions](#)—an independent film and television production studio—has begun construction of [The Film Factory](#)—a \$100 million, 300,000 square-foot studio in New Orleans to house sound stages, post-production facilities, and a film vocational school. The state's film

office worked to relocate projects to other areas of the state in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, demonstrating the skills of the Louisiana film industry outside of New Orleans, and encouraged film and television productions to return to New Orleans as the city's recovery progressed. In 2006, LIFT Productions and [Element Films](#), which is based in Los Angeles, created a fund aimed at bringing feature films to Louisiana through 2009.

In **New York**, the [Tribeca Film Institute](#) has played a key role in the economic revitalization of lower Manhattan since the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001. The institute was founded to support film as a means for promoting tolerance and global awareness while promoting rebuilding in the community through its year-round programs. The institute launched the [Tribeca Film Festival](#) in 2002 to encourage the economic and cultural revitalization of lower Manhattan. The festival, which takes place in Tribeca and in other neighborhoods throughout Manhattan, has become one of the top film events in America. By attracting several million visitors to lower Manhattan, the Tribeca Film Festival has generated approximately \$425 million in economic activity for New York City.¹⁷ In 2008, nearly 400,000 people attended the 11-day festival.¹⁸ Activities include film screenings, special events, concerts, a family street fair, and panel discussions. The Tribeca Film Institute—through the festival and other ongoing programs, which include arts-based initiatives that promote self-expression and social action, youth education and community outreach, and global awareness—has contributed to the revitalization of cultural and economic activity in lower Manhattan.

Film activity also can stimulate economic growth in rural communities. In **Arkansas**, for example, what began as a small documentary film festival launched in 1992 by local arts activists is now the [Hot Springs Documentary Film Institute](#), which draws more than 30,000 audience members and filmmakers each year.¹⁹ The festival now screens more than 90 nonfiction films annually, including the current year's Academy Award nominees. The film institute also hosts year-round educational, archival, and promotional activities aimed at advancing and promoting documentary filmmaking in and beyond Arkansas. Since its inception, the film institute has received support from the Academy of Motion Pictures, Arts, and Sciences; the Rockefeller Foundation; the Arkansas Arts Council; the Arkansas Humanities Council; and the National Endowment for the Arts. It also has worked with the Hot Springs Music Festival, local galleries, and other attractions to make cultural tourism an important part of Arkansas' economy.

GLOBAL COMPETITION IN FILM PRODUCTION

The above benefits are being threatened by competition from around the globe. The motion picture industry is a highly competitive workforce cluster that states and countries work hard to attract. As film evolved in the 20th century, it became a large and complex industry that demanded increasingly specialized artistic and technical skills. Artists, technicians, and specialists in areas such as editing, sound, lighting, imaging, camera work, set design, special effects, and graphics have become a vital part of film and television production and have long set American film production apart from foreign filmmaking.

States that enjoy a high level of film production activity are those considered to be “production clusters.” Production clusters have all the elements necessary to produce a film from start to finish, such as skilled production and post-production workforces, production facilities, and existing film infrastructures that support financing, development, and distribution. Well-established production clusters are located in states such as **California, Illinois, New York, and North Carolina**.

However, in recent years, countries such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have also established strong workforce clusters for film production and have developed technical expertise to rival that found within the American film industry. These countries invested heavily in education and training to develop a highly skilled workforce while offering financial incentives to local and foreign film projects that encourage local production. Such incentives target big-budget U.S. productions.

As a result, many American film projects have moved abroad to take advantage of skilled labor and financial incentives—a phenomenon known as “runaway production.” Despite a 30 percent increase in the dollar volume of worldwide film production from 1998 to 2006, the United States experienced a 14 percent decline, from \$3.9 billion to \$3.3 billion, while production in Canada, United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and countries in Eastern Europe expanded. The number of theatrical releases produced in the United States declined from 127 to 99 between 1998 and 2005. During this same period, the number of theatrical releases filmed in other countries rose from 67 to 104.²⁰ A report from the Center for Entertainment Industry Data and Research indicates that the United States has lost 47,000 jobs on average per year since 1998, as well as an estimated \$23 billion in economic revenues from film projects produced overseas since 2000.²¹

States interested in reaping the economic benefit of ongoing film activity are examining options for developing their own production clusters. Today, when states compete to attract film projects, they are competing to keep the film industry in the United States. To become more competitive, states are refocusing efforts to develop skilled film workforces, create a local film infrastructure, cultivate local film activity, and enact financial incentives to attract film projects.

STATE STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT FILM AND MEDIA ACTIVITY

To attract film and media projects that can contribute millions of dollars to a state’s economy and create thousands of jobs, states must compete not only with one another but, increasingly, with locations overseas and in Canada. The stimulation of film, television, and related media arts activities is an area of considerable policy innovation among states. In order to capitalize on the economic benefits of business in this industry, many states have launched initiatives designed to attract film activity and foster a climate that encourages a broad variety of creation, production, and distribution activities. These strategies not only increase the availability of high-wage jobs and state revenue, they also provide positive public relations for the state and enhance its cultural climate. To compete with other states and countries to attract film and media activity, states are refocusing efforts to develop skilled film workforces, create a local film infrastructure, cultivate local film activity, and enact financial incentives to attract film projects. States interested in reaping the economic, cultural, and other benefits of ongoing film and media activity are examining options for developing or expanding their own production clusters.

As discussed below, state strategies that have proved successful in attracting film and media activity and fostering a climate that encourages a broad variety of creation, production, and distribution activities include the following:

- Offering financial incentives for film projects in the state;
- Supporting the development of a state workforce with the skills to contribute to film activity;
- Facilitating the process of producing films in the state;
- Marketing the state to attract film and media activity; and
- Cultivating local film activity and audiences.

Offer Financial Incentives for Film Projects

To capture pre-production, production, and post-production film projects, states have enacted various financial incentives to help filmmakers cut costs. A combination of incentives can help stimulate new film activity and help states compete with one another and with other countries. Financial incentives fall into five main categories: tax rebates or exemptions; labor incentives; lodging incentives; state property use incentives; and other financial incentives such as grants, loans, or fuel tax vouchers. The number of states using such incentives as of August 2007 is shown in the accompanying table.

Number of States Using Specific Financial Incentives to Attract Film Projects as of July 2008	
Incentive	Number of States
Tax Rebates or Exemptions	43
Labor Incentives	28
Lodging Incentives	27
State Property Use Incentives	14
Other Financial Incentives (e.g. grants, loans, fuel vouchers)	10

Tax Rebates or Tax Exemptions

As of August 2007, 43 states offer tax rebates or exemptions to film projects.[†] These incentives often apply to taxes normally assessed for sales, income, or goods and services (such as equipment rental). In May 2007, for example, **Iowa** Governor Chet Culver signed the [Iowa Film Promotion Act](#) to assist and encourage the production of film, television, and video projects in the state. The program offers a transferable 25 percent income tax credit on qualified state expenses for individuals who invest in or produce a state-registered film project. Qualified state expenses include payments to Iowa residents or businesses for personal property or services related to the film project such as vehicles, equipment, accounting, artistic and design services, construction, data and information services, labor and personnel, lighting, makeup and hairdressing, film, music, photography, sound, video and related services, printing, and travel related to distant state locations. Iowa's program also offers a 100 percent income exclusion for Iowa-based companies or Iowa residents for income earned through a registered film project.

In **Pennsylvania**, filmmakers who incur 60 percent or more of total production expenses in the state can receive a 25 percent tax credit on production expenses. Pennsylvania's [Creativity in Focus Tax Credit](#) is available for feature films, television films, television pilots, and each episode of a television series. Eligible expenses include wages and salaries under \$1 million dollars, construction, operations, editing, photography, sound synchronization, lighting, wardrobe and accessories, and the cost of rental of facilities and equipment. The commonwealth was authorized to award up to \$75 million during the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

Massachusetts offers its [tax credits](#), which are available to studios, producers, and filmmakers who shoot half their movie or spend half of their production budget in the commonwealth, with an option for filmmakers to take the credits as a direct rebate at 90 percent of the face value, or to sell them at market

[†] According to a survey conducted by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies for this publication. For a complete tally of film incentives, see Appendix B.

rate—whichever is more favorable. The tax credit is equal to 25 percent of a production's total spending in Massachusetts. The film credit requires minimum expenditures of \$50,000, a low threshold designed to benefit local, independent, and documentary filmmakers.²²

Puerto Rico enacted a 40 percent tax credit through the passage of a 1999 [Law for the Development of the Film Industry](#). To be eligible for the credit, productions must apply for a license with the [Puerto Rico Film Commission](#), be endorsed by the film commission, and receive approval from the Department of Treasury. Under the law, productions may sell or transfer the credits the tax credits, which may be used against Puerto Rico income tax liability. According to the film commission, the market value for the purchase and sale of tax credits is between approximately 8 percent and 15 percent during the income tax season.

States that have recently expanded or enacted tax incentives to entice new film projects include **Michigan** and **New York**. Michigan increased its [tax credit](#) for producing films in the state from 20 percent to 40 percent. Michigan's legislation, signed in April 2008 by Governor Jennifer Granholm, offers an additional 2 percent credit for films produced in identified core communities.²³ New York Governor David Paterson signed legislation in April 2008 to expand the [Empire State Film Production Tax Credit](#).²⁴ New York's legislation triples the percentage of qualified production costs eligible for the state's refundable tax credit from 10 percent to 30 percent, extends the tax credit program to 2013, and raises the amount that can be awarded per year under this program from \$60 million to \$110 million over the next six years.

Labor Incentives

Twenty-three states offer incentives to reduce the cost of labor for film and media projects. Labor incentives apply to compensation for workers, typically those who are state residents, for production-related labor. These incentives benefit states by encouraging production companies to hire local workers and by attracting film projects looking to cut costs.

Tax credits have a track record of increasing film production in states. **Louisiana's** film production tax credit, enacted in 2002, facilitated a surge of direct expenditures by film projects from \$30 million to \$250 million.²⁵ In 2004, **Illinois** Governor Rod Blagojevich signed SB 785 to provide a tax credit to film and television productions for up to 25 percent of the first \$25,000 in wages paid to Illinois residents. During the next year, film expenditures in the state doubled to \$77 million and the new film projects created 15,000 jobs.²⁶ Governor Blagojevich signed an extension of the credit in 2005 and approved the [Illinois Film Production Services Tax Credit Act](#) in 2006, which created a 20 percent credit on Illinois salaries up to \$100,000 per worker. According to the state, the tax credit helped generate \$155 million in expenditures and wages.²⁷

Additionally, Illinois is among the states that encourages diversity in its film employment practices. With the goal of increasing minority participation in the film industry, Illinois' Film Service Tax Credit requires that production companies receiving the credit make a "good faith" effort to hire women and minorities and to purchase services from minority-owned businesses. The state publishes a [diversity guide](#) to assist film production companies with this process.

Other states have tax rebates aimed at increasing film production by lowering the cost of labor. **Montana** offers a 14 percent tax rebate for Montana labor hired by film projects. The rebate applies to the first \$50,000 paid to each Montana resident.²⁸ **Wyoming** offers a 12 percent to 15 percent rebate on

expenditures for compensation for technical and production crews, directors, producers, performers, and extras who are Wyoming residents.²⁹

Through the **Oregon [Production Investment Fund](#)**, projects filming in the state can qualify for a 10 percent cash rebate on wages paid for labor undertaken in Oregon (as well as a 20 percent cash rebate on production-related goods and services paid to Oregon vendors). The rebate applies to labor undertaken by both residents and nonresidents. Additionally, film projects may combine the labor rebate with the Greenlight Oregon Labor Rebate program, which offers productions that spend at least \$1 million on production-related expenses a 6.2 percent rebate on wages paid in Oregon.

The **Georgia [Entertainment Industry Investment Act](#)** rewards production companies that hire **Georgia** residents. Productions that hire Georgia residents may qualify for an additional 3 percent credit on Georgia labor above the state's 9 percent base tax credit for companies that invest \$500,000 in a year on qualified expenditures.

Lodging Incentives

Lodging incentives help cut costs for filming on location for production companies that must provide lodging for out-of-town staff, often for an extended period of time. To help offset this expense, **Minnesota** exempts lodging tax for production personnel who reside at the same facility for 30 consecutive days.³⁰ In **Texas**, state and local occupancy taxes are waived after the 30th consecutive day of residency, retroactive to the first day of stay.³¹ **Vermont** also offers a retroactive tax exemption for people who stay 31 days or longer if they contract in advance with a hotel, motel, or inn.³²

State Property Use Incentives

The rental and use of state property and building facilities can be costly for film projects. Ten states offer incentives to help reduce this cost. In **Wisconsin**, film production companies can find incentives on a city-by-city basis to use state-owned buildings and locations free of charge, with no permit fees.³³ Additionally, production companies can secure a police unit to manage traffic during daytime filming free of charge. Those in **Pennsylvania** may use state-owned property at no cost for making commercial motion pictures.³⁴ **New Hampshire** requires no filming permits and requires only a completed application to film on state property such as parks, government buildings, and historic sites.³⁵

Other Financial Incentives

Some states offer additional financial incentives beyond tax exemptions and labor, lodging, and state property use incentives. For example, through the **New Mexico [Film Investment Loan Program](#)**, film projects may apply for a 0 percent loan, with backend participation in lieu of interest, for up to \$15 million per project. This means that for films projects that are able to demonstrate potential for generating a profit, New Mexico will accept a negotiated percentage of the profits post-breakdown revenue stream retains a negotiated cut of a film's profits after the production's investment in the state has been considered. **Michigan** offers a [similar loan opportunity](#) through its Jobs for Michigan Investment Fund.

New York gives film projects an [investment tax credit](#) for construction upgrades as well as a special commercial incentive. **Oklahoma** offers both reinvestment and construction incentives.³⁶ **Texas** offers fuel tax breaks for qualified film projects.³⁷ Other states promote their general tax policies as incentives for film projects. For example, **Alaska**, **New Hampshire**, and **Nevada** do not have state sales or income taxes, which could lower production costs for film projects. **Delaware** charges no sales, property, or

inventory taxes, and advertises these incentives for all business activity.³⁸ **Minnesota** exempts expenditures for television commercial production and post-production from state sales tax.³⁹

Multi-Incentive Packages

Many states offer a combination of financial incentives to entice film production companies seeking to reduce costs. One such state, **Connecticut**, makes [tax, labor, and lodging incentives](#) available for film projects that locate in the state. Qualified digital media and motion picture productions that exceed \$50,000 may receive a 30 percent tax credit on production, preproduction, and post-production expenses incurred in the state. The Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism's Digital Media and Motion Picture Division administers the program. Additionally, Connecticut offers certain income tax exemptions for performers and performing entities on income derived from Connecticut sources. Finally, the state waives its 12 percent hotel occupancy tax after 30 days of consecutive stay.

In August 2007, Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell signed a [state law](#) to boost existing tax credits and establish a film workforce training program. The law, which is designed to create new jobs, establishes credits against the corporation and insurance premium taxes for investments in film and digital media infrastructure projects and digital animation productions. The credits are transferable, which means that they may be bought and sold up to three times. The law aims to build off the success of the original tax credit bill, passed in 2006, which has brought over \$450 million in spending to the state, according to Governor Rell.

In 2002, **New Mexico** enacted legislation to create sales tax exemptions, income tax credits, and no-interest loans for productions filmed in the state, creating a policy package that utilizes multiple incentives. In 2003, under Governor Bill Richardson, the number of film expenditures in the state rose to \$80 million, up from \$8 million in 2002.⁴⁰ This 1,000 percent increase in film expenditures demonstrates the powerful effect financial incentives can have on a state's economy.

In addition to a 40 percent refundable tax credit against Michigan Business Tax liability for production expenses, **Michigan** uses multiple incentives to attract potential film projects. Michigan's production incentives include a 25 percent tax credit for investments of more than \$250,000 on Michigan film or production infrastructure; low- and no-interest loan programs for qualifying film and digital media productions in Michigan; a 50 percent refundable tax credit for production companies on expenses for on-the-job training for Michigan residents in advance below-the-line crew positions; and free use of state property for film and digital media production.⁴¹

Rural Incentives

Financial incentives for film productions also play a role in helping states address their rural development needs. Several states use financial incentives as a way to bolster workforce development or to encourage film production companies to shoot in rural areas of the state. **Texas**, for example, encourages filming in rural areas through its [Moving Image Industry Incentive Program](#). Production companies that spend at least 25 percent of their filming days shooting in areas designated by Texas as "underused" can receive a 1.25 percent grant on top of the 5 percent grant on in-state spending available to production companies that produce 80 percent or more of a film project in Texas. This grant is in addition to sales tax exemptions Texas offers for qualified film projects. Other qualifications for the Moving Industry Incentive grant include the following:

- At least 70 percent of the crew, cast, and extras must be Texas residents;

- The project must spend at least \$1 million for feature films, television programs, or documentaries or at least \$100,000 for commercials, infomercials, music videos, and video games; and
- The grants are capped at \$2 million for features, \$2.5 million for television programs, \$200,000 for commercials, and \$250,000 for video games.

Alaska Governor Sarah Palin signed a new film incentive program into law in June 2008. The legislation establishes the Alaska Film Office and includes incentives to attract film productions to Alaska and to encourage them to film in rural locations. The incentive program includes a 30 percent transferable tax credit on qualified expenditures, with the option to claim an extra 10 percent for wages paid to Alaska residents, an extra 2 percent for filming in a rural area, and an extra 2 percent for productions that film between October 1 and March 30. To qualify for the incentive program, productions must spend at least \$100,000 in Alaska during a consecutive 24-month period.⁴²

Support Local Workforce Development

The presence of a local workforce trained in video production is another key to attracting out-of-state film projects, as well as supporting homegrown filmmaking. For that reason, numerous states have launched initiatives designed to cultivate a skilled local workforce trained in film and video production.

The entertainment industry may be more willing to launch a project in or bring post-production work to an area where a skilled technical workforce already exists. By expanding training opportunities and integrating film and media arts education in schools, afterschool programs, and community colleges, states are helping ensure the availability of highly skilled workers. As discussed below, some states offer financial incentives for workforce development; some have film and arts training programs based in universities or run by theaters, studios, or specially designed training institutes; and some states invest in youth-oriented media programs.

Financial Incentives for Workforce Development

South Carolina filmmakers can apply for grants from the [South Carolina Film Production Fund](#), a fund created to develop collaborative projects in film, video, and multimedia between professionals in motion picture related industries and institutions of higher learning in South Carolina. Filmmakers must work in collaboration with South Carolina colleges or universities on the film projects. This requirement allows the Film Production Fund to achieve the important goal of increasing the number of trained film professionals in South Carolina.

Rhode Island has integrated workforce development into the state's film industry financial incentive policies. To receive tax credits from the state, filmmakers must submit a plan to the Rhode Island Film Office detailing how their film projects will involve interns from state higher education institutions, labor organizations, and nonprofit organizations involved in film, television, and related media arts work. Filmmakers must also document plans to participate in training sessions and recruit diverse workers for their projects. [These requirements](#) aim to ensure on-the-job training for state residents.

New Mexico also offers a financial incentive for filmmakers that doubles as a workforce development initiative. Through the [Film Crew Advancement Training Program](#), film productions may receive a 50 percent reimbursement on wages paid to below-the-line workers who are residents of New Mexico. To qualify for the reimbursement, productions must offer on-the-job training to help New Mexican workers

in below-the-line crew positions advance to higher-level jobs. The New Mexico Film Office administers this program.

University-Based Programs

University-based programs in film, television, and other related media disciplines can help a state cultivate talent and maintain a hub of skilled workers as well as a supply of high-tech equipment, state-of-the-art studios and sound stages, and post-production facilities. A strong university-based program could be an important starting point for a state looking to build or strengthen a production cluster.

The state of **Florida** boasts the [Florida State University College of Motion Picture, Television, and Recording Arts](#) (FSU Film School). The FSU Film School, created in 1989 by the state legislature, offers a highly competitive training program for aspiring filmmakers. Students gain skills in development, preparation, production, and post-production and have access to state-of-the-art equipment, studios, and sound stages. The FSU Film School offers degrees in production and professional writing as well as a minor in film studies. The university offers financial incentives to attract talent, including production funds for student-produced films as well as scholarships and assistantships to reduce tuition. Additionally, the university assigns industry mentors to Film School graduates, which has led to a 100 percent employment rate in the entertainment industry within 12 months for recent graduates.

North Carolina offers opportunities for aspiring filmmakers at the [School of Filmmaking](#) at the [North Carolina School of the Arts](#), which was created by former Governor Terry Sanford and author John Ehle. Established by the state's general assembly in 1963, this residential school became part of the University of North Carolina system in 1972. The School of Filmmaking was established in 1993 to provide professional training and access to high-quality equipment and production facilities. Undergraduate programs offered at the school include cinematography, directing, editing and sound, producing, art direction, soundtrack composition and screenwriting. The School of Filmmaking covers the cost of production and post-production for student work.

In **Colorado**, a joint operating agreement among the [Community College of Aurora](#), the University of Colorado at Denver, and Health Sciences Center's [College of Arts & Media](#) created the [Colorado Film School](#). The school offers associate's and bachelor's degrees in Film/Video Writing and Directing, Film/Video Producing, Film/Video Post Production, and Cinematography/Videography. Additionally, professionals wishing to strengthen their technical skills may participate in certificate programs in each of these areas. The school aims to serve as an industry resource in production research and development, particularly in the areas of technology, funding, film distribution, and video production.

U.S. Film Schools

There are at least 100 film schools in the United States, spread across 27 states and the District of Columbia. The types of programs and degrees offered in film study are quite diverse.

Some schools focus on broad technical and artistic aspects of film production, while other programs specialize in one or two areas, such as post-production technology. Some programs integrate film study as part of a larger art or communications program, while others focus solely on film.

Students have opportunities to pursue film study at community and technical colleges, state universities, and elite academies. States may benefit from capitalizing on these existing resources by finding ways to center workforce development efforts in the film industry around these film schools.

Other Film Education and Training Programs

States such as **Idaho**, **Louisiana**, and **New Mexico** are home to film training programs that attract and cultivate talent outside of colleges and universities. Such programs develop new talent, strengthen existing talent, provide job opportunities for workers interested in careers in film, and create a workforce of skilled technicians who can take on production and post-production work when outside film projects locate in the area.

The goal of the **Idaho Film and Television Institute** is to encourage economic activity in southeast Idaho and bring outside sources of income to the local population. To achieve this goal, the Film and Television Institute trains local and visiting students in cinematography, writing, directing, producing, and working on a film crew. The institute provides adult education classes to the community and incorporates film classes in the local public school system.

Through a grant provided by the state of **Louisiana**, the **New Orleans Video Access Center** (NOVAC) provides free job training and placement services to members of the community interested in pursuing careers in the film industry. The goal of the program is to encourage the creation of independent, non-commercial video for a diverse community. NOVAC offers film crew training opportunities to low- and moderate-income people in the areas of grip, electrical, and production assistant work. NOVAC also offers training workshops through its Digital Film Institute that covers production planning, digital video camera operation, video editing, DVD creation, lighting, sound recording, film theory, graphic arts, and Internet video distribution.⁴³

In 2004, **New Mexico** launched the **Governors Film Technicians Training Program** (FTTP) in an effort to grow the number of skilled film crew workers in the state. The New Mexico Film Office and the state union for theatrical and stage employees created the program jointly to train New Mexico residents for work in the film industry. FTTP is currently offered at five state higher education institutions.

Youth Job Training

Recognizing the long-term necessity of comprehensive workforce development approaches, some states are investing in youth-oriented arts education programs. Job training is the focus for **ArtWorks**, a **Michigan**-based nonprofit that specializes in teaching work skills and facilitating positive relationships between youth and adults. Through ArtWorks, youths train with professional artists to produce artwork for clients, giving the students practical, applied experience in the production of digital material. Students also may obtain school credit for completing internships, which include several opportunities in video production, graphic design, and Web design.

Media arts is a primary focus of programs offered for children and youth at **The Community Art Center, Inc.** in **Massachusetts**. The center offers year-round programs for children in disadvantaged Cambridge neighborhoods to help them explore their creativity, learn problem-solving skills, and engage in self-expression. Children in disadvantaged neighborhoods have the opportunity to participate in the center's media arts program, where they analyze media images, acquire media literacy, and learn about the roles involved in film production. The Community Art Center has been offering its Teen Media Program since 1970 and the program has won numerous awards. Teens meet once a week during the school year to work on the development and execution of film projects. In the summer, teens can participate in a seven-week video workshop to sharpen their filmmaking skills. Teens may also move into the Genuine Productions Youth Video Business and receive stipends for their work. The Youth Video Business is a youth-managed enterprise that teaches business skills along with video production skills. The Community Art

Center also sponsors an artist residency program to give visiting teens the opportunity to receive mentoring and training from professional filmmakers. Finally, the center's "Do it Your Own Damn Self" national youth video and film festival involves the community in celebrating work that teens produce during the center's summer camp. Teens are involved in developing marketing materials, and setting up, producing, and hosting the festival.

Facilitate the Film Production Process

States can make themselves appealing to out-of-state film production companies by helping them make connections to skilled workers and services that film companies need, thereby making it easier to film in the state. As described below, states are adopting a number of approaches to facilitate the film production process:

- Creating film production guides;
- Developing location guides; and
- Providing scouting and liaison services.

State Film Production Guides

A film production guide is a comprehensive list of state contacts to help companies and filmmakers connect with the entities necessary to produce a film. Production guides often include information about state tax incentives; contact information for government agencies; casting agencies, film editors, technicians, and skilled workers such as grips and production assistants; companies that provide supplies to film projects; and hospitality information.

For example, the [Pennsylvania Online Production Guide](#) is a free catalogue of film and video professionals in the state. Workers and vendors may apply for a listing with the Pennsylvania Film Office, and others may search by profession and region to locate film crew, post-production and production workers, and a wide array of services.

Maine's [production guide](#) allows online searches for production or support services. Each entry includes contact information, areas of expertise, a description of services, and credits.

The [Web site](#) of the state film office in **Montana** features a service profile that lets prospective filmmakers know about services offered by the state, including locations, incentives, production information, and assistance in dealing with government agencies, businesses, and landowners.

State Location Guides

A state location guide offers information on filming venues throughout the state. These guides may include pictures, descriptions of the area, transportation information, contact information for privately owned locations, and weather guides. In a survey conducted by the ESI Corporation in 2004, producers cited online location images as the service offered by state film offices they used most.⁴⁴ The same survey found that a major reason producers choose a particular state or location for their productions is the scenery needed by the client or director. Thus, location photos are a key tool state film offices can use to attract film projects.

Roles for State Film Offices in Promoting Film and Media Activity

- Market state assets
- Recruit out-of-state productions
- Administer film incentive programs
- Support film production business
- Cultivate in-state film workforce
- Advise localities and government agencies in devising film-friendly policies
- Serve as a spokesperson for the industry
- Monitor film activity and its impact
- Educate citizens about film production

The **Virginia** Film Office hosts an online [location library](#) that allows users to search by category and subcategory through thousands of location files. Users may register and create personal location folders to store photos for quick retrieval at a later date or work directly with the film office to create a custom location package. Additionally, Virginians may submit photographs of their property to be included in the library. Producers interested in filming in **Minnesota** similarly may browse on the Web through Minnesota's [location categories](#) and select photos to store in a personal folder.

The **Washington** State Film Office provides an online clearinghouse of thousands of location photos throughout the state. Users may contact the film office to request a customized location package. The [location library](#) offers a sample of photos online as well as a description of each of the categories in the library.

[Filming in Vermont](#), the **Vermont** Film Office Web site, features an online production guide with a list of film-friendly businesses, travel information, and a library of location photos. The location photos library lets users search through photos by category, subcategory, and specific location.

Scouting Services for Production Companies

Many state film offices assist film production companies with site assessments and other scouting activities designed to determine the suitability of a state or locality. By acting as a coordinator and liaison, the state helps production companies understand and gain access to the locations, amenities, and services available to assist their project.

Apart from using maps and detailed information about weather, sunrise and sunset times, and foliage throughout the state, producers seeking to film in **Tennessee** may utilize the [scouting service](#) offered through the Tennessee Film & Music Commission. The locations department employs full-time location coordinators that scout and provide photographs of specific locations throughout the state. **Texas** also offers [scouting services](#) through the Texas Film Commission and makes these services available to the computer and video game industry.

West Virginia's film office offers a unique service to prospective film projects. Through the state's [River on Demand](#) program, filmmakers may shoot scenes featuring their choice of calm or raging rapids. West Virginia's Gauley River is managed by a flood-control dam, and water can be released into the river from the dam's valves. During November, the film office offers motion and television productions the

Green Films

The film and television production industries can be leaders in "green" business practices. Production companies are increasingly choosing to minimize their environmental footprints when creating new films, and their eco-friendly practices may serve as an example to other major industries. States are working to promote green productions by offering tips and incentives to production companies.

Florida has a [Green Production Plan](#) that aims to promote green films and encourage film productions to include environmentally friendly messages. The Governor's Office of Film & Entertainment posts a guide online to help companies with the greening of their productions. The guide urges productions to recycle, stay in green hotels, and purchase environmentally friendly products from vendors that conserve energy. The guide also suggests ways to convey eco-friendly messages throughout a film, such as showing characters recycling, walking or using green forms of transportation, and turning off the water while brushing their teeth.

New Mexico's [Green Filmmaking Program](#) is a voluntary program for film production companies interested in going green. The initiative educates productions about using eco-friendly materials, provides incentives for productions that choose environmentally sensitive practices, and offers resources to help productions minimize their environmental impact. Incentives include the possibility of waiving permit fees or other costs for green films.

opportunity to film a release of water into the Gauley River, creating a white water effect. The River on Demand program is possible because of the drawdown of the Summersville Lake by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Market the State to the Film Industry

In recent years, states have embarked on a number of strategies to market themselves to the film industry. As described below, these strategies include using state film offices to market their state and facilitate film activity business, assisting cities and towns in their efforts to attract film projects and support the film industry, and promoting established film production sites and post-production facilities in the state.

State Film Offices[‡]

A 2004 survey of film producers found that 91 percent of those surveyed reported that the state film office Web site was their main resource for gathering information about filming in a state.⁴⁵ Accordingly, most states use their state film office's Web site to promote creatively what they have to offer to film production companies, emphasizing their unique features.

Massachusetts bills itself as the most film-friendly state in America. The [Massachusetts Film Office Web site](#) sums up the state's features with three things "every filmmaker should know," which are: "best tax credit, best crew base, and best picture 2007." The Web site expands on this theme with information on state's film tax incentives, the experience and size of the local film workforce, and a list of successful movies produced in the state, which includes the 2007 Academy Award winner for Best Picture, *The Departed*. The Web site also features a production guide with contact information for workers, equipment, and other services, as well as a promotional video. The video cites the Massachusetts Film Office as the "single, unified voice for film and television production in Massachusetts," and features clips from critically acclaimed movies filmed in the state.

The **Virginia** Film Office won second prize in the annual marketing competition hosted by the [Association of Film Commissioners International](#) (AFCI), which makes awards to film offices that do outstanding work promoting their states to the film and television industry. Virginia's Web site, www.film.va.org, features the tag line, "Virginia is for Film Lovers," and provides the following:

- An online production guide;
- Links to local film offices;
- An online location library;
- Opportunities for Virginians to get involved in film activity;
- An online version of the state's hotline, which lists job opportunities for above- and below-the-line workers in the film industry and upcoming film events;
- Financial incentives for film production companies; and
- Links to news releases, annual financial reports of film industry impact in Virginia, biannual newsletters, and publications by the state film office.

Other [2008 AFCI awardees](#) for marketing included **Utah** and **Virginia**, which each received four awards and **North Carolina**, which received two awards. Other state film offices to receive recognition from AFCI were **Arizona**, **Colorado**, **Georgia**, **Hawaii**, **Montana**, and **West Virginia**. State film offices competed with entries from film offices in other states as well as from other countries, including Canada,

[‡] For a complete directory of state film offices, see Appendix C.

New Zealand, and South Africa. The competition evaluated print ads, direct mailings, logos, digital presentation, location brochures, specialty materials, and Web sites.

Many states market unique features to entice production companies. For example, **Alabama's** "[The Country to Film In](#)" marketing strategy highlights the state's diversity and rich history of literature, music, art, and theater. A promotional video located on the Alabama Film Office's Web site features shots throughout the state that resemble the landscapes and common features of other states. The video cites examples of films that use Alabama locations to simulate scenes set in other states and notes that Alabama is the second most biodiverse state in the country. The video ends by declaring that filming in Alabama is like filming in the entire country.

The **Maryland** marketing campaign "[Why Maryland?](#)" aims to highlight diversity within the state and advertises the state as a miniature America. The Maryland Film Office's Web site features different landscapes throughout the state, boasts about the state's film workforce, provides access to a regional production guide to connect film projects with workers and services, lists specific services offered by the film office, and promotes Maryland's accessibility and proximity to several major cities.

In an effort to revitalize local communities, **Oregon** Governor Ted Kulongoski signed legislation in March 2007 called CHAMP Reinvestment Package, with CHAMP standing for cultural, heritage, arts, movies, and public broadcasting. The \$10.6 million package is designed to restore and create cultural programs, revitalize communities, and promote tourism. A key component of the CHAMP package is the support it provides for connections between Oregon's history, movie making, arts, and public broadcasting. The CHAMP package includes \$414,000 for the state's film office to invest in marketing for out-of-state film projects. The state hopes to see an escalation of out-of-state film and commercial production as well as increased economic activity of between \$4.5 million and \$8.98 million. Filmmakers can learn more about the benefits of filming in Oregon through the [Oregon Film Web site](#), which explains why "we're Oregon and they're not." The Web site markets the state by highlighting Oregon's geographic diversity, skilled film workforce, openness to outside film crews, film-friendly climate, and lack of sales tax. Filmmakers may browse the office's database of state location photos, watch the online locations video, read about the state's film tax incentives, access Oregon's production directory, and note upcoming film events.

Minnesota promotes its Film Jobs Production Program reimbursement to prospective film producers through a marketing campaign dubbed "[Snowbate](#)." The Snowbate promotion, created by the Minnesota Film and TV Board, uses eye-catching print ads resembling movie posters to feature Minnesota's reimbursement of in-state film production costs up to 15 percent and or up to 20 percent if film production costs exceed \$5,000,000 within a 12-month period. Minnesota offers these reimbursements to feature films, national TV series, commercials, documentaries, and music videos.

Coordination of Marketing Efforts with Counties and Municipalities

States may strengthen their marketing efforts by coordinating with cities, counties, and towns to attract and cultivate film projects. In **Iowa**, the state film office publishes a guide to help Iowa localities become "[camera-ready](#)." Camera-ready communities have lists and pictures of unique locations; information on transportation, electricity, noise, parking, and other common concerns of production companies; community maps; a contact team willing to work with film productions; opportunities to educate and engage the community in the film industry; and local marketing materials. The guide aims to help

communities become camera-ready, which helps the state film office promote communities to the domestic and international film markets.

California coordinates the efforts of county and municipal film groups to attract, retain, and facilitate film and television production across the state through the [California Regional Office Partnership](#) facilitated by the California Film Commission. The California partnership also publishes a guide for localities on attracting film production. The guide discusses how communities can create film development programs, promote their communities to the film industry, and publicize their success with past projects to attract future film projects. The guide also contains sample forms for communities, including a photography and filming permit, a certificate of insurance, a model ordinance, and an economic impact questionnaire.

Promotion of Film Production and Post-Production Facilities

Recent advances in technology allow film and video producers to utilize service providers anywhere in the United States or abroad. States are competing in this marketplace by promoting their skilled workers and established facilities to attract both production and post-production projects. Promoting these comprehensive resources can help states keep film and video companies in the area after filming is completed, thus extending the economic benefits.

The state-owned **Hawaii** Film Studio, for example, markets itself as a stable set with a quiet and secure shooting environment near restaurants and nightlife. The [Web site](#) of the state's film office promotes the studio's features and the movies and television shows that have been produced there and includes photos of the studio to encourage film productions to use it.

Cultivate Local Film Activity and Audiences

Many states have found that cultivating local film and media activity and developing audiences are key factors for ensuring sustainability and job security for local film workers, as well as for attracting out-of-state productions.

The 2004 analysis of the film and video industry in **Arizona**, for example, found that both the growth of the local film industry and the solicitation of out-of-state production are necessary to help sustain one another.⁴⁶ Similarly, analyses and development plans from **Colorado**, **Idaho**, **Montana**, and **Oregon** conclude that multi-pronged approaches to developing a state film industry that include programs to cultivate local film activity were key to creating a sustainable and successful industry.

States are sparking local film activity by:

- Encouraging the development of homegrown filmmaking;
- Strengthening grassroots infrastructure to create a productive climate for film;
- Growing the market for film through festivals and other events; and
- Assisting with the distribution of locally produced films to the broader market.

Encouraging Homegrown Filmmaking

Encouraging and recognizing in-state filmmakers can help a state raise its profile and visibility within the film industry as a whole. **North Carolina**, for example, has ranked consistently high among the states for film and television production. Contributing to this success is a strong cohort of filmmakers in the state. The [North Carolina Arts Council](#) encourages the career development of North Carolina filmmakers. Film

and video artists may apply for \$10,000 artist fellowships. The Arts Council also provides information on festival listings, funding sources and references, listservs, and film Web sites to help filmmakers learn about film screening opportunities, higher education resources, and other film and video resources in North Carolina.

New York artists can take advantage of the New York State Council on the Arts' [Electronic Media & Film program](#). The program fosters the growth of film and media artists and stimulates local film production and distribution across the state. Grant funds are available to support the following:

- Exhibitions and screenings;
- Artist residencies;
- Technical assistance and training workshops;
- Operating and program support for community-based media arts and film organizations;
- Projects that develop the skills of youth, emerging filmmakers, and professionals in the film and media arts;
- Marketing assistance; and
- Information services including referral services, festival bureaus, conferences, and resource guides.

Along with the [Experimental Television Center](#) and [American Documentary POV](#), the New York State Council on the Arts is also developing a [Media Arts Map](#) to facilitate connections between media artists and media arts organizations. The map is part of an effort to clarify how New York's film and media arts industry can contribute to the community at large.

Film artists in **New Mexico** can apply to receive up to \$20,000 to create narrative films, documentaries, and experimental works. The aim of these contract awards is to support homegrown filmmaking by helping filmmakers produce new projects or complete existing projects. The program, [New Visions/New Mexico](#), which is in its second year, will award up to \$160,000 in contract awards for New Mexican filmmakers and is administered by the state film office.

Roles for State Arts Agencies in Promoting Film and Media Activity

- Stimulate grassroots film production
- Enhance career development of local filmmakers
- Assist key film organizations
- Encourage distribution of local films to national and global markets
- Publicize film events
- Circulate information about film training programs
- Foster collaboration among film, video, and television organizations
- Facilitate coordinated marketing practices
- Support job training for youth
- Promote civic participation in film and media arts activities

The **Arkansas** Arts Council provides a comprehensive list of resources available to Arkansan filmmakers through a [film and video resources newsletter](#). The newsletter includes upcoming film events, opportunities for filmmakers such as grants and competitions, links to area film schools and programs, and other online resources.

Nevada hosts a [Screenwriters Competition](#) through the Nevada Film Office. Amateur screenwriters throughout the state may submit scripts to the Nevada Film Office, which will send the top three scripts to production companies willing to produce the scripts. Winners also receive cash awards, scriptwriting software, and statewide recognition. The competition requires that submitted scripts be 75 percent filmable in Nevada and be a standard feature-length motion picture screenplay.

The [Vermont Filmmakers Forum](#) provides a network of artists for **Vermont** filmmakers looking to connect with other industry professionals. Filmmakers may take advantage of networking opportunities and forums that seek to identify and address the needs of film and media artists. Established by the Vermont Film Commission, the forum includes topics for producers, writers, directors, technicians, and other workers.

The [Austin Film Society](#), a nonprofit organization in **Texas**, administers the Texas Filmmaker Production Fund, which awards grants to emerging film and video artists. Since 1996, the Austin Film Society has awarded \$675,000 to 222 film and video projects. Recipients have had their film projects screened at film festivals such as Sundance, Cannes, and Tribeca. The Austin Film Society receives federal, state, and local funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Texas Commission on the Arts, and the City of Austin to support the Texas Filmmaker Fund and organizational programs.

New Jersey celebrates its local filmmakers through the [Cape May New Jersey State Film Festival](#). The four-day festival, which has been held annually since 2001, presents creative, challenging, and groundbreaking film and video works from Garden State residents. The festival features screenings of New Jersey films and works by New Jersey filmmakers, special events, and opportunities for attendees to meet with the directors, actors, producers, screenwriters, and composers involved in the making of the featured films. The festival also highlights young filmmakers, offers film workshops for youth, and hosts a screenwriting competition to encourage the work of New Jersey screenwriters. The New Jersey State Council on the Arts is a sponsor of the annual festival.

Expanding the State's Audience for Film

Engaging residents in film events can positively reinforce a state's film workforce development and media industry strategies. A community of film and media artists and strong infrastructure will best thrive in a market that supports artistic works. Policymakers can help foster statewide film activity by strengthening the state's audience for film and related media arts. Policymakers and state arts agencies can expand the market by promoting and supporting film events that attract residents and tourists as well as industry professionals. States can encourage citizen involvement by promoting and sponsoring film events, supporting the work of organizations that facilitate citizen involvement, and encouraging productions that spark the interest of local residents.

For example, a large number of film festivals receive financial support from state arts agencies, which also help promote these events to the public. The [Chicago International Film Festival](#) in **Illinois** receives state and local government support. The Hot Springs Documentary Film Institute in **Arkansas** receives state funding from the [Arkansas Arts Council](#) for its annual festival. The council also posts calls for submissions to the festival as well as other film and media events on its Web site. These are just two examples of the dozens of film festivals that are supported by states.

In **Texas**, the state film commission draws attention to the state's film festivals by maintaining a list of annual and upcoming film festivals throughout the state. Additionally, interested filmmakers can use the commission's [job hotline](#) to access a list of calls for entries to state film events and festivals. **Arizona**'s film office also lists the state's film festivals on its [Web site](#) along with opportunities to submit works to events, festivals, and competitions.

The **Maine** Film Festivals [Web site](#), hosted by the Maine Arts Commission, serves as a clearinghouse for the six festivals hosted in Maine each year. Film artists may visit the site to access information on each

festival, including dates, locations, official Web sites, and descriptions of the purpose of each festival and the types of films to be featured at each festival.

In **Iowa**, the [Iowa Cinema Events Coalition](#) (ICEC) was developed to highlight the growing number of film festivals and events in the state. The ICEC keeps a calendar of film events held in the state and helps event planners coordinate to avoid overlapping events. ICEC also helps promote and market events and offers incentives to filmmakers who submit work to multiple events.

States also are encouraging citizen participation in film and media arts by providing financial support for educational programs held at schools and in community settings. Such programs are broad-based and can engage a diverse audience.

In **Texas**, for example, the [Southwest Alternate Media Project](#) (SWAMP), a community-based organization in Houston that receives financial support from the Texas Commission on the Arts, promotes the creation and appreciation of film, video, and media through a number of programs, including a Media Literacy Institute for area teachers interested in incorporating media arts into their school curricula. The two-day institute is free and is offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. The institute provides teachers with standards-based curriculum resources and offers lessons on concepts and strategies for teaching about media.

In **New York**, [Reel Works Teen Filmmaking](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving teenagers, aims to use filmmaking as a vehicle for teaching literacy, communication, critical thinking, creativity, storytelling, and teamwork. The Brooklyn-area organization serves about 150 youth each year through its programs, which are taught free of charge after school and in the summer. Students at Reel Works create short documentary films while working one-on-one with an industry professional. These mentors may continue to work with students as they advance to more challenging programs offered by Reel Works. Reel Works is supported by the New York State Council on the Arts, the City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Brooklyn Arts Council.

Strengthening Grassroots Infrastructure for Film Production

States that want to bolster their film industries are investing in the development of infrastructure to support both local filmmakers and attract out-of-state film projects. One such state is **Rhode Island**. In 2004, Rhode Island made a unique organizational shift in an effort to drive new film activity in the state. The [Rhode Island Film & Television Office](#) was relocated from the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation to the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. Locating the film within the arts agency has increased commercial opportunities for Rhode Island screenwriters, festival producers, and independent moviemakers and broadened the talent pool and resource base available to major film companies mounting productions in the state. This union has facilitated connections between Rhode Island's grassroots arts and filmmaking community, the larger film industry, and the state's educational and civic organizations. The Rhode Island model of locating the film office within the state's arts agency—currently the only model of its kind among states—and could be used in states interested in promoting homegrown filmmaking by increasing the number of opportunities available to filmmakers.

The state of **Ohio** opened the Ohio Film Office, which is housed within the Ohio Department of Development's Division of Travel and Tourism, in February 2008. The Ohio Film Office, which provides a resource for budding filmmakers and promotes Ohio to film productions as a platform for quality entertainment projects,⁴⁷ is keeping members of the local production industry informed of state film

office activity by establishing a listserv to which they can subscribe on the new [Ohio Film Office Web site](#).

States also can provide financial support and resources to connect community-based organizations focused on promoting film activity with one another and with the larger artistic community to construct a solid infrastructure for film activity.

For instance, the [Independent Feature Project](#) (IFP), a nonprofit organization with chapters in **Arizona**, **New York**, **Illinois**, **Minnesota**, and **Washington**, works to create infrastructure for the film community by developing a marketplace that links talent to industry. Three of the state IFP chapters receive direct state support. The mission of IFP is to foster a sustainable infrastructure that supports independent filmmaking and ensures that the public has the opportunity to see films that accurately reflect the full diversity of the American culture. People interested in the business or the creative elements of filmmaking may tap into the organization's programs and resources, which include professional development, networking, a quarterly magazine for filmmakers, conferences, workshops, a job bank, forums, and links to a variety of resources for filmmakers.

The state of **Washington** and the Seattle Mayor's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs provide financial support for the [Northwest Film Forum](#) (NWFF), a Seattle-based nonprofit that provides film production and exhibition services, two cinemas, production and post-production facilities and equipment, classroom space, filmmaker offices, a film vault containing over 1,000 titles, and a filmmaking library. NWFF offers workshops for adults and children, awards grants to filmmakers, and runs a "callboard" service that facilitates the connections among film workers, filmmaking opportunities, and equipment in the state and region.

A need for equipment access, networking, information dissemination, and support for media artists and producers in **Georgia** led to the creation of the [Independent Media Artist of Georgia Etc.](#) (IMAGE) in 1976. Sponsored by the Georgia Office of Film, Video, and Music, IMAGE promotes the production, exhibition, and public awareness of film and video. In addition to the Atlanta Film and Video Festival, which the organization launched in 1977, IMAGE operates audience development activities that strengthen the local marketplace for film and conducts training programs that cultivate the production and management skills needed for the film industry to prosper in the state.

Assisting with the Distribution of Locally Produced Films

Assisting with the distribution of locally produced films to the broader market is another way to help grow local film industries and support area artists. States may assist by connecting artists with information and providing funding support to help facilitate film distribution and the use of services such as those offered by the nonprofit organization [Electronic Arts Intermix](#) (EAI) in **New York**. EAI specializes in the international distribution of works by film and media artists. Works in EAI's collection are available for distribution to worldwide television markets as well as for educational, cultural, and arts organizations. Additionally, EAI maintains a Web catalogue of works in the collection and information for ordering artists' works online.

The [New York State Council on the Arts](#) (NYSCA) provides funding for organizations to support [distribution](#) as well as marketing, closed captioning and subtitling, expanding a collection, and packaging as a collection. Funded organizations must distribute the work of more than one artist or production company and are encouraged to utilize new modes of distribution, such as the Internet.

CONCLUSION

Film and media arts can play a key role in state economic development. As economic impact studies continue to demonstrate the ability of the film industry to create high-paying jobs, stimulate tourism, engage the community, and boost out-of-state spending, many states have recognized the value of investing in this growing industry.

Moreover, increased investment in film from abroad has attracted American film productions, which are taking their productions and economic benefits out of the country. Thus, states are moving quickly to capitalize on the economic benefits of the film industry by competing with other countries as well as with one another.

To attract film productions, states have launched aggressive strategies that embrace marketing campaigns, financial incentives, the cultivation of a skilled local workforce, and support for local filmmaking. Their efforts have resulted in the development of film-friendly environments that attract both local and out-of-state production companies that infuse millions of dollars into state economies.

ENDNOTES

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Appendices – Promoting Film and Media

Appendix A: Selected State-Level Research on the Film Industry

- Arizona** [Analysis of the Film and Video Industry in Arizona](#), ESI Corporation (2004)
- California** [What is the Cost of Run-Away Production? Jobs, Wages, Economic Output and State Tax Revenue At Risk When Motion Picture Productions Leave California](#), Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (2005)
- Colorado** [Film Industry Growth & Development 2005-2007](#), Colorado Film Commission (2005)
- Florida** [Project Report Assessment of the Florida Motion Picture Industry](#), Economics Research Associates (2003)
- Idaho** [Building a Sustainable Film Industry: What Idaho can Learn From British Columbia and Austin](#), Boise State University (2006)
- Louisiana** [Trends in Film, Music, & Digital Media](#), Economics Research Associates (2006)
- Montana** [The Big Sky on the Big Screen Act: A Film Industry Incentive](#), The Montana Film Office and ArtsMarket, Inc. (2005)
- New York** [New York’s Big Picture: Assessing New York’s Position In Film, Television and Commercial Production](#), Cornell University (2006)
- Oregon** [The Contributions of the Film & Video Production Industries to Oregon’s Economy in 2005](#), ECONorthwest (2006)
- Virginia** [An Economic Analysis of Virginia’s Film and Video Production-Distribution Industry](#), Virginia Commonwealth University (2005)

Appendices – Promoting Film and Media

Appendix B: Film Incentive Tally (as of July 2008)

	Tax Rebates or Exemptions	Labor Incentives	State Property Use Incentives	Lodging Incentives	Other Incentives
Alabama					
Alaska	•		•		
Arizona	•		•		•
Arkansas					
California	•			•	
Colorado	•		•		
Connecticut	•		•	•	•
Delaware					
Florida	•		•		•
Georgia	•				
Hawaii	•				
Idaho	•		•		•
Illinois	•		•		
Indiana	•			•	•
Iowa	•		•	•	•
Kansas					•
Kentucky	•				
Louisiana	•		•		
Maine	•		•	•	•
Maryland	•		•		
Massachusetts	•				
Michigan	•		•	•	•
Minnesota	•		•		•
Mississippi	•		•		
Missouri	•				•

	Tax Rebates or Exemptions	Labor Incentives	State Property Use Incentives	Lodging Incentives	Other Incentives
Montana	•		•		•
Nebraska					
Nevada					•
New Hampshire				•	
New Jersey	•				•
New Mexico	•		•		•
New York	•				•
North Carolina	•		•		
North Dakota	•				•
Ohio					•
Oklahoma	•		•		
Oregon	•		•	•	•
Pennsylvania	•			•	
Puerto Rico	•		•		•
Rhode Island	•		•		
South Carolina	•		•	•	•
South Dakota	•				•
Tennessee	•		•	•	•
Texas	•		•		•
Utah	•		•		•
Vermont	•		•		•
Virginia	•			•	•
Washington	•				•
West Virginia	•			•	•
Wisconsin	•		•	•	
Wyoming	•		•		•
Total	43	28	14	27	10

Appendix C: State Film Offices Directory

Alabama
Film Office

Alaska
Film Program

Arizona Film Office

Arkansas Film Unit

California Film Commission

Colorado
Film Commission

Connecticut Film Division

Delaware
Film Office

Florida Governor's
Office of Film & Entertainment

Georgia Film, Video & Music Office

Hawaii Film Office

Idaho
Film Bureau

Illinois
Film Office

FILM Indiana Office

Iowa
Film Office

Kansas Film Commission

Kentucky Film Office

Louisiana Governor's Office of
Film & Television

Maine
Film Office

Maryland Film Office

Massachusetts Film Office

Michigan Film Office

Minnesota
Film & TV Board

Mississippi Film Office

Missouri
Film Commission

Montana
Film Office

Nebraska Film Office

Nevada Film Office

New Hampshire Film &
Television Office

New Jersey Motion Picture &
Television Commission

New Mexico Film Office

New York State Governor's Office
for Motion Picture & Television
Development

North Carolina Film Office

North Dakota Film Production Guide

Ohio
Film Office

State of Oklahoma
Film & Music Office

Oregon Film & Video Office

Pennsylvania Film Office

Puerto Rico Film Commission

Rhode Island
Film & Television Office

South Carolina Film Commission

South Dakota
Film Office

Tennessee Film, Entertainment &
Music Commission

Texas Film Commission

Utah Film Commission

Vermont Film
Commission

Virginia
Film Office

Washington State Film Office

West Virginia
Film Office

Film Wisconsin

Wyoming Film Office