

Vermont Film and Media Industry Task Force Report
January 15, 2023

Act 183 Sec. 49

The interest of the task force is to bolster Vermont's budding film industry, and to potentially change the lack of VT's tax credits or incentives which drives production away to states that do offer them. This sector offers a tremendous economic opportunity for the state if supported properly.

Crucial ingredients for growing a successful film industry in Vermont:

- *In addition to tax incentives
- Establishing a central film office
- Creation of a robust database of film professionals that include equipment, venues, locations, etc.
- Growing and retaining local talent by supporting the abundant film and media education and technical training programs in the state.

A centralized database of professionals:

The report recommends a state-sponsored database that allows film industry employees and local VT business to connect and forge working relationships. This database should include local talent, actors, writers, cinematographers, sound engineers, caterers, costume, hair and makeup, construction workers and electricians. Additionally, the database should contain amenities in Vermont where crews can stay and work while filming, and where they can store trailer trucks and equipment. Searchable imagine of idea Vermont locations, and locations for shooting, film distribution, and screenings should also be included.

The Vermont Production Collaborative (VPC) is working to develop a database that is a searchable directory of active film and media professionals living and working in Vermont. The VPC's database will also include locations, funding sources, and other resources.

Establishment of a central office

The establishment of a central office would act as a central hub for all industry dealings, and can be a centralized avenue for professionals to find work in this field in Vermont. Consideration on how the office would be structured is important, under which department needs to be considered: Economic Development Department, Arts or Cultural Affairs Department, Tourism, etc.

Production Incentives

- Take the form of tax credits, rebates, or grants.
 - Tax credits can run on average between 10% and 30%.
 - Of production expense.
- Production incentives that work best are the ones that are attuned to the specific characteristics of the state in which they are offered. (locations).

Employment Opportunities: Education and Training; Internship and Apprenticeships

Retaining and recruiting a skilled workforce is important for growing Vermont's film industry as well as addressing things like Vermont's aging population. Establishing a central office and database would more easily connect individuals from Vermont's numerous colleges, universities, and career technical training centers to the film industry in Vermont. There are 10 higher education programs in Vermont that specialize in film and digital media studies.

There are opportunities for upscaling, work-based learning programs, and scholarships under the Federal COVID-19 Relief American Rescue Plan Act which have been allocated to programs such as the Creative Futures Grant (Vermont Arts Council), Vermont Trades Scholarship Program, and 802 Opportunity (CCV).

The report notes clearly that many film professionals trained in Vermont leave the state to go to other states that more established film central offices and industries: "Nearly 50% of Vermont's creatives are self-employed or freelance, compared to 40% nationwide." (P. 31).

Establishing a central office, professional database, implementing tax credits and incentives, as well as supporting Vermont's film studies programs, will increase the amount of film professionals who will want to stay in Vermont and work in this industry.

At least five years for ROI. (p. 4)

Important to establish a tracking mechanism for ROI