



New Jersey Economic Development Authority

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (“RFI”)

2024-RFI-214

for

Film, Television, & Media Workforce Needs

1. **INTENT/SUMMARY OF SCOPE**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (“Authority”), an independent Authority of the State of New Jersey, is seeking information and ideas from qualified entities (“Respondents”) with perspectives on the current workforce needs of the film, television, and media industry, including but not limited to: professionals in the film and media industry such as employers, training providers, and unions, other education and service providers, and institutions interested in the investment and financing of the arts. The New Jersey Motion Picture & Television Commission, now part of the Authority, has supported and nurtured the film, television, and media industry for over 45 years. The Commission attracts and supports production work and promotes infrastructure growth through financial incentives, permitting, production services, site selection and clearance. The Commission is a critical partner in advancing the goals of this RFI.

Qualified entities do not need to be located within the State of New Jersey to provide a response and the Authority welcomes perspectives from entities outside of the state.

Through this RFI, the Authority is seeking information from respondents on the scope and characteristics of effective workforce training programs in anticipation of creating or supporting programs and initiatives to support workforce development for film, television, digital and other media production occupations, including but limited to, production assistants, production accountants, studio managers, carpenters, grips, electricians, set-dressers, wardrobe assistants, make-up, hair, script supervisors, voiceover artists, editors, computer generated imagery artists, edit assistants, screenwriters, story editors, assistant directors, writer’s assistants, music supervisors, and post supervisors.

Given the projected growth of the film, television, and media industry over the coming years and its capacity to provide high-value employment to communities throughout the state, the NJEDA has earmarked at least \$5 million in funding through an appropriation in the state budget from Governor Murphy and the NJ State Legislature to support and accelerate robust workforce development in the film, television, and media industry in New Jersey. The NJEDA is interested in receiving comments, questions, recommendations, facts, information, ideas, and responses that will help the Authority better understand best practices for industry workforce program designs, parameters, and details that NJEDA should consider when developing a portfolio of film and media production training programs that enable NJ residents to be part of this growing industry.

This RFI seeks to:

- Collect information on training programs that include instructors and mentors who are currently employed in the production of film and television (production and post-production) who will create teaching plans (syllabi) that are not theoretical in nature but, instead, will impart, “real world/on-set” best technique and practices.
- Better understand the state of the film and media workforce in New Jersey and any existing workforce gaps
- Gain greater insights into the film industry recruitment and training process
- Collect information on specific best practices, programs and approaches to support film workforce training and development needs including short-term bootcamps and longer-term training programs, and the specific populations those programs seek to serve, including residents of Overburdened Communities
- Learn about existing models in the United States and throughout the world that should be explored when developing film and media workforce development programs, particularly those that prepare workers with limited to no experience in the industry

2. **BACKGROUND**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority serves as the State’s principal agency for driving economic growth. The Authority is committed to making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development by focusing on strategies that help build strong and dynamic communities, create good jobs for New Jersey residents, and provide pathways to a stronger and fairer economy. Through partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, the Authority creates and implements initiatives to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life in the State, and to strengthen New Jersey’s long-term economic competitiveness.

Governor Murphy’s Economic Development Strategic Plan, “The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey” specifically highlights investing in emerging innovative industries as critical to the State’s economic development strategy. The plan identifies Film & Digital Media as a strategic sector that has the potential for outsized growth over the next five to fifteen years where the State could use targeted initiatives to promote innovation and economic development within the sector. Additionally, the plan includes goals to create the most diverse innovation ecosystem in the country and close the racial and gender wage and employment gaps.

New Jersey has witnessed impressive growth in the film, television, and media industry, attracting multiple film studios and production companies with many high-profile productions being filmed in the state. This boom is due in large part to the State’s tax and other incentives including the Film and Digital Media Tax Credit Program, the Studio Partners and Film-lease Partners Facilities designation programs, and the pilot Film and Digital Media Studio Infrastructure Program. Utilization of the state’s Film Tax Credit has increased substantially. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2019, NJEDA made 4 awards resulting in \$19.7 million of film production spend in the state. In SFY 2021, 24 awards resulted in \$185.5 million spent in NJ. Those figures climbed to 56 awards totaling over \$758 million of film production spend in SFY 2023. More information on these programs can be found at <https://www.njeda.gov/film/>.

Notable highlights of this industry growth in the state include Lionsgate’s on-going construction in Newark of the first purpose-built studio in New Jersey to be constructed for TV and film production using tax credits (expected to open in 2025), Netflix’s planned construction of a studio complex in Monmouth County (2027-2028), and the proposed construction of 1888 Studios in Bayonne (recently designated a Film-Lease Partner Facility). The number of film projects and productions in New Jersey in 2024-2025 are expected to reach over 1,000, and the projected number of film-related jobs for 2024 is close to 15,000. These projects mark a pivotal moment in New Jersey’s evolution as an emerging force in film and television production.

This RFI is a critical input into New Jersey’s efforts to further invest in the film, television, and digital media industry and build an inclusive and dynamic workforce to meet industry needs.

3. **RFI RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

In submitting responses to this RFI, respondents are encouraged to answer any questions they consider relevant and to the best of their ability. Respondents do not need to answer all questions for their response to be considered. Answers are understood to be preliminary and non-binding. Respondents are free to go beyond the scope of the questions and/or structure responses as necessary to increase clarity and efficiency of responses. Respondents should also feel free to submit additional or alternate information as deemed necessary.

Background

1. Please provide information on you/your entity's background (name, location, organization/business type and size), and your involvement or interest in film and media activities or film and media workforce development.

Film and Media Industry Occupations and Skills

2. What film and television positions are in greatest demand in the NJ region today and/or expected to be in greatest demand in NJ over the next five years?
3. What existing certifications, training, education, and/or knowledge, skills, and abilities are required to work in these high-demand jobs? Please be as specific as possible and differentiate by specific occupation where possible.
 - a. Do employers train/hire certified staff or have them obtain certifications once employed?
 - b. What are the biggest challenges individuals face when seeking to obtain these certifications/skills?
 - c. What are the biggest challenges employers' face when seeking to hire qualified candidates?
 - d. What level of education is required for new hires?
 - e. Are there any other prerequisites (e.g., working hours on a set)?

Training Programs

4. NJEDA is aware of various workforce initiatives implemented by states and other organizations throughout the country (e.g., Georgia Film Academy, Washington Filmworks, etc.). What are the most effective initiatives applicable to New Jersey and should be pursued in the state?
5. What are the characteristics of the most effective education or training programs for in-demand film industry occupations?
 - a. What type of program (e.g., short-term boot camps, professional mentoring programs, workshops, professional certifications, associate degrees, etc.) and why do you think it is a viable option for job seekers to enter the entertainment industry?
 - b. What are the preferred primary eligibility requirements to enroll? Any suggestions for improvement?
 - c. What is the most effective duration for these programs—and why? What time of day is most beneficial to hold these trainings?
 - d. What are the required qualifications for instructors?
 - e. Is there a typical or expected cost to participants?

- f. How are graduates connected to employers for job placement?
6. What are best practices to specifically feature instruction or mentorship by working professionals in training programs?
7. If not currently readily accessible for New Jersey residents, how can these training programs be replicated, or linked to programs in New Jersey to increase this accessibility?
8. Are there other supports, incentives or programs needed to maintain a sufficient and qualified film and media labor force?
9. Would your organization or others seek to participate as an investor or funding partner in film and media-related workforce training programs?
10. Are there any other factors the state should consider that may have an impact on training needs or the industry at large? How do we continue to grow the industry and develop workers alongside innovations in digital content and other technologies?

Recruitment

11. Where and how do you currently recruit training participants or film workers? What partners do you work with to assist with recruitment?
12. Unions are a critical workforce development partner in the industry. How do we best coordinate their activities with other partners to maintain and develop career pathways for New Jersey residents?
13. What are the biggest challenges/obstacles to film workforce recruitment and retention? What is the average turnover in the industry?

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As part of Governor Murphy's Economic Development Strategic Plan and NJEDA's mission, the Authority seeks opportunities to support the film and television industry that include a focus on strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) for underserved populations.

14. How can underserved populations be supported to engage in the film and media industry both in their own communities and beyond?

15. What suggestions do you have for encouraging the inclusion of minorities, women, and veterans in film and media workforce training programs and employment?
16. What innovations can training providers utilize to accelerate or improve training for a diverse and inclusive workforce?

4. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (from Respondents to NJEDA)**

All questions concerning this RFI must be submitted in writing no later than 5:00 PM E.D.T., on June 3, 2024, via e-mail to: workforceInnovation@njeda.gov.com.

The subject line of the e-mail should state: **Questions-2024-RFI-214 - Film, Television, & Media Workforce Needs**.

Answers to questions submitted will be publicly posted on the Authority's website on or about June 7, 2024, at: <https://www.njeda.com/bidding/#RFI> as Addendum.

IT IS THE RESPONDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THIS URL REGULARLY FOR UPDATES.

5. **RESPONSE DETAILS (Info Provided to Respondents Regarding Document Submission)**

All RFI responses must be submitted in writing no later than **5:00 PM E.D.T.** on June 19, 2024, via e-mail to: workforceInnovation@njeda.gov.com.

The subject line of the e-mail should state: "**RFI Response-2024-RFI-214 - Film, Television, & Media Workforce Needs**".

6. **FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS (from NJEDA) / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Respondents may be invited to provide additional information to allow the Authority to better understand information provided.

7. **PROPRIETARY AND/OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

The Authority reserves the right to copy any information provided by the Respondents. The Authority reserves the right to use ideas that are provided by Respondents, applicants, stakeholders, or vendors. By submitting a Response, the submitter represents that such copying or use of information will not violate any copyrights, licenses, or other agreements with respect to information submitted or product solutions demonstrated, if applicable. Responses must clearly be marked for any information the Respondent deems Proprietary and/or Confidential.

8. **DISCLAIMER / NO OBLIGATION**

This RFI is not a request for qualification/proposal. It may or may not result in further action.

This RFI is issued solely as a means of gathering information regarding the Authority's desire to understand the types of products and level of service available in the market to meet the Authority's needs. Interested parties responding to this RFI do so at their own expense. There will be no monetary compensation from the Authority for the time and effort spent in preparing the response to this RFI. All expenses incurred are the sole responsibility of the Respondent.

Should the Authority decide to move forward and issue an RFQ/P or announce a program/product related to this RFI, Respondents need not have submitted a response to this RFI in order to be eligible to respond to the RFP. Should an RFQ/P be issued, responding to this RFI will not affect scoring or consideration for that process.

The Authority is under no obligation to contact Respondents to this RFI.

9. **NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT**

Respondents should be aware that responses to this RFI are subject to the "New Jersey Open Public Records Act" (N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.), as amended and including all applicable regulations and policies and applicable case law, including the New Jersey Right-to-Know law. All information submitted in response to the RFI is considered public information, notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary, except as may be exempted from public disclosure by OPRA and the common law.

Any proprietary and/or confidential information submitted in response to this RFI will be redacted by the Authority. A person or entity submitting a response to this RFI may designate specific information as not subject to disclosure pursuant to the exceptions to OPRA found at N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1, when such person or entity has a good faith legal and/or factual basis for such assertion (i.e. information that may be included in another ongoing public procurement or solicitation). The Authority reserves the right to make the determination as to what is proprietary or confidential and will advise the person or entity accordingly. The Authority will not honor any attempt to designate the entirety of a submission as proprietary, confidential and/or to claim copyright protection for the entire proposal. In the event of any challenge to the Respondent's assertion of confidentiality with which the Authority does not concur, the Respondent shall be solely responsible for defending its designation.