



Explore Minnesota Film Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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What is a state film office?

A film office is a state-level entity designed to promote and support film, television and media production within its region.

Its purpose is to attract production and offer services like location assistance, permits and state incentives.

Established by state laws or executive orders, these offices operate at local, state or national levels to boost the film industry and drive economic growth.

What is the role of Explore Minnesota Film, Minnesota's state film office?

Established in July 2024, Explore Minnesota Film's primary objectives, per legislative statute [116U.255](#) are to:

- administer the film production jobs program and the film production credit program;
- promote Minnesota as a location for film and television production;
- assist in the establishment and implementation of programs related to film and television production, including but not limited to permitting and workforce development;
- improve communication among local, state, federal, and private entities regarding film and television production logistics and best practices;
- coordinate the development of statewide policies addressing film and television production; and
- act as a liaison to production entities, workers, and state agencies.

The core mission of Explore Minnesota is to promote Minnesota as the best state for travel, quality of life and economic opportunity. All our work, including the work of Explore Minnesota Film, is defined by statute and directed by state administration.

Our responsibilities necessitate consulting with and gathering feedback from constituents. We use this information to help advise our programs and communicate feedback to the administration.

We are required to submit an annual report on our agency's programs to the legislature. A copy of Explore Minnesota's most recent annual report (which covers the time period prior to the incorporation of Explore Minnesota Film) can be found [here](#).

When was Explore Minnesota Film established?

Explore Minnesota Film was established via legislation as of July 1, 2024, as an office and program within Explore Minnesota.

How is Explore Minnesota Film different from MN Film & TV?

Minnesota Film & TV was a 501(c)(3) nonprofit film commission dedicated to managing Minnesota's incentive programs, promoting local crews, talent, and production infrastructure, and providing a comprehensive database of filming locations. The financial management of these incentive programs was overseen by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). Minnesota Film & TV ceased operations in September 2024.

Explore Minnesota Film, a part of the state agency Explore Minnesota, now administers film incentive programs, offers support to the film industry through production assistance and engagement, and promotes Minnesota as a filming location. It is important to note that Explore Minnesota Film operates within the executive branch of the State of Minnesota government and is required to adhere to state policies, procedures and directives.

What work has Explore Minnesota Film done since being established on July 1, 2024?

Since July 1, 2024, Explore Minnesota Film staff has transitioned to an updated website, www.exploreminnesota.com/film, hired two permanent staff members, created and executed an advertising and marketing campaign, and taken hundreds of meetings and calls with independent producers, production companies, networks and studios.

The division has successfully transferred the full administration of the Minnesota Film Production Tax Credit Program from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to Explore Minnesota Film.

Additionally, Explore Minnesota will soon be featured in the SetJettors App "Beyond The Frame" program. This initiative highlights local businesses near filming locations to inspire tourism and showcase Minnesota's unique assets.

Work continues as staff plan new initiatives to further promote Minnesota as a great place to produce film and television.

What is the Minnesota Film Production Tax Credit Program?

The Minnesota Film Production Tax Credit Program was enacted by the Minnesota legislature in 2021 and expanded by the legislature in 2023, prior to the development of Explore Minnesota Film.

The legislature sets requirements for the program, including a maximum tax credit of 25% and a minimum qualified expenditure of \$1 million. Explore Minnesota Film is unable to adjust credit percentages and minimum qualified expenditures as program requirements can only be modified through legislative action.

Before the introduction of the Minnesota Film Production Tax Credit Program, individuals and organizations within the Minnesota production community successfully advocated for its implementation, as well as its expansion in 2023 and the development of Explore Minnesota Film in 2024.

What projects has the Film Production Tax Credit supported in Minnesota?

The Minnesota Film Production Tax Credit program has supported 14 projects since its passage in 2021, including projects by local filmmakers and production companies.

Some examples include:

- Downtown Owl (independent feature film)
- Body Language (independent feature film)
- Merry KissCam (independent feature film)
- Marmalade (independent feature film)
- The Fun Raiser (independent feature film)
- Family Dinner (TV series)
- Mattel Package 22 (commercial campaign)
- Mattel Package 23 (commercial campaign)
- Me Hereafter (TV series)
- Athens aka Boundary Waters (independent feature film)
- Hope in the Water (TV series)
- Hostage Rescue (TV series)
- Rescuing Christmas (independent feature film)
- Love is Blind (TV series)

How will Explore Minnesota Film work with the Minnesota film industry, local community members and stakeholders?

Since July 2024, Explore Minnesota Film has worked quickly to hire staff and develop strategic goals to grow Minnesota's film and television production.

In our first year, our plan is to assess the current programs in statute and the resources available to the industry. To accomplish this, we will gather feedback from the community to better understand the needs of the industry and the growth opportunities for the state's production economy. We will share this feedback with the administration and the legislature, as well as the community, to collaborate on ways to enhance the work of Explore Minnesota Film in the future.

We will continue to support Minnesota's film community through production liaison services, community engagement and communication, and the creation of marketing campaigns and materials to increase production work in Minnesota.

Why does Explore Minnesota Film wish to attract \$1 million+ film projects to Minnesota?

One of the goals of incentive programs throughout the country is to attract new spending to a state. Explore Minnesota's goal is to kick start the growth of the film industry in Minnesota once more. Minnesota's Film Production Tax Credit has benefitted projects with budgets ranging from \$1 million to \$4 million. The goal is to attract projects in the \$5 million to \$15 million range to help provide work for experienced crew, training opportunities for those new to the industry, and an infusion of new spending for Minnesota's economy.

How was the \$1 million minimum tax credit incentive set, and how does it interact with the rebate program?

The minimum of \$1 million for the Minnesota Film Production Tax Credit was set by the state legislature in 2021. At the time, Minnesota was one of only a few states that had **both** a film production tax credit and a rebate program. Rebate programs are a great method to support projects with lower budgets, and the Minnesota rebate program had a minimum spend of \$100,000.

Both rebate and tax credit programs can exist concurrently. In this model, projects over \$1 million would qualify for the tax credit program, and those under the \$1 million threshold would qualify for the rebate program—similar to other states. Currently (as of 2024) the rebate program is not funded; legislative action is required to restore funding.

What does Explore Minnesota Film offer for filmmakers who do not qualify for the Film Production Tax Credit?

Explore Minnesota Film offers all filmmakers access to a [production directory](#) where crew, vendors and support services can create a free listing for greater visibility, as well as promote Minnesota crew, talent and services to industry decision-makers. This is part of a larger strategy for Explore Minnesota Film to market the state as a production location.

Additionally, [Explore Minnesota Film staff](#) are available to answer questions and provide information on upcoming productions, education and training opportunities, and local film organizations. We can help all filmmakers navigate government rules and regulations.

In 2025, we will launch a Film Friendly Community program, designed to help local communities understand the unique needs of film or TV production.

What other entities are connected to or represent film communities in Minnesota?

[Minnesota State Arts Board](#)

- Stimulates and encourages the creation, performance, and appreciation of the arts in the state

- Provides grant opportunities for arts organizations and individuals
- Offers six grant programs in the fiscal year 2026 grant cycle. They include: [Accessible Arts](#), [Arts Education](#), [Arts Experiences](#), [Cultural Expression](#), [Creative Individuals](#), and [Operating Support](#) .

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

[Upper Midwest Film Office](#)

- Administers rebate programs for Duluth, St. Louis County, and the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB)
- Provides information and resources to producers regarding locations, crew, talent, and vendors in this area served
- Promotes Northeast Minnesota as a filming location
- Conducts educational workshops for filmmakers and crew

[FilmNorth](#)

- Career development classes, seminars, and workshops
- Fiscal sponsorship
- Film screenings and talk backs
- Networking opportunities
- Other resources to support filmmakers

[Minnesota Women in Film & Television](#)

- Empowers and support women working in the industry
- Provides network of resources, education and support
- Hosts discussions, panels, and networking events

[APAI MN Film Collective](#)

- Creates, promotes, and empowers underrepresented and low-income filmmakers
- Offers Production Lab for the practice and learning of filmmaking skills

[Screenwriters' Workshop](#)

- Provides seminars, script feedback groups, table readings, staged screenplay readings and contests for all types of scripts.

[SPNN](#)

- Provides training, support, and mentorship to adults and youth in the craft of creating media
- Offers classes, workshops, discussions, and in-depth documentary training
- Supports community-run shows
- Partners with the community to create programming to benefit the Twin Cities

[Springboard for the Arts](#)

- Multi-faceted organization providing direct services to artists across all genres
- Provides career consultations, fiscal sponsorship, resource fairs, business skills training, assistance in finding grants, and much more