



**DATE:** March 1, 2019

**TO:** Governor Gretchen Whitmer

**FROM:** Selam Ghirmai  
Interim Director

**SUBJECT:** FY 2018 Michigan Film & Digital Media Office Annual Report

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Pursuant to Michigan Business Tax Act (2007 of 36) Section 455 (MCL 208.1455) the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office (MFDMO) is required to submit an annual report summarizing activities and program spending for the previous fiscal year. Please find attached the annual report that fulfills this requirement.

Additionally, Section 1033 of the General Government Omnibus budget requires the MFDMO to report on additional activities of the office. This information is included in this report as a courtesy to you and includes the MFDMO Strategic Plan Achievements in Review for FY 2018.

Please feel free to contact the MEDC Office of Government Relations at 517.335.1847 with any questions.

Cc: Jeff Mason, President, Michigan Strategic Fund  
Senator Jim Runestad, Senate Finance Committee Chair  
Representative Lynn Afendoulis, House Tax Policy Committee Chair  
Chris Harkins, Director, Senate Fiscal Agency  
Mary Ann Cleary, Director, House Fiscal Agency

**Michigan Film Incentives - Tax Credit Program**

As of December 21, 2011, the Film and Digital Media Production Assistance Program has been operating within the scope of Section 29 of the MSF Act and no longer approves new film tax credit applications under Section 455 of the Michigan Business Tax (MBT) Act. However, previously approved projects may be issued a post-production tax credit certificate after the project is complete. There were no post production tax credit certificates issued in FY 2018. As of November 27, 2018, a total of \$292,416,203.19 in film tax credits has been paid out by the state, with \$27,326,404.57 in potential film tax credits that remain eligible to be claimed under the tax credit program.

**Michigan Film Incentives - Cash Rebate Program**

During FY18, eight projects were issued an approved Certificate of Completion Request (COCR) and paid out by the state under the film incentive (direct cash rebate) program, for a total of \$2,535,948.00. These incentives are cash assistance under appropriated funding. These are listed in the table below. Under Section 29 of the MSF Act, all projects approved in 2012 and thereafter are reported in the online MFDMO Dashboard, which is updated with actual data on a yearly basis, and found at the link below:

<https://www.michiganbusiness.org/industries/mfdmo/film/>

In FY 2018, the total administrative expenses were \$861,693.

**Approved Certificates of Completion Requests  
Fiscal Year 2018: 10/01/2017 - 9/30/2018**

Project	Production Company	Type of Project	Spend by	Financial Assistance	Duration of Financial Assistance	Employed	COCR Approved Date	Locations (Dashboard)
ONU	ONU, LLC	Interactive Website	\$2,244,307	\$413,701	3 years	23	10/6/2017	Southfield
Destined	This is Destiny, LLC	Feature Film	\$863,099	\$221,104	3 years	6	10/20/2017	Detroit, Inkster, Novi, Westland
Blood of the Werewolf	SPE Game One	Mobile App	\$135,934	\$45,417	3 years	2	10/20/2017	Farmington Hills
Writers Block	D2R, Inc.	Feature Film	\$591,689	\$125,794	3 years	4	11/27/2017	Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Detroit
BugBites, 2-13	Bug Bites Production, LLC	Animation	\$1,207,256	\$391,895	3 years	10	12/21/2017	Southfield
God Bless the Broken Road	10 West Productions, Inc.	Feature Film	\$2,206,300	\$772,205	3 years	14	4/16/2018	Manistee, Marne, Rockford
North	North Films, LLC	Feature Film	\$668,136	\$139,927	3 years	4	1/31/2018	Detroit, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Metamora, St. Clair
Detroiters	Central Productions, LLC	Television Pilot	\$1,216,871	\$425,905	3 years	11	2/2/2018	Dearborn, Detroit, Livonia
<b>TOTALS:</b>			<b>\$9,133,592</b>	<b>\$2,535,948</b>				

**MICHIGAN FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA OFFICE**  
**Annual Report (section. 1033) - Fiscal Year 2018 (October 1, 2017 - September 30, 2018)**

**GENERAL SERVICES OFFERED**

For over 30 years, the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office (MFDMO) has positioned Michigan as a worldwide production destination for the film, digital media and creative industries. Often the first point of contact for productions, the MFDMO provides the following services, creating a competitive business climate to attract domestic and international production activity from out of state and grow creative industries business of Michigan residents. These services are offered free of charge to any and all professional and student productions.

<b>Website - <a href="http://www.michiganbusiness.org/industries/mfdmo/">www.michiganbusiness.org/industries/mfdmo/</a></b>	The Michigan Film & Digital Media Office website is the one stop shop for all individuals working or seeking work in the creative industries. Also, the website provides detailed information for those with a general interest in the operation of the office and the services it provides. The website includes a job portal for those seeking/hiring for jobs in the creative industries. The website also has resources for educators, students, filmmakers, and game developers.
<b>Production Directory:</b>	Searchable online directory which features 3,487 approved crew and vendors that provide support services for the film and digital industries.
<b>Locations Directory:</b>	Searchable online directory which houses 5,648 locations/properties throughout the state of Michigan. Locations Directory is utilized as a source for film and television productions, commercials, still photography shoots, and miscellaneous events.
<b>Locations Scouting:</b>	Office provides customized location packages and up to two days of complimentary location scouting services, primarily leveraged by outside productions that are surveying states across the nation for site selection. The office refers productions to professional resident location managers/scouts.
<b>Permitting:</b>	Assist in-state and out-of-state clients on permitting issues at the municipal, county, state and federal levels of government.
<b>Social Media Platforms/Newsletter:</b>	MFDMO maintains a presence on Facebook and Twitter. Maintains 11,407 followers on Facebook and 3,626 followers on Twitter. The monthly electronic newsletter is sent to a distribution list of 6,319 individuals.
<b>Note:</b>	While no new credits or incentives can be offered through the Michigan Film and Digital Media Production Assistance Program, the MFDMO continues to process incentive claims for previously awarded projects, which is described later in this report under Michigan Film Incentives.

**GENERAL SERVICES PROVIDED**

The report below includes the projects that requested assistance of the MFDMO, a listing of the services provided for each project.

<b>Month of Service</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Investment Leveraged (estimated private investment)</b>	<b>Services Provided by MFDMO</b>
October	Television Series	Detroiters	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Grand Rapids Film Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Industry Newsletter	CreativeMich	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Feature Film	Solomon	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Programming	MCACA Field Report	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Web Series	Northbound Season 2	Iron Mountain, Norway, Houghton	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Grand Rapids Feminist Film Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Education Program	MSU Theatre2Film	East Lansing	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter

	Film Festival	Fresh Coast Film Festival	Marquette	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Programming	Detroit Public Television	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially and in our monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	East Lansing Film Festival	East Lansing	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Contest	Mosaic Film Experience	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Desmond District Demons Film Festival	Port Huron	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Royal Starr Film Festival	Royal Oak	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Programming	Grand Rapids Comic Con	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Programming	TEDxDetroit	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Series	Open Projector Night - UICA	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Series	Start Garden Film Series	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Digital Media	Digital Marketing Workshop - Ypsilanti	Ypsilanti	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Independent Film	Pizza P.I.	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
November					Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Festival	Lamp Light Music Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Student Film	MSU Thesis Project	East Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Independent Film	Devil's Night: Dawn of the Nain Rouge	Detroit, Lake Orion, Wixom	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Education Program	Computer Science Education Week	Global	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Master Classes: New York Philharmonic	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Legends of Techno Bass	Detroit	n/a	Promoted in monthly newsletter

	Filmmaker Contest	Project Cinema MI	Traverse City	n/a	website and in monthly	
	Television Series	The Climb	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially	
					Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter	
	Filmmaker Contest	GRFF 36-Hour Film Challenge	Grand Rapids	n/a		
December					Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter	
	Filmmaker Contest	Kalamazoo Teen Filmmaker Festival	Kalamazoo	n/a		
	Independent Film	The Christ Slayer	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially	
	Photo Shoot	Detroit A Go Go	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially	
	Education Program	UM Electrical Engineering and Computer Science	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted socially	
	Independent Film	As Trafficker	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially	
January	Creative Programming	Artist in Residence - Isle Royale	Isle Royale	n/a	Promoted socially	
					Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter	
	Creative Chamber	Artist in Residence - Marquette	Marquette	n/a		
	Independent Film	My Best Friend is a Monster	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially	
	Filmmaker Event	Loeks Visiting Film Artist Series: Paul Schrader	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially	
	Creative Events	North American International Auto Show	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media,	
	Creative Chamber	130th Annual Membership Meeting	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially	
						Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Organization	Michigan Production Alliance	Detroit	n/a		
						Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Thunder Bay International Film Festival	Alpena	n/a		
	Music Event	Intro to DJ'ing Workshop	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially	
						Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Central Michigan International Film Festival	Mt. Pleasant	n/a		
						Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Greater Farmington Film Festival	Farmington	n/a		
Casting Call	Voice-over work in Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially		
Television Series	Delicious Destinations - Upper Peninsula	Various - Upper Peninsula	n/a	Promoted socially		
Film Series	Bohm Theatre - Classic Films	Albion	n/a	Promoted socially		
Job Posting	Motion Capture Digital Faculty - Kendall College	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially		
February					Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter	
	Digital Media	Grow With Google	Lansing	n/a		
	Short Film	Total Apocalypse of the Heart	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially	
	Casting Call	Compass College Student Films	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially	
						Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Filmmaker Community Mixer - RSFF	Royal Oak	n/a		
	Casting Call	Sincerely, Brenda	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially	
Creative Media	Grand Rapids Area Podcasts	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially		

	Web Series	DPD - Echo 1	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Digital Media	Ann Arbor/Ypsi Game Developer Meetup - IGDA	Ypsilanti	n/a	website and in monthly newsletter
	Digital Media	Google CS First	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Freep Film Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Chamber	Evolve Marquette - Ampersand Opening	Marquette	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Emagine Theater's Detroit Expansion	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
March	Film Festival	Capital City Film Festival	Lansing	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Eclipse Awards	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Education Event	MCACA Youth Workshops	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Independent Film	Jack London's Son of Wolf	Ada, Lansing, Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Independent Film	Peppers Grove	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	ArtPrize	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Digital Media	Princeton Review Rankings - Game Design	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Ann Arbor Film Festival	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Casting Call	Kendall College of Art and Design	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Teen Filmmaker Festival	Kalamazoo	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Arts Advocacy Day	Nationwide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Great Indoor Folk Festival	Traverse City	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Italian Film Festival - USA	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	West Michigan Design Week	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter

	Filmmaker Event	Permit Workshop - Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Detroit International Festival of Animation	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Michigan Student Film Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Detroit Music Awards	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Ferris Media Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Casting Call	Independent Detroit Production	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Casting Call	Chapter One: Contrapuntus	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially
	Job Posting	Independent Midland Production	Midland	n/a	Promoted socially
April	Digital Media	eSports event	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Documentary	Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman: Conservation Heroes of the American Heartland	Alcona	n/a	Promoted socially
	Literary	Poetry in Motion	Traverse City	n/a	Promoted socially
	Independent Film	Boyne Falls	Boyne City	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	Detroit Fashion Hackathon	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Backwoods & Bonfires: Music Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Thriller! Chiller!! Film Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Making Your First Low Budget Feature	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Digital Media	CG Jobs in Michigan	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Southeast Michigan Film Festival	Lincoln Park	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Courageous Persuaders	Royal Oak	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Documentary	American Dream: Detroit	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	Michigan Fashion Media Summit	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	LUNAFEST: Women's Film Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	NATAS Michigan Student Production Awards	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted socially
May	Student Film	Dependence	Mt. Pleasant	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter

	Education Event	KCAD Student Showcase	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Casting Call	Hag	Omena, Northport, Traverse City	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	The Fledge Opening	Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	Shorts Block Party	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Adrian International Film Festival	Adrian	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Detroit Designs the World Screening	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	Motor City Comic Con	Novi	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Star Wars Costume Exhibit - DIA	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	River Scene Indie Music Festival	Bay City	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Sunrise 45 Film Festival	Alpena	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Cinetopia	Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Series	LOCAL Film Series	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Chamber	Seat at the Table	Marquette	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	Celebration Cinemas	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	East Lansing Art Festival	East Lansing	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	OCC Student Film Festival	Farmington Hills	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Movement Electronic Music Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
June	Filmmaker Contest	Keep it Colorful	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	Alamo Draft House	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Casting Call	GVSU Student Films	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Trinity International Film Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Threadbare Mitten Film Festival	Charlotte	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter



	Music Event	Electric Forest Music Festival	Rothbury	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Buttermilk Jamboree	Delton	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Charlotte Bluegrass Festival	Charlotte	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Tech Trek	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Ann Arbor Summer Festival	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Allied Media Conference	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Detroit Music Weekend	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
July	Filmmaker Contest	Seed&Spark Hometown Heroes	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Literary	Detroit Bookfest	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	How to Make it in America Art & Fashion Exhibition	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Contest	48 Hour Film Project: Detroit	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Blissfest	Harbor Springs	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Events	Ann Arbor Art Fair	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Faster Horses Music Festival	Brooklyn	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Sights and Sounds Festival	Chelsea	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Mo Pop Music Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter

August	Digital Media	Digital Summit Detroit	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Lively Lands Music Festival	Empire	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Contest	I See You Awards	Royal Oak	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Contest	Sundance Ignite Short Film Challenge	Global	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Cinema Detroit Short Film Block Party	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	Lowing Shop Party	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Hell's Half Mile Film and Music Festival	Bay City	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	September	Film Series	ArtPrize On Screen	Grand Rapids	n/a
Feature Film		God Bless the Broken Road	Ludington, Manistee, Marne, Rockford	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Casting Call		Project Cinema MI	Traverse City	n/a	Promoted socially
Feature Film		White Boy Rick - Michigan Premiere	Novi	n/a	Promoted socially
Film Series		Cine Mexico @ Cinema Lamont	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
Film Festival		Noir City Detroit	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
Documentary		Imperial Wrestling Entertainment	Houghton Lake	n/a	Promoted socially
Filmmaker Contest		Detroit 48 Hour Film Horror Project	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
Music Event		Earthwork Harvest Gathering	Lake City	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Film Festival		Soo Film Festival	Sault Ste. Marie	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Creative Events		Technology in Motion	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
Creative Events		Eastern Market After Dark	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially

In addition to general services provided by the MFDMO, the office also manages multiple short-term and continuous special projects, driven by a comprehensive strategic plan released by the MFDMO in May 2015. The plan included immediate and long-term goals and recommendations to bridge gaps amongst the creative industries, promote the Pure Michigan business and tourism campaign, improve transparency to the public and legislature and ultimately ensure that taxpayer dollars are being used wisely. The recommendations and special projects are categorized in terms of Talent Development, Digital Media, Education, Promotion, Customer Service, Transparency, and Measures and Metrics. The strategic plan can be found at this link: [https://www.michiganbusiness.org/49949a/globalassets/documents/film/about/mfo\\_strategic\\_plan2015\\_booklet\\_3-1.pdf](https://www.michiganbusiness.org/49949a/globalassets/documents/film/about/mfo_strategic_plan2015_booklet_3-1.pdf).

# ANNUAL REPORT - APPENDIX A

## MICHIGAN FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA OFFICE

### FY2018 STRATEGIC PLAN ACHIEVEMENTS IN REVIEW

In May 2015, the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office (MFDMO) released a strategic plan. The plan included short- and long-term goals and recommendations to help bridge gaps amongst the creative industries, promote Pure Michigan, improve transparency and communication to legislative partners, and ultimately ensure that taxpayer dollars are being used wisely. While the landscape of the MFDMO has changed drastically since the release of this plan with the end of the film incentive program, the MFDMO continues to work diligently to implement as many recommendations as possible. Please find a listing of the completed recommendations below that were accomplished in fiscal year 2018.

#### TALENT DEVELOPMENT



Each project produced in Michigan provides the opportunity for the Michigan-based creative class to further develop their abilities. Promoting, strengthening and increasing local film and creative talent encourages this workforce to stay in Michigan, continue contributing to the local economy by developing their own content while attracting contractual work from out-of-state production and digital projects.

**Recommendation:** *Partner with film and creative industry members to conduct workshops in various regions of the state to provide training, connect talent with employment opportunities and increase awareness of the film and creative industry's breadth and depth in the state.*

**Action:** Through its sponsorship of film, music and digital media events year-round and statewide, the MFDMO indirectly provides access to professional development and general interest opportunities to creative professionals and enthusiasts alike. We worked to make sure that sponsor recipients provided opportunities for talent development by requiring scholarship, stipend, and/or prize money be awarded to filmmaker or digital media developer to promote the creation of new media at the Gold Partner level. In addition to that requirement, at the Platinum Partner level, we require coordination of talent development and/or networking workshop or panel. Through deliverable requirements such as these, we ensure that events we sponsor are creating opportunities to develop and foster talent in the state.

**Recommendation:** *Maintain efficient and accurate production, crew and locations directories that pair local talent with available production positions. Enhance the growth of these directories through promotional efforts by the office, industry partners, regional film offices, and MFO advisory council members.*

**Action:** This recommendation has been accomplished through the continual promotion of the MFDMO's online production directory and the expansion of adding a digital media online directory. The maintenance of the production, crew and locations directories remains an ongoing process within the MFDMO. At present, there are 3,487 crew members and support service listings as part of the production directory. Similarly, new submissions are routinely made to the locations directory. Presently, there are 5,648 locations listed. A list of office services, including links to the Crew and Locations directories, is provided as part of every customer service outreach.

**Recommendation:** *Create a talent bank of private employers that are willing to provide internship and apprenticeship opportunities for individuals interested in pursuing a film or other creative industry career, including the skilled trades.*

**Action:** Rather than creating a database specific to the creative industries, we leveraged the work that a fellow business unit at the MEDC and TED had already completed with regard to internships. Our colleagues at *Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC)* created a portal that connects active internship and job seekers with job providers across all sectors in the State of Michigan. We created a link for internship seekers on the "Jobs/Education" tab of our website that redirects to the PMTC internship portal.

#### DIGITAL MEDIA



Most individuals utilize a phone, computer or other electronic device throughout the day. It continues to become part of a lifestyle and Michigan is home to some of the most talented individuals in this area. Strengthening the support of this industry and developing partnership with the private sector can help Michigan become the Midwest hub for digital media.

**Recommendation:** *Create public/private partnerships with those interested in growing the digital media sector in our state and help foster the economic growth of this industry. This yields the opportunity to declare Michigan as the Midwest digital media hub of the country.*

**Action:** Since 2016, MFDMO has partnered with Google and local supporting organizations to provide year-round online access to the CS First program, which teaches entry-level computer coding skills to middle-school students statewide. MFDMO has also hosted annual events since 2016 for 300 participating students which feature new and emerging digital technology. In the 2018 event, there were 302 attending students, 9

interactive stations, and 2 exhibitors. In addition, 9,595 students participated online through clubs statewide, an increase of 3,527 students over 2017.



#### EDUCATION

With several high schools, colleges, and universities across Michigan providing film and creative industry programs, there is an opportunity for the MFDMO to strengthen relationships with these institutions, utilize the skills and talent of our youth and apply employment matchmaking and place making techniques to encourage their decision to stay in Michigan and continue investing in its economy.

**Recommendation: *Maintain an updated listing of high schools, colleges and universities with creative programs in the state and help connect students with industry related professional for hands-on educational opportunities, including skilled trades and digital media.***

**Action:** We offer a list of college and university programs in the fields of film and digital media/computer science on our website. This gives current or prospective students considering a career in the creative industries a resource to learn which programs may be the best fit for them.

**Recommendation: *Strengthen relationships with high schools, colleges and universities that have a creative program by offering in-class presentations about the creative industry from the state's perspective and by connecting with social media directors to leverage messaging efforts.***

**Action:** When possible, and where it makes sense, the MFDMO connects high school and college students to educational opportunities available at film, music and digital media events year-round and statewide by donating MFDMO sponsor passes to students in film, digital media or other creative academic programs.

**Recommendation: *Connect high school, college and university ambassadors for the creative industry with the MFDMO advisory council to solicit their ideas, support their efforts and encourage the growth of youth in the creative industry.***

**Action:** The Michigan Film Office Advisory Council (MFOAC) is required by statute to meet three times a year. Since the unveiling of the 2015 Strategic Plan, the MFDMO has made it a priority to engage schools in the regular MFOAC meetings. Over the past year, the MFDMO has engaged and offered opportunities to present and collaborate with MFOAC to Lansing Community College, Specs Howard, and Warren Consolidated High School.

In addition to hosting students at regular Advisory Council meetings, the MFDMO is also a proud host to many interns throughout the year. In 2018, the MFDMO mentored two

students who are interested in pursuing the creative industries as a career, one of whom has gone on to intern with *Saturday Night Live* in New York City.



**PROMOTION**

Michigan has a comeback story to tell – the economy continues to improve and Detroit is now thriving. One of the best ways to convey this positive message is through the creative industry.

**Recommendation:** *Solicit and feature return-to-Michigan stories in newsletters, legislative reports, social media and on the MFDMO website that highlight individuals, businesses and projects that choose to return to Michigan to pursue their creative goals.*

**Action:** It has become common practice for the MFDMO to feature success stories from the film and creative industry and folded into regular correspondence through newsletters, social media and press releases. It is critical to encourage the promotion of the indigenous industry that continues to grow our creative economy.

**Recommendation:** *Partner with the Pure Michigan tourism campaign to allow tourists to identify whether their visit was inspired by a film or creative industry feature.*

**Action:** Film tours are being created to encourage more tourism economic activity inspired by the film and creative industries. Additionally, in a slight variation of this recommendation, the MFDMO contracted with *Circle Michigan* in early 2016 to develop ten film tour itineraries that are planned around Michigan-made films, all of which have been completed. A full listing of these tours can be viewed on the MFDMO website, the Pure Michigan Travel Road Trips web page, as well as the [Circle Michigan](#) website. The MFDMO contracted for an additional six film tour itineraries in 2018.

**Recommendation:** *Provide promotional certificates to locations and communities that have been the sites for a project for both incented and non-incented film productions.*

**Action:** Certificates to non-incented projects can be distributed, upon request, and verification of the filming location.

**Recommendation: Increase Michigan’s presence and participation in domestic and international film, creative industry events and trade shows to ensure maximum exposure at efficient costs.**

**Action:** The MFDMO has many opportunities to elevate the creative industry on national and international stages. The MFDMO has partnered with Michigan’s own national and international festivals and events including:

Month	Sponsor Recipient	Location
October	Fresh Coast Film Festival	Marquette
	Royal Starr Film Festival	Royal Oak
November	Lamplight Music Festival	Grand Rapids
	Mosaic Mobile Video Festival	Grand Rapids
January	Thunderbay International Film Festival	Alpena
	Grand Rapids Film Festival 36 Hour Challenge	Grand Rapids
March	Ann Arbor Film Festival	Ann Arbor
April	Capital City Film Festival	Lansing
	Freep Film Festival	Detroit
	Grand Rapids Film Festival*	Grand Rapids
	Digital Arts, Film & Television (DAFT) 50th Michigan Student Film Festival	Detroit
May	Courageous Persuaders	Royal Oak
June	Cinetopia International Film Festival	Detroit
July	Vidlings & Tapeheads Film Festival	Hamtramck
August	Traverse City Film Festival	Traverse City
	Trinity International Film Festival	Detroit
	I See You Awards	Novi, Bel Air, Detroit
	Livelylands Music Festival	Empire
September	Digital Summit Detroit	Detroit
	ArtPrize X	Grand Rapids
	Earthwork Harvest Gathering	Lake City
	Hell’s Half Mile Film & Music Festival	Bay City
Year-Long	UICA Open Projector Night	Grand Rapids

\*Some events from this festival had to be rescheduled to September due to weather.

The MFDMO is a member of the Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM) and on its legislative policy subcommittee and legislative annual breakfast subcommittee. This membership gives the opportunity to engage with other activists in the tourism industry and further align efforts that showcase the creative economy.



#### CUSTOMER SERVICE

The MFDMO continues to learn what is done well, what areas can be improved upon and what can be accomplished to keep Michigan competitive across the country. This includes the need to streamline services, provide timely and accurate responses and leverage film and creative industry partners that are focused on accomplish the same goal.

**Recommendation: *Maintain a user-friendly website where individuals interested in the film and creative industry can identify local creative industry partners and organizations and discover opportunities on how to get involved.***

**Action:** The MFDMO website contains a link where creatives can share their individual contact information and interest area(s) to one of five Creative Chambers throughout the state.

**Recommendation: *Evaluate and streamline application and funding disbursement process to maintain efficiency of data being collected and ensure competitiveness in comparison to other states.***

**Action:** The MFDMO updated the application for sponsorships to a completely online system, resulting in faster turn-around and a smoother process for both the office and applicants. The application deadline was also changed from 60 days prior to the event to 90 days prior to the event. This was done to address issues with funds being received in sufficient time prior to the event for the organization to make use of sponsorship dollars.

#### TRANSPARENCY



Since the inception of the film credit in 2008, to the transition to the film incentive in 2012, the transparency of the program has enhanced; however, there is always room for additional improvement. As the MFDMO continues to expand its responsibilities into other diverse areas, maintaining transparency will remain a priority.

**Recommendation: *Maintain current requirements and further enhance legislative reporting to provide legislators all relevant data and material related to the film and***



*creative industries to ensure they have all information at their disposal as they make legislative decisions.*

**Action:** In addition to highlighting progress on the strategic plan recommendations, the expanded legislative reports include a more thorough dashboard that maintains legislatively required data and provides additional information on each project to ensure transparency of the incentive and disbursement process.

**Recommendation:** *Leverage social media and networking efforts by incorporating and featuring more infographics about the creative industry, strengthening the MFDMO's relationships with schools, colleges and universities, enhancing location scouting opportunities, highlighting Pure Michigan features related to the creative industry and featuring regional film offices and MFO advisory council members.*

**Action:** Social media drives the creative economy. Through strategic engagement, the MFDMO has surpassed over 11,407 followers on Facebook and engages all social media users through live-tweeting Council meetings, events, partnership efforts and training opportunities. The MFDMO also has 3,626 followers on Twitter and sends a monthly newsletter to 6,319 individuals signed up through our distribution list.

**Recommendation:** *Encourage film and creative industries to expand their external outreach during a production by connecting with their respective local and legislative leaders to convey the impact and importance of the project happening in their community.*

**Action:** Sponsoring events across the state provides the MFDMO with an opportunity to engage with local communities and their leaders. To that end, we provide all sponsor recipients with a list of their local legislators and require them to inform and invite the legislators. This provides event organizers with information to highlight the event and demonstrate the importance of film and creative industries to leaders in all areas of Michigan.

**Recommendation:** *Ensure regular communication with the creative industry by providing consistent, periodic updates that would include information from the MFO, highlights of upcoming projects happening across the state, and return-to-Michigan stories to show the growth of the creative industry in Michigan.*

**Action:** Ensuring regular communication with our creative partners is critical. The MFDMO has been able to accomplish this effort through the growth of our email distribution list and integrating a monthly newsletter to keep the industry informed about current projects and upcoming events. Additionally, the MFDMO strives to meet with industry stakeholders around the state to provide updates on news and initiatives from the office and engage directly with the creative community to gain feedback. This includes annual presentations to stakeholder groups like the National Association of

Theatre Owners and participating in local film judging contests like the Grand Rapids Film Festival.



#### **MEASURES AND METRICS**

Capturing and measuring data is an important step in the effort to understand what initiatives are successful and what should be improved to increase the benefits of a program.

**Recommendation: *Create a mechanism to capture data on all film projects in Michigan— incented and non-incented—to measure the breadth and depth of the film and creative industry and realize its impact.***

**Action:** Capturing information from our customers will allow the MFDMO to provide better and more targeted services to people in the film and creative industries. The MFDMO developed a preliminary survey to capture information about current and future projects. The survey is available on the website, and a link to this survey is sent as part of customer outreach.

**Recommendation: *Strengthen relationships with all film festivals in the state to garner data related to how many attendees participated in the festival and the economic impact of the festivals in the various communities.***

**Action:** Film festivals sponsored by MFDMO are required to submit Measures & Metrics reports 30 days post-event. Past recipients of sponsorship awards are not considered for current-year funding unless their previous event’s report is on file at MFDMO.