



MICHIGAN STRATEGIC FUND

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 2, 2020

TO: The Honorable Jim Stamas, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee,
Subcommittee on General Government

The Honorable Shane Hernandez, Chair
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Mark Huizenga, Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on General Government

FROM: Jeff Mason, President
Michigan Strategic Fund

SUBJECT: 2019 Section 1032 Annual Report on Film Incentives and Credits

Section 1032 of the General Government Omnibus budget requires the Michigan Strategic Fund to provide an annual report on film incentives and tax credits at the same time the report required under Section 455, MCL 208.1455 of the Michigan Business Tax Act is submitted.

Pursuant to this requirement, attached is the 2019 report. Also, included is information required under Section 1033 of the General Government Omnibus budget, activities of the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office as well as its FY 2019 Strategic Plan Achievements in Review.

If you have any questions, please contact our Office of Government Relations at 517.335.1847.

Attachment

cc: Members, Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees on General Government
Members, Senate Subcommittee on Labor and Economic Opportunity/MEDC
Chris Kolb, State Budget Director
Chris Harkins, Director, Senate Fiscal Agency
Mary Ann Cleary, Director, House Fiscal Agency



DATE: March 2, 2020

TO: Governor Gretchen Whitmer

FROM: Selam Ghirmai
Interim Director

SUBJECT: 2019 Michigan Film & Digital Media Office Annual Report

Pursuant to Section 455 of the Michigan Business Tax Act (Public Act 36 of 2007) the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office (MFDMO) is required to submit an annual report summarizing activities and program spending for the previous 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 2019.

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 2019. As of December 10, 2019, 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 FY 2019, four 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 \$1,414,435. 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 2019, the total administrative expenses were \$628,279.

Approved Certificates of Completion Requests

FY 2019: 10/01/2018 - 09/30/2019

Project	Production Company	Type of Project	Total Michigan Spend by Production Company	Financial Assistance	Duration of Financial Assistance	Persons Employed in State as FTE	COCR Approved Date	Locations (Dashboard)
Believe	Do You Believe Movie, LLC	Feature Film	\$4,662,370	\$657,142	3 years	12	11/15/2018	Manistee, Grand Rapids, Ludington, Muskegon, Commerce, Ionia
Ask Dr. Nandi Season 3	Ask Partha, LLC	TV Series	\$1,845,121	\$389,798	3 years	10	12/17/2018	Farmington Hills
Ask Dr. Nandi Season 2	Ask Partha, LLC	TV Series	\$1,146,280	\$255,484	3 years	6	1/2/2019	Troy
Mickey Matson and the Helm of Darkness	Helm Films, LLC	Feature Film	\$37,297	\$112,011	3 years	2	2/4/2019	Scottville
TOTALS:			\$7,691,068	\$1,414,435				

MICHIGAN FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA OFFICE
Annual Report (section. 1033) - FY 2019 - 10/01/2018 - 09/30/2019

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.

Website - michiganbusiness.org/mifilmaddigital	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 provided. 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.
Production Directory:	Searchable online directory which features 4,107 approved crew and vendors that provide support services for the film and digital industries.
Locations Directory:	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.
Locations Scouting:	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.
Permitting:	Assist in-state and out-of-state clients on permitting issues at the municipal, county, state and federal levels of government.
Social Media Platforms/Newsletter:	MFDMO maintains a presence on Facebook and Twitter. Maintains 12,513 followers on Facebook and 3,674 followers on Twitter. The monthly electronic newsletter is sent to a distribution list of 6,018 individuals.
Note:	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 with a listing of the services provided for each project.

Month of Service	Project Type	Project Name	Location	Investment Leveraged* (estimated private investment)	Services Provided by MFDMO
October	Advertisement	Michigan State Police Recruitment	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Programming	IGDA Detroit Meetup	Southfield	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Industry Newsletter	CreativeMich	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Reality DocuSeries	Street Cred	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Digital Media	Meaningful Play Conference	East Lansing	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Royal Starr Film Festival	Royal Oak	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Government	MFOAC Meeting	Royal Oak	n/a	Promoted on social media and website
	Film Festival	Thriller! Chiller!! Film Festival	Grand Rapids	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
	Independent Film	Coming Up for Air	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Programming	Bryce Dudal - Ellen DeGeneres Appearance	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Contest	Mosaic Mobile	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
	Documentary	Documenting DETROIT	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	The Fearless Tribe of Fanatic Filmmakers	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Job Posting	Tippling Point Solutions	Sault Ste. Marie	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Series	Open Projector Night - UICA	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Series	Detroit in Film	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Digital Media	Digital Marketing Workshop - Ypsilanti	Ypsilanti	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Documentary	Detroit: Comeback City	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially

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Month of Service	Project Type	Project Name	Location	Investment Leveraged* (estimated private investment)	Services Provided by MFDMO
November	Music Festival	Lamp Light Music Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	East Lansing Film Festival	East Lansing	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Tourism Advocacy	TICOM Quarterly Meeting	Frankenmuth	n/a	Promoted socially
	Casting Call	America's Got Talent	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Education Event	Mosaic Film Experience	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Filmmaker Meetup	Ypsilanti	n/a	Promoted socially
	Call for Submissions	Capital City Film Festival	Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Programming	IGDA Detroit Meetup	Southfield	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Series	Local Directors Series: The Incarnation	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Programming	Detroit Technology Exchange: Launch Detroit	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Programming	Accelerating the Runway	Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	HHM Film Festivus	Bay City	n/a	Promoted socially
	Casting Call	Water in the Broken Glass	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media and website
December	Call for Submissions	Red Bull Arts Detroit Micro-Grant Program	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Casting Call	Flint Indie Movies	Flint	n/a	Promoted socially
	Auditions	Motion Picture Institute Student Films	Troy	n/a	Promoted socially
	Call for Submissions	Vidlings and Tapeheads Film Festival	Hamtramck	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Web Series	Northbound 2	Iron Mountain, Norway, Houghton	n/a	Promoted on social media and website
	Education Event	EECS 494 + EMU Student Games Showcase	Ypsilanti	n/a	Promoted socially
	Documentary	Lindell Athletic Club	Southeast Michigan	n/a	Promoted socially
	Call for Submissions	Idlewild International Film Festival	Idlewild	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Feature Film	Frozen Stupid 2: Open Water	Roscommon	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	Education	MDE Robotics Investment Press Release	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Call for Submissions	GRFF36 Hour Film Challenge	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
January	Film Screening	Sincerely, Brenda	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Call for Submissions	Threadbare Mitten Film Festival	Lansing	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Call for Submissions	Student Production Awards	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Call for Submissions	I See You Awards	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Feature Film	Nowhere, Michigan	Norway, Iron Mountain, Kingsford	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Chamber	Promotional Reel	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Television Series	The Zimmern List	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Thunder Bay International Film Festival	Alpena	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Music Event	Saturday Night Live - Greta Van Fleet	International	n/a	Promoted socially
	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	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Casting Call	MasterChef Junior	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	February	Creative Events	Art & Craft Beer Festival	Lansing	n/a
Filmmaker Event		Compass College Open House	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially

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Month of Service	Project Type	Project Name	Location	Investment Leveraged* (estimated private investment)	Services Provided by MFDMO
	Job Posting	MEDC Video & Media Content Designer	Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Music Event	Movement Electronic Music Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	Feature Film	Guest Artist	Chelsea	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	Call for Submissions	Fortnight Film Contest	Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Casting Call	Cents	Potterville	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	Feature Film	My Soul to Keep	Rochester Hills, West Bloomfield Township, Pontiac, West Bloomfield, Wolverine	\$659,713	Promoted on social media, 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 Events	MSU Comic Book Forum	East Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	Artic Screening w/ Q&A from Tim Zajaros	Bloomfield	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Brew & View Screening of Mean Girls - CCFE	Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Job Posting	Look the Other Way - Feature Film	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Music Event	How Sounds are Made: Ian Fink + DBS Cactus Concert	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Chamber	Grand Rapids Creative Chamber Mixer	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	March	Film Festival	Capital City Film Festival	Lansing	n/a
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
Creative Programming		The State of Superior Podcast	Upper Peninsula	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Casting Call		Still Life - Student Short	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
Creative Events		ArtPrize	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Creative Programming		Seed&Spark - Crowdfunding to Build Independence	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Film Festival		Ann Arbor Film Festival	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Filmmaker Event		Detroit Filmmaker Awards	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
Film Festival		Teen Filmmaker Festival	Kalamazoo	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Education Award		DAFT Educator of the Year	SE Michigan	n/a	Promoted socially
Creative Events		Epic Games Mega Grants Announcement	Worldwide	n/a	Promoted socially
Film Festival		Italian Film Festival - USA	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
Filmmaker Event		Relaxer + Q&A with Director Joel Potrykus	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
Film Series		HMM Film Series: Three Identical Strangers	Bay City	n/a	Promoted socially
Creative Chamber		Downtown Detroit Partnership Programming	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
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 Chamber		Marquette Creative Residency Event	Marquette	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
Film Festival		Detroit Can Film Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
April	Film Screening	Division 19	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	Seed&Spark Workshops	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter

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Month of Service	Project Type	Project Name	Location	Investment Leveraged* (estimated private investment)	Services Provided by MFDMO
	Tourism Advocacy	Pure Michigan Twitter Chat	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Cinetopia Film Festival	Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Education Event	MFDMO Annual Computer Science Event	Grand Rapids	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
	Film Festival	Thriller! Chiller!! Film Festival	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	Eclipse Awards	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Event	Courageous Persuaders	Royal Oak	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Filmmaker Event	NATAS Michigan Student Production Awards	Ann Arbor	n/a	Promoted socially
May	Casting Call	Motion Picture Institute Student Films	Troy	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Contest	Detroit Voices	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Education Event	MDE Approves CS Standards	Statewide	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	Short Film	Find Me Up North	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially
	Short Film	Low Road	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	Planet M - Mobility Cross Promotion	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Events	Motor City Comic Con	Novi	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	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
	Creative Chamber	Seat at the Table	Marquette	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	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	Music Event	Vidlings and Tapeheads Film Festival	Hamtramck	n/a	Promoted socially
	Creative Programming	Michigan Musicians of Note	Statewide	n/a	Promoted socially
	Documentary	The Russian Five	International	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	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	Lively Lands Music Festival	Burdickville	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
	Film Series	Movies on Monroe	Grand Rapids	n/a	Promoted socially
	Government	NATO Michigan Chapter Presentation	Lansing	n/a	Promoted socially
	Feature Film	Flint	Flint	n/a	Promoted socially
Documentary	12th and Clairmount	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially	
Reality Television	America's Got Talent - Detroit Youth Choir	Unknown	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter	
July	Music Festival	Earthwork Detroit Music Festival	Detroit	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
	Documentary	Paradise Boogie - DPTV	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Filmmaker Contest	48 Hour Film Project: Detroit	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter

GENERAL SERVICES PROVIDED

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

Month of Service	Project Type	Project Name	Location	Investment Leveraged* (estimated private investment)	Services Provided by MFDMO
	Creative Programming	Chat it U.P. Podcast	Upper Peninsula	n/a	Promoted socially
	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
	Independent Film	The Farwell	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially
	Music Event	Mo Pop Music Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Creative Programming	Lyric Theater	Harbor Springs	n/a	Promoted socially
	Government	MFOAC Meeting	Traverse City	n/a	Promoted on social media and website
	Film Festival	Traverse City Film Festival	Traverse City	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
	Music Festival	Excellency Music Festival	Bay City	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Independent Film	Lost Heart	Whitehall	n/a	Promoted socially
	Documentary	America You Kill Me	Unknown	n/a	Promoted socially
	Short Film	Rise of the Mask	Unknown	n/a	Promoted on social media and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Hell's Half Mile Film & Music Festival	Bay City	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
September	Independent Film	War Path	Southeast Michigan	n/a	Promoted on social media, website and in monthly newsletter
	Film Festival	Detroit SheTown Film Festival	Detroit	n/a	Promoted socially
	Digital Media	IGDA Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Meetup	Ypsilanti	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Michigan Film Festival Forum	Bay City	n/a	Promoted socially
	Film Festival	Threadbare Mitten Film Festival	Lansing	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

*Investment Leveraged represents how much an incented production project spent in Michigan on labor, goods, services, etc. Investment Leveraged is confirmed through an audit the incentive recipient submits through a compliance claims process.

n/a represents non-incented projects that were provided promotional support; Investment Leveraged is not verified for non-incented projects.

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 among 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.

ANNUAL REPORT - APPENDIX A

MICHIGAN FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA OFFICE

FY 2019 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 FY 2019.



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: In September 26-29, 2019, the MFDMO launched its first-ever, state-level "Film Festival Forum" in partnership with Film Festival Alliance (a national organization to foster collaboration and grow a sustainable film festival ecosystem). It was held in conjunction with Hell's Half Mile Film & Music Festival in Bay City, Michigan. The event brought together film industry leaders to network, learn best practices in supporting filmmaking and festivals in Michigan and identify collaborative opportunities.

- There were 35 attendees representing 22 organizations.
- Exceeded original plan to host at least four workshops by hosting two additional sessions (total of six).
- Hosted numerous discussions about how the MFDMO can move beyond current, sponsorship-based relationships with film festivals to optimize and scale up their role as business and educational centers for filmmakers and as points of interest for tourists.

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 4,107 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 6,040 locations listed. A list of office services, including links to the Crew and Locations directories, is provided as part of every customer service outreach.

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 2015, the 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 2019 event, there were 306 attending students, nine interactive stations, and one exhibitor. In addition, a total of 16,002 students participated online through clubs statewide, an increase of 3,912 students over 2018.

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.

In addition to hosting students at regular Advisory Council meetings, the MFDMO also offered and/or conducted in-class presentations to students about filmmaking in Michigan with the University of Michigan and Oakland University.



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 commissioned 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 and 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:

**MICHIGAN FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA OFFICE
FY 2019 STRATEGIC PLAN ACHIEVEMENTS IN REVIEW**

Month	Sponsor Recipient	Location
October	Fresh Coast Film Festival	Marquette
	Royal Starr Film Festival	Royal Oak
	Meaningful Play Game Conference	East Lansing
	Hell's Half Mile Film & Music Festival	Bay City
November	East Lansing Film Festival	East Lansing
	Mosaic Mobile Video Festival	Grand Rapids
January	Thunderbay International Film Festival	Alpena
	Profiles in Color Season 2 Premiere	Detroit
February	Central Michigan International Film Festival	Mt. Pleasant
	GRFF 36-Hour Challenge	Grand Rapids
March	Ann Arbor Film Festival	Ann Arbor
April	Capital City Film Festival	Lansing
	Freep Film Festival	Detroit
	Digital Arts, Film & Television (DAFT) 50th Michigan Student Film Festival	Detroit
May	Courageous Persuaders	Royal Oak
	Detroit Filmmaker Awards	Detroit
	Cinetopia International Film Festival	Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Metro Detroit
	Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts	Grand Rapids
June	Detroit Can Film Festival	Detroit
	Vidlings & Tapeheads Film Festival	Hamtramck
July	Earthwork Detroit Music Festival	Detroit
	Traverse City Film Festival	Traverse City
	Nevertheless Film Festival	Ann Arbor
	Farm Block Festival	Allouez
August	Excellency Music Festival	Bay City
	Trinity International Film Festival	Detroit
	Idlewild International Film Festival	Idlewild
	I See You Awards	Novi, Bel Air, Detroit
	Livelylands Music Festival	Empire
September	Digital Summit Detroit	Detroit
	ArtPrize Project 1	Grand Rapids
	Earthwork Harvest Gathering	Lake City
	Hell's Half Mile Film & Music Festival	Bay City
	Trans Stellar Film Festival	Detroit
	Detroit SheTown Film Festival	Detroit
	Royal Starr Film Festival	Royal Oak
	Warpath Premiere & Community Networking Event	Royal Oak
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 12,513 followers on Facebook and engages all social media users through live-tweeting Council meetings, events, partnership efforts and training opportunities. The MFDMO also has 3,674 followers on Twitter and sends a monthly newsletter to 6,018 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.



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 the MFDMO.