



Creative Chamber Pilot Program

Presented by the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office

Purpose: *A talent attraction and retention initiative that bolsters economic development and the creative industries by engaging the local business and creative community.*

Overview: Michigan is fortunate to have a strong and vibrant creative and cultural economy. Through the Creative Chamber pilot program, the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office (MFDMO) is engaging communities to cultivate the growth of this sector and elevate Michigan as the state of creativity.

The Creative Chamber pilot program charges the local business community with engaging their **local creatives and other public, private and nonprofit stakeholders** to **break down industry silos** for purposes of:

- 1) Attracting more and better creative jobs
- 2) Cultivating a creative and culturally-friendly environment making communities attractive place for individuals to live, work and play
- 3) Encouraging the retention and growth of talent in the creative and cultural economy

The first round of pilots focus on five communities that have demonstrated a desire to grow their creative and cultural economy and identity and where empirical data supports this goal. Those identified communities include Detroit, Washtenaw County, Grand Rapids, Traverse City, and Marquette.

Creative Industries Definition: There are 12 clusters that are considered to be part of the creative industry¹: 1) Advertising, 2) Architecture, 3) Arts Schools, Artists & Agents, 4) Creative Technology, 5) Culture & Heritage, 6) Design, 7) Fashion, Garment & Textile, 8) Film, AV & Broadcasting, 9) Literary, Publishing & Print, 10) Music, 11) Performing Arts, and 12) Visual Arts & Crafts.

Supporting Evidence and National Trends: The Creative Chamber pilot program is Michigan's response to the national and international growth of the creative economy. In 2014, the Creative Industries yielded \$698 billion to the U.S. Economy and 4.7 million Jobs. Specifically to Michigan, the creative economy contributes nearly 89,000 jobs in over 10,000 businesses generating over \$4.09 billion in wages. This represents a growth of 1.5% in Employment and 8.5% growth in wages since 2011.²

¹ [2016 Creative State Michigan Report](#)

² [2016 Creative State Michigan Report](#)

Funding Sources: The \$1.5M Creative Chamber pilot program is funded by the Michigan Film & Digital Media Office and supports five pilot communities. Funding is specific to carrying out the recommendations and goals as put forth by the communities and providing technical and administrative assistance (not hiring employees). Each Creative Chamber is charged with developing a sustainability plan to continue long-term benefits of the Creative Chamber program that lives beyond this three-year grant program.

Creative Chamber Structure: Each participating Creative Chamber community is required to create a Creative Chamber advisory board that includes representatives from each of the 12 creative subsets (mentioned on page 1), government, advocacy groups and education. MFDMO will have representation on each Creative Chamber board.

Program Proposals and Associated Measures/Metrics: Each community is required to develop measures and metrics that align with the three aforementioned goals of:

- 1) Attracting creative businesses and projects
- 2) Enhancing their creative and cultural vibrancy
- 3) Attracting and retaining creative talent

1) Attracting Creative Businesses and Projects

The first branch of the Creative Chamber seeks to syndicate public and private partners, non-profits and foundations that are interested in growing the creative industries in the community by attracting and expanding creative businesses and projects to the region. This is expected to be accomplished by having the organizations become members of the Creative Chamber and leveraging services, resources and networks to grow the creative economy.

This structure will give creative businesses that are interested in locating in a specific region the resources to make sound business decisions based off of the opportunities available in a community. The Creative Chamber members would serve as ambassadors to encourage the growth and retention of creative businesses in the area.

2) Enhancing Creative and Cultural-friendly Community Environment

A community can have a great presence of creative and cultural spaces and venues in a region. Elevating these assets are a critical component to retaining and attracting the talent that fuel Michigan's creative economy.

The purpose of this program is to create a community culture around the creative industries. The Creative Chamber platform serves to bring together various public, private and nonprofit groups that, many times unbeknownst to each other, support the same creative and cultural initiatives. This program will enable communities to work together to build bandwidth and share resources in the development and implementation of a cohesive placemaking strategy to accomplish common goals in the community and region. This would include the development of regular workgroups, trainings, and business opportunities along with providing resources (i.e. equipment) for individuals to create their creative and cultural projects.

3) Retaining and Growing Creative and Cultural Talent

The creative industries continue to grow in Michigan. Millennials, especially, are inspired to create rather than simply consume the creative and cultural products in today's world. Ensuring Michigan communities have the resources to attract talent in these creative industries, and train those in Michigan who have a desire to be successful in this economy is critical as Michigan strives to be a hub for creativity and innovation in the Midwest.

This initiative requires the community to create professional development opportunities to prepare Michigan talent for entrepreneurial opportunities in the creative industries and fill the positions that are in high-demand in the region. The program focuses on individuals that have a desire to work in the creative industries, but are looking for and desiring additional training. Programs are also to be provided to support and educate individuals interested in launching or expanding their own creative business by giving them the tools and training to be successful.

Identified Michigan Pilot Communities:

Detroit*: Detroit has a strong history of growing and promoting creative talent and the future is even more promising for this industry. Detroit was recently the first US City to obtain UNESCO's City of Design designation which yields an even greater opportunity to further elevate, promote and grow the creative industries in this region. Currently the Detroit region is home to over 2,380 establishments that employ nearly 24,000 individuals earning over \$2.5 billion for work in the design and related fields. It is also home to the highest concentration of commercial and industrial designers in the United States (*Bureau of Labor Statistics*). This is in addition to the strong cultural institutions that are located in Detroit and the educational institutions that continually educate the next generation in creative industries.

Washtenaw County*: With nearly 500 industry focused establishments that employ 6,400 and yield \$390 million in wages, Washtenaw County is a driver of the creative industry and talent. This is especially true specifically to creative technology (i.e. software publishing, app developers) that accounts for over 57% of the region's creative economy wages. Overall the regional has experienced an increase of nearly 11% in wages from 2011-2014. This growth is strengthened by the presence of strong educational institutions, cultural organizations and festivals and events that continue to promote and elevate creative industry.

Grand Rapids*: The Kent County region is home to over 800 creative establishments that employ 11,800 and yield over \$674 million in wages. The largest growth in the creative industry in this region is Design. The region experienced a growth of 17.4% in overall creative industry wages from 2011-2014 with the top creative industry occupations being software developers, graphic designers, and computer programmers. Kent County has strong support from public and private partners that are focused on growing the creative talent and ensuring Grand Rapids becomes a critical creative hub of Michigan. This effort is further promoted through the various education institutions, cultural organizations and festivals and events (i.e. ArtPrize) that continue to elevate the region's creative talent and opportunities.

Traverse City: Located in northern Michigan, Traverse City is acclaimed to be the home of several festivals and events that focus on the creative industries and are promoted on an international scale. The mission of the region is to support and grow the indigenous industry while continuing to grow the overall economy. This effort has received strong local support with an overall vision to expand and grow the creative economy.

Marquette: Marquette is often overlooked largely due to its location in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, however there is a strong vision and passion to growing the creative industries in the region. The effort was supported through the creation of the *City of Marquette Arts and Cultural Master Plan*³ that calls for "ramping up the City's role in building the creative economy" and building "new partnerships to maintain and build a robust creative and cultural scene." Conservatively, the plan estimates \$7-10 million in annual revenues attributable to the creative industries that was quantified based off of voluntary information provided by the industry. An official and structured study would yield greater revenue results.

*Data in these regions provided by [2016 Creative State Michigan Report](#)

³ [City of Marquette Arts and Cultural Master Plan](#)