

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ORDINANCE NO.: 762-2022

Project: Greater Cleveland Media Development Corporation dba
Greater Cleveland Film Commission 2022 Operating
Grant

Project Location: Citywide

Project Manager: Matthew Keri

Ward/Councilperson: Citywide

Grant Amount: \$250,000

Purpose of Financial Assistance

The purpose of this \$250,000 grant contract is to fund the general operating expenses associated with Greater Cleveland Film Commission's programming directed at the attraction of new film-related businesses, jobs, and capital to Northeast Ohio. The agreement will assist with operating expenses between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

Background

The Greater Cleveland Film Commission (GCFC) offers programs and services that support the local film community by attracting new businesses, new jobs, and new money to Northeast Ohio. GCFC also works to create a nurturing environment in which Northeast Ohio's film industry can grow and thrive.

In 2021, productions directly spent over \$106.6 million in NE Ohio. More than half of all production spending in Ohio in 2021 went to NE Ohio. 921 crew and over 3,000 paid extras worked in NE Ohio in 2021. Productions also worked with over 200 NE Ohio vendors in 2021.

GCFC aggressively pursues media productions and businesses that can make a significant impact on the local economy. They serve as a one-stop shop for local, national, and international filmmakers, ensuring not only an exceptional production experience, but also repeat business. GCFC will continue yearly recruitment trips to Los Angeles, New York City, and Atlanta to remind industry representatives of the benefits of filming in Northeast Ohio. Each trip consists of an average of 25 meetings with producers, directors, and studio executives.

GCFC was the driving force behind the passage of the Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit (OMPTC) in 2009, and their advocacy efforts in 2016 achieved an increase to \$40

Million annually. The OMPTC currently stands at \$40 Million per year, now with the addition of theatrical production eligibility, making it the best incentive for theater in the country. Their partnership with Playhouse Square has been strengthened and further aligned as a result. GCFC is currently advocating that the State of Ohio implement changes to the OMPTC that will allow for a new uncapped tax credit relying on data from the latest economic impact study. In 2021, production companies directly spent just over \$190 million filming in Ohio (\$106.6 million in NE Ohio). However, \$224.5 million of combined production budget was turned away due to the cap on Ohio's existing motion picture tax credit. GCFC advocates strengthening the tax credit to insure Ohio stops losing these local jobs to other states.

GCFC's Workforce Development programs are designed to provide REEL EDUCATION FOR REAL JOBS, and give local talent the training, experience and professional connections to succeed in the film industry. All workforce development programs are created in consultation with industry experts and local academic partners in order to yield relevant, employer-driven curricula and training. GCFC will continue to partner with universities and other educational institutions, such as Cuyahoga Community College, Cleveland Institute of Art and Cleveland State University, in developing and expanding these types of programs.

In 2021, the GCFC Board Executive committee approved adding a new board committee focused solely on Education / Workforce Development initiatives. Members of the committee are connected to educators, media centers and well-known potential partners focused heavily on workforce initiatives in Northeast Ohio. The committee will host meetings and community outreach events, help launch a FilmSkills Pilot Program for CMSD students and connect GCFC with media centers at Karamu House and Ginn Academy to name a few.

In 2021, over 1,100 students participated in their workshops or in various speaking engagements about the film industry. This year, GCFC will continue to host industry experts to help provide knowledge and experience in training the local workforce. This list will be updated throughout the year and will be shared with anyone interested. As of February 16, 2022, 701 students have participated in their workshop and / or speaking engagements including:

- Cleveland School of the Arts (CSA) FilmSkills Series: Concept/Storyboarding/Pitching with Geoff Yaw -Emmy Award Winning Documentarian, Senior Director/Producer at Think Media Studios (January 26, 2022)
- CSA FilmSkills Series: Pitch Decks (Selling Your Idea to a Client) with GCFC President Bill Garvey and Production Coordinator Mike Wendt (February 2, 2022)
- CSA FilmSkills Series: Point of View with Tiffany Alexander – former CNN reporter, current Screenwriter and Cleveland State and Kent State Professor (February 9, 2022)

• CSA FilmSkills Series: Continuity with Jessy Leigh - Script Supervisor, Actress, Writer-Director (February 16, 2022)

Project Description

GCFC is looking to the City of Cleveland for financial assistance to continue these services and activities into 2022 and 2023. The City has funded the Film Commission for the past 23 years. The current contract between the City and GCFC is for \$250,000 for the period from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. The total cost of this year's proposed operating grant project to the City of Cleveland is \$250,000.

Economic Impact

GCFC will market the City of Cleveland as a destination for the film industry, advocate for the creation of a favorable climate for the film industry, and create workforce development programming for local residents.