



## **UMFO Grant and Sponsorships**

### **WHEREAS**

The mission of the Upper Midwest Film Office (UMFO) is to create a vibrant and sustainable film, TV, and commercial production (content) industry specifically in Northern Minnesota and broadly across the entire state.

### **WHEREAS**

UMFO has been commissioned by St. Louis County and the IRRRB to administer grant funding in support of the development of the content industry in their respective regions.

### **WHEREAS**

UMFO will administer such grant funding following four guiding principles:

1. (INVESTMENT) New measurable economic activity generated by such applicant's programming will optimally be demonstrated by a net flow of capital moving into the region from outside of it.
2. (RESOURCE UTILIZATION) Outside investment from the broader industry utilizes local talent and resources to feed regional economic impact.
3. (WORKFORCE) Regions see meaningful long-term employment gains, with the population as a whole seeing the industry as a basis for a worthwhile career.
4. (CREATIVE COMMUNITY BUILDING) Programming creates accessibility and exposure for the community to creative storytelling (film and media arts) and careers in the industry.

### **THEREFORE**

UMFO will strive to support the regional communities through intentional sponsorship of organizations involved with the film/content industry following our guiding principles.



## UMFO FILM COMMUNITY GRANT FAQ

**Q: How much funding is available for the present 2025 grant cycle:**

Up to \$67,000 will be available for the Feb 2025 application period\*

Up to \$22,000 will be available for the July 2025 application period

\* a portion of the funding is restricted to activities specifically benefitting IRRRB service area

**Q: When can my organization apply?**

**A:** Feb applications open February 1, 2025 and will close February 18, 2025. The second grant cycle opens July 1, 2025 and will close July 14, 2025. Organizations may apply for both grant cycles. Regardless of previous approval or denial.

**Q: Who can apply?**

**A:** For the February 2025 application period, only organizations with 501(c) (3) nonprofit status are able to apply. Organizations with fiscal sponsorship may be considered at a later date.

**Q: Who cannot apply?**

**A:** Grants may not be used for election campaigns, lobbying activities, or direct religious purposes. UMFO does not provide grants to private foundations, individuals, or to film, television or commercial projects.

**Q: How does my organization apply?**

**A:** We want to make this simple and not cumbersome while also protecting the intent of the funding. Organizations will submit applications prior to the grant cycle deadlines (Feb 18, 2025 & July 14, 2025).

Applications include

- A brief letter of request for funding with an explanation of what the funds would be used for.
- Completed application form

**Q: Are there any matched funding requirements?**

**A:** No

**Q: What are the grant requirements?**

**A:** All projects will be required to do applicable reporting according to the grant agreement. Information including but not limited to estimated economic impact, sales, UMFO representatives meeting with incoming producers, etc. may be required.



UMFO and the applicable funding source (St Louis County or IRRRB) should be credited where reasonable.

**Q: Can an Organization apply for a sponsorship more than once?**

**A:** Organizations may apply for both grant cycles regardless of previous approval or denial.

**Q: If an Organization or Individual applies for a sponsorship and does not get it, can they apply for the sponsorship the following year?**

**A:** Organizations may apply for both grant cycles. Regardless of previous approval or denial.

**Q: How are applicants measured?**

**A:** A rubric scoring system will be used to score projects. Considerations include but not limited to the length of established programming, economic impact, impact on the film community ecosystem, past Producer/Project attraction, demographics served, and residency.

**Q: Who approves?**

**A:** The UMFO team and UMFO Board of Directors will make final recommendations. All recommendations are final and non-negotiable.

**Q: How long does it take to get the funding:**

**A:** UMFO understands that organizational funding is integral and important. Applications will be gathered and scored within a reasonable time after applications. The goal is to get funding directly to organizations as soon as possible. Efforts will be made to respond quickly.

**Past Sponsorship Recipients:**

Ely Film Festival  
Ely's Historic State Theatre  
Zeitgeist: Minnesota Film Festival  
Zeitgeist: Minnesota Media Arts School  
Northern Film Alliance: Duluth Superior Film Fest  
Northern Film Alliance: MN Web Fest  
Northern Film Alliance: Edu Fest  
Northern Film Alliance: Edu Fest: Horror High  
Catalyst Content Festival  
Twin Cities Film Festival  
Sunscreen North Film Festival  
Hibbing College Foundation

Applications are received and reviewed by the Program Administrator with final approval. Submission and of application does not in any way guarantee that a project will be granted funding.