

FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA STUDIO INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM
Grant Pilot Program Specifications

(December 21, 2022)

Funding Source	Approximately \$10 million (FY 2023 state budget appropriation) 5% (\$500,000) for EDA's program administration costs
Program Purpose	The Film & Digital Media Studio Infrastructure Program is established to fund infrastructure improvements and sitework in support of the development of a film or digital media studio production facility. The Program is established to stimulate economic growth and enhance the State's long-term economic competitiveness by supporting and encouraging strategic economic development investments in the designated Film & Digital Media industry target sector.
Eligible Applicants	<p>Eligible applicants are municipalities, municipal entities, counties, county entities, and/or State instrumentalities that are undertaking infrastructure improvements or sitework to support the development of a film or digital media studio production facility.</p> <p>Additional applicant requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be in substantial good standing with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection at the time of application to be eligible. A current tax clearance certificate must be provided prior to approval to demonstrate the applicant is in substantial good standing with the NJ Division of Taxation, unless the applicant is not required to register with the Division of Taxation.
Eligible Uses	<p>Eligible Uses of Program funding are limited to infrastructure improvements and sitework in support of the development of a film or digital media studio production facility, which include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roadwork or transportation improvements ▪ Water and/or sewer lines/service ▪ Gas lines/service ▪ Telecommunications ▪ High speed broadband ▪ Electrical utility lines/grid/supply ▪ Accessibility and safety improvements (i.e. sidewalks, fire hydrants) ▪ Site remediation or site work on government owned property

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	<p>Funding can only be used for the approved project costs including reasonable administrative costs based on application, Authority review, and funding grant agreement.</p> <p>All projects will be subject to prevailing wage law and compliance with other labor standards requirements.</p>
Application Process and Board Approval/ Delegated Authority	<p>The Film & Digital Media Studio Infrastructure Program will be a competitive grant program with applications due by a set deadline. Online applications will be accepted during a defined minimum 60-day application period, and all applications will be reviewed following the closure of the application period.</p> <p>The Authority will perform a review of applications after the closing of the application period. Applicants will be given ten business days to cure any deficiencies. If at the end of the ten-day period, the applications are still incomplete, they will be notified the application will not be advancing to be scored and will be deemed withdrawn. At the sole discretion of the Authority, staff may ask for clarification of the application information including but not limited to responses, documentation, and attachments.</p> <p>Applications will be evaluated and scored on a competitive basis. Applications that meet the minimum score requirement of 65 out of a possible 100 points will be eligible for funding.</p> <p>Applications will initially be separated into two application review groups –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. applications in support of a Film or Digital Media Studio production facility in excess of 250,000 square feet, and2. applications in support of a Film or Digital Media Studio production facility less than 250,000 square feet <p>Provided that one or more applications are submitted in each group which meet or exceed the minimum score requirement of 65 points, then the highest ranked application from each group shall be recommended to the Board for award approval. Following this step, then all remaining applications are merged into a single group and shall be recommended to the Board for award approval starting with the highest scored application until all Program funding is awarded.</p> <p>If an applicant requests grant funding for an eligible project but there are not sufficient Program funds available to fund the full grant request, the Authority would inform the applicant of the amount of grant funds available. If the applicant wishes to proceed, the applicant would be required to fund the</p>

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	<p>difference to fill the gap to ensure the submitted project proposal is undertaken as described.</p> <p>If all program funds are not awarded during the initial application period, then applications will be reopened on a rolling basis with applications that meet the minimum score being recommended for award based on the order in which completed and eligible applications are received.</p> <p>All eligible applications will proceed to the Board for approvals.</p>
<p>Application Requirements</p>	<p>The Authority will request information about the proposed Project, including, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project Overview and Description; 2. Letter from the studio production facility confirming studio plans to build/expand studio production facility (indicate sf size) on the site with an estimated number of FTE jobs when operational, and that the proposed infrastructure improvements in Applicant’s proposal are being undertaken in support of the studio production facility; 3. Project Budget (Sources & Uses line-item detail) including evidence of additional financing if applicable per Project Budget; 4. Project Development timeline; 5. Experience and capacity of the applicant (and contractors/consultants if applicable) to implement Project within Project development timeline; and 6. Narrative and/or documentation regarding Small, Women, Minority, Veteran Business Enterprises (“SWMVBE”) participation
<p>Application Scoring</p>	<p>Applications will be reviewed and scored by staff of the Authority formed as an evaluation scoring committee. Applications will be scored on a scale of 0-100 points, with award recommendations limited to applications that meet or exceed the minimum score requirement of 65 points.</p> <p>Scoring factors and points will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applicant readiness to proceed <i>(up to 35 pts)</i> ▪ Project merits (community and regional economic impact and benefits of the proposed project as catalyst for and connection to local development) <i>(up to 35 pts)</i> ▪ Project Feasibility <i>(up to 15 pts)</i> ▪ Applicant (and contractor/consultant) experience

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> & capacity <i>(up to 10 pts)</i> ▪ SWMVB E participation <i>(up to 5 pts)</i>
Grant Amounts	<p>In accordance with the Economic Recovery Fund statute (N.J.S.A. 34:1B-7.13), the Film & Digital Media Studio Infrastructure Program funding is provided as Grant financial assistance to municipalities, municipal entities, counties, county entities, and/or State instrumentalities for the Program Purpose and Eligible Uses indicated.</p> <p>Minimum grant amount -- \$50,000 provided to any one applicant or Project Maximum grant amount -- \$4,750,000 provided to any one applicant or Project.</p> <p>Grant funding may fund 100% of an approved Project's costs.</p>
Funding Disbursement	<p>Once a project is approved for funding, the Authority will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Applicant detailing the project description, the amount of grant funding, and general grant requirements.</p> <p>The grant funds will be disbursed either incrementally as eligible project expenses are incurred and prorated with other funding sources if applicable with the Authority's standard construction retainage withheld until project completion, or grant funds may be disbursed in coordination with other funder's disbursement process if applicable.</p> <p>Funding disbursement requests must be evidenced by documentation supporting that the expenses were incurred, work has been performed in accordance with prevailing wage and affirmative action requirements, and work was done consistent with project approval and eligible uses of program funding.</p> <p>If the approved Film or Digital Media Studio Infrastructure Project has not been completed <u>and</u> the supported studio production facility has been terminated (for example, applicable redevelopment agreement is terminated, site plan approvals are denied or expire), the Applicant will no longer be eligible for any remaining unused grant funds.</p> <p>Final payment to be made upon the Authority's inspection of completed Project and receipt of certificate of completion.</p>
Fees	Application Fee: \$1,000