



New Jersey Film and Digital Media Tax Credit Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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New Jersey Film Tax Credit Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The New Jersey Film Tax Credit Program provides a tax credit of 35% of qualified film production expenses incurred after July 1, 2018 against the corporation business tax and the gross income tax for certain expenses incurred for the preproduction, production, and post-production of certain films in New Jersey. The film tax credit may be reduced to 30% for qualified film production expenses incurred for services performed and tangible personal property purchased for use at a sound stage or other location that is located within the 30-mile radius of Columbus Circle. The 35% would be applied to all qualified wages and salary expenses statewide, including qualified payments to loan outs.

General Program

1. What is the difference between a total film production expense and a qualified film production expense? Why is this an important distinction?

As part of eligibility for tax credits under the NJ Film Tax Credit Program, a film must meet at least one of two expense eligibility thresholds:

- **Total Film Production Expenses:** A minimum of 60% of the film's total production expenses (excluding post-production expenses) must be incurred after July 1, 2018 for services performed and goods purchased through vendors authorized to do business in New Jersey; or
- **Qualified Film Production Expenses:** The qualified film production expenses, in a single period for the applicant must exceed \$1,000,000 for services performed, and goods purchased, through vendors authorized to do business in New Jersey.

Qualified Film Production Expenses is defined as: expenses incurred in New Jersey for the production of a film including pre-production costs and post-production costs incurred in New Jersey; includes but not be limited to: the wages and salaries of individuals employed in the production of a film on which the tax imposed by the "New Jersey Gross Income Tax Act," N.J.S.54A:1-1 et seq. has been paid or is due, and any wages and salaries of individuals employed in the production of a film that are not subject to tax under the "New Jersey Gross Income Tax Act," N.J.S.54A:1-1 et seq., due to the provisions of a reciprocity agreement with another state; and the costs for tangible personal property used, and services performed, directly and exclusively in the production of a film, such as expenditures for film production facilities, props, makeup, wardrobe, film processing, camera, sound recording, set construction, lighting, shooting, editing, and meals.

However, qualified film production expenses do not include *expenses incurred in marketing or advertising a film; expenses incurred for intangible property such as story rights.*

For New Jersey studio partners and New Jersey film-lease production companies, qualified film production expenses shall not include payment in excess of \$500,000 to a highly compensated individual for wages or salaries or other compensation for writers, directors, including music directors, producers, and performers, other than background actors with no scripted lines.

For other qualified production companies, qualified film production expenses shall not include payment in excess of \$750,000 to a highly compensated individual for wages or salaries or other compensation for writers, directors, including music directors, producers, and performers, other than background actors with no scripted lines.

Please note that total film production expenses and qualified film production expenses have different definitions, and total film production expenses are used only as a means of determining eligibility for the program for those that meet the minimum 60% threshold.

Once a film project is deemed eligible for tax credits, the amount of tax credits a project will receive is based entirely on a percentage of the film's ***qualified film production expenses***.

2. What defines a "film" for the purposes of this program?

"Film" or "film project" means a feature film, a television series, or a television show of 22 minutes or more in length, intended for a national audience, or a television series or a television show of 22 minutes or more in length intended for a national or regional audience, including, but not limited to:

1. A documentary feature film, documentary television series, or documentary television shows;
2. A game show;
3. A talk show;
4. A competition or variety show filmed before a live audience; or
5. An award show or other gala event filmed and produced at a nonprofit arts and cultural venue receiving State funding.
6. A reality show

"Film" shall not include a production featuring news, current events, weather, and market reports or public programming, or sports event, a production that solicits funds, a production containing obscene material, or a production primarily for private, industrial, corporate, or institutional purposes, or a reality show, except if the production company of the reality show has obtained a minimum six-episode order from, and is commissioned and scheduled to premiere on, a major linear network or streaming service.

"Film" shall not include an award show or other gala event that is not filmed and produced at a nonprofit arts and cultural venue receiving State funding.

3. What does “incurred in New Jersey” mean?

Incurred in New Jersey is a standard used to determine if an expense is a qualified film production expense under the NJ Film Tax Credit Program. Incurred in New Jersey is defined as: service performed within New Jersey and tangible personal property used or consumed in New Jersey. A service is performed in New Jersey to the extent that the individual performing the service is physically located in New Jersey while performing the service. Notwithstanding where the property is delivered or acquired, rented tangible property is used or consumed in New Jersey to the extent that the property is located in New Jersey during its use or consumption and is rented from a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey and the film production company provided to the authority the vendors information in a form and manner prescribed by the authority. Purchased tangible property is not used and consumed in New Jersey unless it is purchased from a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey and is delivered to or acquired within New Jersey; provided however, that if a production is also located in another jurisdiction, the purchased tangible property is used and consumed in New Jersey, to the extent that the property is located in New Jersey during its use or consumption, if the acquisition and delivery of purchased tangible property is located in either New Jersey or another jurisdiction where the production takes place. Payment made to a homeowner for the use of a personal residence located in the State for filming shall be deemed an expense incurred in New Jersey, notwithstanding the fact that such homeowner is not a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey, provided that the approved applicant has made the withholding required by N.J.S.A. 54:10A-5.39b.g and 54A:4-12b.h and N.J.A.C. 19:31-21.3(c). Per statute, to qualify the expenses, productions are required to withhold 6.37% from all payments made to a homeowner for the use of their personal residence and remit that to the state.

Important Note: A New Jersey business must be registered to operate in the state and hold a Business Registration Certificate (BRC) to qualify as an expense under the NJ Film Tax Credit Program. The best way to ensure a business is registered to do business in New Jersey is to obtain a copy of the BRC before or at the time any purchases are made before any purchases are made through them.

For an expense to be **incurred** in the State:

Rental Equipment: Must be rented from a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey. If the equipment is initially acquired in another state, the expenses can be counted as incurred in New Jersey, on a prorated basis for its use in New Jersey.

Tangible Personal Property must be purchased from a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey. The property must be purchased in New Jersey, or if from an out-of-state vendor, shipped by the vendor to New Jersey. However, if the production is also shooting in another state, the expenses for personal property incurred in or delivered to that other state, can be counted in New Jersey, on a prorated basis, for its use in New Jersey.

Services must be performed in New Jersey.

Travel (i.e. Airfare) must be purchased through an authorized New Jersey vendor and one leg of the trip must touch New Jersey.

CPA Certification Fees: Any fee incurred for the final CPA Certification review are **not** eligible expenses regardless of where the service is performed.

Payroll Handling Fees: the payroll company must be an authorized vendor and have employees perform the payroll services within the State.

Intangible Property: Expenses incurred for Intangible property after February 26, 2024 are **NOT QUALIFIED**.

4. Can a pass-through entity apply for the credit?

A pass-through entity can apply for the credit but cannot use the tax credit directly on its tax return. The credit flows through to the business entity's members, partners, or shareholders. Examples of such pass-through entities are partnerships, LLCs (including a Single Member Limited Liability Company (SMLLC) or single member foreign Limited Liability Company (LLC) qualified to do business in New Jersey), S corporations, and sole proprietorships.

5. Do qualified film production expenses included pre-production and post-production costs?

Yes, qualified film production expenses can include pre-production and post-production costs incurred in New Jersey after July 1, 2018. Projects that are filmed outside of New Jersey but whose post-production services are performed in New Jersey are eligible for the Digital Media Post-Production credit. See further below for more information.

6. What is a loan out company?

“Loan out company” means:

For applications submitted **before** July 10, 2024: a personal service corporation or other entity with which a taxpayer contracts for the provision of specified individual personnel, such as artists, crew, actors, producers, or directors for the performance of services used directly in a production.

For applications submitted **after** July 10, 2024: a personal service corporation or other entity authorized to do business in New Jersey that is contracted with by the taxpayer to provide specified individual personnel, such as artists, crew, actors, producers, or directors for the performance of services used directly in a production. "Loan out company" shall not include entities contracted with by the taxpayer to provide goods or ancillary contractor services such as catering, construction, trailers, equipment, or transportation.

7. What about payments made to a loan out company or to an independent contractor—are such payments considered qualified film production expenses?

Payments made to a loan out company or to an independent contractor shall not be a “qualified film production expense” unless the payments are made in connection with a trade, profession, or occupation carried on in New Jersey or for the rendition of personal services performed in New Jersey and the taxpayer has made the withholding required by N.J.A.C. 19:31-21.3(c).

Qualified film production expenses and qualified digital media content production expenses shall include any payments made by the taxpayer to a loan out company for services performed in New Jersey by individuals who are employees of the loan out company and whose wages and salaries are subject to withholding but not subject to tax under the “New Jersey Gross Income Tax Act” due to the provisions of a reciprocity agreement with another state.

All payments made to independent contractors and loan out companies providing services used directly in the production would require a 6.37% withholding to be considered qualified.

Loan out companies must be authorized to do business in New Jersey.

8. Do payments to loan out companies qualify as an expense for wages and salary or as a vendor payment for services performed?

Payments made to loan outs whether through payroll or direct payments would be considered a wage and salary expense as long as the loan out is authorized to do business in the State, and the required withholdings are made. They are also subject to the respective ATL wage/salary cap.

9. If a production pays an independent contractor providing services, does that contractor need to be registered to do business in New Jersey?

If the payment is a payroll expense, the required withholding needs to be made. If the expenses are accounts payable vendor expenses, the vendor would need to be fully authorized to do business in New Jersey and provide a Business Registration Certificate.

10. How does a Vendor / Loan out register in New Jersey?

It is a two-step process, Step 1: Forming or Authorizing the entity, Step 2: Registering for tax purposes. (sole proprietors would only do step 2, the NJ-REG form)

Link below to the Treasury business registration site:

<https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/revenue/gettingregistered.shtml>

Once properly registered, the vendor or loan out would be able to obtain a Business Registration Certificate from the portal below:

https://www1.state.nj.us/TYTR_BRC/jsp/BRCLLoginJsp.jsp

11. Will the NJ sales and use tax exemption program continue with the film incentive?

The NJ Film Tax Credit Program does not impact or discontinue any existing programs.

12. Is there an annual cap per project?

There is no defined cap per project, however the annual allocation for film projects is \$100 million per State Fiscal Year (July – June).

For projects submitted by Studio Partners, the annual allocation is \$150 million per State Fiscal Year.

For projects submitted by Film-lease Production Companies, the annual allocation is \$150 million per State Fiscal Year

13. Are tax credits earmarked on a first-come, first-served basis based on date of initial application?

Yes, assuming the project meets the eligibility requirements for the program, tax credits are available on a first-come, first-served basis, based on the date/time a fully completed application is received by the NJEDA.

If an incomplete application is received, the NJEDA will notify the applicant, who will be required to provide the additional information until the application is deemed to be complete.

Once an application is deemed complete, if the amount of available credits is oversubscribed for a given state fiscal year, we will continue to approve projects based on the subsequent state fiscal year credit allocation. Projects approved for a future fiscal year allocation cannot be issued a tax credit before the first day of that fiscal year.

Additionally, if an application is seeking more credits than is available in the current allocation, the project will be approved with allocation from a future state fiscal year.

14. What happens if my project is approved with allocations from a future fiscal year?

Projects approved with allocation amounts from a future fiscal year, will have to wait to be issued a tax credit until we are in that fiscal year.

Example: NJ SFY runs July-June. Project approved in SFY 2025 with funds from SFY 2026 – would have to wait until July 1, 2025 (SFY 2026) to be issued a credit from taxation. See Question 34 for impact on vintage year.

15. What constitutes a fully completed application?

Please visit www.njeda.gov/film for a checklist of required items that must be provided in order for an application to be considered fully completed.

16. Does the tax credit amount approved at initial application limit the maximum possible credit a project can receive? For example, if a film application is approved for a tax credit of \$6.5 million, and the production company goes over budget and incurs qualified film production expenses beyond what the tax credit approval was based upon, is the production company limited to the \$6.5 million tax credit that was initially approved?

Yes – the initial approval provided by the NJEDA Board will be a not to exceed amount. If the project goes over budget and certifies qualified expenses beyond what was originally estimated, the award will be limited to the amount approved initially by the NJEDA Board.

In a scenario where a project is approved for tax credits that are more than what the production ultimately spends and can certify, the project will receive an amount of tax credits based upon the actual amount spent/certified.

17. What happens if I need to update the budget submitted with the application to capture an increase in spend?

If the application has already been deemed complete, and the initial budget reviewed by the consultant, the production would need to withdraw the initial application and resubmit a new application with updated numbers. This application would be treated as an entirely new application and all required fees would need to be paid again.

If the initial application had not yet been deemed complete, reviewed by the budget consultant – or if the Authority requests updated information - the production may be able to update the initial budget submitted.

18. How should a television series that is looking for a multi-year commitment for tax credits apply for the program?

Television series spanning multiple years should file individual applications for the program on a per-season or per-episode basis, as there are no multi-year commitments under the program.

19. What are the criteria for meeting the diversity standard in order to qualify for an additional 2% tax credit?

A taxpayer shall be allowed an increase in the tax in an amount equal to two percent of the qualified film production expenses or four percent of the digital media content production expenses, provided that the application is accompanied by a diversity plan, outlining:

- The intention to prioritize the hiring of minority persons and women in an amount of not less than 25 percent of the total hired (not just NJ employees) for the qualified film or digital media production;
- The efforts made to ensure equal employment opportunities for minority persons and women in the recruitment, selection, appointment, promotion, training and related employment areas;
- The specific goals, which may include advertising and recruitment actions, for hiring minority persons and women, including full-time jobs for full-time or full-time equivalent employees in New Jersey for production staff and crew, entry level positions, management positions, and talent related positions; and
- The participation in training, education, and recruitment programs that are organized in cooperation with State colleges and universities, labor organizations, and the motion picture industry and are designed to promote and encourage the training and hiring of minority persons and women who represent the diversity of the State population.

If you are involved with a project that wishes to submit a diversity plan, please visit www.njeda.gov/film for more information.

20. How can a production increase the diversity bonus to 4%?

An applicant who meets the requirements of the initial 2% bonus above, may be allowed an additional increase in the tax credits in an amount equal to 2% of the qualified film production expenses, provided that the application is accompanied by a diversity plan that also outlines specific goals include hiring no less than 25 percent of all persons hired as performers in the film or digital media production who:

1. Are women or members of a minority group;
2. Have been residents of New Jersey for at least 12 months preceding the beginning of filming or recording; and
3. Are members of a bona fide labor union representing film and television performers

21. Understanding that tax credits can be sold and transferred, can the credits be transferred multiple times or just once? Can the credits be transferred to multiple parties?

The credits may be transferred one time only by the initial applicant, subject to a non-refundable transfer fee. The credits may be transferred to an individual or business entity that has Corporation Business Tax (CBT) or Gross Income Tax (GIT) liability. The credits can also be sold to multiple entities; however, each transfer will be subject to the transfer fee and the purchaser must have a valid tax clearance.

22. Is there a link to access the tax credit transfer application?

The Transfer Application is forthcoming and, when available, will be found at www.njeda.govm/film

23. Where is a document outlining the Agreed Upon Procedures?

The Agreed Upon Procedures can be found at www.njeda.gov/film/

EDA has recently updated its Agreed Upon Procedures. Currently there are two versions, the first of which was effective as of the December 16, 2018 that may be used for all projects. There is a second Agreed Upon Procedures that is effective as of March 1, 2021 and may be used in the CPA review of all projects approved under the program. Projects approved by the EDA Board on or after July 1, 2021 must use the 2021 Agreed Upon Procedures.

24. Is sampling allowed in a CPA's review of a production company's Qualified Film Production Expenses?

Please see the Agreed Upon Procedures documents linked above for details relating to the verification of costs.

25. Is there still a need to certify a production company's total film production expenses in the instance where it is qualifying for the program on the basis of incurring more than \$1 million in qualified film production expenses?

Projects need to be complete prior to completing the CPA certification. In the event that the project qualifies for the program on the basis of incurring qualified film production expenses of more than \$1 million for services performed and goods purchased, through vendors authorized to do business in New

Jersey, the CPA verification report need only verify the qualified film production expenses, not the total film production expenses.

However, pursuant to P.L. 2018, c.56 - Garden State Film and Digital Media Jobs Act, a CPA verification report may only be prepared following the completion of the production.

26. For projects that include expenses incurred for use at a sound stage or other location within a 30-mile radius of Columbus Circle, NYC (30% credit), AND outside the 30-mile radius (35% credit), what procedure(s) need to be followed to track this?

At application, if the applicant anticipates incurring expenses for use within the 30-mile radius, they will need to fill out Schedule D on the budget template. This schedule will include the anticipated or known location where the expense will be used. To the extent a line item on the budget is incurred for use at locations both within and outside the 30-mile radius, the expense should be prorated based on its use within the zone on Schedule D. Expenses for wages and salaries, including payments of compensation to loan outs and independent contractors would be eligible for the 35% credit, provided the required withholdings were made, regardless of shooting location. Wages and salary expenses would not appear on Schedule D.

27. Is “vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey” defined? Does the vendor need to be physically located in New Jersey?

The regulations define “vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey” as a vendor that has obtained authorization to conduct business in this State by filing the appropriate documents with the State of New Jersey Department of the Treasury, Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services. **All qualified expenses must be incurred through Vendors authorized to do business in New Jersey.** Important Note: The best way to ensure a business is registered to do business in New Jersey is to [verify a company's NJ Business Registration Certificate](#) before any purchases are made through them.

However, in recognition that there has been some confusion regarding the requirement that all nonpayroll expenses must be paid to registered vendors in order to deem them *qualified* film production expenses, the EDA has determined it will allow projects that were approved before July 1, 2021 to choose not to perform vendor registration verification. Beginning on July 1, 2021, all approved projects will be required to demonstrate that purchases have been made from registered vendors.

Further, the EDA has determined to provide an exception from the vendor registration verification requirement for de minimis purchases as follows:

For projects with approved tax credit awards of less than \$2.5 M- purchases up to \$1,000

For projects with approved tax credit awards from \$2.5 M to \$5 M- purchases up to \$2,500 For projects with approved tax credit awards greater than \$5 M- purchases up to \$5,000 For example, a project that

has been awarded a \$3M film tax credit must verify vendor registration for all purchases greater than \$2,500.

28. For the vendor verification thresholds listed above, are the limits for individual purchases or an aggregate of all purchases through one vendor?

The schedule above applies to each individual transaction. For example. If a production is approved for \$1 million in tax credits has 10 purchases of \$120 through a single vendor, no vendor registration verification is required.

29. What is the best way for a production to determine if a vendor is “authorized to do business in New Jersey”? Do vendors need to be authorized at the time of the expenses or can they register at a later date?

The production should obtain a Business Registration Certificate for each vendor from the link below:

https://www1.state.nj.us/TYTR_BRC/jsp/BRCLLoginJsp.jsp

Vendors need to be authorized to do business at the time of the expense. Productions should obtain valid BRCs and W9s from all vendors they do business with for their records.

30. Would productions need to provide evidence of vendor registration if the expenses are paid to New Jersey State, County, or municipal government?

No, these entities would not need to provide a BRC.

31. Production companies will need to submit a Tax Clearance Certificate throughout the process. Where can one be obtained?

Go to: [New Jersey Tax Clearance - Premier Business Services Portal](#) for information and instruction to use the Premier Business Services Portal.

32. How do I know what my application fees are?

The following tables show the application fees for each project:

Tier of Project	Qualified Spend
Micro / Indie	\$0 - \$999,999
Small	\$1M - \$5,999,999
Medium	\$6M - \$14,999,999
Large	\$15M - \$29,999,999
Mega	\$30M +

Tier	Application Fee	Approval Fee	Issuance Fee	Credit Transfer Fee (per transfer)
Micro / Indie	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$1,000
Small	\$250	\$500	\$500	\$5,000
Medium	\$2,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Large	\$5,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$5,000
Mega	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$5,000

Application Fees are non-refundable and due at application submission.

Approval Fees are non-refundable (unless the project is declined) and due prior to project approval.

Issuance Fees are non-refundable and due prior to tax credit issuance.

Credit Transfer Fees are non-refundable and due at tax credit transfer application submission and are per transfer.

*Each project is also subject to a non-refundable third-party budget review fee due prior to project approval.

*Application fees are subject to change if submitted budget amounts change prior to approval

33. Is there a hiatus rule? For example, if a production company were to shoot at least one day of principal photography within the 180-day period after application submission, could the production company resume a couple of months later and still qualify for the tax credit?

There is no rule prohibiting a hiatus. Unless NJEDA provides otherwise, the required CPA certification must be submitted to NJEDA no later than four years after the NJEDA's initial approval if the applicant is seeking a credit against the tax imposed pursuant to section 5 of P.L. 1945, c. 162 and three years after the NJEDA's initial approval if the applicant is seeking a credit against the tax imposed pursuant to the

N.J.S.A. 54A:1-1 et seq. Applicants that expect to undertake a hiatus following principal photography should also be aware of the following:

- At application, the applicant will be required to provide an estimated completion date for the film. If the project expects to undertake hiatus following principal photography, the applicant should account for this anticipated hiatus when providing an estimated completion date at application.
- Following approval of a tax credit, the project will be required to provide progress reports throughout the duration of the project, which will detail the progress of the project relative to the estimated completion date that was provided at application. Failure to submit timely, periodic reports that demonstrate satisfactory progress may lead to the forfeiture of the tax credit.
- Projects will be issued tax credits that are dated with a tax year corresponding to the applicant's Fiscal Year under which the project was initially approved by NJEDA. The tax credit must be used on the tax return for that tax year.

34. How is the vintage year of the tax credit determined?

The vintage year of the tax credit is based on the tax year the Authority issued the initial approval of the application. This is the tax year the credit must be used initially. Once the cumulative total amount of tax credits, and tax credit transfer certificates, allowed to applicants exceeds the amounts of tax credits available in a fiscal year, the "tax credit vintage year" shall mean the next subsequent tax year of the applicant in which tax credits are available.

For example, a calendar year filer who is approved in June 2024, would receive a tax credit with a 2024 vintage year. Vintage year is not related to the state fiscal year or the allocation year the project is approved under.

35. What is a Studio Partner?

A studio partner is an EDA-designated production company that has made a commitment to produce films or commercial audiovisual products in New Jersey and has developed, purchased, or executed a 10-year contract to lease a production facility of \$250,000 square feet or more.

Studio Partners would first apply to the Authority for the designation and then submit subsequent applications for each film project produced in New Jersey thereafter.

See section titled "Studio Partners, Film-Lease Production Companies, and Film-Lease Partner Facility Designations" below for additional questions relating to studio partners.

36. What is a Film-Lease Production Company?

A film-lease production company is a production company that has made a commitment to lease or otherwise occupy production space in a New Jersey film-lease partner facility. In addition to the foregoing, if a New Jersey film-lease partner facility has received a temporary or final certificate of occupancy, a film production company must satisfy one of the following two criteria:

1. The film production shoots at least 50% of the total principal photography shoot days within New Jersey at a New Jersey film-lease partner facility; or
2. The qualified film production expenses of the project for all services performed and goods used or consumed at the New Jersey film-lease partner facility and payments made for the use of the New Jersey film-lease partner facility must equal or exceed 33% of the total qualified film expenses of the project.

See section titled “Studio Partners, Film-Lease Production Companies, and Film-Lease Partner Facility Designations” below for additional questions relating to film-lease production companies.

37. What is a Film-Lease Partner Facility?

A film-lease partner facility can be one of the following:

- (a) A production facility in New Jersey whose owner or developer has made the commitment to build, lease, or operate a production facility of 250,000 square feet or more, including a sound stage and production support space, for a period of five or more successive years.
- (b) A production facility built, leased, or operated by a production company designated as a New Jersey studio partner and which the New Jersey studio partner no longer occupies.
- (c) A portion of a production facility owned by a New Jersey studio partner that is in excess of the space being used by the studio partner, provided the spaces utilized and unutilized by the NJ studio partner both exceed 250,000 square feet.

See section titled “Studio Partners, Film-Lease Production Companies, and Film-Lease Partner Facility Designations” below for additional questions relating to film-lease partner facilities.

38. Is there a reduction on the credit you receive for qualified labor expenses based on where in NJ the project is filmed? Does the 30-mi radius zone of Columbus Circle influence the credit you receive on qualified labor?

Regardless of project type and location, qualified wage and salary expenses would be the base credit for the application type. This includes payments to loan out companies and independent contractors providing services primarily involved in the production

For Legacy Film: Statewide Labor would qualify for 35%

For Studio Partner Projects (including Post Only): 40%

Film-lease Production Companies: 40%

Digital Media: 30%

Post-Only Incentive for work at a Film-lease Partner Facility: 40%

Other Post Only Incentive: 35%

Additional Qualified Film Production Expense Questions

Please refer to the first two questions of this FAQ document to review the difference between a total film production expense and a qualified film production expense, as well as how NJEDA will be determining whether a qualified film production expense has been incurred in New Jersey.

For a list of qualifying expenses please see the second tab on the budget template. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and is provided for general guidance purposes only and can be updated at any time without notice. Specific facts and circumstances relating to the purchase and usage may be examined to determine whether a cost may qualify.

1. Are there certain types of expenses that are not considered qualified film production expenses? Is there a cap on qualified wage and salary payments?

Qualified film production expenses do not include expenses incurred in marketing or advertising a film; expenses incurred for intangible property such as story rights.

For New Jersey studio partners and New Jersey film-lease production companies, qualified film production expenses shall not include payment in excess of \$500,000 to a highly compensated individual for wages or salaries or other compensation for writers, directors, including music directors, producers, and performers, other than background actors with no scripted lines.

For other qualified production companies, qualified film production expenses shall not include payment in excess of \$750,000 to a highly compensated individual for wages or salaries or other compensation for writers, directors, including music directors, producers, and performers, other than background actors with no scripted lines.

2. What if an individual is performing multiple ATL job functions, is the \$500,000 or \$750,000 cap per jobs function?

For applications submitted before July 10, 2024: No, the cap is \$500,000 per individual. If a producer is also an actor, only the first \$500,000 would be a qualified film production expense.

For applications submitted after July 10, 2024: Legacy films project cap was increased to \$750,000. Studio Partner and Film-lease Production Company projects are still capped at \$500,000.

3. Would all employer paid taxes (FICA, FUI, SUI) qualify for all resident and nonresident cast/crew?

These expenses would qualify as long as the labor was incurred in New Jersey and the required withholdings were met.

4. Would qualified fringes (SUI, FUI, FICA, etc) and per diems count towards the \$500,000 or \$750,000 cap?

These fringes or per diems would not count towards the ATL cap.

5. Are legal costs associated with forming the production entity and maintaining its status with the State considered a qualified film production expense?

No, these legal costs are not considered a qualified film production expense.

6. Are filing and similar fees in connection with forming and registering the film production company with the State considered a qualified film production expense?

No, these fees are not considered a qualified film production expense.

7. Are union dues considered qualified film production expenses?

If these expenses are allocable to wages or salaries of individuals employed in the production of a film on which New Jersey Gross Income Tax is due, then these expenses would be considered qualified film production expenses.

If these expenses are separate and in addition to wages or salaries of individuals employed in the production of a film on which New Jersey Gross Income Tax is due, then the applicant must satisfactorily demonstrate that the expense was incurred in New Jersey and that the expense is direct and exclusive to the film seeking tax credits.

8. Are New Jersey Corporate Business Tax and Income Tax return preparation fees considered a qualified film production expense?

No, these preparation fees are not considered a qualified film production expense.

9. Are bank fees (monthly fees, wire transfer fees, etc.) considered a qualified film production expense?

No, bank fees are not considered a qualified film production expense.

10. Does compensation for travel days qualify?

Compensation for travel days may qualify depending on how it is reported to the payroll company. If any portion of the travel day is counted as a New Jersey (NJ) workday and NJ tax is withheld for that day, it may be considered a qualified expense. Typically, the day the individual departs from NJ is treated as a NJ workday and may be eligible.

11. Are per diems or allowances for living, travel, or meals considered qualifying film production expenses?

If these expenses are allocable to wages or salaries of individuals employed in the production of a film on which New Jersey Gross Income Tax is due, then these expenses would be considered qualified film production expenses.

If these expenses are a separate benefit provided to individuals employed in the production of a film on which New Jersey Gross Income Tax is due, they are subject to the ability of the applicant to satisfactorily demonstrate that the expense was incurred in New Jersey and that the per diem or allowance was used directly and exclusively for the film seeking tax credits. Direct purchases of travel or meals by the production company may qualify.

Interstate Ridesharing and taxi expenses could qualify as long as one leg of the trip is in New Jersey and the ride was for the exclusive use of the production.

12. Are expenses for tolls considered a qualified film production expense?

Intrastate tolls would be considered qualified, but interstate tolls would not be eligible.

13. Are expenses for Box or Kit Rentals considered a qualified film production expense?

If the expenses are a non-wage expenses, then the expense must be incurred through a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey. If the expense is allocable as wages, the required withholding must be made on the expense.

14. Are expenses for per diems or box / kit rentals considered a qualified film production expense? Are they treated as a wage payment?

Box rentals/ Kit rentals and per diems/ allowances are treated differently depending on how they are paid and who is receiving the payment. Payments to loan outs and independent contractors require a 6.37% withholding to be considered qualified.

For W-2 Employees:

Taxable kit rentals (which are paid on W2 and have WH) are considered compensation are still qualified but count towards the 500k cap – These would be considered part of the wage or salary expenses.

Nontaxable kit rentals (paid outside of wages) that are reimbursements not compensation is qualified and do not count towards the \$500k cap.

Taxable Per Diems (amounts over the GSA limits) are qualified but must have WH and count towards the 500k and considered part of compensation under wage and salary payments.

Non-taxable Per Diems (amounts under GSA limits) are qualified, no withholding required and do not count towards the \$500k cap.

15. Are expenses for location rentals including renting private property, considered a qualified film production expense?

For the expense to be qualified, the entity receiving payment, must be authorized to do business in New Jersey. If the location is a private residence, the homeowner would not need to be authorized to do business, but the production must withhold and remit 6.37% on the fee paid to the homeowner. These expenses would still be considered vendor expenses, not payroll expenses. Productions should confirm the payee is the homeowner through a copy of a deed.

16. Is liability insurance, completion bonds, errors & omissions insurance, or real property insurance considered qualified film production expenses? And if the vendor is registered with NJ, is it necessary for the insurance to be purchased from an insurance company / agency located in NJ as well?

Only general liability or construction insurance policies would be eligible. In order to be considered a qualified film production expense, the insurance policy must be purchased through a vendor authorized to do business in NJ, the policyholder must be the film production company seeking/approved for tax credits, and the policy must be directly for and exclusive to the film for which the production company is seeking/approved for tax credits. The insurance company/agency does not need to have a brick-and-mortar NJ location, but the definition of incurred in NJ for a service would still need to be met.

Completion bond premiums or fees and errors and omission insurance policies would not be eligible production expenses.

17. Would workers' compensation insurance qualify as an eligible expense?

Workers' compensation premiums can qualify if the vendor providing the coverage is authorized to do business in New Jersey and the expense is for qualified New Jersey wage and salary expenses.

18. If an item is purchased online, such as a costume or prop, can it be considered a qualified film production expense?

If the vendor is authorized to do business in New Jersey, and the item is shipped by the vendor to New Jersey, the expense can be a qualified film production expense. If the item is shipped to another state, the expense can be considered a qualified expense, as long as the production is also filming in that state, and the expense is prorated based on its used in New Jersey.

19. For an equipment company based out-of-State that will be supplying cameras, props, wardrobe, etc., would those expenses be considered qualified film production expenses if the equipment company has a New Jersey address and is registered to do business in New Jersey?

The vendor renting the equipment must be authorized to do business in New Jersey. If the production picks up the equipment from the out-of-state vendor, the expense can be considered a qualified film production expenses if the production is also filming in that state, and the expense is prorated based on

its use in New Jersey.

20. Are donations made to a non-profit or other entity considered a qualified film production expense?

Donations are not considered a qualified film production expense.

21. Shipping: Do shipping costs of documents or items (FedEx, UPS, USPS, etc) qualify?

If the shipping expense is incurred in New Jersey from a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey, the shipping expense would qualify.

22. Is contingency a qualified film production expense?

Contingency is not a qualified expense and there is no specific line item on the budget template.

23. Do personal cell phone reimbursements qualify for cast and crew?

No, these reimbursements would not qualify.

24. Are wrap parties a qualified film production expense?

Wrap parties are not a qualified film production expense.

25. Would gifts, e.g., welcome gifts to actors coming on board or expressing thanks at the end of production such as flowers, or perks for actors/directors such as an espresso machine for the actor's lodging, be considered a qualified film production expense?

Gifts are not a qualified film productions expense.

26. Would gratuities, e.g., tips paid for delivery service (including deliveries to film sets and elsewhere), dining, etc. be considered a qualified film production expense?

Tips could be considered as qualified film productions expense.

27. Would personal items for talent, e.g., pharmacy purchases, sundries, doctor visits, be considered a qualified film production expense?

No, personal items for talent would not be considered a qualified film production expense.

28. Would meals, car service, and other costs in connection with meeting with financiers (both equity and debt) be considered a qualified film production expense?

No, these costs would not be considered a qualified film productions expense.

29. Would expenses for cast and crew PPE, and lodging for potential quarantine reimbursements qualify?

PPE and lodging could qualify as long as the purchase was incurred in New Jersey through a vendor authorized to do business in New Jersey.

30. Would Uber / car service cancellation fees be considered a qualified film production expense?

The service was not performed so the cancellations fees would not be considered a qualified film productions expense.

31. When are qualified rideshare / taxi service costs counted as an in-zone expense vs out-of-zone?

If one leg of the trip is within the 30-mile radius of Columbus Circle- the entire expense qualifies an in-zone expense.

32. Would game show prizes, e.g., tangible goods or cash prizes, be considered a qualified film production expense?

Game show prizes (cash or other) would not be qualified regardless of the contestant's residency.

33. Would parking tickets and similar fines be considered a qualified film production expense?

No, parking tickets and similar fines would not qualify as a qualified film productions expense.

34. Where on the Budget Template should I include COVID expenditures?

While there is no specific line item for these costs, they can be added to the OTHER section under Misc Expenses. The column to the right of the expenses amount should be used to let us know what is included in that line item. You may be asked to provide supporting documents regarding this line item

35. Is there a requirement that the film project must end up being distributed in order to submit the CPA certification and receive a tax credit?

There is no distribution requirement, however, the project needs to be fully complete and the NJ logo credit requirements satisfied as determined by the NJ Film Commission

Studio Partner, Film-Lease Production Company, and Film-Lease Partner Facility Designation Questions

1. Are there any direct benefits under the program for getting a film studio designated as a Film-Lease Partner Facility?

The designation is not an award of tax credits. However, the designation would make the space more attractive to film productions as the potential for incentives for projects shot at a designated facility is much higher.

2. Do I have to wait for a Film Lease Partner Facility to be operational to become a Film Lease Production Company?

Not necessarily. The following information outlines the requirements for a company to become a Film-Lease Production Company, even if a Film Lease Partner Facility is still being constructed.

If the Film Lease Partner Facility does not yet have a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO): the film-lease production company must have a lease to occupy at least 36,000 square feet for no less than 3 years to apply.

In the event the authority determines that a New Jersey film-lease production company has failed to meet the qualifications of a New Jersey film-lease production company or otherwise comply with the provisions of this section, the authority may recapture from that film production company the portion of any tax credit that had been awarded to that film production company that was only available to the film production company by virtue of the film production company's designation as a New Jersey film-lease production company.

3. Can any production company be a New Jersey Film-Lease Production company?

Any production company that satisfies the requirements of being a New Jersey film-lease production company can receive the designation.

4. Can any production facility be a New Jersey Film-Lease Production Facility?

Any production facility that satisfies the requirements of being a New Jersey film-lease production facility can receive the designation, however no more than three New Jersey production facilities may be designated as a New Jersey film-lease partner facility. *

*This limitation shall not apply to production facilities, or portions thereof, owned, built, leased, or operated by a film production company designated as a New Jersey studio partner.

Application Questions

1. Who should the applicant be?

The applicant can be a production service company or the studio or entity who hires a production service company to complete a film production on their behalf and the studio or entity is reimbursing the production service company for the production expenses. The applicant does not need to be a business

formed in New Jersey, but the applicant needs to be fully authorized to do business in New Jersey and be a New Jersey taxpayer as defined in the New Jersey tax code.

2. Who can fill out the application? Who can be listed as the Authorized Representative?

Only individuals who can legally bind the applicant entity should be filling out and certifying the contents of the application. This would not include producers or production accountants. Producers and accountants can be listed as the application contact, however only a principal executive or owner of the applicant entity should be listed as the Authorized Representative.

3. What is a privilege period?

A privilege period is the applicant entity's tax year.

4. Am I able to edit the application after I submit it?

No, once submitted, the application locks. You do have the ability to share a draft of the application before final submission.

5. What address should I use on the application?

Please use the registered address of the applicant business. If the business was not formed in NJ, please use the out of state business address.

6. What Ownership Information is needed?

On the application, list all owners who have a 30% or more interest in the applicant company. This could be individuals or business entities. This information should be supported by Bylaws, an Operating Agreement or other formation documents.

7. How do I know what tax liability the applicant entity has, and which credit the applicant would be eligible for?

This should be discussed with the applicant's CPA or tax professional. There are different implications depending on how the business was formed, how the business was registered for tax purposes, and what elections the business makes with the IRS or Taxation.

8. Can I provide a Movie Magic or other production budget software templates?

No, the application requires the NJEDA budget template form be filled out by all applicants. There is a detailed instruction tab on the document. The template will collect expenses across multiple schedules or tabs.

Schedule A: Total production budget

Schedule B: Of the expenses listed on A, what expenses were incurred through vendors authorized to do business in NJ. Schedule B would include qualified wage and salary payments as well.

Schedule C: Of the expenses listed on B, what are the qualified expenses. Schedule C would include wage and salary expenses. For some productions, B and C will be the same or similar, but Schedule C can never be more than B.

*Schedule D: Of the expenses listed on C, what are the expenses incurred for goods and services for use WITHIN the 30-mile radius of Columbus Circle, NYC (but used in NJ). Schedule D would not include and expenses for wage and salary.

The totals listed on each schedule would need to match the numbers entered on the application.

**Expenses incurred for goods or services used within the 30-miles radius would be eligible for a 30% credit.*

Of note, the budget template schedules are subsets of each other. We would not expect to see line items or amounts on Schedule B that did not appear on Schedule A. Additionally, we would not expect to see amounts on Schedule C that were not listed on A. Similarly, amounts listed on B, C or D could not be higher than the amounts listed on A.

9. What are the documents required to be submitted with an application?

Tax Clearance Certificate for the applicant entity: <https://www.njeda.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Securing-Your-Tax-Clearance-Certificate-Directions-Client.pdf>

Timeline & Proposed Shooting Schedule – please include: timing of the production/filming, filming locations, and anticipated or actual dates of commencement and completion of principal photography. A one-liner would be acceptable.

Detailed Project Synopsis – includes what is being filmed (I.e. film project, digital project, reality TV

project), a detailed plot summary, the genre and subject matter, the anticipated film rating (if applicable) and include the names of the principals and actors/actresses as well as the names of the following:

- Producer(s)
- Director(s)
- Screenwriter(s)
- Cinematographer(s) / Director(s) of Photography
- Production Manager(s)

Budget Template

If the film project includes construction related costs, notice Regarding Affirmative Action/Prevailing Wage, <https://www.njeda.com/notice-regarding-aa-and-pw-2021-002/>

If project is submitting a diversity plan for the hiring of women and minority persons, please provide a completed Diversity Plan Form.

List of NJ Shooting Locations and Addresses.

Operating Agreement or Bylaws for the applicant entity. Any supporting formation documents to confirm ownership, shareholders, members, etc.

10. What happens after an application is submitted?

Once an application is submitted, EDA staff will review the submission and determine if the file is complete. If the submission is not complete, EDA will reach out to the applicant to provide the missing information. If the submission is complete, EDA will send an email to the applicant informing them the application is complete, the estimated award amount, and that it was added to the approval queue and the file is under review.

Applications submitted for \$10MM or less in estimated award size can be approved under delegated authority. These approvals take less time than the larger projects which have to go for review at one of the EDA's monthly board meetings.

Once a project is approved, an approval letter would be drafted and sent to the applicant to sign and return to EDA. At that point the file is in post-approval status and would have to submit quarterly project status updates and keep their tax clearance up to date.

Once the applicant is ready to start the final third-party CPA review, they should reach out to their Post-Tax Credit Relationship Officer who will get sign off to transfer the file to the Compliance and Servicing team who process and review the CPA report.

11. In addition to the CPA review, is there anything else required of the applicant after an application is approved and filming ends?

Yes, productions must remember to obtain and include a “Filmed in New Jersey” logo in the end credits of the film. This logo can be obtained from the New Jersey Motion Picture and Television Commission by emailing njfilm@njeda.gov.

Digital Media Post-Production Credit

1. What are the eligibility requirements for the Digital Media Post-Production Credit?

For an applicant to receive a tax credit equal to 40 percent of the qualified digital media content production expenses, at least \$500,000 must be incurred for post-production services including visual effects services performed at a New Jersey film-lease production facility or that are incurred by a New Jersey studio partner.

For an applicant to receive a tax credit equal to 35 percent of the qualified digital media content production expenses, at least \$500,000 must be incurred for post-production services including visual effects services performed by a qualified independent post-production company.

2. Who should the applicant be for the Digital Media Post-Production Credit?

For digital media post-production applications, the applicant should be a New Jersey-based entity providing post-production and related services.

3. Can a film production not filming in New Jersey apply for the Digital Media Post-Production Credit?

The film production company would have to meet the eligibility requirements listed in Question 1 above to qualify for the post-production-only credit.

4. What is a qualified independent post-production company?

A qualified independent post-production company is defined as: a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or other entity principally engaged in the provision of post-production, including visual effects services for a film or films.

5. What is considered digital media content?

Digital content means the following digitally formatted and distributed content, which content includes data or information created in analog form but reformatted in digital form: animation; video games; visual effects; interactive media, including virtual, augmented, or mixed reality; content containing text, graphics, or photographs; sound; and video.

6. What are considered qualified digital media production expenses?

Qualified digital media production content expenses include: the costs of computer software and hardware, data processing, visualization technologies, sound synchronization, editing, and the rental of facilities and equipment; and the costs for post-production, including sound design, visual effects, animation, music composition, color grading, and mastering.

7. What is not considered a qualified digital media content expense?

Payments made to a loan out company or an independent contractor shall not be deemed a "qualified digital media content production expense" unless the payment is made in connection with a trade, profession, or occupation carried on in New Jersey or for the rendition of personal services performed in New Jersey.

For applications submitted before July 10, 2024: "Qualified digital media content production expenses" shall not include expenses incurred in marketing, promotion, or advertising digital media or other costs not directly related to the production of digital media content.

For applications submitted after July 10, 2024: "Qualified digital media content production expenses" shall not include expenses incurred in marketing, promotion, or advertising digital media; costs incurred for the design, maintenance, and hosting of websites; or other costs not directly related to the production of digital media content.

Costs related to the acquisition or licensing of digital media content by the taxpayer for distribution or incorporation into the taxpayer's digital media content, or any costs included in an application submitted to the authority, shall not be deemed "qualified digital media content production expenses."

PLEASE NOTE:

The information contained in these Frequently Asked Questions is provided for general guidance purposes only and does not replace or supersede the laws and regulations

associated with the New Jersey Film Tax Credit Program, namely P.L. 2018, c.56 - Garden State Film and Digital Media Jobs Act and N.J.A.C. 19:31-21.1 et seq., and further information may be contained in such laws and regulations.

A copy of the most recent program statute and rules can be found at <https://www.njeda.gov/film>