NJ Film Works Grant Program
Questions and Answers

1) **Do companies have to be based in New Jersey? Are organizations that are based in another state but working in NJ eligible for this program?**

   Applicants do not need to be based in NJ. However, applicants must implement an NJ based program that will allow New Jersey residents to access workforce opportunities. Applicants must describe a clear approach to make the training accessible for and targeted to NJ residents and linked to NJ employment opportunities in film and digital media careers.

   In addition, at the time of execution of the grant agreement, as well as at the time of each disbursement of funds, a current tax clearance certificate will be required to demonstrate the awarded applicant is properly registered to do business in New Jersey and in good standing with the NJ Division of Taxation.

   Out-of-state applicants that meet these and other eligibility requirements are eligible.

2) **What is the applicable grant period? How long does an organization have to spend the funds?**

   The term of the grant may not exceed two (2) years.

3) **Is the grant first come first served, or will all applications be reviewed at the end of the submission period?**

   This is a competitive grant program, and all eligible applications will be reviewed after the application deadline on July 11, 2025, at 5pm EDT.

4) **Are we able to make updates to our application after the deadline? Or once submitted is there no going back to make modifications?**

No. Applications cannot be modified after submission. Following a completeness review, Applicants will be notified in writing of any deficiencies identified within, or clarification of, their application. Applicants will be given ten (10) business days from the staff notification to cure any deficiencies or provide answers to clarifying questions. Applicants that fail to cure or provide clarifications during the same 10-day period will be deemed incomplete and will not advance to scoring.

5) **If an applicant has professional experience in the film industry, but does not have experience in job training, can they still apply?**

   Yes. However, part of the scoring criteria as detailed in the product specifications includes whether the application details a track record of related experiences operating workforce development programs resulting in successful outcomes.

6) **Can we work with a different placement agency to show history of job placement?**

   Yes, applicants may collaborate with additional entities to implement the training program as needed. However, the NJEDA will only enter into a grant agreement with the awarded applicant entity.

7) **Can government agencies apply if they partner with an educational program?**

   Yes, applicants may collaborate with additional entities to implement the training program as needed. However, the NJEDA will only enter into a grant agreement with the awarded applicant entity.

8) **Are online programs or hybrid online/in-person programs eligible?**

   Training programs must either be in-person or hybrid (include both a virtual component and an in-person component). The program must describe a clear approach to make the training accessible for and targeted to New Jersey residents and linked to New Jersey employment opportunities in film and digital media careers.

9) **When will grants be awarded?**

There will be an evaluation period following the submission deadline for all applications on July 11, 2025. The length of the evaluation period will depend on the number of applications NJEDA receives. After the evaluation period concludes, NJEDA staff will make recommendations to the NJEDA board for approval. NJEDA hopes to recommend awards for approval and execute grant agreements before the end of calendar year 2025.

10) **Is there a requirement on how long a participant must remain in a placed job? Example, if we get a participant placed, and they leave the job after two weeks, does that affect the applicant's program outcome for proposed number of completers placed into paid positions?**

No. This grant program does not specify the length of time program graduates must remain placed in paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship within the industry.

11) **Grant funds must be used over two years… should there be a separate budget for each year? Is there a yearly disbursement?**

Grant funds must be used within the 2-year grant period. Please refer to the grant specifications for the disbursement schedule and the budget template located on the program webpage. Applicants should submit one budget for the proposed program. Please refer to the "Read First Glossary" in the Budget template for more information.

12) **If our organization aims to implement a program which trains staff who then continue in that position, does that fall within the grant criteria?**

Programs that include training instructors who in turn train program participants, may include those instructors training costs as part of an eligible cost for the grant. However, the trainers or instructors who are a part of the training program would not count toward the employment outcomes required.

13) **Do proposed programs that can train in three occupations versus just one have a better chance of an award?**

Not necessarily. The Evaluation Committee will evaluate proposals individually based on the five criteria below (see the Grant Program Specifications for more detail):

- Impactful program design and implementation approach, and the ability of the

initiative to meet the needs of New Jersey's growing film and digital media industry
- Ability to serve NJ's Overburdened Communities
- Ability to provide wraparound supports and low or no-cost training
- Ability to implement proposed program for film and digital media occupations and prior experience creating and implementing workforce development initiatives
- Justification for the proposed use of funds with a reasonable budget to implement the proposed training program

14) When will yesterday's webinar slides be posted or emailed?

A recording of the webinar was posted on the program webpage on 5/16/25 and the slides from the webinar were posted on 5/21/25.

15) We are a for-profit film festival that has owned and operated a record label, publishing company since 1978 and are posed to provide Live bands for large groups in spaces close to our brick-and-mortar location in Bergen County. If we go under a prime company would that enable us to be a candidate for the grant?

The Grant Program is open to entities that can implement and deliver programs that will allow New Jerseyans to access workforce opportunities in the film and digital media industry and address identified labor market shortages by providing tangible skill development and/or job readiness training. Applicants may collaborate with additional entities to implement the training program as needed. However, the NJEDA will only award and enter into a grant agreement with the applicant entity.

All program collaborators that are receiving grant funding must be included in the application budget and identified for their role in the project.

16) There is a difference between eligible and qualified. What are the qualifications for the primary grant seeker (i.e., NJ Start, SAM.gov, CAGE, etc.)?

Eligible applicants for this grant are entities that can provide New Jersey residents with access to workforce development training, internship, apprenticeship, and learning opportunities for careers in the targeted industry of film & digital media, with a particular focus on access for residents of New Jersey's Overburdened Communities.

The primary applicant must be in substantial good standing with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) and NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to participate in the program. At the time of the execution of the grant agreement, as well as at the time of each disbursement of funds, a current tax clearance certificate will be required to demonstrate the awarded applicant is properly registered to do business in New Jersey and in good standing with the NJ Division of Taxation. Applicants are not required to register with any other contracting/procurement entity to facilitate their application for this grant program (e.g., NJStart, SAM.gov, CAGE).

Please review our Board Memorandum creating the program, Product Specifications and Notice of Funding Availability for all eligibility criteria. These items are available here: NJ Film Works Grant Program - NJEDA

17) **Does the partnering entity also need to meet the same qualifications and associated licenses?**

No. As the NJEDA will only enter into a grant agreement with the awarded applicant entity, collaborating entities do not need to meet the same requirements as the awarded applicant entity. All program collaborators that are receiving grant funding must be included in the application budget and identified for their role in the project.

18) **Is the grantee allowed a review of their proposal before submission?**

No. NJEDA will not review applications before the submission deadline.

19) **Do you require evidence of organizational readiness (i.e., CFO/CPA, legal team, advisory board, etc.)?**

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate proposals based on the five criteria detailed in the Grant Program Specifications. Some of the considerations related to organizational readiness include, but are not limited to:

- Details a track record of related experiences operating workforce development programs resulting in successful outcomes (e.g., completers placed in quality employment and retained, increased wages), including experience recruiting, training, and/or providing services to a diverse group

of participants and has a team with the qualifications and experience required to implement the program.
- Provides an achievable implementation plan, with quarterly tasks identified in the spreadsheet template provided in the application guidance, and details strategies to mitigate anticipated challenges.
- Describes an approach to conduct ongoing program evaluation and improvement.
- Provides a realistic budget aligned with proposed program in spreadsheet format utilizing the template provided in the application guidance and plan for program sustainability beyond the grant term.

20) Can the same institution submit multiple applications for the NJ Film Works grant?

Yes. This grant program does not specify a submission limit per applicant.

21) Given the employment requirement within the grant timeframe, are there any age restrictions for participants? Specifically, are high school sophomores who are not eligible for employment during the grant period still able to participate in the program under this grant?

Evaluation criteria will consider how programs detail strategies to provide near-term job placement for trainees within the film and digital media industry or trained occupation. In addition, 10% of the grant amount will be pro-rated against the proposed number of program graduates placed in paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship within the industry or trained occupation, within 90 calendar days of program completion, so long as at least 25% of the proposed participants were placed. As such, proposed programs that cannot fully meet the evaluation or outcome goals, will not receive the maximum evaluation score or grant disbursement allowed under the grant.

22) How will NJEDA verify or define that participants are residents of Overburdened Communities? Is self-attestation, school enrollment, ZIP code residency, or another form of documentation required?

The grant does not require participants to be residents of Overburdened Communities. However, scoring criteria will consider the proposed applicant's ability to serve NJ's Overburdened Communities and whether the proposal identifies

specific strategies to successfully recruit and serve residents of New Jersey's Overburdened Communities.

23) Our organization frequently hires graduates of our programs to serve in various roles, such as teaching assistants in after-school programming, support staff for community productions, and crew on in-house documentary film projects.

a. Would these types of employment be considered valid under the grant's employment requirement?

Proposed initiatives must provide workforce development training for at least one of the eligible occupations (but no more than three). The proposed training(s) should provide tangible skill development and/or job readiness training specific to the selected occupation(s). Please see Exhibit B for detailed job descriptions. 10% of the grant amount will be pro-rated against the proposed number of program graduates placed in paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship within the industry or trained occupation, within 90 calendar days of program completion, so long as at least 25% of the proposed participants were placed.

b. Can participants be hired on a part-time or freelance/project-based basis, or must the employment be full-time?

This grant program does not specify the length of time program graduates must remain placed in paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship within the industry.

c. Is employment considered acceptable if participants are utilizing their acquired skills in adjacent industries (e.g., using camera operation or sound design skills in a theater or live performance setting)?

Yes. Employment in these trained occupations within adjacent sectors (e.g., live performance settings using film-related skills) is acceptable. Proposed initiatives must provide workforce development training for at least one of the eligible occupations (but no more than three). The proposed training(s) should provide tangible skill development and/or job readiness training specific to the selected occupation(s). Please see Exhibit B for detailed job descriptions.

24) Can grant funds be used to support a participant's job placement in the film industry? For example, if a participant trains with us to work as a Production

Assistant, can we then use grant funds to support the cost of an industry professional staffing them on their film or for a studio to hire them as an intern?

Yes. Eligible uses of grant funding include costs associated with implementation of the program, which may include job placement services, so long as those costs are incurred within the grant term. However, any paid job placements counting towards the prorated disbursement must follow the participants' completion of their training. Eligible uses of grant funding are costs associated with training NJ residents only including:

- Costs associated with planning (e.g., staff costs for program development, curriculum materials, etc.)
- Soft launch (e.g., outreach costs, recruitment materials and related costs, etc.)
- Implementation costs (e.g., instructor time, facility fees, participant stipends, equipment or materials, delivery of support services, etc.)
- Administration and overhead costs

25) **We understand that film work in New Jersey is the job placement focus of this program, but based on the mention in your webinar regarding work placement in NYC being permissible, does the same apply for Philadelphia? As to not exclude those who reside in rural communities in southern and southwestern NJ to whom public transportation is a barrier, we hope this would be an option.**

Yes, placement into paid positions outside of NJ is acceptable, as long as it is within the industry or one of the eligible trained occupations. However, applicants must implement a New Jersey based program that will allow New Jerseyans to access workforce opportunities in the film and digital media industry by providing tangible skills sought by employers. Applicants must describe a clear approach to make the training accessible for and targeted to NJ residents and linked to NJ employment opportunities in film and digital media careers.

26) **The Certificate of Alternate Name field is required in the application. What should we upload here if we don't have one?**

The "Applicant Doing Business As (DBA)" field is not a required answer in the application. A Certificate of Alternate Name is required if the applicant indicates that they are "Doing Business As (DBA)" under a different name than the full name of their registered legal entity which appears on their formation documents. More

information on Certificates of Alternate Names can be found here: State of New Jersey Business Charter Amendments.

27) **Camera Operator role: Is there flexibility to instead train for "Camera Loader" which is a more entry level role in the Camera Department?**

Proposed initiatives must provide workforce development training for at least one of the eligible occupations (but no more than three). The proposed training(s) should provide tangible skill development and/or job readiness training specific to the selected occupation(s). Training for an occupation, such as Camera Loader, is allowed so long as the training also provides training in the skills needed for an eligible occupation (such as Camera Operator or Digital Imaging Technician).

28) **If market conditions change in Year 2, would it be possible to amend our grant agreement to change crafts if our industry partners think there will be greater demand in another one of the acceptable crafts?**

NJEDA will enter into a grant agreement with the awarded applicants to execute the proposals as submitted and scored. The applicant will be held responsible for complying with the terms of the grant agreement for the awarded proposal. Amendments to grant agreements must be approved by NJEDA in writing, but the scope of the project must follow the program described in the application. Therefore, switching to an unrelated occupation in Year 2 would not be allowed.

29) **We are able to submit letters from multiple potential employers in the film & media industry stating they will consider hiring individuals who have completed our training program for paid employment or internship. These companies are eager to CONSIDER our program completers for potential paid positions - however, they are not able to guarantee employment. My question is, is this sufficient for our employer/partners to state that they will consider hiring completers of our training programs?**

Employer commitment letters are optional. Evaluation criteria will consider how programs detail strategies to engage industry and build a network of employer partners who will be integrated into the program, including development of industry vetted curriculum and the selection of training candidates.

Evaluation criteria will also consider programs that can provide near-term job placement for trainees within the film and digital media industry or trained

occupation. In addition, 10% of the grant amount will be pro-rated against the proposed number of program graduates placed in paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship within the industry or trained occupation, within 90 calendar days of program completion, so long as at least 25% of the proposed participants were placed. As such, proposed programs that are not able to fully achieve their outcome targets will not receive the maximum grant disbursement allowed under the grant.

30) Are proposed programs required to operate for two full years?

The term of the grant may not exceed two (2) years, and all proposed programs must be completed within that term, but do not need to be in place for the entirety of the two-year term. The design of proposed programs must meet the eligibility requirements and parameters of the grant as stated in the Board Memorandum, Grant Program Specifications, and Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) but are otherwise at the discretion of the applicant.

31) Are there any stipulations for what constitutes a paid internship? Can it be one day? Is there a necessary dollar amount? Do paid internships have to take place within the state of NJ?

This grant program does not specify the length of time program graduates must remain placed in paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship. This grant program does not specify compensation amounts for paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship. However, the scoring criteria considers applications that clearly detail strategies to provide near-term job placement for trainees, including direct connections to employment partners or job placement organizations, training providers or employers that operate a train-to-hire program, partnerships with relevant labor unions committed to placing trainees in a union apprenticeship program, and entities offering paid internships.

Placement into paid positions outside of NJ is acceptable, as long as it is within the industry or trained occupation. However, applicants must implement a New Jersey based program that will allow New Jerseyans to access workforce opportunities in the film and digital media industry by providing tangible skills sought by employers. Applicants must describe a clear approach to make the training accessible for and targeted to NJ residents and linked to NJ employment opportunities in film and digital media careers.

32) Is there flexibility on the paid internship requirement as far as the 90 days after completion of the program is concerned? (Some of our students may complete as juniors and may have to wait a year until graduation to be eligible for a paid internship).

No. Evaluation criteria will consider programs that can provide near-term job placement for trainees within the film and digital media industry or trained occupation. In addition, 10% of the grant amount will be pro-rated against the proposed number of program graduates placed in paid employment, internship, or apprenticeship within the industry or trained occupation, within 90 calendar days of program completion, so long as at least 25% of the proposed participants were placed. As such, proposed programs that cannot fully meet the evaluation or outcome goals, will not receive the maximum evaluation score or grant disbursement allowed under the grant.

33) Are public school districts considered government bodies?

For the purpose of this application, public school districts should select "Government Body" as their applicant entity type.

34) Do school districts need a date of formation and a date established document?

Yes. "Date Established" is a required field in the application.
Applicants must provide formation documents verifying the entity's name. School districts can upload a NJ Division of Taxation Form ST-4, W-9 Form, state or county resolution establishing the district, or registration document from SAM.gov. and include the relevant date of establishment from the supporting document.

35) Do school districts need a NAICS code?

Yes. There are NAICS codes for Educational Services, which include codes for various educational institutions. You can search for NAICS codes at NAICS Code & SIC Identification Tools | NAICS Association

36) Is it true that if we meet less than 25% of the goal we receive $0?

30% of the grant award may be pro-rated if participant enrollment, participant completion, and participant placement goals are not fully achieved. If for example,

an applicant proposes to place 100 graduates in paid employment but only places 24 of the 100, the awardee would not receive the 10% of the grant award tied to the job placement goal. 70% of the grant award is not subject to pro-rated stipulations. Please review the Funding Disbursement section in the Grant Program Specifications for additional information and illustrative scenarios.

37) How is "fringe" amount defined?

Definitions related to budget items are in the Read-First Glossary tab of the required Budget Template (available on the webpage). For this grant program, Fringe Amount is the cost of employee benefits provided by an employe, in addition to their regular salary or wages (e.g. health insurance, retirement plans, sick and vacation leave, etc.).

38) Do training instructors need to be NJ residents?

No.

39) Could we count Hair & Make-up as one of the three allowable crafts and alternate between hair one year and make-up the other year?

Proposed initiatives must provide workforce development training for at least one, but no more than three, eligible occupations. Both Hair Stylist and Makeup Artist are eligible occupations under this grant program and either or both may be selected among the three permissible occupations for training.
The design of proposed programs must meet the eligibility requirements and parameters of the grant as stated in the Board Memorandum, Grant Program Specifications, and Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) but are otherwise at the discretion of the applicant.

40) For disbursements, what accounting is required? Can we get more details on whether we will submit receipts, track participants in an internal system?

Awarded applicants will be provided reporting and disbursement guidance upon execution of a grant agreement. NJEDA will not provide a system for applicants to track their participants.

41) **Are organizations permitted to be included in more than one grant proposal, either as a lead applicant or as a partner?**

Yes.

42) **For businesses not currently based in New Jersey but with a significant history of work in the state, is it required that we be registered as a New Jersey business at the time of application submission, or is it sufficient to complete that registration prior to the grant award?**

At the time of the execution of the grant agreement, as well as at the time of each disbursement of funds, a current tax clearance certificate will be required to demonstrate the awarded applicant is properly registered to do business in New Jersey and in good standing with the NJ Division of Taxation.

43) **To what degree should the curriculums be detailed in the application?**

Eligible grantees will have responsibilities and key deliverables including, but not limited to, delivering a curriculum and instructional model for the professional development and technical classroom-based components of the Program. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated under the Scoring Criteria, as identified in the Board Memorandum and Program Specifications, which includes, "Impactful program design and implementation approach, and the ability of the initiative to meet the needs of New Jersey's growing film and digital media industry."

44) **Do faith-based organizations qualify or are eligible to fulfill wrap-around services?**

Any applicants who are involved in religious activities or are religiously affiliated will be required to answer additional questions to determine eligibility. Completion of a Religious Activity Questionnaire will be required for these applicants.

45) **Is there a placement rate expectation?**

Evaluation criteria will consider how programs detail strategies to provide near-term job placement for trainees within the film and digital media industry or trained occupation. In addition, 10% of the grant amount will be pro-rated against the proposed number of program graduates placed in paid employment, internship, or

apprenticeship within the industry or trained occupation, within 90 calendar days of program completion, so long as at least 25% of the proposed participants were placed.

46) **For qualifying participants from this overburdened population, what are the eligibility requirements that we must consider and / or verify during the participants' application process for our program?**

The grant does not require participants to be residents of Overburdened Communities. However, scoring criteria will consider the proposed applicant's ability to serve NJ's Overburdened Communities and whether the proposal identifies specific strategies to successfully recruit and serve residents of New Jersey's Overburdened Communities. NJEDA will require grantees to provide quarterly reporting on program data, including enrollment, completion, and job outcomes from the training, attendance, exam and credential results, recruitment plans, wraparound services, trainee evaluations, expenses, progress against milestones, challenges/successes, and demographics information.

47) **Are we expected to train eligible residents within the geographic proximity of our location, only? Are we allowed to advertise and recruit beyond the proximity of our physical location?**

The program must describe a clear approach to make the training accessible for and targeted to New Jersey residents and linked to New Jersey employment opportunities in film and digital media careers. Evaluation criteria will also consider specific strategies to successfully recruit and serve residents of New Jersey's Overburdened Communities. The design of proposed programs must meet the eligibility requirements and parameters of the grant as stated in the Board Memorandum, Grant Program Specifications, and Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), but are otherwise at the discretion of the applicant.

48) **If we have in-kind support for our program, should it be included in the budget and if so, where should it be included on the budget and application? For example, our CEO's contribution would be in-kind, where should we put this portion of his salary?**

Applicants may include information regarding in-kind supports in their program narrative, but it is not required. Only items that the applicant intends to utilize grant

funding for should be included in the NJFW Budget Sheet. The estimated costs/value of in-kind support should not be included in the NJFW Budget Sheet.

49) **Regarding the proposed number of program graduates placed in employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship, can grant funds be used to subsidize the employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship of program graduates?**

No. As specified in both the Board memorandum creating the program, and the Notice of Funding Availability Eligible uses of grant funding are costs associated with ***training*** NJ residents only including costs associated with planning (e.g., staff costs for program development, curriculum materials, etc.), soft launch (e.g., outreach costs, recruitment materials and related costs, etc.), implementation costs (e.g., instructor time, facility fees, participant stipends, equipment or materials, delivery of support services, etc.), and administration and overhead costs.

Grant funds may not used for any purposes other than those mentioned above, including as the source of payment to program graduates counted towards the project outcome of number of program graduates placed in employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship.

50) **Regarding the proposed number of program graduates placed in employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship within 90 calendar days of program completion, can trainees who DO NOT complete or graduate the program, but who are placed into a paid position, be counted as a project outcome?**

No. As specified in the Evaluation Criteria of the Grant Program Specifications, applicants must propose program outcomes including number of participants enrolled in the program, number of participants completing the program, and number of ***program graduates placed in employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship*** within the industry or trained occupation within 90 calendar days of program completion.

Only **t**rainees who are program graduates and complete the program may be counted in the project outcome of program graduates placed in employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship.

51) **Regarding the proposed number of program graduates placed in paid positions within 90 calendar days of program completion, can a trainee who is placed into a paid position during the course of their training, and who then goes on to complete the program, be counted in the project outcome of number of program graduates placed in employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship within 90 calendar days of program completion?**

Yes – as long as the placement into employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship **occurs within 90 calendar days of program completion**.

Trainees who are placed into a paid position within 90 days – either before or after – program completion may be counted in the project outcome of number of program graduates placed in employment, paid internship, or apprenticeship within 90 calendar days of program completion.