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ABOVE THE LINE EDUCATION FORUM OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Washington State Legislature created the Production Incentive Program (also referred to as the Motion Picture Competitiveness Program) in 2006 to attract and retain film industry investment in Washington ([Chapter 43.365. RCW](#)). The legislature passed [ESHB 1914](#) during the 2022 legislative session which allows Washington Filmworks to allocate money to support workforce development.

Washington Filmworks (WF) is the private non-profit organization that manages funding programs as well as a variety of resources for the creative industries in Washington State. WF's mission is to create economic development opportunities by building and enhancing the competitiveness, profile and sustainability of Washington State's film industry.

What is available in the Above the Line Education Forum?

Education Forum

The Above the Line Education Forum will provide educational opportunities for up to 30 emerging Washington State directors and producers working in longform, live action narrative feature film and episodic formats. The education forum will take place over 12 weeks and each week film industry professionals will present on topics such as legal protections, budgeting, financing, production, working in Washington and marketing / distribution. Education forums will be held virtually and the series will culminate in an in-person event.

Participants would benefit greatly to have a long form narrative project budgeted at \$1 million or less to develop during the program. The program includes stipends for participation and travel and accommodations will be covered for any in-person opportunities. Filmmakers from communities across the state and individuals that have a wide array of lived experience are encouraged to apply!

Mentorship

All participants in the education forum may have the opportunity to apply for a 6 month mentorship to further develop a longform, live action narrative project by working with a film professional in Washington State and a film professional from a major production market such as Los Angeles or New York. Projects to be developed must have a budget of less than \$1 million (which includes both in-state and any out-of-state spending.) Each producer selected for a mentorship may invite a director of their choice to participate in the mentorship. Similarly, each director selected for a mentorship program may invite a producer of their choice to participate in the mentorship.

EDUCATION FORUM ELIGIBILITY

Requirements

An individual is eligible for the education forum if they meet all the requirements below:

1. The applicant of record for the program is a Washington resident producer or director.
2. The applicant of record may not have participated in the Above the Line Education Forum previously.
3. The applicant must identify as an individual from a historically underrepresented (i.e. marginalized) community. (For a definition of historically underrepresented community see section titled Definition of Terms)
4. Applicants must be 18 years old or older at the time of application.
5. Applicants must be able to provide a social security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).

6. Applicants may not be current WF Board Members or staff, or any jury members participating in the evaluation process. Applicants that do not disclose any immediate conflicts with those previously listed, or any other actual, or reasonably foreseeable potential conflict of interest, may be disqualified at any time.
7. If selected to participate, the applicant must sign a legally binding contract with WF.

Program Disqualification

An individual will be disqualified from the program if:

1. The applicant engages in fraud or misrepresentation, fails to comply with all applicable laws, or otherwise acts in a manner that materially damages the mission of WF to enhance the development and competitiveness of the motion picture industry in Washington.

EDUCATION FORUM APPLICATION

Overview

Applications for the education forum can be found and submitted via [Washington Filmworks' website](#). Filmmakers from communities across the state and individuals that have a wide array of lived experience are encouraged to apply.

Application Process

1. WF will review each application to ensure all necessary documentation has been submitted. If the application is incomplete or documents are missing, WF will contact the applicant to request the missing information.
2. During review of the application, WF may request additional information or discuss the initial application with the applicant. The applicant will have up to three business days to supply any additional information requested by WF unless otherwise negotiated. If the information is not received within the allotted time, WF has the right to remove the application from the process.
3. Applicants must certify that their project being developed during the program is not engaged, to any extent, in the production of erotic material, as defined in [RCW 9.68.050](#).
4. Applicants will be selected to participate based on any or all of the following factors (not listed in any order of significance):
 - a. Positive impact that the education forum will have on participant's film career
 - b. Previous experience making filmed content
 - c. Demonstrated success of completing projects and filmed content

- d. Eligibility requirements and additional eligibility requirements as in these guidelines and criteria
- e. Potential to exemplify the best of Washington State's film industry
- f. Professional history of the applicant in decision making roles on filmed projects
This includes, but is not limited to, issues relating to:
 - i. Unpaid financial obligations, including employee benefits
 - ii. Cast, crew or supplier mistreatment
 - iii. Unrepaired damage to locations
 - iv. Fraud, misrepresentation or violations of law that affect production

Application Review and Funding Notification

1. A jury of up to 5 industry professionals with a wide array of lived experience will review each application and make participant recommendations to WF.
2. The jury will use a rubric to evaluate each application.
3. All decisions about applicant participation in the education forum will be at the sole discretion of WF Board of Directors or any such other committee or group designated by the Board of Directors.
4. A decision about program participation will be confirmed by a participant letter of intent which will include the applicant's name and the required participation dates of the program.
5. Participants will be required to execute a written agreement with WF within one week of receiving the participation letter of intent. If the WF agreement is not signed and returned by the applicant within one week of the date of the participation letter of intent, WF may revoke its commitment.
6. The written agreement with WF will include:
 - a. Applicant's acceptance and conformance to the education forum Guidelines and Criteria
 - b. Applicant's full application
7. If an applicant is not chosen for the education forum, they may re-apply at a later date.

EDUCATION FORUM REQUIREMENTS

If selected to participate in the education forum, the following outlines the requirements of the program:

1. Participants must attend an in-person event at the conclusion of the education forum.
2. To qualify for the weekly participation stipend, individuals must attend a majority of the week's programming.

3. Participants should be advised that to qualify for the mentorship, there is a minimum requirement to attend 80% of the education forum.
4. When the participant exits the program, they must complete an assessment.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. *Applicant* – A Washington resident director or producer responsible for signing the application and, if approved, the legally binding agreement between WF.
2. *Director* – One who directs the production of motion pictures, as the word "direct" is commonly used in the motion picture industry.
3. *Education Forum Graduate* - Program participants who have attended a minimum of 80% of the classes and panels in the education forum.
4. *Episodic Series* – Multiple installments of an ongoing motion picture production generally less than 60 minutes in length.
5. *Historically Underrepresented Community* – As a result of feedback from community members, WF prefers using the term “historically underrepresented communities” in place of the term “marginalized communities.” For this program, “historically underrepresented community” has the same meaning as “marginalized community.”
6. *Longform Narrative Content*: A feature film or series with a narrative over a number of episodes.
7. *Marginalized Community* – The term "marginalized communities" refers to groups of persons who have been relegated to an unimportant or powerless position such that they are prevented from participating fully in decisions affecting their lives. People may experience further marginalization because of their intersecting identities.

They are often communities or populations that face systemic economic, political, social, and cultural barriers, many of them embedded in local laws and norms. The term encompasses communities with a shared experience of marginalization stemming from circumstances beyond their control.

Marginalized communities often include Black, Latino, Indigenous and American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders, and

other persons of color, members of religious minorities, refugees, migrants, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQIA2S+¹) persons, rural communities, formerly incarcerated persons, persons experiencing homelessness, and persons with disabilities.

8. *Motion Picture* – A recorded audio-visual production intended for distribution to the public for exhibition in public and / or private settings by means of any and all delivery systems and / or delivery platforms now or hereafter known, including without limitation, screenings in motion picture theaters, broadcasts and cablecast transmissions for viewing on televisions, computer screens, and other audio-visual receivers, viewing on screens by means of digital video disc (DVD) players, video on demand (VOD) services, and digital video recording (DVR) services, direct internet transmission, and viewing on digital computer-based systems which respond to the users' actions (interactive media).
9. *Participant Agreement* – The contractual agreement between WF and the program participant which outlines the terms and conditions of program participation and program disqualification.
10. *Participant Signatory* – Individual that will serve as the signatory on WF contractual agreement.
11. *Participation Letter of Intent* – Document issued by WF that confirms the applicant's participation in the Education Forum. The participation letter of intent is also included in the legally binding agreement.
12. *Producer* – The primary individual associated with the production responsible for overseeing the motion picture's financial, business and creative decisions. In evaluating applications, consideration may be given by WF to other parties bearing "producer-type" credits.
13. *Production Company* – A business that is primarily (defined as 50% or more) engaged in the business of producing motion pictures.
14. *Washington Filmworks (WF)* – The 501(c)(6) non-profit organization that manages the MPCP pursuant to RCW 43.365 and 82.04.4489 that will oversee the State of Washington's funding assistance program for qualified productions.

¹ Taken from [National Assoc. of Social Workers](#): People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or gender expansive, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual, and two-spirit

15. *Washington State Resident* – An individual who maintains a permanent dwelling within the state, and spends an aggregate of at least six months each year within the state, and signs a Declaration of Residency certifying that they have been a Washington State resident for at least six months prior to the date production begins. See [Declaration of Residency](#).

16. *Workforce Development* - Workforce development may vary by sector and place, and encompasses initiatives that educate, train, and prepare people to meet current and future industry needs. Individuals, educational systems, employers, Unions, community-based organizations, and governmental agencies are all important collaborators in workforce development.

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ADDENDUM 1:
Above the Line Education Forum: Education Forum
Application Preview