



Field Briefing November 2022

Independent Film and Media



About the Briefing

This document is intended to educate policymakers and decisionmakers about the challenges and opportunities related to the U.S. infrastructure serving independent filmmakers and media artists. Commissioned by the **National Endowment for the Arts** and produced in partnership with the **Sundance Institute** through a Cooperative Agreement, the topics outlined in this briefing were informed through individual and group conversations taking place across 2021–2022 with members of the Independent Film and Media Arts Group (IMAG) and other independent film stakeholders representing a diverse cross-section of roles in the field, including producers, directors, distributors, exhibitors, funders, sales agents, and nonprofit artist support organizations. Quotes are attributed to individuals by the role they play in the field (rather than by name) to preserve anonymity and ensure participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences. The briefing is additionally supplemented by reports and relevant research and articles covering the independent film and media arts field.

Independent Film and Media Arts Group

The Independent Film and Media Arts Group (IMAG) is a field building initiative convened by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in collaboration with the Sundance Institute. Launched in 2020, IMAG is a growing network of more than 800 individuals representing local, regional, and national stakeholders across the United States, including artists and collectives, film and media arts organizations, film festivals, art house cinemas, cultural institutions, content distributors, broadcast entities, arts service organizations, and funders. Membership is drawn from 47 states and one territory, and includes individual filmmakers and organizations dedicated to strengthening support networks for the independent film and media arts field through knowledge exchange and peer learning, with a focus on equity and career sustainability.

More information about this initiative can be found at [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov).



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Independent Film and Media

KEY TAKEAWAYS

A Sector Too Valuable to Fail →

- + A driver of innovation in the \$192 billion U.S. film industry
- + Promoting voices vital to the health of our democracy
- + In peril due to shifts in the industry and distribution models

Recent Successes →

- + Leading the charge on diversity and representation
- + Organizing for fair and equitable industry practices
- + Connecting audiences to trusted content via public media

Challenges →

- + Enduring impact of the COVID-19 pandemic
- + Reduced competition due to corporate consolidation
- + Prevailing practices of uncompensated labor
- + Lack of social safety net
- + Overcoming a history of systemic exclusion

Opportunities →

- + Support programs that promote economically sustainable careers
- + Invest in regional initiatives and organizations
- + Invite the independent film sector to the table

Appendix →

- + Independent Film and Media Arts Group affiliated organizations

“The arts, the humanities... [they] are the soul of America, reflecting our multicultural and democratic experience... [They] help us understand and communicate our values as a people; compel us to wrestle with our history and enable us to imagine our future; invigorate and strengthen our democracy; and point the way toward progress.”

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

September 30, 2022



SECTION 1

A Sector Too Valuable to Fail

State of the Field

A DRIVER OF INNOVATION IN THE \$192 BILLION U.S. FILM INDUSTRY

The American film and television industry supports 2.2 million jobs and pays out \$192 billion in total wages annually.¹ From cinematographers to caterers, directors to dry cleaners, and production assistants to digital equipment suppliers—the workforce represents a vast array of professions and economic sectors. Of those whose work focuses mainly on production, a significant number are self-employed individuals, independently owned production companies, and nonprofit organizations employing independent contractors. Further, the field relies on an ecosystem of small and medium-sized nonprofit and for-profit entities such as regional film festivals, independent arthouse cinemas, public broadcasters, educational distributors, and media art centers to independently distribute film. This network makes it possible for films to reach audiences who may have limited access otherwise.

- **Direct industry jobs employ more people than other major sectors, including mining, oil and natural gas extraction, crop production, utility system construction, and rental and leasing services.²**

Small businesses predominate the film and media arts industry:

- + 110,000 total businesses
- + located in every state in the country
- + 89% employ fewer than 10 people³

Within this economic engine, the independent film and media ecosystem plays an important role. It is a talent incubator and source of innovation. Creative successes in the field lead directly to economic growth, entrepreneurship, and the global position of the American film industry as a talent pool.

Filmmaking talents that were born and nurtured in the independent sector have gone on to make an indelible mark on mainstream media and culture at large. Ryan Coogler made *Fruitvale Station* as an independent film in 2013, just five years before directing *Black Panther*, which grossed over \$1.3 billion worldwide and became the ninth-highest-grossing film of all time. Chloé Zhao made the independent film *The Rider* in 2016 with a six-person crew before going on to win two Oscars for *Nomadland* in 2020 and directing Marvel's *The Eternals* in 2021. *Hoop Dreams*, directed by Steve James, broke through with mass audience appeal in its theatrical release in 1994, bringing in \$11.8 million at the box office and permanently changing the idea of how large an audience a documentary could attract.

PROMOTING VOICES VITAL TO THE HEALTH OF OUR DEMOCRACY

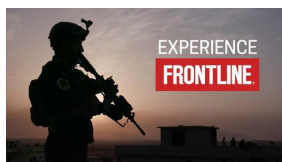
The strength and diversity of independent media is crucial to maintaining a healthy democracy. Independent storytelling is rooted in communities, based on the lived experiences of today's Americans, and is created outside of commercial and ideological pressures.⁴ While often invisible to general audiences, there is a robust network of film and media arts organizations collectively working “behind the scenes” to cultivate and support diverse independent voices, as well as provide opportunities for the public to experience and engage with independent storytelling as a catalyst for conversation and community empowerment.

The narrative power of a robust and representative independent media sector goes far beyond entertainment. Both fiction and nonfiction storytelling can profoundly influence how Americans come to understand ourselves and our respective relationships to the larger society. As one independent filmmaker noted, “Being able to have that representation on screen is so vital for a healthy community and sense of self.”

Independent film often comes from communities that have never told their stories before. It is made “by filmmakers who are challenging what is (or is not) being said in mainstream media, by those who are creatively challenging the medium—redefining how stories are told,” said another advocate for independent makers.

As philosopher John Dewey said in 1927, “Artists have always been the real purveyors of the news. For it's not the outward happening in itself which is new, but the kindling by it of emotion, perception, and appreciation.” Veteran documentarian Gordon Quinn often cites this quote as the founding principle for the four-time Oscar-nominated nonprofit production company [Kartemquin Films](#) (*Hoop Dreams*, *Minding the Gap*) in 1966, which seeks to “spark democracy through documentary.”⁵ Independent film—like no other medium—can trigger conversations about how to live together in a democracy.

Made by Independent Filmmakers



Frontline, the premiere investigative documentary series in the country



Coda, Oscar-winning feature film hailed for representation of Deaf community



Time, multi-award-winning documentary portrayal of a New Orleans family impacted by incarceration

A SECTOR IN PERIL

The rise of streaming platforms over the last decade has created myriad new platforms and pathways for stories to reach audiences. Unquestionably, the independent film community has served as an irreplaceable feeder for new content. However, with the frenzy of mergers and acquisitions, the lack of diversity among heads of studios and commissioning editors, the gutting of the theatrical market for independent films post-pandemic, and the lack of a social safety net, there is field-wide deep concern about what this moment means for the independent film community.⁶ One cannot thrive as an independent maker in today's economy as they might have in the past, for reasons outlined later in this report. The independent film ecosystem is in peril. Commercial media corporations have not invested in the independent sector from which they've benefited.

- **Who will champion independent film and the innovative and responsible storytelling that comes out of it? As one independent film distributor said, “The indie sector is where the talent grows. For one of the largest American exports, why is there no investment in keeping it healthy?”**

“We must uphold artists as drivers of cultural power and societal progress, and thus as essential workers, deserving of substantial protections.”

Restoring the Future: Building a More Abundant Media Arts System Through Restorative Values Practice⁷



SECTION 2

A Sector Worth Supporting Recent Successes

For the past two decades, the film and television industries have been in the midst of a revolution from analog to digital—the greatest manifestation of which can be seen in the rapid growth and domination of streaming services. The pace of change has left makers guessing how long any given funding, distribution, or exhibition pathway will continue to exist. Yet in the face of this uncertainty, independent makers continue to lead much of the innovation in the field.

LEADING THE CHARGE ON DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION

Members of the independent sector have played a critical role in pushing the larger media and cultural landscape towards a more diverse and representative future. One well-known example is [ReFrame](#), a movement founded and led by the Sundance Institute and [Women In Film](#) working to systemically progress toward a more gender-representative industry on all levels.

It has been well documented⁸ that American film and television have long failed to accurately represent the full range of the lived experiences of race, religion, gender and sexual identity, geography, class, disability, and more. Meaningful representation is lacking, both “behind the camera” (the project’s creative team) and on-screen (fictional characters and documentary participants).

For example, although Latinos make up 19% of the country, a UCLA diversity in TV report released last year found they appear in only about 6% of roles.⁹ And across 200 top movies from the U.S., U.K., Australia, and New Zealand, 87.8% of primary and secondary Muslim characters spoke no English or spoke with an accent that rendered them “foreign.”¹⁰

In response to such persistent inequities, hundreds of independent film organizations work tirelessly to increase representation in front of and behind the camera and to celebrate the cinematic contributions of underrepresented groups. Examples include: [National Association of Latino Independent Producers](#), [The National Multicultural Alliance](#), [Cinema Tropical](#), [Blackstar Film Festival](#), [ReelAbilities Film Festival](#), [Nia Tero](#), [MPAC Hollywood Bureau](#), [Firelight Media](#) and its [Groundwork Regional Lab](#), [Illuminative](#), [Outfest](#), and [Women in Film](#).

Certain independent films also break through to the mainstream and permanently change the media landscape and the larger culture with their body of work. *Crip Camp* was independently produced by Jim LeBrecht and Nicole Newnham before Netflix brought it to a global audience and made disability rights activist Judy Heumann a household name.¹¹ Before they made *Reservation Dogs*, Sterlin Harjo and Taika Waititi started off making independently produced work, which laid the groundwork for their breakthrough series on FX, hailed for “its heartfelt and glorious portrayal of being young and Native in modern America.”¹²

Innovation and new voices start in the independent sector. Against great odds and with very few resources, makers have been changing the narrative to better reflect the country's makeup. While big distributors and exhibitors have increased their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in the last few years, when marketplace pressures come to bear, representation becomes less of a priority.¹³ If we're going to have a more representative media landscape, it's because independent makers are demanding it and creating compelling content for diverse audiences.

ORGANIZING FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE INDUSTRY PRACTICES

Although the film and television sector is one of the most well-unionized industries in the country, much of independent film and media, particularly on the documentary side, operates without the protection of a union contract. In recent years, there has been a rise in self-organized networks that exist to improve the collective well-being of independent makers. These grassroots networks are substantive and fill critical infrastructure and resource gaps.

These groups have created talent databases that make it easier to hire more representative teams, codified crediting practices that impact a producer's ability to accurately represent their role on a project, established best practices guides to make films and television more accessible to makers and audiences, and created resources for navigating the ever-changing distribution landscape. Exciting additions to the landscape include:

[A-Doc](#)

[Alliance of Documentary Editors](#)

[BIPOC Doc Editors Database](#)

[Brown Girls Doc Mafia](#)

[Color Congress](#)

[Distribution Advocates](#)

[Documentary Producers Alliance](#)

[Film Fatales](#)

[FWD-Doc: Documentary Filmmakers with Disabilities](#)

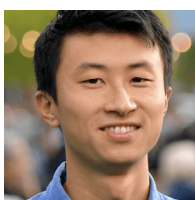
[Indie Media Arts South](#)

[The Producers Union](#)

These groups, many of which were founded as volunteer organizations in the last decade, have filled major gaps that existed in the independent film and media ecosystem. Absent sufficient financial backing from the private sector and government, they have used their relationships and collective power to create the necessary infrastructure to support their work. These groups have made great changes in the field thus far and are a huge asset to the independent film ecosystem.

PUBLIC MEDIA: A UNIQUE OFFERING IN THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Public media's noncommercial nature allows it to operate first and foremost as a public service, thus freeing it from marketplace constraints that prioritize profits over public good. It has long been a talent incubator for the larger entertainment industry, particularly in the documentary space. The [ITVS Open Call](#) program, for example, is a major source of funding that any maker can apply to regardless of experience level. To date, it has funded 575 independent films. Notable examples* are:



Bing Liu
Minding the Gap



Jacqueline Olive
Always in Season



Laura Poitras
My Country, My Country



Bernardo Ruiz
Reportero

As with the rest of the industry, public media still has much work to do to be fully representative of the communities it serves, but in recent years it has shown a stronger track record of elevating underrepresented creators, stories, and protagonists than its commercial counterparts.¹⁴

Public media remains the most accessible to audiences. “Through local stations everywhere, it reaches more Americans—98% of the population—than commercial broadcast does (at 96%),” according to the Center for Media & Social Impact’s report *Stories for a Stronger Nation*.¹⁵

● **In its very design, public media is rooted in local and regional communities through its network of 330 local stations, which reaches over 120 million viewers per month via television and 26 million viewers online.** The geographic spread facilitates a level of proximity between storytellers and audiences while ensuring that a diversity of work is created. As public trust in media overall has experienced sharp declines, public media has retained the trust of viewers. “PBS is the most trusted public institution in the United States—even by many people who get their news primarily from Fox or Reddit.”¹⁶

*Photo credits: Bing Liu, photo by Thomas Lohnes/Getty Images; Jacqueline Olive, photo courtesy IMDB.com; Laura Poitras, photo courtesy Indiewire; Bernardo Ruiz, photo courtesy ITVS.

"Media companies have been consolidating for decades, incentivized by increased profit margins and reduced risk, and enabled by federal deregulation. In 1983, 50 companies owned 90% of the media consumed by Americans. By 2012, just six companies controlled that same 90%."

**New York City Film & Television Industry
Economic Impact Study (2021)**



SECTION 3

A Sector at Risk

Present and Systemic Challenges

ENDURING IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The consequences of the global pandemic on the independent film sector continue to disrupt an already fragile ecosystem. Some examples are:

- + Halted productions that affect schedules and lead to unpaid wages and cost overruns.
- + The cost of production (including COVID-19 safety protocols) has increased on average by 20%, according to one executive at a major streamer.
- + Theatrical exhibition has taken a big hit: About 500 screens have closed since the pandemic began, according to the National Association of Theater Owners.¹⁷
- + Nonprofit organizations that serve independent filmmakers have lost critical revenue, forcing them to scale down their programming.¹⁸
- + Festivals and independent cinemas had to quickly adopt costly virtual exhibition platforms in order to maintain their audiences.

REDUCED COMPETITION DUE TO CORPORATE CONSOLIDATION

Rapid corporate consolidation and horizontal and vertical integration of the industry is leading to a less diverse content landscape controlled by even fewer immensely powerful media conglomerates. Media companies have been consolidating for decades, incentivized by increased profit margins and reduced risk, and enabled by federal deregulation. In 1983, 50 companies owned 90% of the media consumed by Americans. By 2012, just six companies controlled that same 90%.¹⁹

In just the last 15 years, more than two dozen large mergers in media and consumer telecommunications have occurred in the industry,²⁰ further reducing consumer choice, limiting free competition, and contributing to a reduction in jobs.²¹

PREVAILING PRACTICES OF UNCOMPENSATED LABOR

There is a lot of money being made in the larger media and entertainment economies, yet independent creative teams (comprised of small businesses and freelance contract workers) are seldom compensated fairly for their work. According to a 2020 study, based on the experiences of 620 documentary film professionals who reside in the United States, “only 20% of documentary filmmakers say their most recent film made enough revenue to make a profit, and 4 in 10 nonfiction storytellers (40%) said their film did not make any revenue at

all. Differences are more stark for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) filmmakers. About a quarter (27%) of BIPOC filmmakers said their most recent film generated a profit (compared to 44% of white makers), and nearly 6 in 10 (55%) of BIPOC filmmakers said their most recent film did not make any revenue at all, compared to 35% of white filmmakers. Women filmmakers were more likely than men to report that their most recent film did not make any revenue at all (42% to 35%).²²

LACK OF SOCIAL SAFETY NET

Since the majority of independent media creators work either as independent contractors, freelancers, or run their own small businesses, the lack of affordable health insurance is a major barrier to staying in the field. The cost of childcare, lack of paid sick or family leave, and lack of pensions further add to the economic challenges of making a sustainable career in the field.

A HISTORY OF SYSTEMIC EXCLUSION

The film industry's long history of excluding marginalized groups (by race, geography, disability, class, gender and sexual identity) is evident both behind the camera and on screen. "A greenlight capacity is predicated on prior success. That's the biggest barrier," said one streaming executive. This fact makes it difficult for historically underrepresented voices to get hired on well-funded productions and secure significant distribution deals. These challenges are particularly acute in the documentary sector.

Voices from the Field

What happens in a corporate setting is that it becomes about P&L and bottom line and that restricts creativity. With the Paramount decree being struck down—now entities can totally vertically integrate.

-Independent producer

While it may appear there are a lot of buyers, in truth the number of buyers has shrunk. It's a false front.

-Streaming executive

We're still human beings that have to survive and have to sustain ourselves in some way. With film budgets under \$1 million, we cannot pay ourselves at all.

-Independent producer

As a freelancer, your health care is spotty... I've gone years without health insurance. What's bad enough to go to the ER for? You have to ask yourself these questions.

-Independent producer

Female filmmakers are the worst about paying themselves.

-Streaming executive

According to the same 2020 study of documentary professionals, "white respondents identified streaming providers as their main source of recent revenue at a rate ten times higher than their BIPOC counterparts. A mere 13% of BIPOC filmmakers claimed they had been able to distribute recent work to streaming providers, including Amazon and Netflix. Almost one in four BIPOC filmmakers stated that they had not secured any distribution outlets for their most recent work. This widespread economic exclusion means over half of BIPOC filmmakers did not generate any meaningful revenue from their most recent films."²³

As diversity and representation initiatives emerge across the industry to address such inequities, there will be a continued and growing need for systemic investments in order to enact long-lasting transformative and reparative change.

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

- **When these challenges force makers out of the field, there is a loss to American society. Creativity and innovation are squandered, resulting in a loss for both the economic and democratic benefits that the sector feeds. For every successful independent project there are many others that never gain distribution.**

As part of a filed comment, led by Senator Ben Ray Luján, Congressman Joaquin Castro, and Congresswoman Yvette Clark, in support of Federal Communications Commission rulemaking in July, 2022, lawmakers noted "The media and entertainment industry is the dominant narrative-creating and image-defining institution in the United States."²⁴ The consequences of underrepresentation was addressed by Congresswoman Judy Chu in a 2020 congressional hearing: "The result is that fewer young people can imagine themselves in these roles, and it reinforces the false impression that American culture is predominantly the white stories we see on screen—something particularly dangerous at a time of rising xenophobia and bigotry in our nation."²⁵

Voices from the Field

In the last couple of years there's been so much talk of diversity. Certain organizations and certain companies have tried to increase the pipeline, but there's still not enough funding opportunities.

-Independent producer

Issues relating to sustainability disproportionately affect diverse voices, often preventing many of them from thriving or having to leave the field long before they reach their potential.

-Independent producer

In the last 10-15 years, there's a prestige class of filmmakers—for those that have been making good films for long enough. Industry knows them. If you're not already in the prestige circuit, it's very hard to break in.

-Sales agent

"When I think of what are the components of a career, I think: access to health insurance, sustaining oneself between projects, and mental health support."

Network executive, former independent producer



SECTION 4

A Sector Ready for Investment Opportunities

The recommendations below outline three areas of opportunity that could address the field's systemic challenges and subsequently amplify the economic and democratic benefits it has to offer.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE CAREERS

Independent filmmakers struggle to raise financing project by project, with the life cycle of a single feature film ranging from one year to ten or more. Even when working on multiple films, the challenge of sustaining a career comes down to basic survival costs that often get squeezed out of project budgets. When one's ability to pay for rent, healthcare, childcare, and retirement savings is challenged year after year, it drives creatives into other more economically sustainable professions. Innovative funders have recognized that supporting the artist first, via an artist fellowship or a guaranteed income program, can be a more enduring form of investment. Promising examples in recent years are noted below. It should be noted that one of these is the direct result of pandemic-related government funding and the others have all emerged since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although extraordinary global conditions arguably catalyzed each of these, the opportunity to learn from these pilot programs and apply lessons towards the future of a healthy independent film ecosystem is imperative.

Artist Fellowships

- + [NEH American Rescue Plan-funded Artist Fellowships](#)
- + [Rainin Foundation Fellowships](#)
- + [Dear Producer Award](#)

Guaranteed basic income programs for artists

- + [San Francisco Guaranteed Income Pilot for Artists](#)
- + [Springboard for the Arts Guaranteed Income Pilot](#) (St. Paul, MN)
- + [Creatives Rebuild New York Guaranteed Income for Artists](#)

INVEST IN REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Programs that connect artists and audiences through the power of storytelling happen at a regional and local level across the U.S. Whether these are film festivals, professional networks, youth media training programs, or production hubs, these initiatives affect the

economy and culture of a region in ways that feed the national industry and dialogue. They introduce audiences to films with stories underrepresented in mainstream media, support arts workers in various levels of the creative economy, and decentralize the decision-making around storytelling production and distribution. Perhaps most significantly, such initiatives use independent films to catalyze discussions important to local communities.²⁶ Two exciting examples are [Indie Media Arts South](#) and Full Spectrum Features' [Community Storytellers](#) program, funded by [Chicago Creative Place grants](#).

INVITE THE INDEPENDENT FILM SECTOR TO THE TABLE

An opportunity exists for decision-makers and stakeholders to gain valuable perspectives by tapping into expertise within the independent film and media arts field. Specifically, in the face of rapid corporate consolidation, there is critical debate happening about how to best promote a competitive media landscape that represents a democratic plurality of voices. Countries outside of the U.S. and some local governments within the U.S. have created tools to address these concerns. For example, in Europe there are new rules of engagement between streamers and the communities where they seek subscribers.²⁷ In California, a proposed law requires demographic and diversity milestones be met in exchange for state film production tax credits.²⁸ Independent producers can speak directly to how their work and sector would be impacted by such proposals. In regards to gauging the direct impacts of proposals regarding antitrust laws²⁹ and merger reviews,³⁰ members of the independent film and media ecosystem have valuable first-hand experience in the commercial marketplace that can inform such discussions. Their knowledge about existing tools and model policies at local, regional, and national levels is an essential resource in the effort to strengthen the film economy.

Regional Arts Initiative in Action



Indie Media Arts South is a regional collective of arts organizations, film festivals, and media makers working to strengthen the independent sector across the greater South, with a focus on equity and sustainability.

- + hosts regular field-building meetings
 - + presents a Southern filmmaker screening series
 - + distributes a newsletter spotlighting artists and sharing opportunities for the field
-

CONCLUSION

The organizations and individuals working within the American independent film and media sector play an important role in catalyzing economic growth and entrepreneurship. In the midst of an increasingly globalized media landscape—in which threats to democratic discourse abound—this field is a critical resource that contributes to a multiplicity of voices that are vital to the health of our democracy. Therefore, the American independent film and media sector must be included in national and local policy conversations when it comes to matters affecting the creative economy and the entertainment industry.

Voices from the Field

Solutions are increasingly at the regional level. High-quality, well-run regional festivals and institutes are in fact supporting diverse voices that are not on the national radar of all the big organizations. They have held workshops and retreats focusing on Black voices, regional voices, looking at them as makers on a career path rather than project by project. In this sense, festivals are not just exhibition spaces; they can be artist development spaces.

-Independent producer

“How do we change the way we tell marginalized stories? There is no accountability for these conglomerates. Mandates to produce a certain number of underrepresented voices don’t exist.”

-Independent producer

Municipal and state-level tax incentives that set lower budget floor entry points are a simple and helpful way for independently produced films to qualify, a best practice demonstrated in [Sundance’s Guide to Tax Incentives](#).

-Public funder

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INDEPENDENT FILM AND MEDIA ARTS GROUP AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

The Independent Film and Media Arts Group (IMAG) has been convened by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in collaboration with the Sundance Institute since late 2019. The 800+ individuals in the membership are a combination of independent makers as well as representatives from a wide variety of organizations. A partial list of those organizations is listed below, in order to illustrate the scope and geographic diversity of the group.

a/perture cinema	Capitol Interactive	Double Exposure Investigative Film Festival
Academy Foundation	Catapult Film Fund	Early Bird Films
AdocPR	Cedar Rapids Independent Filmmakers	East Tennessee State University
AFI Conservatory	Center for Asian American Media	Electronic Arts Intermix
AFI Silver Theatre & Cultural Center	Center for Documentary Studies	Emblematic Group
After School Film Institute	Center for Independent Documentary	Emerson College
Agile Ticketing Solutions	Center for Media and Social Impact	Enzian Theater
Akron Film Collective	Charlotte Black Film Festival	Exposure Labs
Alabama Folklife Association	Charlotte Film Society	Fargo Film Festival
All Senses Go	Chicago Filmmakers	Femme Frontera
Alliance for Community Media	Chicago International Film Festival	Field of Vision
Alliance of Documentary Editors	Chicago South Asian Film Festival	Film Fatales
American Documentary	Chicken & Egg Pictures	Film Festival Alliance
American Public Television	Cinema Arts Centre	Film Florida
Amherst Cinema	Cinema St. Louis	Film Forum
Ann Arbor Film Festival	Cinema Tropical	Film Impact Georgia
Anthology Film Archives	Cleveland International Film Festival	Film Independent
Appalachian State University	Co-Creation Studio at MIT Open Documentary Lab	Film Pittsburgh
Appalshop	Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media	Film Society of Minneapolis St. Paul
Arab American National Museum	Colorado State University's ACT Human Rights Film Festival	Film Streams
Arch + Bow Films	Columbia Film Society	Film Wisconsin
Arizona Humanities	Community Film Workshop of Chicago	FilmGate Miami
Art House Convergence	Concordia Studio	FilmNorth
ArtsNow	Cosmic Rays Film Festival	FilmScene
Association of Independents in Radio	Cucalorus Film Foundation	Filmshop
Aspen Film	Dakota Film Festival	Final Girls
Athena Film Festival	Dallas Filmmakers Alliance	Firelight Media
Atlanta Film Society	Dallas Video Fest	Florida Film Festival
Atlanta Jewish Film Society	DC Asian Pacific American Film Festival	Ford Foundation
Aurora Picture Show	DC Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment	Frameline
Austin Film Society	DCTV	Free State Festival
AXS Lab	Denton Black Film Festival	Full Frame Documentary Film Festival
BAVC Media	Denver Film	Full Spectrum
Bed Rock Productions	Des Moines Film Society	Garden State Film Festival
Belcourt Theatre	Detroit Film Society	Gary International Black Film Festival
Brown Girls Doc Mafia	Diverse Filmmakers Alliance	Gateway Film Center
Big Sky Film Institute	Doc Society	Gene Siskel Film Center
Black Documentary Collective	Documentary Cinematographers Alliance	Genuine Article Pictures
Black TV & Film Collective	Documentary Educational Resources	Global Impact Producers Alliance
Black Public Media	Documentary Producers Alliance	Greater Cleveland Urban Film Foundation
BlackStar Film Festival		Hawaii International Film Festival
Boston Latino International Film Festival		Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking
Brattle Film Foundation		Harlem Film House
BRIC Arts Media		Hazel Pictures
Buffalo International Film Festival		Hip Hop Film Festival
CalArts School of Film/Video		

Honolulu Museum of Art, Doris Duke Theatre
 Hoosier Films
 Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival
 Houston Cinema Arts Society
 Howard University
 Hyperreal Film Club
 Hyphen Film Center
 Illinois Public Media
 In Progress
 Independent Film Alliance Chicago
 Indie Media Arts South
 Indie Memphis
 International Documentary Association
 Iowa PBS
 ITVS
 Jacob Burns Film Center
 Jerome Foundation
 Jewish Film Institute
 Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts
 Kartemquin Films
 Kickstarter
 LEF Foundation
 Los Angeles County Office of Education
 Luminial Theater
 Magnum Foundation
 Maine Film Association
 Maine Film Center
 Maryland Film Festival
 Maryland Public Television
 Maysles Documentary Center
 Media Alliance
 Media Burn Archive
 Media Impact Funders
 Meridian Hill Pictures
 Mezcla Media Collective
 Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs
 Michigan Production Alliance
 Mid-America Arts Alliance
 Milwaukee Film
 Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance
 Milwaukee PBS
 Mississippi Film Alliance
 Mississippi Film Office
 Moms-In-Film Los Angeles
 Mountainfilm
 Multitude Films
 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico
 Museum of the Moving Image
 Nashville Creative Arts
 Native Arts & Cultures Foundation
 Nebraska Arts Council
 New Day Films
 New Hampshire State Council on the Arts
 New Orleans Film Society
 New Orleans Video Access Center
 New York Foundation for the Arts
 New York International Children's Film Festival
 New York Women in Film and Television
 NewFilmMakers Los Angeles
 North Carolina Arts Council
 North Dakota Film Society
 Northwest Film Center
 Northwest Film Forum
 NW Arkansas Film, Music & Entertainment Commission
 NW Documentary
 O Cinema
 Oakland Film Center
 Oolite Arts
 Open Signal
 Open Television
 Oregon Film Office
 Outfest
 Outgaze Film Festival
 Oxford American Literacy Project
 Oxford Film Festival
 Pacific Islanders in Communications
 Paley Center for Media
 PBS
 Perspective Fund
 Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival
 Philadelphia Latino Film Festival
 PhillyCAM
 Phoenix Film Foundation
 Pickford Film Center
 Points North Institute
 Prince George's Film Office
 Produce Iowa- State Office of Media Production
 Provincetown Film Society
 PRX
 Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project
 Ragtag Film Society
 Reel South
 Re-Present Media
 RiverRun International Film Festival
 Rockaway Film Festival
 Rocky Mountain Women's Film
 Roxie Theater
 RYOT
 SAG AFTRA
 San Antonio Film Festival
 Saint Paul Neighborhood Network
 Salt Lake Film Society
 Santa Fe Independent Film Festival
 Santa Fe Film Institute
 Scope of Work
 Scribe Video Center
 Seattle International Film Festival
 SF Urban Film Fest
 SF Urban Film Fest
 Sidewalk Film Center & Cinema
 Sight Unseen
 South Arts
 South Dakota Film Festival
 Southern Documentary Fund
 Spy Hop Productions
 Squeaky Wheel Film & Media Art Center
 Stockade Works
 Story Syndicate
 Storyline Media
 Stowe Story Labs
 Sundance Institute
 Tallgrass Film Association
 Tennessee Arts Commission
 The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture
 The D-Word
 The Film Collaborative
 The Gotham Film & Media Institute
 The Human Family
 The Redford Center
 Third Coast International Audio Festival
 Third Horizon
 Third World Newsreel
 Tribeca Festival
 Trickster Cultural Center
 True/False Film Fest
 UNC-TV/Public Media North Carolina
 Undocumented Filmmakers Collective
 UnionDocs
 Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center
 Utah Arts Alliance
 Utah Film Center
 Video Consortium
 Video Data Bank
 Vidiots Foundation
 Visual Communications
 Visual Studies Workshop
 Walker Art Center
 Washington Filmworks
 Wexner Center for the Arts
 Wisconsin Film Forward
 Wisdom of The Elders
 Women in Film and Video
 Women In Media
 Women Make Movies
 Women's Voices Now
 Woods Hole Film Festival
 Working Films
 WORLD Channel