

MONTANA



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & GUIDELINES

GRANT CATEGORIES

FEATURE FILM & TV GRANT

Grant funds on qualified expenditures can be awarded if the project's in-state spend exceeds \$300,000 and shoots at least 50% of principal photography in-state.

RESIDENT FILMMAKER GRANT

Grant funds of up to \$50,000 can be awarded for a Montana resident filmmaker who has a validated credit as a Producer, Director or primary Director of Photography and shoots at least 50% of principal photography in-state

DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Grant funds of up to \$50,000 can be awarded to filmmakers who create Montana-centric content, which can be streamed on MFO channels, VISITMT.COM and/or other credible streaming outlets/networks.

NOTE: As a stipulation for receipt of a Montana Big Sky Film Grant, each recipient will properly credit the state of Montana at the appropriate level. This could include a listed credit, Montana Film Office or VISITMT.COM logo placement in the film credits and/or on posters, web pages and other marketing materials, as well as screening considerations, cross marketing on DVD and/or other negotiable concepts. All recipients must provide access to EPK and other marketing materials and include the following credit in press releases associated with the project: "Made possible in part by the Big Sky Film Grant." Only one grant per project can be awarded.

PRODUCTION TYPES

The grant incentive applies to production costs incurred in Montana. Eligible productions* include:

- Feature Films
- Episodic television series
- Television pilots, TV presentations, TV movies and TV miniseries
- Credited director or producer with previous theatrically distributed or Network presented projects.

*Certain categories of productions are excluded from the program, including, but not limited to, broadcast news or current affairs programs, interview or talk shows, instructional videos, sport shows or events, and daytime soap operas. NOTE: These exclusions may not apply to Development Grants. Contact montanafilm@mt.gov for more information.

WHEN TO APPLY

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: We have a yearly grant cycle that begins each fiscal year on July 1st. To be considered at the beginning of the grant cycle, we encourage applications to be in by June 30th each fiscal year. However, we do accept applications throughout the year in the instance our program is allocated more money – to which we may have an additional grant review in the same fiscal year. To apply to any of the grant-types above, contact the film office directly at 406-841-2876 or email montanafilm@mt.gov.

EVALUATION CRITERIA: **Feature Film & TV Grant**

Projects applying for the Feature Film and TV grant are evaluated based on the economic impact of local spend, resident jobs, lodging nights, and marketing consideration. Grant awards are based on Montana expenditures and a qualifying scale of funds can be awarded as a rebate on Montana expenditures verified by 3rd party CPA review.

Funds can be awarded within 30-60 days of principal photography, and are subject to availability.

Special consideration is given to projects that:

- Shoot 100% of principal photography in Montana.
- Have named talent attached.
- Have industry-proven production company, DP, or director attached.
- Have wide distribution contracts or agreements in place.
- Project is a Montana-based story (historical, topical, or place-based significance and/or Montana writer associated).
- Shooting in a shoulder season (fall/winter/early spring).
- Hire at least 30% resident Montana crew.
- Produced by a Montana production company.
- Spend a minimum of \$25k on post-production expenditures with a Montana company.
- Spend a minimum of \$10k on local grip/electric expenditures with a Montana company.

Timeline:

- Completed applications must be received **no less than 60 days prior to the start of principal photography.**
- Submit a completed application no less than 60 days **but not more than 180 days prior to the start of principal photography in Montana.**

- Start principal photography in Montana no more than 45 calendar days before or after the principal photography date provided in the production’s original application.
- Feature Films Require a third-party CPA review no more than 60 days after filming. This is a production focused grant and funded projects need to be scheduled to be on the ground and in principal photography within the 180-day timeline with other funding secured.

Allocations: The allocation amount** is based on an evaluation of all the project’s elements and how they best fit the goals of the grant. An award will be given as a percentage of expenditures with a maximum allocated amount. Upon CPA review, if the production exceeds the expenditure estimate only the maximum will be given. If the production does not meet the budgeted estimate, the allocation will be adjusted at the percentage awarded.

**Due to required non-disclosure agreements with the production entities, the Montana Film Office cannot disclose the award until principal photography is completed and a CPA review of the film budget has been completed.

Marketing Partnership Consideration: The Big Sky Film Grant is funded through bed tax dollars used to promote the state of Montana for tourism and film. Productions may be considered for additional funding if they can provide marketing partnership considerations.

Application & Review: Qualified projects should work with the Montana Film Office prior to and throughout the application and review process. If a project is deemed eligible, the Film Office will provide a link to the Feature Film & TV Grant application. Please contact the Film Office for more information, 406-841-2876 or montanafilm@mt.gov.

EVALUATION CRITERIA: **Resident Filmmaker & Development**

Applicants will be required to provide basic application information and responses to four application sections. Responses are evaluated on the following criteria. Instructions and criteria will vary slightly for each separate grant.

1. **Project Description:** Provide a brief description of your story, its connection to Montana, and why the location is set in Montana. List all associated financial and creative producing entities and include URLs and IMDB links. Describe the production team in detail including attached talent, directors, and any other relevant details that are a part of the production. If you are proposing deliverable content, please describe these content pieces in detail and how they are a valuable asset for the state's tourism and film marketing efforts.
2. **Financial Profile & Operating Plan:** Provide the top sheet for your entire film budget. Provide a broken-out budget specifically detailing the days of principal photography and/or post production in Montana and related expenditures. Include the number of resident hires and what positions and number of non-resident hires and positions. Include the production’s planned Montana locations and total days at each location, start date of Montana pre-production, start date

of principal photography, overall total of principal photography days, completion date of principal photography, post-production dates and activity in Montana. Include a list of funding sources that are secured for the Montana portion of the production at the time of application. Do **NOT** include funding sources that are not secured. Provide specific detail on what the funds from the Big Sky Film Grant will be used for if awarded.

3. **Marketing, Distribution & Project Appeal:** Describe the marketing and distribution plan in detail. Describe how this project could provide a broad, long-term tourism impact and/or presents Montana in an indelible way to the public and/or film industry.
4. **Need for Project:** Describe how the proposed project will have an economic impact on the local area, region and state (jobs created, payroll generated, earned media values etc.)