



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity

OFFICE OF FILM
JB Pritzker, Governor

Illinois Film and TV Workforce Program
FY2024 Report

The (35 ILCS 16/) Film Production Services Tax Credit Act of 2008 as amended by PA102-700 created the Illinois Film & TV Workforce Program. The program launched as a pilot in FY 2022 aims to offer training and experience to underserved and marginalized communities, creating job opportunities in the growing film industry across the state.

By FY 2024, the program initiated in 2022 had evolved into an annual grant opportunity. The Illinois Film Office (IFO), under the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, allocated \$1,000,000 annually for the Illinois Film & TV Workforce Training Program.

The program's objectives included training individuals primarily from marginalized and underserved communities for entry-level film & TV production opportunities and facilitating the use of their new knowledge and skills to build mentoring relationships and connections within the film community that could lead to sustainable employment.

In FY 2024, the program received nearly 600 applications, with 102 being accepted, resulting in an acceptance rate of 17.5%. This high number of applications and the low acceptance rate indicate significant demand for the training and the program's selectivity. The total number of trainees retained was 89, and 65 were placed on either short-term or long-term employment. The grantees provided training ranging from 3½ weeks to 15 weeks, with a minimum of 80 hours up to over 120 hours.

The IFO hosted its 3rd year-end culminating event on June 21, 2024. This event aimed to introduce the trainees to influential figures in the industry and cover various topics to facilitate ongoing learning, inspiration, and opportunities. The event took place at two locations: Chicago State University and Cine City.

The FY 2024 cohort of 102 self-identified as:

Gender/Sex Identity:

43.8% identify as Female

40.6% identify as Male
 12.5% identify as non-Binary
 1.04% identify as Trans without identifying
 2.06% declined to answer

Race/Ethnicity:

16.5% identify as Asian/Pacific Islander
 40.2% identify as Black/African American
 11.3% identify as Latinx/Hispanic
 25.9% identify as White
 6.1% identify as More than one Race

Education:

39.4% have a GED/HS
 16.2% have had Some College
 39.4% have a Bachelor's
 5% have a Master's

The Grantees

Chicago Filmmakers is a 501c3 established in 1976, in Chicago, Edgewater

Mission: Chicago Filmmakers is a not-for-profit media arts organization that fosters the creation, appreciation, and understanding of film and video as media for artistic and personal expression, as well as media of important social and community impact. Chicago Filmmakers' twofold mission is to serve independent film and digital video artists by supporting the creation and dissemination of new media artworks and to serve Chicago audiences by screening artistically innovative, socially relevant, and diverse films and videos.

Number of enrolled Attendees	Number Trained	Percentage Completed	Number of trainees placed
12	12	100	6



Successes & Outcomes

Members of previous cohorts recently worked on THE BEAR season 3, THE CHI seasons 6 & 7, and DELI BOYS.

Filmscape is a 501c3 established in 2019, in Chicago, West

Mission: They bring together filmmakers, artists, technicians, and students from across Chicago and the greater Midwest.

Number Enrolled	Number Trained	Percentage Completed	Number of trainees placed
15	14	93.3%	11



Successes & Outcomes

Of the 14 trained, 11 (79%) received hands-on experience on sets and/or employment. The trainees reported positions on the sets of The Chi, a Mario Lopez movie, for Murder Mystery, Emperor of Ocean Park, Force, and Chicago PD along with other notable agencies and productions.

Free Spirit Media is a 501c3 that was founded in 2002, Westside Chicago

Mission: Free Spirit Media (FSM) provides teens and young adults in communities of color on Chicago's West and South sides with a comprehensive foundation in media literacy and hands-on media production experience. Free Spirit Media runs in-school arts education, after-school and summer digital programs, and advanced creative workforce development programs.

Number Enrolled	Number Trained	Percentage Completed	Number of trainees placed
15	13	86.7%	7



Successes & Outcomes

Free Spirit reports that 7 of the interns have been placed at least one day on set, commercial, or short film work. Some of the work was paid. This means approximately 54% of trainees received significant direct hands-on and workplace experience.

Fresh Films is a 501c3 that was created in 2010, Quad Cities/Chicago Southside

Mission: Fresh Films (FF) creates films, TV shows, and documentaries while training future filmmakers in all aspects of film. Youth collaborate on-set rotating through every film position – from camera and sound to editing and effects – gaining technical and workplace skills. Fresh Films uses the fun of film to connect with teens across the nation. Together FF works to build their technical skills and abilities to problem solve, work hard, communicate, and take on leadership roles.

Number Enrolled	Number Trained	Percentage Completed	Number of trainees placed
24	23	95.8%	14



Successes & Outcomes

14 of them worked on a film set for our streaming project #JobGPS and 4 certified additionally in Adobe Premiere editing.

Shattered Glass was established in April of 2006, in Champaign, IL

Mission: Shattered Glass Studios believes in sharing stories that are as important to tell as they are award-winning or successful. It is this belief, and the talent of the creative team of expert storytellers, that makes Shatter Glass Studios a key player amongst independent filmmakers. They are committed to producing high-quality, artistically driven stories that appeal to a wide variety of audiences, connecting with each in ways that, while hopefully different, are most certainly memorable.

Number Enrolled	Number Trained	Percentage Completed	Number of trainees placed
31	27	87.1%	27



Successes & Outcomes

Over the past month, every graduate (100%) of the 2024 workforce program was hired by one of the following three independent films produced in the region (The Rider, An Untitled Tornado Documentary, and Tears to a Glass Eye).

ⁱ It is the purpose of this Act to preserve and expand the existing human infrastructure for the motion picture industry in Illinois. It shall be the policy of this State to promote and encourage the training and hiring of Illinois residents who represent the diversity of the Illinois population through the creation and implementation of training, education, and recruitment programs organized in cooperation with Illinois colleges and universities, labor organizations, and the motion picture industry.

(Source: P.A. 95-720, eff. 5-27-08.)