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Organization Name

Humboldt-Del Norte Film Commission

Contact Person

Cassandra Hesseltine

Phone

7075020018

Email

commisisoner@hdnfc.org

Website

<https://hdnfc.org/>

Mailing Address

235 F Street
Eureka, CA 95501
[Map It](#)

Project Overview

Project/Event Title


Humboldt Del Norte Film Commission Film and Film Tourism

Dates or Duration

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Amount of Funding Requested

\$75,000.00

Entry   

Entry Id: 2453

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What is the Return on Investment?

The Humboldt Film Commission generates return on investment through a combination of direct overnight stays from film productions, coordinated support of destination events, and ongoing film tourism development within Humboldt County.

Direct Lodging Impact from Film Productions

Film and media productions require accommodations for cast, crew, and support teams for the duration of their stay. Even small productions generate consistent room nights, while larger productions can result in extended stays across multiple lodging properties. These bookings are secured in advance and represent reliable, multi night occupancy for Humboldt County lodging partners.

Event Related Overnight Visitation

The Film Commission supports and coordinates tourism driven programming that attracts out of area visitors to Humboldt County. While separate funding sources support event marketing and talent, this request ensures the staffing capacity needed to organize, facilitate, and execute these efforts. Visitors attending these programs frequently stay one to three nights, with many extending their visit to explore additional areas of Humboldt County.

Film Tourism and Extended Stays

High profile productions filmed in Humboldt County continue to generate long term visitation. Travelers seek out recognizable locations and build multi day itineraries around these experiences, contributing to sustained lodging demand beyond a single event window.

Promotions and Lodging Partnerships

The Film Commission supports lodging impact through:

- Cross promotion of Humboldt County lodging partners in visitor communications and outreach
- Encouraging lodging participation in event related promotions and visitor planning
- Supporting the development of multi day itineraries that promote extended stays within the county

Measuring Tourist Participation and ROI

Success is measured through a combination of:

- Estimated room nights generated from film productions based on crew size and length of stay
- Attendance tracking for supported programming with identification of out of area visitors
- Post event and visitor surveys capturing lodging usage, length of stay, and visitor origin
- Feedback from Humboldt County lodging partners regarding occupancy trends during key periods
- Tracking of film inquiries, bookings, and repeat visitation

This approach ensures that staffing and operational support translate

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directly into increased overnight stays, extended visitor duration, and measurable economic impact within Humboldt County.

Seasonal Impact

The Humboldt Film Commission plays a key role in increasing visitation during shoulder and off season months by supporting film production activity and year round tourism development that is not limited to peak summer travel periods.

Film Production During Off Peak Months

Film and media productions frequently occur outside of traditional tourism seasons, often taking place in fall, winter, and spring when locations, permits, and accommodations are more readily available. These projects bring cast and crew into Humboldt County for extended stays, generating consistent overnight bookings during periods that typically experience lower occupancy.

Year Round Tourism Development

The Film Commission maintains ongoing marketing and outreach efforts that promote Humboldt County as a destination for film tourism throughout the year. Visitors drawn to recognizable filming locations are not tied to a specific season and often travel during quieter months, contributing to more balanced, year round lodging demand.

Filling Calendar Gaps Through Coordinated Programming

In addition to major events, the Film Commission supports and coordinates smaller scale programming, screenings, and film related experiences that can be scheduled during shoulder seasons. These activities help activate the local calendar, providing additional reasons for visitors to travel during traditionally slower periods.

Encouraging Extended and Flexible Travel

Film tourism and production related travel are less dependent on seasonal patterns, allowing visitors and industry professionals to plan trips based on interest and opportunity rather than peak travel timing. This flexibility helps distribute visitation more evenly across the year and supports lodging partners during off peak months.

Through these combined efforts, the Film Commission helps stabilize tourism by driving overnight stays beyond the summer season, strengthening year round occupancy and economic resilience for Humboldt County lodging providers.

Feasibility & Track Record

The Humboldt Film Commission has a proven track record of successfully delivering tourism driving initiatives, supporting film productions, and executing complex, multi partner projects that generate measurable economic impact for Humboldt County.

Organizational Capacity and Leadership

The Film Commission is led by an experienced Film Commissioner with a

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strong network of industry relationships, public agency coordination experience, and a demonstrated ability to attract and support productions of varying scale. This leadership ensures that projects move efficiently from initial inquiry through on the ground execution. The organization is further strengthened by the involvement of industry leaders, including board member Amy Lemisch, former Executive Director of the California Film Commission, whose expertise and guidance support strategic growth and industry alignment.

Key Staff and Operational Support

This request directly supports staff capacity required to manage day to day operations, including responding to production inquiries, coordinating logistics, maintaining industry databases, and supporting tourism related programming. Existing staff and contractors are supplemented by interns and project based support, allowing the organization to scale as needed.

Partnership Network

The Film Commission works in close collaboration with local and regional partners including:

- Lodging providers and hospitality partners
- Local businesses and service providers
- City and county departments
- Arts, culture, and tourism organizations

These partnerships are essential to delivering seamless production support and creating visitor ready experiences that translate into overnight stays.

Volunteer and Community Support

Many Film Commission initiatives, including public facing programming, are supported by a strong base of community volunteers. This engagement expands capacity while strengthening local investment in tourism and film related activities.

Relevant Experience and Past Successes

The Film Commission has successfully:

- Attracted and supported film and media productions that generate direct lodging stays and local spending
- Coordinated logistics across multiple jurisdictions and partners
- Produced and supported destination driven programming that draws out of area visitors
- Leveraged high profile projects to increase regional visibility and tourism interest

Most recently, a major motion picture filmed in Humboldt County went on to win the Academy Award for Best Picture. The Humboldt Film Commission was credited in the film, reflecting the organization's direct role in supporting the production and highlighting the region on an international stage.

Proven Ability to Deliver Results

Through established systems, industry relationships, and a strong operational foundation, the Film Commission consistently delivers

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outcomes that translate into increased visitation, extended stays, and measurable economic benefit for Humboldt County.

Innovation & Uniqueness

This proposal is uniquely compelling because it leverages a rare moment of national visibility to create sustained tourism impact for Humboldt County through film driven visitation.

Unlike a single event or short term campaign, the Humboldt Film Commission operates as a year round engine that converts industry activity, media exposure, and public interest into overnight stays. The current opportunity is significantly expanded by recent national recognition tied to a major motion picture filmed in Humboldt County that went on to win the Academy Award for Best Picture. This level of visibility is unprecedented for the region and has created immediate and ongoing interest from both the film industry and potential visitors.

This proposal ensures that Humboldt County is positioned to capture and extend that momentum through:

- Increased capacity to respond to new production inquiries generated by heightened visibility
- Strategic alignment of tourism messaging with recognizable filming locations
- Support of programming and visitor experiences that encourage travel tied to film and media interest
- Ongoing development of film tourism as a distinct and growing segment of the visitor economy

What makes this effort unique is the combination of industry access, proven execution, and timing. With established relationships, experienced leadership, and national level credibility, the Film Commission is able to translate attention into action: bringing productions, visitors, and extended stays into Humboldt County.

How will you define success with your project and ensure sustainability?

The success of this proposal will be measured through a combination of tourism, production activity, and lodging related performance indicators that reflect both immediate and long term impact.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Humboldt Film Commission will track:

- Number of film and media inquiries received and converted into active projects
- Number of productions filmed in Humboldt County
- Estimated room nights generated from productions based on crew size and length of stay
- Attendance at supported programming, with emphasis on out of area visitors
- Visitor origin data and length of stay collected through surveys and

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event engagement

- Lodging partner feedback regarding occupancy trends during key periods

These metrics provide both quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate increases in overnight visitation, extended stays, and overall tourism activity.

Sustainability Model

Film Commissions operate as public facing economic development and tourism entities and are designed to provide free services to productions in order to remain competitive with other regions. As such, the model is not based on full cost recovery through earned revenue, but on demonstrated return on investment to public and partner funding sources.

Sustainability is achieved through a diversified funding structure that reflects the value delivered to the region, including:

- Public investment from local jurisdictions
- Tourism and lodging related funding partners
- Sponsorships and partnerships tied to programming and visitor engagement
- Grant funding aligned with economic development and tourism outcomes

This model ensures that services remain accessible to productions while continuing to generate significant economic impact, particularly in the form of overnight stays and visitor spending.

Long Term Viability and Growth

The Film Commission has an established track record of securing ongoing support based on measurable results. Continued investment allows the organization to expand its impact, increasing production volume, visitation, and lodging demand over time.

Recent national recognition tied to a major production filmed in Humboldt County has further strengthened this position, increasing both industry interest and destination visibility. This momentum supports continued partnership investment and long term program stability over the next three to five years and beyond.

Room Night Strategy

The Humboldt Film Commission utilizes a targeted, multi channel approach to convert film related interest into measurable overnight stays, focusing on both industry and visitor markets.

Target Markets

Efforts are focused on two primary audiences:

- Film and media professionals traveling for production, including cast, crew, and support teams
- Out of area visitors drawn by film tourism, destination programming, and recognizable filming locations

Secondary audiences include regional drive markets within California and

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neighboring states, as well as niche tourism segments interested in film, nature, and cultural experiences.

Industry Conversion to Lodging

Film productions are a direct and high value driver of overnight stays.

Tactics include:

- Rapid response to production inquiries to secure projects before competing regions
- Providing lodging referrals and coordination support for productions
- Maintaining up to date vendor and accommodation lists to streamline booking decisions
- Supporting extended stays through multi week production scheduling

These efforts convert inquiries into confirmed bookings with immediate lodging impact.

Visitor Conversion Through Programming and Promotion

To convert public interest into travel:

- Promotion of Humboldt County filming locations through storytelling and media exposure
- Integration of film related experiences into visitor planning, encouraging multi day itineraries
- Cross promotion with local businesses and attractions to extend length of stay

Lodging Partnerships and Packages

The Film Commission encourages and supports:

- Collaboration with lodging partners to create event and experience based packages
- Inclusion of lodging options in visitor communications, websites, and outreach materials
- Promotion of extended stay opportunities tied to multi day programming and regional exploration

Marketing Channels and Digital Campaigns

Marketing efforts utilize:

- Digital marketing and social media campaigns highlighting Humboldt County as a filming destination
- Website and online resources that guide visitors in planning overnight trips
- Email marketing and partner cross promotion to reach regional and statewide audiences
- Earned media generated through film productions and related press coverage

Data Capture and Measurement

To track conversion and improve outcomes:

- Event registration and attendance tracking with geographic data collection
- Post event and visitor surveys capturing lodging usage and length of stay
- Monitoring website traffic and engagement related to travel planning content

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- Ongoing communication with lodging partners to assess booking trends during key periods

Through these coordinated tactics, the Film Commission ensures that both industry activity and visitor interest are intentionally guided toward overnight stays, resulting in measurable benefits for Humboldt County lodging providers.

Has this project or idea been successfully tried elsewhere?

Yes. This model is widely used across California, where film commissions and tourism agencies work together to convert production activity into overnight stays and long term visitation.

Regions such as Humboldt's peer counties and statewide programs supported by the California Film Commission have demonstrated that attracting film and television projects directly generates lodging demand through cast and crew stays, while also creating ongoing tourism through recognizable filming locations.

California communities regularly build on this by aligning film activity with tourism promotion, encouraging visitors to travel to filming sites and extend their stays. This combined approach, production attraction plus film tourism, is a proven strategy for increasing occupancy, particularly outside peak travel seasons.

Humboldt County is applying this same established model, strengthened by recent high profile production activity that has elevated awareness of the region and created new opportunities to convert interest into overnight visitation.

Projected Room Nights

Room night generation varies based on the size and duration of film productions, so estimates are provided as a realistic range based on typical activity.

Smaller productions generally require between 2 and 50 rooms per night for several days. Larger productions can require between 75 and 200 rooms per night for multiple weeks.

Example scenarios include:

Small production: 10 rooms per night for 5 nights = 50 room nights

Mid size production: 40 rooms per night for 10 nights = 400 room nights

Large production: 100 rooms per night for 14 nights = 1,400 room nights

Based on these patterns, even a small number of productions can generate meaningful lodging demand. A conservative annual estimate is approximately 500 to 2,000 room nights depending on the number, size, and duration of projects secured.

How calculated

Room nights are calculated by multiplying the number of rooms booked

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per night by the number of nights a production is in market, including prep, filming, and wrap when applicable.

Expected occupancy impact

Productions create consistent multi night bookings that support occupancy across local lodging properties. Smaller projects help fill gaps during lower demand periods, while larger productions can generate significant occupancy across multiple weeks.

Timing of stays

Production related stays often occur during fall, winter, and spring when lodging availability is higher. These stays typically range from a few nights to several weeks and provide valuable support during shoulder and off season periods.

Proposed Budget

The Humboldt Film Commission operates with a diversified funding model that supports year round film attraction, tourism development, and programming coordination that generates overnight stays within Humboldt County.

Total Estimated Annual Budget
459,500

Funding Sources

Public Agency Support
Humboldt County 295,000
City of Eureka 35,000
City of Arcata 7,500
Del Norte County 25,000

Local and Partner Support

Fortuna Chamber of Commerce 4,500
Red Carpet Gala 2,500
Museum Sales and Revenue 3,500
Donations and Public Support 500

Tourism Investment

Humboldt Lodging Alliance 75,000 requested

Carryover

Prior year carryover 11,000 Measure J only

Expense Allocation (Summary)

Personnel and Staffing
Approximately 293,000
Supports core staffing required to attract productions, coordinate logistics, manage industry relationships, and deliver tourism related programming. This is the primary driver of the Film Commission's ability to generate overnight stays.

Operations and Facilities

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Approximately 39,000

Includes rent, insurance, communications, and essential administrative infrastructure required to maintain daily operations and respond to production activity.

Marketing, Outreach, Travel, and Strategic Reserve

Approximately 30,000

Supports targeted outreach to film industry professionals, destination marketing, digital presence, travel to industry markets and networking opportunities, and maintains a flexible reserve to respond to time sensitive marketing opportunities that can generate additional visitation and overnight stays.

Programs and Tourism Development

Approximately 52,000

Supports coordination of film related programming, visitor experiences, and tourism initiatives that encourage overnight stays. Separate funding sources support specific event marketing and talent.

Administrative and Professional Services

Approximately 18,000

Includes bookkeeping, compliance, subscriptions, and systems necessary to maintain organizational stability and accountability.

Budget Approach

The majority of funding supports staffing and operational capacity, which is essential to delivering measurable tourism outcomes. Film commissions function as service based economic development entities, and the ability to respond quickly to industry inquiries and coordinate visitor activity directly impacts the number of productions secured and the volume of overnight stays generated.

The requested funding from the Humboldt Lodging Alliance directly supports this capacity, ensuring continued growth in visitation, extended stays, and lodging demand within Humboldt County.

Certification

- Yes, I certify

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