

Film Fest and Theater Sponsorship Program

Application

Purpose

The purpose of the sponsorship program is to assist Montana communities and advance Montana's economic and cultural objectives by promoting rural tourism and dispersal of visitors; developing a skilled, sustainable workforce; supporting a professional, year-round film industry; enhancing community partnerships and business development and demonstrating stewardship of public funds through efficient, targeted investments. The Montana Department of Commerce Film Office administers this sponsorship offering with the program guidelines that can be found on Commerce's website at commerce.mt.gov.

This application document is for informational use only. All applications must be completed and submitted online.

Application Overview

Please read the Film Fest and Theater Sponsorship Program guidelines before beginning this application.

- Eligible applicants are limited to one submission per cycle.
- This sponsorship is offered on a competitive basis.
- All eligible applications must be submitted online through the Montana Grants and Loans Portal no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 30, 2026. Those not in the "submitted" state will not be eligible for review.
- All eligible projects and related activities for this sponsorship cycle must occur between Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2027.

The application process is as follows:

Montana Department of Commerce | commerce.mt.gov | montanarelay.mt.gov (711)
P.O. Box 200533 | Helena, MT 59620-0533 | Phone: 406-841-2700 | Fax: 406-841-2701

Application Process

1. Read guidelines and application materials; verify eligibility.
2. Prepare, gather and organize required information and electronic document files to submit with the electronic application.
3. Prepare, gather and organize required information and electronic documents to submit with the application: IRS Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification, and the certificate from the Montana Secretary of State's Office that indicates the business registration is active and in good standing.
4. Create a State of Montana Okta account. Contact the State's IT Help Desk at 406-444-2000 with any issues or for assistance. Using an official email address associated with the applicant's organization is recommended, not an individual's email that may be used for other purposes or organizations.
5. Complete the specific Montana Department of Commerce Film Office Sponsorship online application located on the [Montana Grants and Loans Portal](#). Submit it by 11:59 p.m. on the application close date. Note: The portal will automatically log out after 60 minutes or if the user navigates away to another browser. An application is not automatically saved within the portal; save all work in progress as a draft to avoid data loss and to return to work on it later.

For help or more information on the sponsorship program, call the Commerce Film Office at 406-841-2883 or email montanafilm@mtgov.

Application: Required General Information

An answer is required for all questions 1-25. Incomplete entries or missing information will have a negative impact on the application's evaluation score and ranking. Please read and follow instructions provided.

1. Name of business entity or organization applying and controlling the project.
2. Mailing address of the applicant.
3. Physical address of the applicant, if different than mailing.

4. Is the business entity or organization currently registered and in good standing with the Montana Secretary of State's Office?
 - Yes: Upload official business registration certificate issued by the Montana Secretary of State's Office or appropriate documentation that verifies registration is current, active and in good standing.
 - No: Should an award be made, the applicant must register and provide proof prior to contracting.
5. Federal Tax Identification Number (EIN of the business entity or organization).
6. Upload the current IRS Form W-9 that has been signed and dated within the past 12 months. Note the IRS Form W-9 currently available is 2024. Download the fillable form and instructions [here](#).
7. Select one business type of the entity or organization; this must match the name and address information on record with the IRS.
 - Individual Business – single-member limited liability corporation or a sole proprietor
 - Business entity – LLC, partnership, S Corp., C Corp., for-profit or non-profit
 - Non-governmental entity
8. Provide contact information for the authorized signer for application. This individual will also be the legal signatory for the contract with Commerce should the applicant be awarded funds.
 - Name of authorized signatory
 - Title
 - Phone number
 - Email address
9. Is the authorized signatory also the primary contact for the entity/organization and will serve as the contract liaison?
 - Yes
 - No; another individual will serve as primary contact (provide name, title, phone number and email address).
10. Has applicant entity/organization received sponsorship from Commerce's Film Office in the past?

- Yes: List year or years.
11. Does applicant have capacity and agree to administer the electronic distribution of a specific Commerce post-participation survey to attendees or participants within the specified time frame and at no cost to Commerce?
- Yes, briefly describe the electronic distribution format and process to be used
 - No
12. There are four unique sponsorship categories. Select only one.
- **Film Festival:** One event, one or more consecutive days, one per calendar year. Minimum award \$1,000; maximum award of up to \$10,000.
 - **Film Series:** Series of film screenings within the same calendar year. Minimum award \$1,000; maximum award of up to \$10,000.
 - **Film Tours:** More than one event on physical tour to more than one Montana community within same calendar year. Minimum award \$1,000; maximum award of up to \$10,000.
 - **Rural or Independent Theater:** One-time support in the same calendar year of a project or defined activities that add value or contribute to the sustainability of the specific rural or independently owned theater. Does not have to be both rural and independently owned. An independently owned theater in an urban community is eligible. May be for-profit or nonprofit. Minimum award of \$1,000; maximum award of up to \$5,000.
13. Project name.
14. Project overview. In a few sentences, briefly describe the project details of who, what, when, where, why and how.
15. Location of the project or primary activities in Montana. If multiple locations, i.e. a film tour, list all locations.
16. Will metrics be used to evaluate outcomes, success or completeness of the project?
- Yes; briefly describe.
 - No
17. List or briefly describe the target audience.
18. Projected number of attendees or participants.
19. Project dates.

- 20. Estimated total cost (budget) for the project.
- 21. Funding sources. List all sources of funding, income, revenue; indicate if any funding is secured; include other sponsors, in-kind donations, matching funds, private donations, crowdfunding, retails sales of tickets and merchandise.
- 22. Funding uses. List all expenses or uses of funding.
- 23. Amount requested in whole dollars, rounded to nearest one hundred.

Special Consideration

Information and answers provided in Questions 23-27 may impact the overall ranking of the application in the evaluation process. Applicants may complete any or all fields that are relevant to the project. Special consideration will be given to an application that provides a complete answer and support.

- 24. The project demonstrates a direct connection or contribution to meeting any of the goals and objectives of Commerce's Destination MT Division:
 - Develop and create sustainability in the film industry: Describe how the project aligns with this goal.
 - Support rural tourism: Describe how the project has the potential to attract attendees or participants to engage in rural tourism.
 - Disperse visitors to rural areas: Describe how the project has the potential to draw or disperse visitors to rural areas.
 - Demonstrate good stewardship of state resources: Describe how the project is an efficient and effective use of bed tax funds or how the project provides a return on the investment from state funding or leverages other state funds or investments.
- 25. The project is supported by funding from other sources. Include all that apply:
 - Other sponsorships.
 - Other public funding, like local/city, state or federal.
 - Grants, donations or investments.
 - Matching funds.
 - Revenue generated from ticket sales or participation fees.

- Revenue generated from retail merchandise sales or concession sales.
- Crowd funding.
- In-kind contributions or donations.
- Please list any other funding sources.

26. Applicant offers one or more of these sponsorship benefits to Commerce:

- Sponsor-approved branding on all project promotional materials including print, digital and in-person/on-site that coincides with the organization's sponsorship benefits offered at similar level of funding.
- or participant contact list with name and email address provided prior to project start date.
- Permanent display acknowledging sponsorship, i.e. a plaque with Commerce name, website acknowledgment, onsite signage, etc.
- One-time distribution of Commerce promotional items and informational materials onsite at live event or organization's primary headquarters.
- Please specify any other additional benefit not listed.

27. Based on the location of the project and the definitions found in the guidelines, the project is located primarily in a rural community, or if the project is a tour of multiple communities, at least 50% or more are rural.

28. Project occurs primarily in Montana's shoulder season, defined as September through November or March through May.

Applicant Acknowledgement:

By submitting this application for the Film Fest and Theater Sponsorship Program, I hereby acknowledge and agree to the following on behalf of the applicant:

I read and understand the Montana Department of Commerce Film Office Sponsorship Program guidelines published by Commerce before submitting this application.

I have legal authority to submit this application on the applicant's behalf and applicant's governing body (if applicable) has directed me to submit this application.



I understand that a previous sponsorship does not guarantee or preclude a future sponsorship.

I understand that an application submitted after receiving sponsorship five consecutive years in a row may not be eligible unless all other eligible applications in the same cycle have been considered first.

I understand that applicants may only submit one sponsorship application per cycle.

I understand that applicants must complete all startup requirements and sign a contract with Commerce before receiving any sponsorship funding.

I understand that applicant will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including those prohibiting discrimination, including on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability.

I understand that applicant will provide Commerce with project completion reporting and deliverables by contract termination date and in the format required by Commerce at no cost to Commerce.

I understand that submitting false or misleading information concerning this application may result in applicant's disqualification from receiving financial assistance from the State of Montana. Awards made based on false information may result in the applicant having to repay the award amount and referral to local authorities for criminal prosecution.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the information contained in and submitted with this application is true and correct.

Applicant electronic signature and date.