



Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM31.30	ACTION			Ward: 21
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Authorization to Amend the Approved 2021 Operating Budget to Reflect Potential Receipt of a Grant from the Ministry of Labour for xoTO Screen Industry Pathways Programming - by Councillor Michael Thompson, seconded by Councillor Paula Fletcher

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Michael Thompson, seconded by Councillor Paula Fletcher, recommends that:

1. City Council increase the 2021 Approved Operating Budget for Economic Development and Culture by \$800,000 gross, zero net, fully funded by a grant from the Government of Ontario, conditional upon execution of an agreement between the City and the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.
2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to enter into any related agreements with other entities, including industry and community organizations to implement the Film Office and Entertainment's youth workforce and skills development programs and activities, including the xoTO Screen Industry Pathways programming and to spend provincial funding in accordance with the provincial grant program requirements and guidelines.

Summary

This Motion seeks City Council's authorization to amend Economic Development and Culture Division's previously approved 2021 Operating Budget to reflect the potential grant from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. The Film, Television and Digital Media Office of the Economic Development and Culture Division has applied for the Skills Development Grant as part of the Ministry of Labour's new two year \$115 million Skills Development Fund, which aims to support workers and apprentices, specifically designed to address the challenges brought on by COVID-19 and to help reduce obstacles to hiring, training and retaining while preparing workers for economic recovery.

The City of Toronto's Film, Television and Digital Media Office fosters the growth of the screen sector through infrastructure expansion, workforce development and diversification initiatives. Economic Development and Culture was recently advised that it was eligible for a

one-time grant of \$800,000 from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development's \$115 million Skills Development Fund. If provided, the grant monies would be eligible for expenditures related to the xoTO Screen Industry Pathways training programming incurred between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022.

Toronto is one of North America's top five film and television production and post-production jurisdictions and is a widely recognized and fast-growing center of creative excellence. The screen sector represents over \$2.0 billion in economic spend annually in Toronto, which represents over 1,500 projects and over 35,000 jobs for Torontonians. By 2025, the Toronto region's production infrastructure will grow by over 2.0 million square feet of additional production space (a 63 percent increase) to meet rising global production volumes. The sector will need to adequately prepare for the projected 12,000 Full Time Equivalents that will be required to meet the labour needs created by this infrastructure growth. Mass job creation and the inclusion of historically underrepresented populations are the exciting opportunities presented to the City of Toronto to support. The screen sector needs to increase the rate at which it trains film technicians in key categories all of which have been identified as key skills-gaps in the Toronto labor force through the City of Toronto-commissioned Toronto Screen Industry Workforce Study, published on March 29, 2021. Toronto's creative and business edge in attracting large productions depends on the ability of the jurisdiction to produce enough skilled workers to meet the needs of this growing sector.

The Film, Television and Digital Media Office through its xoTO Screen Industry Pathways initiatives is working closely with local educational institutions, unions and guilds and Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) community groups to adapt and expand their curricula to fittingly educate Torontonians about the screen sector's wide range of sustainable career pathways. Through these programs, a diverse range of Torontonians quickly become well-trained, market-ready workers set on sustainable career pathways. xoTO supported training programs strengthen systems paths by aligning outreach, soft-skills training and social support for individuals with industry-led hard skills training and work placements. Unions and guilds represent the majority of film workers in the Toronto area and are by and large the "employer" on all major productions. Recruitment and training of new workers as well as the up-skilling of current workers to adapt to the new technologies and methods of filmmaking must be put in overdrive to prepare for the prolific years ahead. The systems created must include and be designed with the very communities the industry is inviting in.

The potential \$800,000 grant will serve to scale up programs that bring industry and union-led training to diverse community groups and fast-track the career pathways of its participants. The Directors Guild of Canada-Ontario, unions IATSE Local 873 and NABET 700-M UNIFOR are official training and industry partners for the programs, as well as community partners such as CEE (Career Education Empowerment) Centre for Young Black Professionals, Miziwe Biik, Nia Centre for the Arts, The Remix Project, POV, OYA Media Group and ArtworksTO. This work is guided by the Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Board, a City Advisory Body that guides the Film Office's sector development work.

These programs and activities for which the potential grant monies will support, directly respond to the COVID-19 Impacts and Opportunities Report, Poverty Reduction Strategy 2019-2022 Action Plan and Confronting Anti-Black Racism Action Plan.

Background Information (City Council)

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