

January 25, 2023

Re: Rural Economic Diversification Infrastructure Program (REDIP) and Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET)

Attention Program Adjudicators:

I am writing to provide a letter of support for Vancouver Island North Film Commissions matching grant applications to REDIP and ICET. Funding from these projects supports the capacity of the region to attract and facilitate BC Motion Picture Industry currently one of BC's leading economic and workforce generators.

According to the Vancouver Economic Commission fall report film, television, visual effects and animation industries generated a record-breaking \$4.8 billion in direct spending for the provincial economy in 2021. This is \$1.4 billion more – a 40 per cent year-over-year increase – from the \$3.4 billion spent in 2020, when the pandemic shuttered film sets for weeks during the busiest seasons.

These numbers illustrate the sector's direct economic impact. However, they omit the indirect economic benefits the film industry has on many other sectors, such as tourism, accommodation, hospitality, and transportation, all of which were severely impacted by COVID-19.

According to Creative BC's 2020/2021 Impact Report, the sector employs a total of 63,000 workers and creates approximately 35,000 full-time and equivalent jobs in B.C.

Rural communities are recovering and rebuilding from the pandemic or currently dealing with the ongoing rise and fall of traditional resource based industries. For the past ten years Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District has supported the work of INfilm to attract and facilitate the BC motion picture industry to the rural regions of central, west coast and northern Vancouver Island. We support up-skilling training through ongoing tuition free motion picture skills training opening local doors in the rural communities for employment in one of BC's faster growing sectors.

The project applications which includes an image collection strategy will notably be used to attract both film and tourism to the real communities of the region.

Currently production companies face high costs in renting and transporting equipment to the Island. Specialized industry equipment can be rented locally by production companies, local independent producers and support workforce skills training activities.

Industry sector diversification is necessary for economic growth and new employment opportunities. This capacity building project in combination with our ongoing skills training will attract more film production and film tourism opportunities to rural and remote communities.

I respectfully ask that both funding applications are looked on with favour.

Yours truly,

John Jack, Chair
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

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