The San Francisco Film Commission (Film SF) champions filming in San Francisco. We are a City agency that strives to attract a diversity of storytellers to the cinematic city of San Francisco and foster filming and production of all kinds in order to stimulate economic development, create jobs and share the beauty of our city with the rest of the world.

For many people around the world, their first glimpse of San Francisco is in a movie, television show or commercial. Those images compel them to visit our photogenic city, where they create their own stories. The San Francisco Film Commission makes all of this possible by seeking out the makers, then helping to make their visions into reality."

— Joe D’Alessandro, President & CEO, San Francisco Travel

We also work to promote awareness of film training and economic opportunities in the schools and act as a liaison with other specific interest groups, councils, organizations and institutions related to the film industry. Film SF provides perspective for the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors regarding long-range promotion, development and planning for a significant film arts base in San Francisco.

Under the guidance of the Commission, the Film Office issues permits to productions shooting in San Francisco. We work closely with productions to assist with locations, coordinate their needs for SFPD, street closures, MUNI requests, PORT filming and working with DPW, as well as assist productions with connecting to merchants and neighborhood groups to facilitate their filming in various neighborhoods. We work to balance the needs of the productions, the City and its residents and merchants so that there is a positive take-away with the filming experience. In short, we put San Francisco on the screen.

Film SF markets San Francisco as a filming destination for the motion picture, television, advertising, digital content and other related industries by attending trade shows and film festivals, as well as placing targeted ads to attract more filming to the City, while working with the local film community to support local projects with significant ties to San Francisco.
Funding for the San Francisco Film Commission comes from the collection of permit fees and the Hotel Tax funds from Grants for the Arts. For FY 17/18, Grants for the Arts provided $400,000. Permit fees collected by the Film Office totaled $215,100.
SF FILM COMMISSION
5 YEAR GOALS

FACILITATE THE CREATION OF A DEDICATED STAGE SPACE
• Will enable productions to base complete films/TV shows in San Francisco
• Will help create longer-term employment for crew and actors
• Will draw productions to our City

REASSESS THE STRUCTURAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE SCENE IN SAN FRANCISCO REBATE PROGRAM
• See how it can best serve local job creation and local spending
• How can be spread to more productions in a fiscal year

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH BAY AREA-BASED FILM/MEDIA COMPANIES
• Assist agencies and companies to find emerging SF film talent
• Heighten awareness of locations, crews, technologies that are available in SF
• Increase the buzz about production in SF

FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH BAY AREA-BASED TECH COMPANIES INVOLVED IN PRODUCTION
• Determine who are the big companies who have their own production spaces and are hiring and determine how can we meet their needs
• Involve them in a stage space feasibility study
• How to assist filmmakers with sponsorship and filmmaker dollars

STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEIGHBORHOOD & MERCHANT ASSOCIATIONS
• Build networks within neighborhoods so they can help understand the positive impact of filming in their area
• Help neighborhoods become advocates for film
• Understand better their needs and concerns during film production

CREATE A STRONG BRANDING/MARKETING/ADVERTISING PROGRAM
• To define who we are
• Promote SF as a filming destination
• Show SF residents/merchants the benefits of filming
Filming in San Francisco remained steady in FY 17/18 despite a drop in the total number shoot days. Film SF issued 669 film permits, with 1330 shoot days and $215,100 in permit fees. These numbers are slightly down when compared to FY16/17 which had 696 permits, 1455 shoot days and $242,200 in permit fees. There was significant increase in Feature Film shoot days with productions that showcased San Francisco to a world-wide audience. However, the decrease in TV series’ permits, shoot days and fees are a result of the challenges faced by the fact that San Francisco doesn’t have a dedicated sound stage. This is why creating a stage space is listed as the Commission’s primary goal of the next five years. Without a sound stage, the film office sources whatever space we can find, but operating in that way severely hampers our ability to provide consistent, high quality, available space to productions that often need space to build in order to base here. For FY 18/19 we believe permits and shoot days will increase due to increased promotion and use of our Scene in San Francisco Rebate Program by indie films which often don’t have the budgets to build sets, and hence don’t require a stage space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERMITS ISSUED</th>
<th>FY 16/17</th>
<th>FY 17/18</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERMITS</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>669</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>SHOOT DAYS</th>
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<th>FY 17/18</th>
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<tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>PERMIT FEES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERMIT FEES</td>
<td>$242,200</td>
<td>$215,100</td>
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The greatest increase in shoot days was seen in Feature Films, with 113 shoot days in FY 17/18 compared to 33 the previous fiscal year.
PERMIT FEES

FY 16/17

FY 17/18

FILM TYPE

FY 16/17
FY 17/18

- Corp / Industrial: $32,000, $31,000
- Documentary: $15,150, $14,050
- Feature: $6,500, $29,200
- Music Video: $800, $1,000
- Shorts / PSA: $2,600, $3,800
- Still Photography: $44,000, $36,900
- Student Film: $0, $0
- TV Commercial: $23,400, $19,700
- TV Series: $72,882, $36,000
- Web: $45,150, $43,250

TOTALS: $242,200, $215,100
NOTABLE PRODUCTIONS FOR FY 17/18

FEATURE FILMS

• Sony Picture’s Venom starring Tom Hardy and Michelle Williams

• Marvel Studio’s Antman and the Wasp starring Paul Rudd, Evangeline Lilly and Michael Douglas

• Ersatz Film’s Bitter Melon, directed by local filmmaker HP Mendoza

• Last Black Man in San Francisco, written and directed by 5th generation San Franciscan Joe Talbott
Film SF was an integral part of why we were able to make this movie in San Francisco. The film office went to great lengths to help our production, providing critical resources and helping orchestrate important connections that made all the difference. In the months leading up to our shoot, our roving band of artists was without a home. Film SF’s rebatable office space allowed us to hold countless casting sessions, production meetings, and acting lessons for our lead actor, Jimmie Fails. Having a large, quiet space alone—a true rarity in San Francisco—where our lead actor could feel safe and comfortable to experiment in the weeks before production, had a profound impact on the performance he gave in the film. Once in production, Film SF continued to be great allies, providing rebatable SFPD for exterior city scenes that required a controlled environment. Without this, our small independent film wouldn’t have had a chance to pull off the ambitious heights we set for it. I hope to continue making movies in San Francisco with their help."

— Joe Talbot, Director, Last Black Man in San Francisco

“When we filmed the first Ant-Man in San Francisco we found the city and their film commission extremely helpful and they went over and above to support the movie. When we decided to make the sequel we knew the one thing we could count on was filming again in San Francisco. On Ant-Man and the Wasp we again we had such a fabulous experience with the city and people of San Francisco and the film commission could not have been more helpful. I believe the movie showed off the city so well and for all intents and purposes the city itself became a character in the movie. The film community in the bay area welcomed us with open arms and we couldn’t be more grateful. Marvel Studios would like to thank the City of San Francisco as well as its Film Commission for making our shoot so successful.

— Mitchell Bell, Vice President of Physical Production, Marvel Studios
• Netflix’ *The OA*

• Netflix’ *A Taiwanese Tale of Two Cities*

• Sony Picture’s *Start Up*

• Food Network’s *Eat, Sleep, BBQ and Repeat*
STILL PHOTO
- Williams Sonoma
- Athleta
- HP
- Uber
- Walmart
- Food Network’s

COMMERCIALS
- Nissan
- Abercrombie & Fitch
- Sperry
- Kenzo
- FitBit
- Mazda

WEB
- JR SF Mural (Web & Still)
- Red Bull
The Scene in San Francisco Rebate Program was created in 2006, with its purpose being threefold:

- Increase the number of qualified film productions being made in San Francisco
- Increase the number of San Franciscans employed in the film making industry
- Encourage the resulting economic benefits

The Film Rebate Program gives qualifying productions a dollar-for-dollar refund of: (a) fees or payroll taxes paid into the City’s general fund; (b) moneys paid to the City for use of City property, equipment or employees, including additional police services; and (c) permit fees for film production in the City.

The Rebate Program has been extended and modified numerous times since its inception:

2006 $1.8 million appropriated for 3 years, subject to annual appropriation
2009 Program was extended for 3 more years; total rebate per production capped at $600,000
2012 Program extended for an additional 2 years, with new allocation of $2 million, subject to annual appropriation
2014 Program was extended for 4 more years, with an additional allocation of up to $4 million (or up to $1 million per year) subject to annual appropriation.

Program sunsets June 30, 2019 *Only $800,000 per year has actually been appropriated each fiscal year since this extension.

Over the years, the Scene in San Francisco Rebate program has served to attract several notable productions to shoot in San Francisco. Since its inception, 27 productions have used the program, including La Mission, Milk, Trauma, Hemingway & Gelhorn, Blue Jasmine, HBO’s Looking, Diary of a Teenage Girl, Netflix’ Sense8, Steve Jobs, and a number of small, independent films.

- Since 2006, the City has rebated $5,522,876 to productions
- These productions have
  - Hired more than 15,130 local crew and actors who are members of IATSE Local 16, Teamsters 2785 and SAG/AFTRA
  - Employed 196 First Source Hires
  - Paid $21,766,099 in wages to local SF crew and background actors
  - Spent $61,755,425 on goods & services on items such as gas, hotels, car rentals, location fees, office supplies, lumber, security, equipment rentals, catering, etc
  - For every dollar rebated since 2006, productions have spent $15.12 locally
Between our City’s natural beauty, iconic architecture, amazing local talent and our Scene in San Francisco rebate program, it is no surprise that film production in San Francisco is as strong as ever. With the film industry’s success comes good union jobs, spending at our small businesses and the guarantee that San Francisco will remain a cultural beacon for years to come, helping to attract tourists from around the world.”

— London Breed, Mayor of San Francisco
In FY 17/18, two independent films used the Rebate Program. Both films were lower budget productions that could not have afforded to film in San Francisco without our incentive.

“Without the Rebate Program, Bitter Melon would be a very different movie. We were pulling out our hair trying to figure out how we were going to fake an airport scene. It was going to look cheap, it was going to be confusing to the audience because nothing really looked like an airport except for an actual airport. There was no way we could afford an actual airport. When we learned about the Rebate Program, it took our movie to the next level. For a small, super low-budget indie film like ours, having access to SFO raises the production value by way more than the actual dollar amount. For our movie, the rebate allowed us to make a better film. With the money we saved from the rebate, we were able to hire a full orchestra and compose an original score for the film. We even found ourselves trying to find more scenes to shoot in San Francisco to find ways to save even more money. Whether it's a 15 million dollar studio movie or a $200,000 indie, the rebate program makes a massive impact on the overall quality of the film, as well as the flexibility of shooting in San Francisco.”

— Michael Oberst, Producer, Bitter Melon

The Rebate Program is the only reason we were able to achieve shooting our low budget film in San Francisco. Without it, we would have had to make such extreme cuts to the creative it would not have been worth it to film in San Francisco. And that would have been incredibly disappointing and difficult—given the name of the film—it’s an homage to SF from people who grew up here. It’s no secret that San Francisco has experienced large levels of socioeconomic change, and simply, this rebate program has afforded people from here the ability to make a movie in their hometown.”

— Khaliah Neal, Producer, Last Black Man in San Francisco

*Last Black Man in San Francisco premiered at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival and won the Directing Award in U.S. Dramatic Competition.
# Scene in SF Rebate Program FY 17/18

## Bitter Melon

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<tr>
<td>DIRECT SPEND IN SF (EXCLUDE WAGES)</td>
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VENDOR DISCOUNT PROGRAM
The Vendor Discount Program was established in January 2010 to attract more productions by offering additional financial incentives when shooting in San Francisco. This program provides an opportunity for production companies and their crew members to receive discounts while using the services of participating businesses and local merchants. Currently, more than 100 local businesses are participating in the program, including 28 hotels, 15 restaurants, 3 major airlines, as well as car rental agencies, entertainment venues and gift shops.

PARTICIPATING VENDORS FY 17/18

>100 LOCAL BUSINESSES

- 28 HOTELS
- 15 RESTAURANTS
- 3 MAJOR AIRLINES

SAN FRANCISCO FILM COMMISSION FILM SPACE GRANT FY 17/18-FY 18/19
The San Francisco Film Commission Film Space (SFFCFS) grant provides financial assistance to nonprofit organizations that assist locally based independent filmmakers. They provide low-cost office and film production space in San Francisco in order to facilitate film production activities in San Francisco. Towards the end of FY 14/15, Film SF expanded the grant to a 2-year program.

Eligibility Requirements:
- Applicant’s mission focuses on the development and production of film in San Francisco through support and education of individual filmmakers.
- Tax-exempt organization. All applicants must be tax exempt charitable organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the internal revenue code.
- The organization’s headquarters and primary operations must be in San Francisco or the San Francisco Bay Area.
- The filmmakers supported by the organization must be actively engaged in a film, video, television or other moving image project in any genre and in any stage of production—from screen writing to strategizing the project’s exhibition, distribution and outreach plan.
- Continuing and stable presence in the community. The organization has a continuing existence and ongoing operations.
- Applicants must demonstrate that they own or are leasing a facility suitable for ongoing use by two or more filmmakers (the “subgrantee filmmakers”) for film office and film production activities and that such ownership or lease will continue for at least one year.

In FY 17/18 the two-year Film Space Grant was divided between two recipients:

Ninth Street Independent Film Center’s Media Arts Incubator Program and Bay Area Video Coalition’s (BAVC) Media Maker Fellowship.
Ninth Street’s Media Arts Incubator Program continues their legacy of support with help from the Film Space Grant as they partner with filmmakers in pre-through-post production by providing office/production space to four filmmaker projects (from September to August) each year for 12 month residencies. Since 2009, the Incubator program has provided residencies to a total of 16+ filmmakers, focusing on culturally diverse independent media artists from underrepresented populations that have unique and compelling stories to share with the world.

BAVC’s Media Maker Fellowship re-launched its Residency program with the help from the Film Space Grant as an expanded series for independent media makers working on visually driven documentary, narrative, or other time-based media projects in San Francisco. Residents were provided with a semi-private editing suite and office space, along with tailored industry mentorship and opportunities to share their work with each other and the broader BAVC community.

The Film Space Grant has allowed us to provide long term spaces to Bay Area Filmmakers. Our filmmakers are thrilled for the opportunity to have dedicated offices and access to all building amenities and community without the worry of reapplying each year and in the hopes of being accepted for another term. Our filmmakers are able to focus on their projects instead of finding space in San Francisco each year. Ninth Street IFC is able to continue fulfilling our core mission of creating a long term home for film and filmmakers in San Francisco thanks largely in part to the Film SF Space Grant.

— Ryan Delgado, Managing Director, Ninth Street Consortium

Support such as the Film Commission’s allow local media artists to continue working in the City are so necessary, especially at time where space is at a premium and may artists have to choose between professional vs. creative lives. Being able to open the doors and have the dedicated spaces for these artists is truly invaluable. They hear time and again that its access to these spaces that make new work possible.

— Mr. Matt Sussman, Public Programs and Fellowships Coordinator, BAVC
SUMMARY OF FY 17/18

• 242% increase in the number of feature film shoot days compared to FY 16/17.

• Two blockbuster films shot a total of 53 days in San Francisco, making it look on screen like both films were shot wholly in the City.

• Award of the two-year Film Space Grant supporting Ninth Street Media Arts Incubator and BAVC’s Media Maker Fellowship.

• For every dollar the City rebated to productions for the Scene in San Francisco Rebate Program, $3.65 was spent locally by those productions in FY 17/18.