

## **APIA MN Film Collective**

Arts Impact for Groups FY22 Sample Grant Application

### **Group's Purpose**

1. The Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) Minnesotan Film Collective was founded by filmmaking artists Naomi Ko and Melissa Vang to create space and opportunities for the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) filmmaking community in Minnesota. There is a lack of representation of APIDA narratives in mainstream media and there are no APIDA Minnesotan narratives in mainstream media. Our goal is to bridge this gap by bringing together APIDA filmmakers who are in need of a space to write their screenplays, learn and train on-set, produce new films, and receive criticism. We solely focus on narrative / fiction content.

2. Our previous programming includes hosting three screenwriting labs (2018-2019) with leading and working APIDA TV and film screenwriters, we provided two on-set production labs (2019, 2021) where we paired participants with working APIDA filmmakers on a short film, and numerous filmmaking workshops. Since the pandemic, we have live streamed shows called "The Ramen Salon," hosted a series of five workshops with working APIDA filmmakers called "Hollywood At Home," and produced a collection of nine short films created by Asian American filmmakers that spoke to their experiences about the pandemic and anti-Asian discrimination in May 2021. We also have an active mentorship program where national APIDA filmmakers mentor our participants and provide guidance on their narrative projects.

### **Grant Number & Project Name**

AIG22-1-050 Short Film Pre-Production Lab

### **Project/Program Description**

Funding to host a series of workshops to teach Asian American filmmakers how to effectively plan and produce a short film on a small budget with limited resources.

### **Project or Program**

1. We seek funding to host a six month long series of workshops on how to plan and produce a short film on a small budget with limited resources. The focus of these workshops are the "pre-production" phase, which is the stage of a film that takes place before filming begins. During this phase, scripts are finalized, cast and crew are hired,

locations are scouted, budgets made, equipment is secured, and storyboards and shot lists are created. Without a solid and well-thought out pre-production period, many mistakes happen during the production (filming) of the project, which compromises the film itself.

This series will include lessons and masterclasses from experienced filmmakers who have effectively shot narrative fiction short films on shoe-string budgets. There will also be workshops focusing on different aspects of pre-production like casting, choosing crew, budgeting, finding locations, production design, costume design, script breakdown & storyboarding & shot lists, rehearsals, shooting schedules, and more.

2. The goals of this program are:

- Increase participants' abilities to plan and produce their own short films
- Diversify the art and storytelling of Minnesota by centering Asian Americans
- Increase participants' exposures to filmmakers, equipment houses, locations, and art-makers in the Twin Cities

3. Film is powerful as it humanizes experiences and has the potential to reach a large audience. Our goal has and continues to be to equip Asian American filmmakers with the tools to tell their own stories and share it with our community, state, and nation. Over 90% of our participants stated that our programming has provided tools, pathways, and opportunities that advanced their filmmaking practice as well as their careers. In addition, our filmmaking participants told us that pre-production is an area that they would like to gain more skills in, especially as many of them received MSAB Creative Support for Individuals grants and are about to embark on shooting their first narrative short film. We believe that this direct feedback and the creation of this program will continue to equip Asian Americans to create their own films.

4. The Short Film Pre-Production Lab will be a series of workshops, lessons, and masterclasses on different aspects of the pre-production process. These workshops will be led by Naomi Ko and guest teaching artists. There will be 7-12 participants in this program and are alumni of our previous programming. We will also have 1 workshop that will be open to the general public.

May - June 2022: notify partners of grant award, kick-off meeting, workshop planning, solidify workshop dates, publicize public workshops

July - November 2022: workshops

December 2022: Feedback session and short film progress check-in

January 2023: Final Report

## **Community**

1. We identify our primary group as Asian Pacific Islander Desi Americans (APIDAs). In the U.S., APIDAs are the country's fastest growing racial group (grew 46% between 2000 and 2010). Minnesota has the fourth largest Southeast Asian population and is home to a diverse Asian American community (300+ languages/dialects that spans hundreds of ethnic groups from 40+ countries) and generational gaps (from immigrants,

refugees, American born, etc.) and regional gaps (East Asian, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Southeast Asians, Pacific Islanders), to name a few. This is reflected in our leadership, our advisory board, and our roster of filmmaking participants. Our Collective has a rolling artist roster of 30+ members who identify from across the spectrum of the APIDA experience. In our five-person Advisory Board, four identify as APIDA.

2. APIDAs are one of the most underrepresented groups in film, TV, and entertainment. Can you name 10 Asian American films and/or TV shows? How many films and TV shows even showcase an APIDA actor? Writer? Director? According to the University of Southern California's 2018 Annenberg Inclusion Initiative study, Asians and APIDAs only made up 3.2% of filmmakers from 2007-2017. Asian Americans, and not Asian filmmakers from Asia, have one of the lowest rates of representation in-front and behind-the-camera. Narrative filmmaking opportunities are incredibly difficult for APIDA MN filmmakers. The Twin Cities does not have a strong filmmaking industry, which makes it harder for our community members to get jobs. Filmmaking is an expensive art form, as it does require equipment and people. We know people are hungry for the filmmaking opportunities we provide because of the number of applications we receive to participate in our labs. To our knowledge, we are the only APIDA film organization that provides arts learning and activities in narrative fiction filmmaking that center our experiences. Our participants have told us the necessity of our programs. One participant stated that he “learned more in the intensive than four years in college.”

3. APIA MN Film Collective’s leadership team of Naomi Ko, Melissa Vang, and Belinda Xiong will lead this program. Naomi Ko is the project manager, in charge of the workshop curriculum and contacting guest artists, Melissa Vang will be in charge of community engagement, and Belinda Xiong will lead operations and web hosting. Prospective teaching guest artists include: Pete Lee (Taiwanese American, Sundance & SXSW), Maegan Houang (Chinese/Vietnamese American, SXSW), Carolyn Mao (Korean American, Sundance & Tribeca), Fred Thornton (Black, Netflix). All teaching artists are Asian American or Black, and have had experience producing a short film on a limited budget.

## **Proposal Budget**

### **Project Budget Expenses**

Teaching Artist Wages (\$100/hour x 59.5 hours) = \$5,950.00  
Program Manager Stipend = \$500.00  
Community Engagement Stipend = \$500.00  
Operations Stipend = \$500.00  
Web Hosting, Zoom, Dropbox = \$750.00  
Accessibility, Captioning, Adaptable Art Tools = \$600.00  
Fiscal Sponsorship Fee (7%) - \$700.00  
Accounting and Taxes = \$500.00

**Total Project Cash Expenses**

\$10,000.00

**Amount Requested**

\$10,000.00

**Project Budget Income**

MRAC Arts Impact - \$10,000

**Total Project Cash Income**

\$10,000.00

***(Important!)* Additional Fields Required**

Please note that in the full application there are additional fields that will need to be completed and are not shown to panelists.