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CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU • HONOLULU FILM OFFICE

Honolulu City Council Informational Briefing

Committee on Innovation, Technology & Entertainment (ITE)

May 29, 2025

Status Report of the Film Industry in Hawai‘i







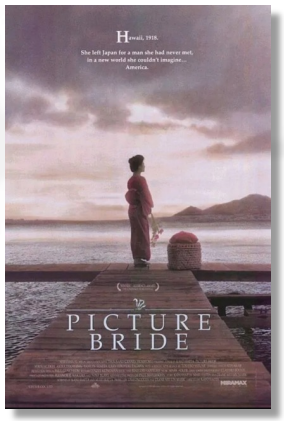




Our Mission

To develop and grow the film industry on O‘ahu and in Hawai‘i with the goals of:

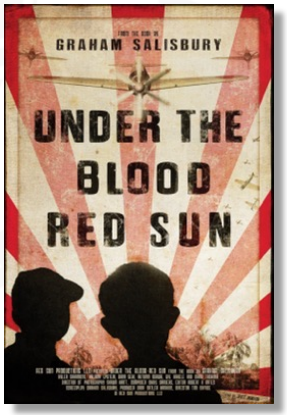
- driving economic diversification by
  - creating jobs (direct, indirect, induced)
  - stimulating business opportunities and,
- helping filmmakers tell their stories











Strong Economic Diversification

A Major Production:

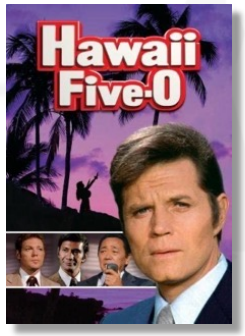
- is like a $50 - 100M business setting up shop here
- must spend its budget to make its product
- the majority of the budget goes to labor = job creation



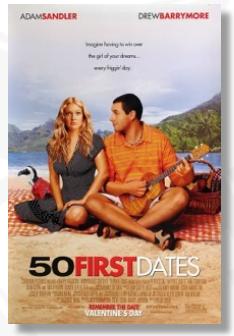
HAWAIIAN LOVE, Universal Pictures, 1913













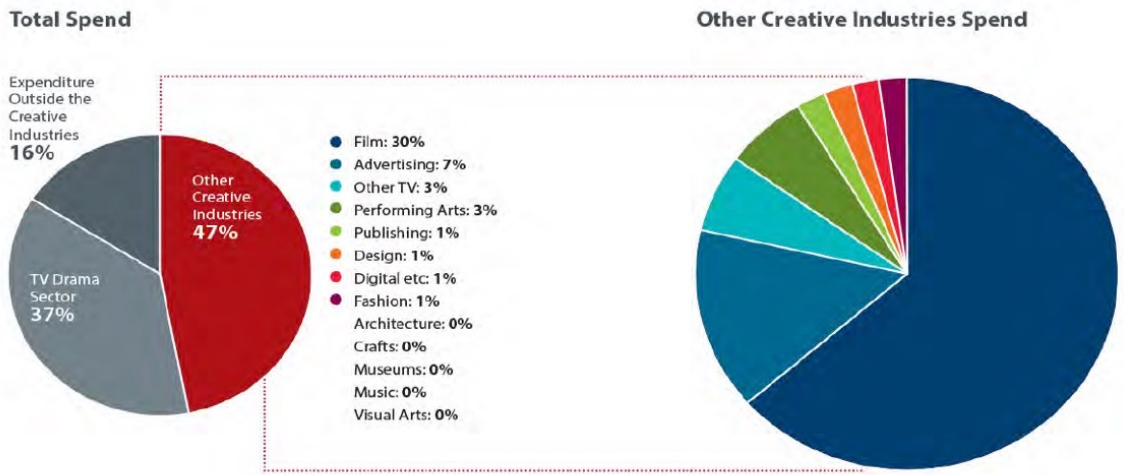
Content Production is Catalytic, Drives Industry Sectors

Other Creative Industries spending 47%

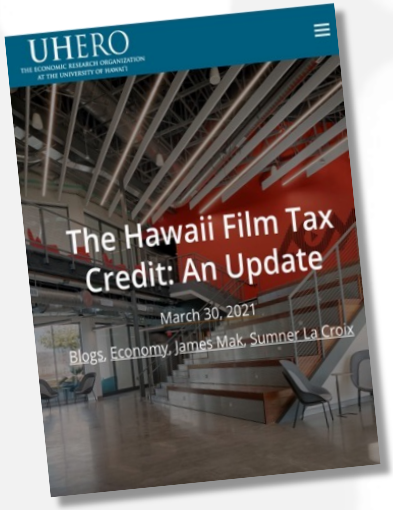
Outside of Creative Industries spending 16%



Figure 2: The Creative Industries Ripple Effect - Television drama productions



UHERO Report, Feb 2021



Hawaii's film industry has grown much faster than the overall economy

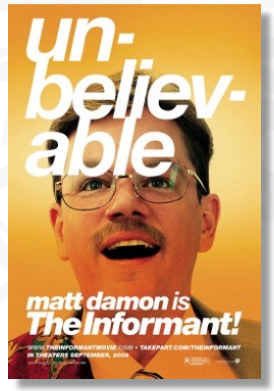
" There is considerable agreement in the development economics literature that small countries and states like Hawaii that depend heavily on one major export should adopt policies that facilitate diversification of their economies…"



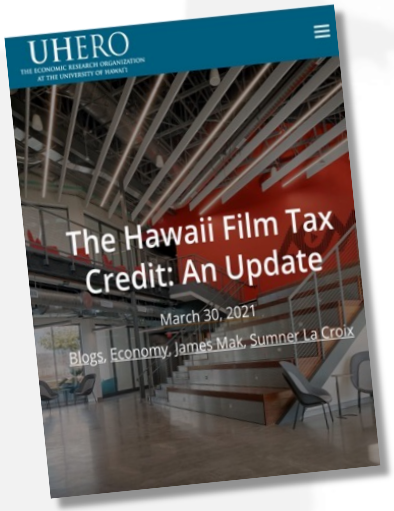








UHERO Report, Feb 2021



" Even after inflation, current dollar spending in Hawaii on film/tv/digital production ***increased by 116%*** *"*

" Spending growth is much larger than the overall increase in Hawaii real GDP over the same period, ***a modest 17%*** *"*

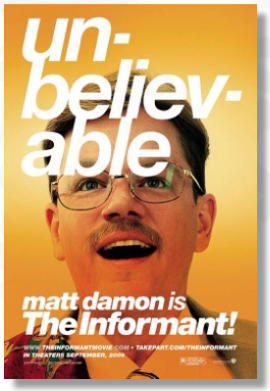
-- based on direct spending from 2007 - 2019



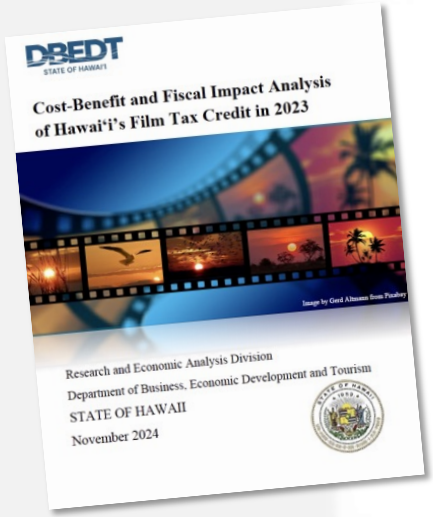








Cost-Benefit Analysis of Tax Credit (DBEDT-READ)



2023 Net Benefits:*

- $148.9M in increased state GDP

- $94M if measured by earnings

For every $1 spent on the film tax credit it generated:

- $4.00 of State GDP

- $2.53 in earnings

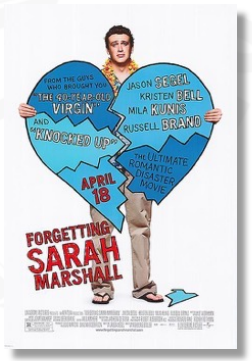
**A truncated year due to the SAG-AFTRA and WGA strikes*











Case Studies:
Economic Diversification

RESCUE HI SURF

Throughout 2023 and 2024, ***Rescue: HI Surf*** filmed a total of 137 days around Oahu, Hawai'i during its first season, contributing over $65.6 million in direct spending to the local economy.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

788	1,350	$ 33.85 Million	$31.75 Million
Jobs Created	Local Extras	Local Vendors	Local Wages

The production's direct spending went towards:

- Hiring 2,138 local cast and crews employees earning more than $ 31.75 Million in wages; and
- Supporting hundreds of local Oahu-based businesses and government agencies—investing over $33.85 million into the local economy including:
  - $4.5M on public and private location fees, and production office space;
  - $3.3M on car and truck rentals;
  - $2.2M on catering and food for local cast and crew;
  - $2.1M on lighting, camera, and sound equipment; and
  - $1.2M on local hotel and housing for cast and crew.

Source: Warner Bros. Discovery

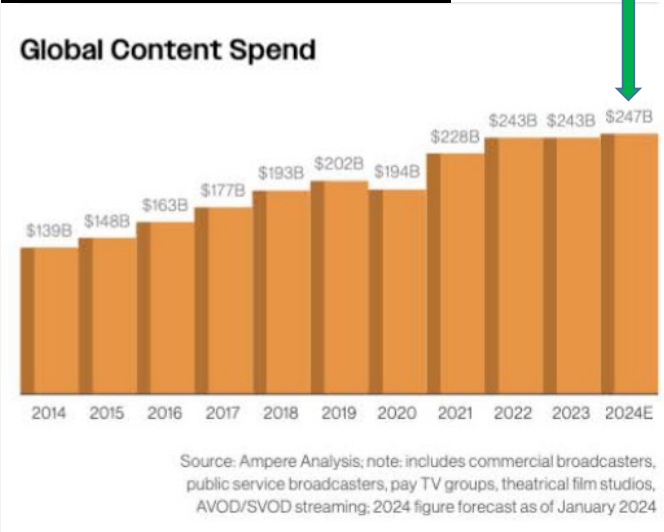


Source: Oxford Economics and the Motion Picture Association

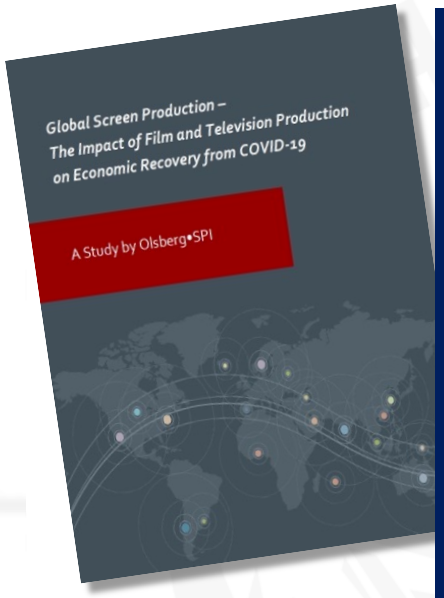
Global Screen Industry Perspectives

VARIETY VIP+

$247B



Olsberg-SPI



$10 million
Weekly spend of an example major film during 16-week shoot

67%
Average proportion of production costs spent in other business sectors outside of Screen Production

Global Screen Sector Contraction

(post COVID-19 and the 2023-2024 labor strikes and negotiations)

VARIETY

May 28, 2025 9:30am PT

TV and Film Production Jobs

The three largest production centers in the U.S. have each struggled to fully recover from the 2023 strikes.

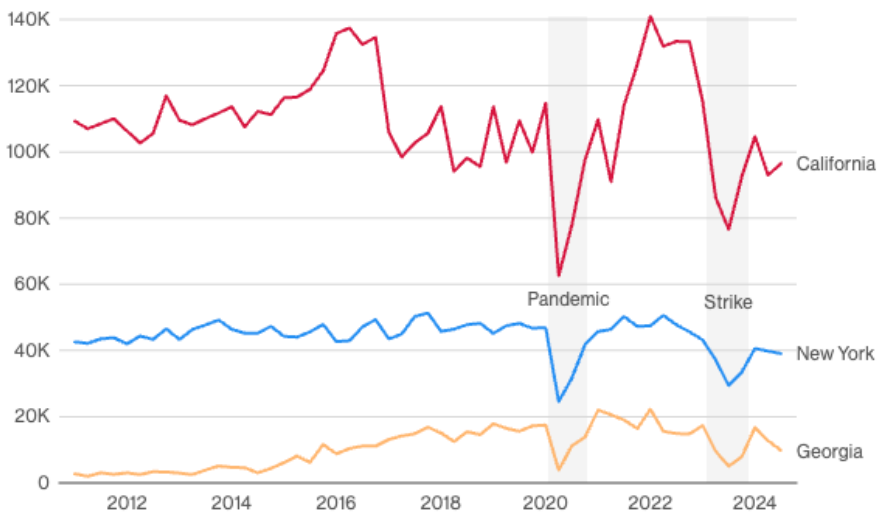


Chart: Gene Maddaus ; Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Quarterly employment data for motion picture and video production.

Outside L.A., a Global Bubble Bursts

Film and TV production surged around the world in the last decade, peaked in 2021-22, and then collapsed. The UK has rebounded, but remains well below the peak. (In millions of U.S. dollars.)

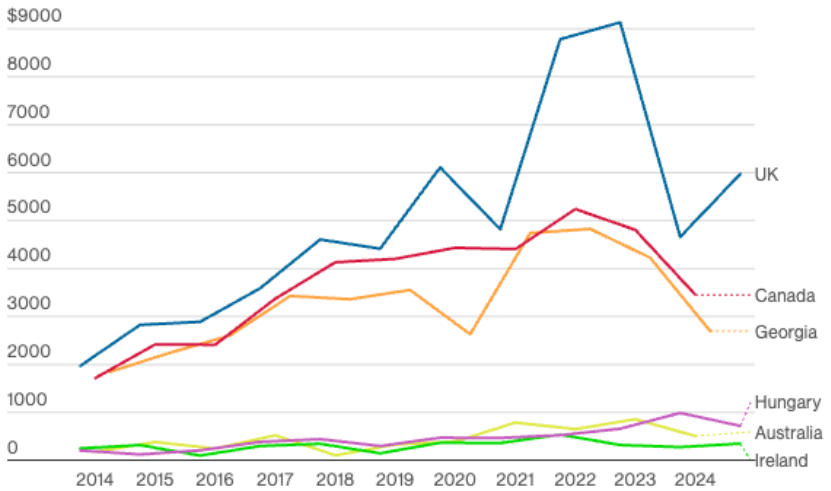


Chart: Gene Maddaus ; Source: British Film Institute, Canadian Media Producers Association, Georgia Department of Economic Development, Screen Australia, National Film Institute Hungary, Screen Ireland.

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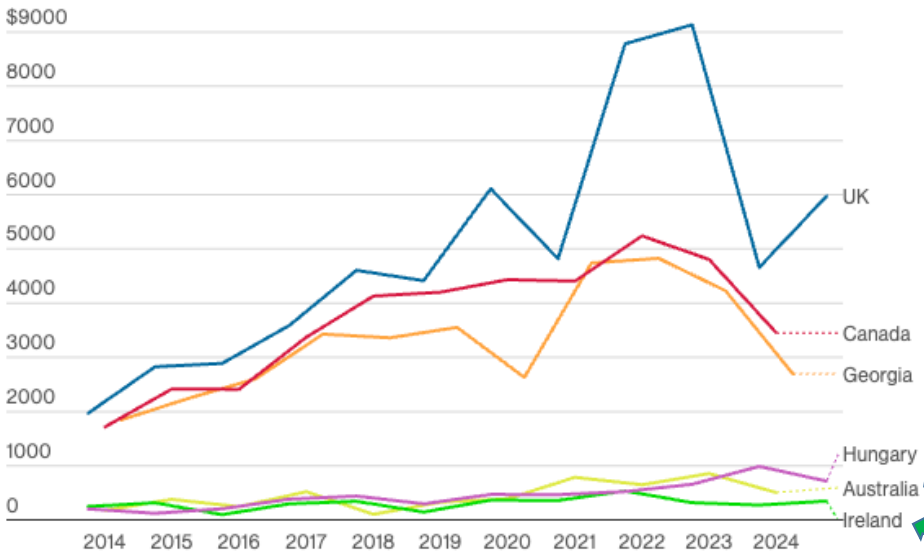


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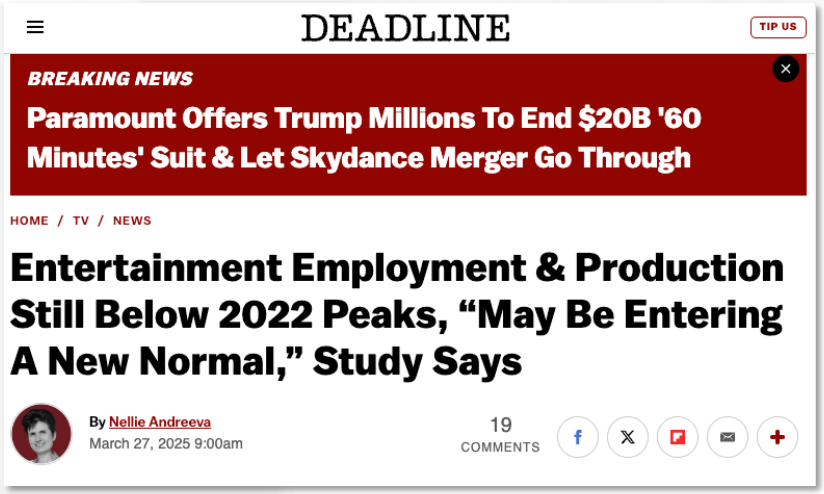
Hawai‘i’s Industry, post-pandemic: $400M range

Australia $506M

HI

Ireland $349M

Global Screen Sector in Fluid Phase


DEADLINE

TIP US

BREAKING NEWS

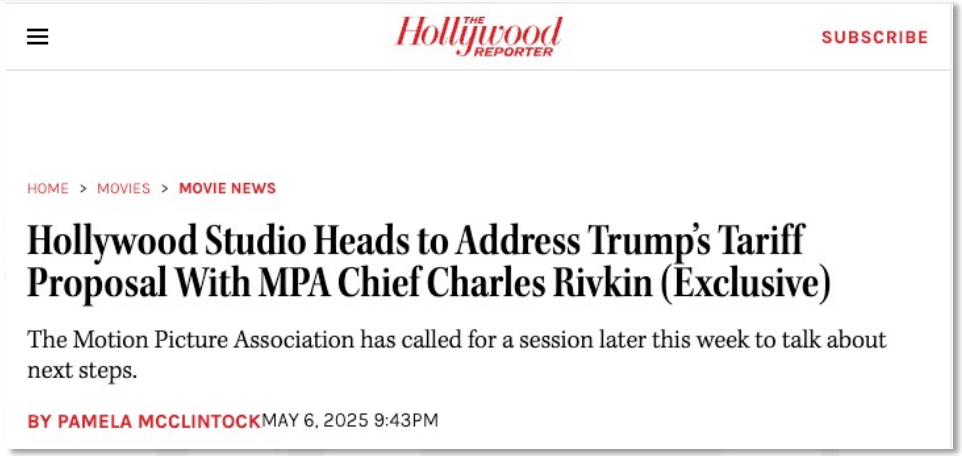
Paramount Offers Trump Millions To End $20B '60 Minutes' Suit & Let Skydance Merger Go Through

HOME / TV / NEWS

Entertainment Employment & Production Still Below 2022 Peaks, "May Be Entering A New Normal," Study Says

By Nellie Andreeva
March 27, 2025 9:00am

19 COMMENTS


The Hollywood Reporter

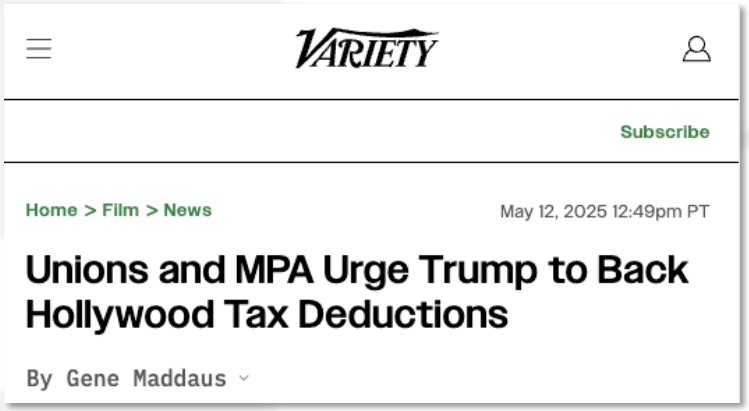
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HOME > MOVIES > MOVIE NEWS

Hollywood Studio Heads to Address Trump's Tariff Proposal With MPA Chief Charles Rivkin (Exclusive)

The Motion Picture Association has called for a session later this week to talk about next steps.

BY PAMELA MCCLINTOCK MAY 6, 2025 9:43PM


VARIETY

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Home > Film > News

May 12, 2025 12:49pm PT

Unions and MPA Urge Trump to Back Hollywood Tax Deductions

By Gene Maddaus


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May 5, 2025 12:07pm PT

Trump Plans to Meet With Film Industry to Discuss Tariffs: 'I Want to Make Sure They're Happy' and 'I'm Not Looking to Hurt' Them

By Pat Saperstein

Opportunities with Hawai‘i in the Global Spotlight

Got a Tip? Newsletters U.S. Edition VARIETY

Home > Film > Box Office May 25, 2025 9:37am PT

Box Office: ‘Lilo & Stitch’ Ignites to $341 Million Globally, ‘Mission: Impossible 8’ Climbs to $200 Million





Lilo & Stitch Movie Poster, Cannes, France

Premiering August 1, 2025, Apple TV



Coming to Theaters – Summer 2026



CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU • HONOLULU FILM OFFICE

Now is the BEST time to Film in Hawai‘i

- Competitive Hawai‘i Production Tax Credit
  - ACTIVE and FUNDED
- Skilled Crews Available
- Facilities Available
- Stunning Locations Available











Legislative Session 2025 Wrap Up

SB 732 proposed enhancing the existing tax credit - did not pass
- industry hoping for narrow version with most competitive aspects be included in Special Session

HB 796 would sunset all tax credits in 5 years - did pass
- industry hoping Governor will veto measure











Business Certainty Important for Future Growth

A Stable Tax Credit:

- drives work into the production pipeline

- work in the pipeline

    - creates jobs and workforce development
    - drives infrastructure development











Next Steps – Marketing and Education

Main Issue: Confusion in the marketplace

- Aggressive Outreach to Industry Decision-makers in key markets (Los Angeles, New York, London, at key industry events and festivals)
- Trade Mission to Hollywood Studios
- Industry Connectivity Programs – Producer in Residence Program @ HIFF











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Mahalo

