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## **Independent Film Society of Colorado Launches Peak Filmmaker Grant —Annual Awards for Colorado Independent Filmmakers**

*Four grants per cycle will support women,  
Indigenous, and emerging filmmakers — and projects  
that spotlight Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region.  
Created in partnership with the Pikes Peak Community Foundation.  
Fundraising events to be announced in the coming weeks.*

**COLORADO SPRINGS, CO — JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2026 — The Independent Film Society of Colorado (IFSOC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to championing independent filmmaking across the state, today announced the creation of the Peak Filmmaker Grant — a new annual program that will award up to four grants to Colorado-based independent filmmakers, beginning with its inaugural cycle in 2027. A support fund is being launched in partnership with the Pikes Peak Community Foundation, the Pikes Peak region’s leading community foundation, which will steward the fund and incorporate it into its growing network of community-driven charitable funds.**

The Peak Filmmaker Grant addresses a long-standing funding gap for Colorado filmmakers, who have historically had less access to production capital than peers in larger film markets. Each award is designed to be put directly to work in the most resource-intensive phases of filmmaking — production and post-production — where modest funding can be the difference between a film that gets finished and one that does not.

Each cycle, the program will award four category-specific grants split from total funds received to support to Colorado independent filmmakers. The four award categories are:

### **The Woman in Film Filmmaker Award**

A grant to a Colorado-based independent filmmaker who self-identifies as a woman. The award supports women filmmakers as they bring projects through production and post-production in an industry where women remain underrepresented behind the camera, particularly in directing and producing roles.

### **The Indigenous Filmmaker Award**

A grant to a Colorado-based independent filmmaker who self-identifies as Indigenous, including Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, member of a First Nation, or member of another recognized Indigenous community. The award supports Indigenous voices in independent film and the stories that have been historically excluded from mainstream production funding.

## **The Emerging Filmmaker Award**

A grant to a Colorado-based filmmaker at the start of their independent filmmaking career — typically within five years of their first directing or producing credit, and not yet a recipient of major competitive film funding. The award supports artists who have the vision and talent but not yet the track record that traditional funders typically require.

## **The Colorado Springs Spotlight Award**

A grant to a project that is substantially set in, shot in, or thematically about Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region. The award supports filmmakers telling stories of southern Colorado — its landscapes, communities, and history — and aligns the program directly with the region served by IFSOC. Unlike the other three awards, the Spotlight Award is project-based: any Colorado-resident filmmaker may apply if the project itself meaningfully features the region.

"Colorado has more independent filmmakers than its production-funding infrastructure currently supports, and that gap falls hardest on the filmmakers whose work the field most needs," said Carlo Maldonado, Executive Director of the grant and Vice-President of IFSOC. "The Peak Filmmaker Grant is a direct, practical response. Four filmmakers, every year, in real money for the work itself — and a clear commitment that women, Indigenous filmmakers, emerging artists, and projects spotlighting the Pikes Peak region are part of who we mean when we say, 'independent film in Colorado.'"

Applications to IFSOC for the inaugural cycle will open in the first quarter of 2027. Each award is judged by its own selection panel, all applying the same IFSOC rubric. The four recipients will be announced annually at the Colorado Short Circuit Film Festival.

Pikes Peak Community Foundation will steward the IFSOC fund alongside its hundreds of other charitable funds supporting the arts, outdoors, and other priorities of the residents of the Pikes Peak Region. Through careful management of the fund's assets and administrative support, the Foundation will empower IFSOC to make grants and carry out this important work.

## **Fundraising Events Coming Soon**

To sustain the Peak Filmmaker Grant for the long term, IFSOC will host a series of fundraising events throughout 2026/2027 in Colorado Springs and across the state, including a launch reception, naming-sponsor opportunities, an in-kind partnership program with Colorado post-production and production-services companies, and a community giving campaign tied to Colorado Gives Day. More details will be announced at the IFSOC community mixer at 6:30 - June 11<sup>th</sup> at Windstar Studios on 525 Communication Circle. Visit [IFSOC.org](https://ifsoc.org) for mixer tickets. For press credentials please email [carlo.maldonado@ifsoc.org](mailto:carlo.maldonado@ifsoc.org).

Complete program details — including eligibility criteria for each award category, the application process, the published rubric, and frequently asked questions — will be available at [ifsoc.org](https://ifsoc.org). Filmmakers, film enthusiasts, donors, and Colorado businesses interested in supporting independent film are invited to follow IFSOC at [ifsoc.org](https://ifsoc.org) and on social media for forthcoming announcements about applications, events, and sponsorship opportunities.

## **About the Independent Film Society of Colorado**

The Independent Film Society of Colorado (IFSOC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Colorado Springs and dedicated to promoting independent filmmaking across the state. Through programs including the Colorado Short Circuit Film Festival and the Peak Filmmaker Grant, IFSOC supports Colorado filmmakers, builds audiences for independent work, and grows the cultural infrastructure for storytelling in Colorado. Learn more at [ifsoc.org](https://ifsoc.org).

## **About the Pikes Peak Community Foundation**

Pikes Peak Community Foundation has invested more than \$173 million in difference-making nonprofit organizations since our founding in 1928. Our mission is to grow and nurture funds so that community improvement continues now and for future generations. Learn more at [ppcf.org](http://ppcf.org).

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***Editor's Note***

High-resolution IFSOC logo, mission statement, and historical program imagery is available on request. For interviews with IFSOC leadership about the Peak Filmmaker Grant and upcoming fundraising events, contact Carlo Maldonado at [carlo.maldonado@ifsoc.org](mailto:carlo.maldonado@ifsoc.org).