

Producer Fund

Investor Deck

Daren Smith | GP

*Fund I - a series of
Craftsman Film Ventures*

OUR MISSION:

Build the future of film:
Independent, Values-Driven, and
Massively Profitable

(...and have a heck of a lot of fun doing it)

INT. INDIE FILM ECOSYSTEM - DAY

The Problem:

Most Indie Films Lose Money

They are often UNDERFUNDED and UNDERDEVELOPED which means they UNDERPERFORM in the marketplace.

Too many investors put their money into independent *films* while unaware of the underlying *ecosystem* that makes films profitable and successful.

PRODUCER

Investors lose, filmmakers burn bridges, and audiences are let down.

Hollywood isn't faring any better, with movies consistently losing hundreds of millions of dollars in the box office ([link](#)).



EXT. FILM INDUSTRY - NIGHT

Hollywood Is Collapsing. That's Our Opportunity.



PRODUCER

We need new solutions to produce profitable, family-friendly films that spark meaningful conversation and change people for the better.

The Industry is Broken:

- **Box office flops:** Pixar's *ELIO* opened to just \$20M in the box office on a \$150M budget.
- **Franchise fatigue:** 2024 saw the worst opening weekends for Marvel and other franchises in a decade.
- **Audience disconnect:** 79% of moviegoers say Hollywood is "out of touch" with real life (Axios poll, 2023).
- **Studios are downsizing:** Paramount layoffs, Warner Bros. shelving completed films, and Netflix canceling shows mid-season.

Underserved Demand:

- **Parents are starving** for films they can watch with their kids.
- Theater owners are *begging* for mid-budget original content (per Stephen Follows).
- Independent films like *Sound of Freedom* and *His Only Son* proved values-based films can outperform big-budget competitors.

What We're Making:

We're producing 10 films over 4 years, each budgeted at \$1-2.5M. These are masterfully-crafted, values-based, PG-13-or-lower stories that **spark conversation, inspire action, and stay with audiences for years.**

We are *not* just making "faith-based" films. Our movies are family-friendly, broadly inspirational, and culturally resonant. Values based, faith adjacent, but not religiously prescriptive. This allows us to reach both secular and faith-driven audiences.

INT. PRODUCER FUND I - DAY

Producer Fund I systematizes what actually works
in indie film, and cuts everything else.

Profitable independent films
that change people for good

How we build \$1.5-2.5M films that feel like \$5-7M+

Source	Range	Notes
Equity (Fund)	\$1M	From Producer Fund I - recouped first with preferred return
Tax Incentives	\$300-600K	Rebates from state or international incentive programs (20-40% of spend)
Co-Production Partners	\$100-250K	Creative partners contribute cash, crew, or locations
Sponsors / Grants / MG	\$100-650K	DAF funding, brand sponsorships, and international Minimum Guarantees
TOTAL BUDGET	\$1.5-2.5M	Fully financed at greenlight

*Our target is 25-50% non-equity funding per film, allowing fund investors to recoup faster and retain more long-term upside.

How we de-risk every film:

- Tax Credits - up to 40% of local spend.
- Co-productions - strategic partners have to buy in.
- Sponsors & DAFs - family-aligned brands and philanthropically-minded investors use Donor Advised Funds to support values-based content
- International Pre-Sales (MGs) - select deals with international distributors may provide cash advance *before production* - with zero impact on domestic or DTC rights.

Timeline:

Funding committed by EOY | 2025 - 2 films greenlit | 2026 - 3 films | 2027 - 3 films | 2028 - 2 films |
*Theatrical releases for all films

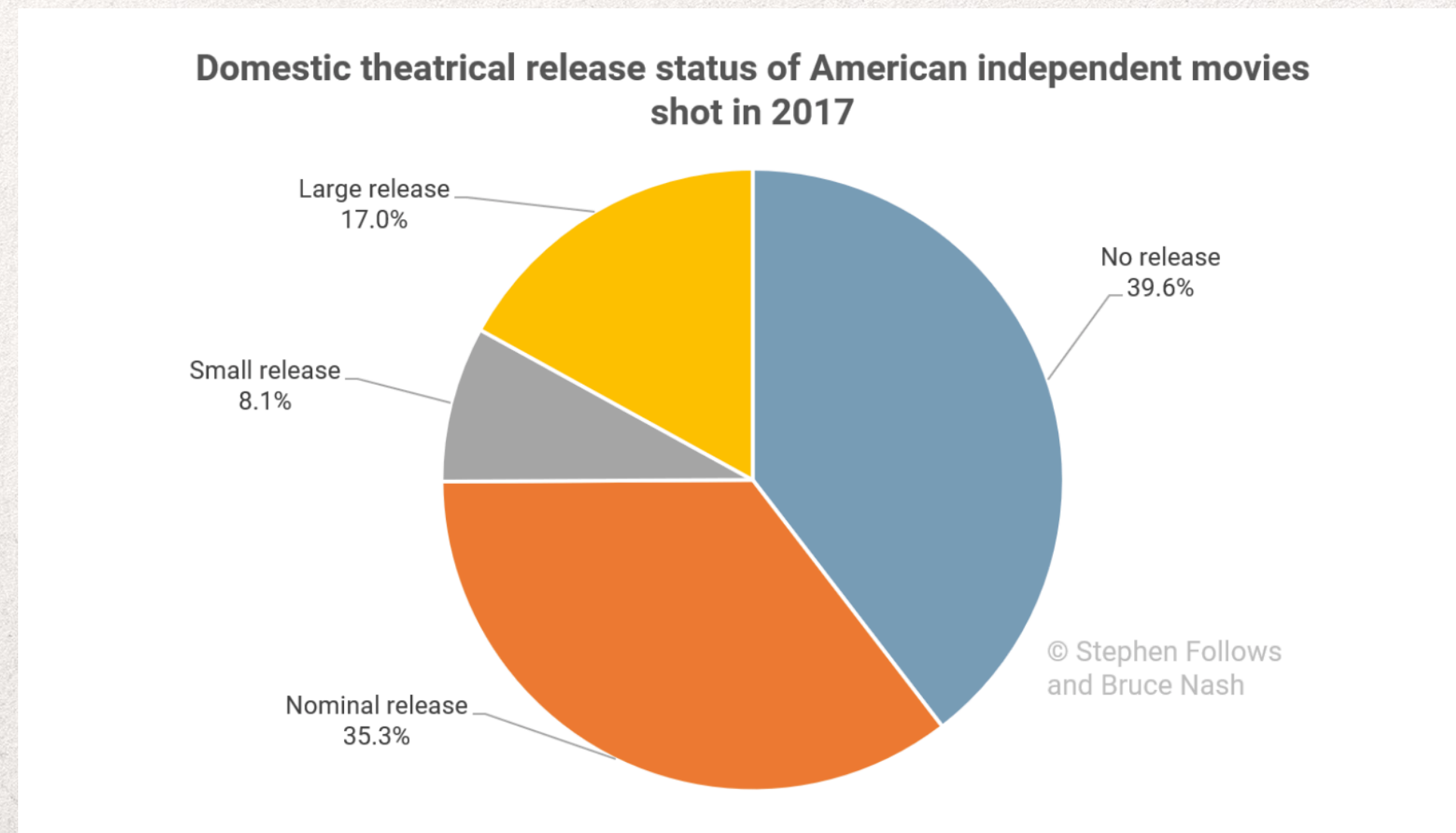
For each film:

\$200k Production Fee | \$50,000 Short Film | \$100,000 Development | \$50% for Marketing | \$500k-1.5m Production

INT. PRODUCER FUND I - DAY

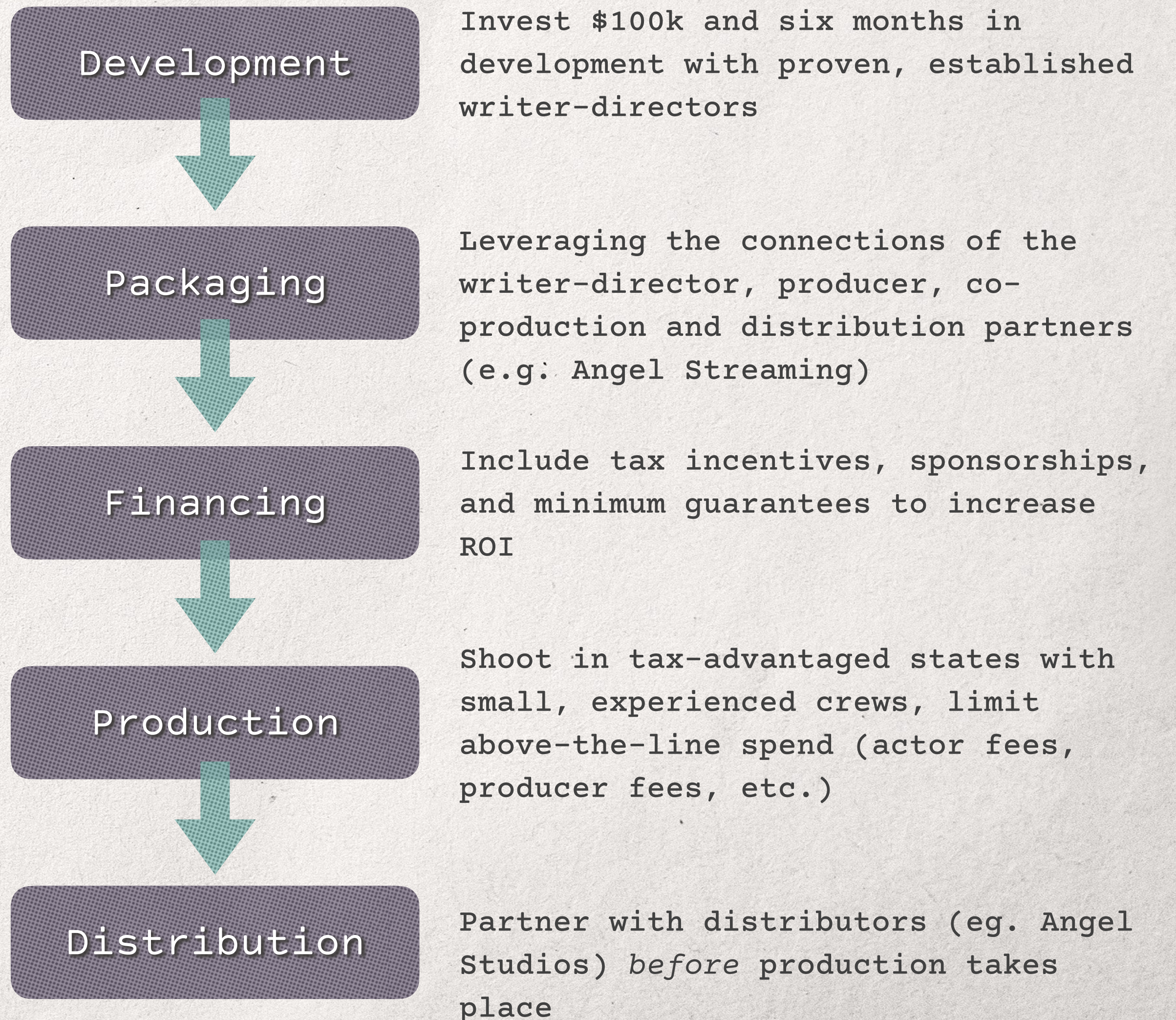
Protecting the Downside

Only 17% of independent films get a theatrical release that earns \$100k+ in the box office*. Here's how we plan to overcome that statistic:



*<https://stephenfollows.com/how-many-independent-films-reach-cinemas/>

Risk Management: Leveraging Relationships



Guaranteed Theatrical Releases (Without Giving Up Control)



The Distribution Foundation

We've secured a Letter of Intent from **Purdie Distribution** to release *all 10 films* in theaters across the U.S.

- This provides an initial guaranteed release path for every project in the fund.
- Unlike traditional output deals, we retain flexibility to pursue other partners where it adds strategic value.

Why This Matters

- Theatrical release drives perception, press, awards, and streaming value.
- Most indie films never see a big screen. We start there.

The Craftsman Go-To-Market Model

We Don't Wait to Be Picked

Instead of selling off rights early, we build our distribution in-house — and retain upside.

1. Theatrical (via Purdie LOI or strategic partners)
2. Streaming (Angel Studios, AVOD/SVOD contacts)
3. DTC Store (Email, digital/physical bundles, fan events)

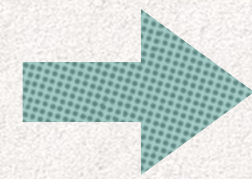
Each release is designed to build the *next audience faster* — compounding revenue and reach across the fund.

EXT. PRODUCER FUND I - CONTINUOUS

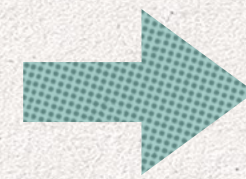
We've already done it.

We're doing it again, better.

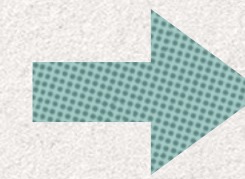
What Comes
Around (2021)



Give Me Your
Eyes (2022)



Faith of Angels
(2024)



The Carpenter
(2024)

\$750,000 budget

Utah Film Incentive
recipient

2022 TIFFF (Toronto
International Film
Festival) selection

Bought by IFC Films

Streaming on AMC+,
Hulu, and others

\$950,000 budget

Filmed in Utah in
2022

International stars
attached -

Mauricio Ochmann and
Elyfer Torres

#2 release on Amazon
Prime LATAM

\$1.1 million budget

Utah Film Incentive
recipient

Self-distributed
theatrically 9/2024

International through
Premiere Ent.

Streaming through
Angel Studios

\$1.8 million budget

Filmed in Cape Town,
South Africa (15:1
exchange rate)

35% tax incentive
recipient

Self-distributed
theatrically November
2024

Films In Development:

Title	Logline	Key Attachments
Dancing with Dragons	Exploring the connection between money & meaning, starring host Carl Richards (Behavior Gap)	Host, access to top tier guests, TV show follow-on lined up.
Ha Ha Hostages	Six comics. One robbery. Zero clue what happens next. In this hostage comedy with heart, the only thing more dangerous than the armed robbers might be the jokes.	Writer-Director Kevin Oeser, access to well-known LA-based comics.
Extra Dirty	Based on the true story (that keeps repeating) of the soda wars in Provo, Utah (substitute cookies, blankets, whatever you like)	In talks with writer-director, life rights for the story
Untitled YA Adventure Movie	A 16 year old descendent of Edgar Allan Poe discovers she is the key to a series of unnatural events - pulled straight from Poe's stories - that occur the night of her 16th birthday.	Garrett Batty to write & direct

We're ready to greenlight 2 films the moment \$2M is committed.
Development timelines are in place. Attachments are made. We're ready to move.

EXT. PRODUCER FUND I - CONTINUOUS

Investing In The Community

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Producer Fund I strategically selects production locations in tax-advantaged states like Utah, Georgia, and New Mexico, which often include LMI communities. By hiring local crews, sourcing materials, and using local services, the fund stimulates economic activity in these areas.

JOB CREATION

Film productions create numerous jobs, from skilled professionals like camera operators and editors to entry-level positions such as production assistants. This directly contributes to workforce development and employment opportunities in LMI regions.

SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES

Film productions often rely on local small businesses for catering, transportation, lodging, and equipment rentals. This provides a direct boost to small businesses in LMI areas, fostering economic sustainability.

INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION

Independent films have a strong history of giving voice to underrepresented groups. By supporting diverse talent and storytellers, Producer Fund I contributes to equity in media representation, aligning with the spirit of social impact promoted by the CRA.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

By producing transformational, family-friendly films, Producer Fund I creates content that positively impacts communities. This supports cultural enrichment and brings attention to stories that resonate with and uplift underserved audiences.

LONG-TERM GROWTH

Investments in independent films can encourage the development of local film industries in LMI areas. This creates a sustainable cycle of economic benefits as regions develop reputations as production-friendly hubs.

TAX REVENUE CONTRIBUTIONS

By filming in LMI regions, the fund contributes to local tax bases through state and local tax credits, which indirectly supports public services and infrastructure improvements.

OPPORTUNITY FOR INSTITUTIONS

Banks and other institutions can meet CRA requirements by investing in Producer Fund I, as it directly supports economic activities that benefit LMI communities while providing financial returns.

EXT. FILM INDUSTRY - DAY

Doing Good With Your DAF

Individuals with Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) are often looking to do some good with their funds.

But these DAFs often resort to typical investment structures like the stock market and real estate, benefitting very few. (Elon Musk doesn't need more money...)

Investing in Producer Fund is an opportunity to keep the money in the DAF while also doing some good, which is typically only possible if you send the money out to a 501c3.

Prefer the writeoff? We also are set up to accept charitable donations through Utah Film Center's fiscal sponsorship*. Reach out to learn more.



*<https://fiscal.utahfilmcenter.org>

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INT. PRODUCER FUND I - DAY

General Partner

Daren Smith

18 year career in film, tv, music,
and media

Senior producer on 4 seasons of the
TV show Relative Race for BYUtv

Award-winning producer of 4
independent feature films, one
internationally in Cape Town, South
Africa. Most recent won Audience
Choice and Festival award for
feature film. Three released
theatrically.

"I'm on a mission to create films that I can
watch with my kids, that they can watch with
their kids in 30 years. That requires building
a new, profitable indie film ecosystem, and
bringing more people into the industry as
investors.



Producer Fund I

A fund built to generate returns and lasting legacy

KEY TERMS

Fund Size: \$10M

Check Size: \$10k - \$2.5M

Deployment: 4 years, 10 films

Return Target: 8-10x over 10 years
(~33.9% IRR)

Recoup: 100% invested capital + 20% preferred return, then 50% split with filmmakers.

Distributions: Starting in year two

INVESTOR BENEFITS

Executive Producer credit on all films (min \$1M investment)

Access to sets, premieres, screenings

Behind-the-scenes access and updates

Participation in returns in perpetuity

Let's schedule a call.

I'll walk you through the projects, the financial model, and how we'll build the future of film together.

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