CRAFTSMAN FILMS

PRODUCER FUND I

INVESTOR DECK

Daren Smith | GP

Fund I - a series of Craftsman 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.

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.

EXT. FILM INDUSTRY - NIGHT

HOLLYWOOD IS COLLAPSING. THAT'S OUR OPPORTUNITY.

"

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.

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PROFITABLE INDEPENDENT FILMS THAT CHANGE PEOPLE FOR GOOD

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

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 - 1 film greenlit | 2026 - 3 films | 2027 - 3 films | 2028 - 3 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

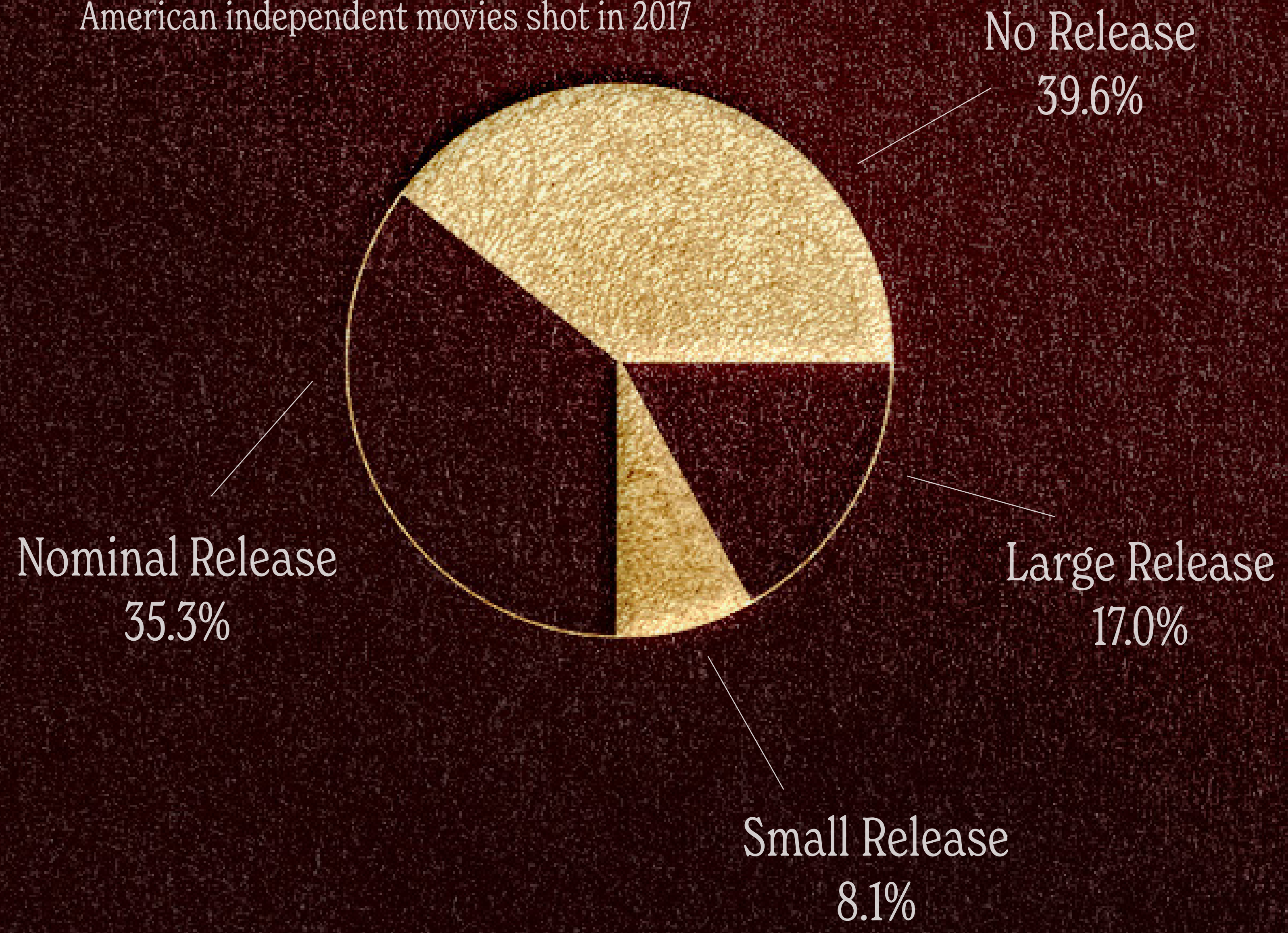
INT. PRODUCER FUND I - DAY

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:

Domestic theatrical release status of American independent movies shot in 2017



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

Our productions are structured to qualify for Section 181, which allows investors to receive a dollar-for-dollar deduction of their share of qualified production expenses, potentially reducing their effective cost basis in the year of spend.

DEVELOPMENT

Invest $100k and six months in development with proven, established writer-directors

PACKAGING

Leveraging the connections of the writer-director, producer, co-production and distribution partners (e.g. Angel Streaming)

FINANCING

Include tax incentives, sponsorships, and minimum guarantees to increase ROI

PRODUCTION

Shoot in tax-advantaged states with small, experienced crews, limit above-the-line spend (actor fees, producer fees, etc.)

DISTRIBUTION

Partner with distributors (eg. Angel Studios) before production takes place

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)

- $750,000 budget
- Utah Film Incentive recipient
- 2022 TIFF (Toronto International Film
- Festival) selection
- Bought by IFC Films
- Streaming on AMC+, Hulu, and others

GIVE ME YOUR EYES (2022)

- $950,000 budget
- Filmed in Utah in 2022
- International stars attached -
- Mauricio Ochmann and Elyfer Torres
- #2 release on Amazon Prime LATAM

THE CARPENTER (2024)

- $1.8 million budget
- Filmed in Cape Town, South Africa (15:1 exchange rate)
- 35% tax incentive recipient
- Self-distributed theatrically November 2024

FAITH OF ANGELS (2024)

- $1.1 million budget
- Utah Film Incentive recipient
- Self-distributed theatrically 9/2024
- International through Premiere Ent.
- Streaming through Angel Studios

FILMS IN DEVELOPMENT

Film One is already greenlit and moving toward a 2026 release.
With every $1M committed, an additional film is unlocked.

*Projects in discussion only; not optioned.

EXT. PRODUCER FUND I - CONTINUOUS

STATUS: Greenlit - Filming 2026 for September release

BROTHERHOOD

LOGLINE:
In this cinematic musical set in 2025 America, two neighboring families—one a white American household and the other a Mexican immigrant family—find themselves drawn together by a shared crisis. The immigrant family has been struggling for decades to finalize their citizenship, and now they're facing the threat of deportation.

Their neighbor, John Tate, who once kept his distance from such troubles, gradually transforms into a compassionate advocate. Through the power of community, he steps up to help his neighbors, and both families ultimately learn what it truly means to love thy neighbor as thyself. It's a heartfelt story of empathy, courage, and the bonds that can grow even in difficult times.

KEY ATTACHMENT:
Writer-Director Ross Boothe, and actors Mauricio Martinéz, and Casey Elliott.

STATUS: Script

UH-OH, DAD'S IN A HOLE

LOGLINE:
In this family adventure comedy that channels the spirit of "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids," we follow a dad who's a bit of an outdoorsy prepper but has lost touch with his kids. Determined to reconnect and get them away from their screens, he drags his teenage daughter, her friend, and his younger teenage son out for a no-frills camping trip. It's all going fine until the dad literally falls into a deep hole in the wilderness—a hole so tight and remote that he can't get out, and no one can hear him calling for help.

As the kids realize something's wrong, they have to rely on a mix of half-remembered survival skills and their own intuition to find and rescue their dad. Along the way, they all grow closer and learn to trust each other, while the dad is forced to let go of control and rediscover the importance of family connection. By the end of their wilderness misadventure, they come out stronger and closer than ever. It's a heartwarming, humorous tale about letting go, leaning in, and the unexpected adventures that bring families together.

EXT. PRODUCER FUND I - CONTINUOUS

STATUS: Concept

DANCING WITH DRAGONS

LOGLINE:
Exploring the connection between money & meaning, starring host Carl Richards (Behavior Gap). This project begins with a two-part pilot designed for a full theatrical release. The pilot serves not only as the launch of the series but also as the cornerstone of the marketing campaign, building audience anticipation and brand awareness ahead of the full show, which will follow directly after.

KEY ATTACHMENT:
Host, access to top tier guests, TV show follow-on lined up.

STATUS: Script

HA HA HOSTAGES

LOGLINE:
"Ha Ha Hostages" is a contained comedy thriller set on one fateful charity night at the Ha Ha Lounge in a small American town. A lineup of comedians, including a once-famous headliner now a bit past his prime, gather for what's supposed to be a lighthearted evening. But when two bumbling robbers attempt to hold up the club and take the comedians hostage, the night turns into a hilarious standoff where punchlines fly as fast as the plot twists.

Our protagonist, a comic who's not interested in brown-nosing the former star, suddenly finds himself in the middle of a robbery gone wrong. While he's tempted by the chance to open for a big-name comedian across town, he realizes that what truly matters is looking out for his fellow comics and the audience. As the robbers' plans unravel—thanks to their own comedic ineptitude and the comedians' relentless joking under pressure—our hero steps up to save the day, proving that friendship and loyalty are more valuable than any career break. With the help of his also-famous girlfriend on the outside coordinating with the cops, the night ends in laughter, a newfound sense of camaraderie, and a reminder that thinking beyond your own pride can lead to the best kind of happy ending.

KEY ATTACHMENT:
Writer-Director Kevin Oeser, access to well-known LA-based comics.

EXT. PRODUCER FUND I - CONTINUOUS

STATUS: Script

EXTRA DIRTY

LOGLINE:
"Extra Dirty" is a darkly comedic business thriller set against the quirky backdrop of Utah's never-ending flavor and franchise wars. Inspired by real-life local rivalries—ranging from MLMs of the past to soda and cookie shop showdowns—the film follows an everyday guy who's down on his luck. After losing his job, he and his wife come up with a fresh idea: adding unique flavor shots to sodas and opening a small, charming soda shop. But just as their venture takes off and the lines start forming around the block, a bigger competitor moves in, sparking a full-blown "soda war." It's a tale that mixes the spirit of "The Social Network" with the dark humor of "Fargo," showing how ego, pride, and bad decisions can turn a simple business idea into an all-out battle. In the end, our protagonist learns that no amount of success can replace family, and that real victory comes from prioritizing community and empathy over cutthroat competition. The title "Extra Dirty" is a playful nod to both the soda concoctions and the legal and personal battles they face, ultimately highlighting the double meaning of going "extra dirty" in business and in life.

KEY ATTACHMENT:
In talks with writer-director, life rights for the story

STATUS: Concept

TRICK OR CHEAT

LOGLINE:
Picture a witty, Halloween-themed mystery with a dash of teen detective work. Our story kicks off as a 16-year-old girl—let's call her Ella for now—moves from the big city to a small town just in time for her 16th birthday, which also happens to be on Friday the 13th under a full moon in October. As she wryly notes to her parents, "it's all a bit cliché," but things get even more bizarre when she realizes her new school's PTA is up to something seriously strange.

The PTA is determined to win a "Best High School" award by any means necessary, even if it means borrowing ideas from Edgar Allan Poe to manipulate, suspend, or quietly remove any troublesome students before the judges arrive. Ella, along with her precocious younger brother—who just happens to be a Poe enthusiast—starts to unravel the conspiracy. As she digs deeper, she also discovers her own hidden lineage as a distant relative of Poe himself.

In the end, it's up to Ella to bring the truth to light, outsmart the overzealous PTA, and embrace her own identity while doing a bit of teenage sleuthing. It's a spooky, humorous, and slightly gothic adventure that mixes small-town antics with a dash of literary mystery, perfect for a Halloween night.

EXT. PRODUCER FUND I - CONTINUOUS

STATUS: Script

TO ERR

LOGLINE:
A sci-fi Adam and Eve allegory.

Centuries after mankind's near-extinction, an android (Michael) longs to leave their island research facility - until him and his partner (Lily) rescue an orphaned human baby. Upon discovering the baby may contain a cure for humanity's virus, a ship arrives, offering a way off the island and chance to spread the cure. However, the ship is piloted by android zealots who believe the virus is an act of God - and will only grant passage in exchange for raising the baby as one of their own.

Thus, Michael and Lily are forced to choose between pursuing their grand purpose, or raising one of the last families.

KEY ATTACHMENTS
Derek Romrell - Writer-Director
Nick Ritter - Writer
Jordan Roper - Producer, Composer
Dave Martinez - Adam
Sam Sargeant - Cinematographer

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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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 INVESTORS

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.

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

EXT. FILM INDUSTRY - DAY

DAREN SMITH

General Partner

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."

INT. PRODUCER FUND I - DAY

CRAFTSMAN FILMS PRODUCER FUND I

YOUR INVESTMENT. MEANINGFUL MEDIA. REAL IMPACT.

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

CRAFTSMAN FILMS
PRODUCER FUND I

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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