

NOVAC's Louisiana Film Crew Training Program FAQ

What is the Louisiana Film Crew Training Program?

The Louisiana Film Crew Training Program (LFCTP) is an intensive, hands-on training program designed to prepare students for entry-level work in the film and TV production industry. Students will learn the language and techniques of certain aspects of filmmaking and TV production within an applied learning environment. In addition to this LFCTP participants will receive individual assistance finding job placement within this or a related industry.

The LFCTP is made possible by the Recovery Workforce Training Program; a workforce training and placement program established by the Louisiana Recovery Authority in collaboration with the State Office of Community Development's Disaster Recovery Unit and the Louisiana Workforce Commission. The Louisiana Workforce Commission serves as the direct administering agent for the RWTP.

The goal of the Recovery Workforce Training Program is to develop sector-based strategies to address the need for trained workers, and to support recovery and rebuilding of the areas impacted by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as the long-term recovery of the State's overall economy. The RWTP seeks to build regional partnerships that bring together local education and training, business service, and social service infrastructures in order to respond effectively to the workforce needs of an industry.

Who is eligible to participate in the LFCTP?

The LFCTP program is available to individuals, 18 years or older, who are Citizens of the United States, or Permanent Residents, with a valid picture ID, who are or will be available to work within the State of Louisiana at the time of, or soon after training.

In addition to this the LFCTP will endeavor to meet certain quotas for the total number of applicants who are trained. Priority will be given to individuals who were residents of Louisiana before the storms. In addition to this students will be screened to find out whether they are considered Low to Moderate Income, the area in which they live, and whether or not they can be considered "displaced" by either Hurricanes Katrina or Rita. These factors will have a bearing on some students selected to participate in this program, but not all.

What is considered Low to Moderate Income?

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is responsible for the funding of this program as part of the State of Louisiana Recovery Workforce Training Program and they have required all of the participating programs to meet certain requirements including that *a portion of* participants

trained in the program live in households that are designated low to moderate income. HUD defines low to moderate income as total household income that is 80% or below the median income in a metropolitan statistical area (or Parish). This number is different from Parish to Parish. Below is a sample chart of the 2008 income thresholds for Orleans Parish.

# of people	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
ABOVE more than	33,501	38,301	43,051	47,851	51,701	55,501	59,351	63,151
Moderate less than	33,500	38,300	43,050	47,850	51,700	55,500	59,350	63,150
Low less than	20,950	23,900	26,900	29,900	32,300	34,700	37,100	39,450
Very Low less than	12,550	14,350	16,150	17,950	19,400	20,800	22,250	23,700

Low to Moderate Income status is determined based on information provided in the Income Certification Form, to be completed by the applicant (usually at the time of an interview). The Income Certification Form, including information on all Parishes, can be downloaded from our website and is also available to download at the following location:

<http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbg/DRedLMI.htm>

The website also contains a link to download an excel viewer in case you are not able to open Excel files. Please note that the spreadsheet will not display properly in all Internet browsers. We have found that neither Safari nor Firefox will adequately display this document, which poses a challenge for Mac users. If you are unable to properly view or print this form please email crewtraining@novacvideo.org with your complete mailing address (we also need your complete home address, if different) and we will mail you a print out or just arrange for you to fill one out at a later date. However you must prepare this information for the purposes of the LFCTP application.

In completing the income certification form (and the electronic application) HUD requires that each applicant calculate their total household income and indicate on the form the corresponding income category according to the applicant's household size. The number of people that you include when calculating your household is the number of people that are claimed on a single tax return. If you file taxes for yourself only, and no one else can claim you, then the number of people you should calculate in your "household" is 1. If you are married, filing jointly, then it is 2, etc. This is per year. Determine your household's current gross yearly income by calculating your household's current gross monthly income and projecting it forward 12 months.

Income should include all monies from wages or salary, self-employment, interest, dividends, net rental income, social security income, supplemental security income, public assistance income, retirement and all other income (unemployment compensation, alimony and child support etc.)

It is your responsibility, as a participant seeking training in the Louisiana Film Crew Training Program, to make sure that the information provided on this form is accurate. The income information for the individuals living at your address should be exact. You will be required to complete an official form, called the Income Certification Self-Attestation Form, as part of the application process, which will include this same information. The Federal Government has the right to verify this information against its own records at any time, and we expect them to do so.

HUD regulations also require that certain ethnic, racial and gender information be reported for each applicant. When completing this form please check the box next to the appropriate Race and Ethnicity category. Everyone **MUST** also check a box either for Hispanic or not (please note that this is in addition to the Race/Ethnicity section). Everyone must also check the appropriate box for Female Head of Household. Remember to sign and date your form. Again, this process is not necessary at the point at which you apply but will be required should you be selected for an interview.

Remember, not all LFCTP participants need be defined low to moderate income so don't be discouraged to apply!

What is the definition of displaced?

For the purposes of the Film Crew Training Program the term displaced will mean anyone who has been forced by the hurricanes to move from their homes in the impacted parishes, who may or may not have relocated elsewhere, and who may or may not be currently employed, and who have not yet been able to return to a permanent dwelling.

Remember, not all LFCTP participants need be defined as displaced so don't be discouraged to apply!

Will I be accepted if I apply?

We don't know yet! We have been overwhelmed by the response to this program. The first PA Class accepted only 1/6 of the total applicants. However, as we offer more classes we *hope* that the selection process will become less competitive. While we are too short-staffed to offer individual consultation about why an applicant may not have been selected we hope that this FAQ will contain enough general information about the program and the industry to give applicants an idea of our selection criteria. In addition to meeting all of the basic criteria for the program applicants must demonstrate an ability to accept immediate work in the State of Louisiana Entertainment Production Industry

and an understanding of what that work entails (it can be grueling and often not creative). Applicants must demonstrate motivation and excellent communication skills. Sometimes we just have too many qualified applicants to select them all. Anyone whose application has been turned down for a LFCTP class may re-apply to any future class at any point.

Do I need to know anything about film or video to participate?

No! Our hope is to train as many motivated individuals as we can to work in this fun and lucrative industry. Part of the excitement for us is reaching out to people who would never otherwise have the opportunity to, or think of, working in this field.

That said, the Film Production Industry is not for everyone! Long hours (12-14 hours, six days a week) are the norm. Punctuality, dependability, an ability to follow directions precisely, and a cheerful and professional attitude are expected. Work often takes place under other challenging conditions, on hot stages or outside in the pouring rain, summer heat or winter cold. Equipment is heavy and people yell at you. You have to be able to function well and get your job done under all of these circumstances.

Does it cost anything to participate?

No, NOVAC's Louisiana Film Crew Training Program is funded entirely by a State of Louisiana Workforce Development grant (part of the Federal Government's Community Development Block Grant to help rebuild Louisiana in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita). We do not, however, provide stipends during or after training.

When do you plan to offer the training sessions?

The next LFCTP class will be a Set Construction class, followed by Scenic Painting and then Grip/Electric. These classes will be scheduled back-to-back, and, at times, overlapping. We are tentatively planning to begin the Set Construction class (the first of the three) in mid-Summer. We will not be offering another PA class until later in the Fall. Individuals cannot train in more than one field so you will need to decide which training you want to pursue. Please note that all of these dates are tentative and that they are subject to change. Please check back on the website often for updates.

Does the LFCTP provide a stipend?

No, while all services related to the program, including all training and job placement services, are provided free of charge no stipend will be provided by NOVAC or any of its partners to individuals at any point during their participation. However, NOVAC's job skills or training follow-up services may continue during or after an individual has already been hired by a production entity or any other employer.

Is the LFCTP ADA Compliant?

Yes, the Louisiana Film Crew Training Program complies with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants with disabilities, who seek accommodations, must indicate this in their application. Accommodations for accepted candidates will be made before the beginning of a training module. If a disability is identified later in the training, a non-retroactive accommodation plan will be developed.

With which tenets of the United States' Anti-Discrimination legal code does the LFCTP comply?

The Louisiana Film Crew Training Program complies with Section 109 of the HCD Act of 1974, Title I, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, religion, and sex within Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs or activities. LFCTP also complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, as well as with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a national law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability. LFCTP also complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; a law that prohibits discrimination based on age in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. In addition LFCTP complies with Title IX of the education amendments of 1972, which states that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. And LFCTP also complies with the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, which requires contractors with the federal government to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified disabled and Vietnam era veterans. The LFCTP's services are offered without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, political affiliation, or disability - except where age, sex or disability may have a negative impact on the individual's ability to perform the duties specific to an industry.

Can I train in more than one track?

No, we don't anticipate that we will have the capacity to accept a student for more than one LFCTP class.

Which training track should I choose?

There are pros and cons to each track and it's a personal decision. You may decide to later change your focus. Many people join the Industry in one area and later decide to migrate to a different area of interest. We suggest you read through all of the FAQ's (particularly the descriptions of each of the training curricula) and do your own research on the various crew and production opportunities within the industry. There are some physical requirements to some of the training tracks that you may find you are not physically able to

meet. Other training tracks require a higher level of reading and writing skills. It is important to note that all of the training tracks prepare individuals for entry-level work.

What is the LFCTP Grip/Electric Training Track?

Grips are lighting and rigging technicians in the film and video production industry. They make up their own department on a film set and are led by a Key Grip. Grips have two main functions. The first is to work closely with the camera department, especially if the camera is mounted on a dolly, a crane or in any unusual position. Some grips may specialize in operating camera dollies or camera cranes. The second is to work closely with the electrical department to rig the lighting set-ups necessary for a shot. The training program prepares students for entry-level work in this department.

The Grip/Electric Training Track will consist of 2 two-week (for a total of twenty days) programs. Each day's session will be 4 to 8 hours long, as needed. One night exterior is planned for each program, so two class sessions during the workshop will be held at night. Classes are generally held in a large (often non-climatized) warehouse space in the New Orleans metro area.

Students will be divided into two groups: one grip, the other electric. The instructors will function as a key grip or gaffer would on set, with the day's lesson being a pre-designated lighting setup. The design of the two-week program should mirror the actual workings of a film set. After two weeks the curricula will repeat with the opposite group so that each participant is cross-trained in both crafts.

What traits are necessary for work as a Grip/Electric?

Physical strength is one requirement of this training track. The equipment is heavy and the hours of exertion expected on any given day are combined to make fitness a real factor. Minimum expected requirements are as follows: The ability to lift and carry in excess of fifty pounds of awkward loads, for example a camera dolly will often weigh in excess of 200 pounds and four grips are often expected to transport it by hand up stairs and down. The plywood sheets and some larger stands can exceed fifty pounds. The electricians have lighting units that must be lifted to head height or above, placing them on top of a stand. These units can weigh over 100 to 125 pounds. Cable coils that those same electricians must lift, load, coil and uncoil can weigh nearly the same.

Stamina is another requirement for this field. Hot stages or exteriors in the summer, cold weather in winter, rain (real or manmade,) heavy equipment, intensity and the long hours (12 hours or more, six day weeks etc.) are the normal day on set, enough said.

Certain fundamentals and literacy are expected of applicants who enroll in this training track. Electricity and its basic concepts along with its safe handling should be understood before coming into class. Photography and the basic working of a 35mm camera will be used as examples throughout the course. Any student needing background or refresher materials will be directed to some basic source materials from the library to study before the first class.

Basic reading and math skills are required of all students entering this training track.

What is the profile of a Production Assistant?

A Production Assistant, also known as a PA, is a job title for a person responsible for various jobs, such as stopping traffic, acting as couriers, getting items from craft service, etc. They also do various administrative tasks, such as filing, photocopying, typing/Word processing, taking/making telephone calls and organizing the office for the day. Production assistants are often attached to individual people on set, such as an actor or a crewmember.

In television and film, production assistants are usually divided into two categories: office PA's and set PA's. Office PA's spend most of their work day in a show's production office, handling such tasks as answering phones, receiving deliveries, picking up lunches or coffee, and making copies of scripts, amongst many other tasks. Office PA's report to the Production Coordinator. Set PA's work at the location where the production is being shot. They report to the Second Assistant Director (2nd AD) and sometimes to the First Assistant Director (1st AD). Set PA's usually work the longest days of anyone and are regularly the first to arrive and the last to leave. Often times PA's will switch duties and an Office PA will work on location if an extra hand is needed, or a Set PA will work in the office on hiatus weeks when the physical production is shut down.

Some other departments also hire PA's and their work will be tailored to whatever craft that department is responsible for (i.e. Wardrobe, Art, Locations, etc.)

What skills are necessary for work as a Production Assistant?

The following is a list of some of the skills that make a great PA:

- A general understanding of the language and process of Film/TV production
- DEPENDABILITY -- the most important skill of all
- PUNCTUALITY -- absolutely essential. No excuses
- Ability to follow directions precisely
- Willingness to work long hours (12-14 hour days are the norm)
- Cheerful and professional attitude
- In-depth knowledge of your town (directions, etc.) and reliable transportation

- Ability to "think on your feet" - that is, to make a quick decision when you have to, rather than waiting helplessly for someone else to take over.
- Another important skill: if you make a mistake, own up to it and take responsibility
- And here's a really important one: a thick hide. Sooner or later, you're going to get yelled at, whether or not you deserve it. Don't take it personally--get over it—it's part of the game.

What types of earning potential will I have as a Production Assistant?

Pay for Production Assistants varies depending on the type of show, but standard rates in film usually range from \$100-\$150 a day. On a television show, pay ranges from \$8 an hour with overtime, to flat fees of \$500-\$700 a week, including or excluding possible overtime.

Production Assistants play a vital role on a set and this entry-level position is almost a right of passage to moving into other more experienced production roles including: Line Producer, Unit Production Manager, First Assistant Director and Second Assistant Director.

What is the LFCTP Production Assistant Training Track?

The LFCTP Production Assistant Training track is a two-week training curriculum that is designed to provide students exposure to the process of film and video production. Classes are held between 4 and 8 hours a day, mostly on weekdays, but sometimes Saturday classes are necessary to accommodate instructors and guest speakers. Classes primarily take place at the NOVAC offices in the Bywater neighborhood of New Orleans.

Lectures and hands-on exercises in camera, lighting, and sound recording techniques will introduce students to the tools used to make film and TV programs. Students will also learn about various crew roles, responsibilities, and expectations; budgeting; planning processes; script breakdown; shot lists; talent/extras coordination; and location scouting/permits. Students will engage in a practical set experience, rotating amongst the different roles within a typical production. Students will then be instructed on the process of digital editing from logging footage to mastering onto DV tape. Finally, in preparation for immediate work within the industry, students will focus on types of employment opportunities, resume building, networking, and self-promotion.

Following this 2-week intensive program LFCTP students must complete a Production Assistant Training (PAT) competency exam. The exam will ensure that students have a thorough understanding of all topics covered and are prepared for the workplace. Students will also be required to present a completed resume/cover letter.

What is the LFCTP Set Construction Training Track?

The LFCTP Set Construction Training Track is a four-week training that is designed to train a local workforce in the area of set construction and prop making in the film industry as well as to expand the local union's membership with an experienced workforce.

Classes generally take place during weekdays and consist of around 6 hours of instruction per day. The days will be divided into thirds with one third consisting of instruction and two thirds dedicated to hands-on set building. The goal for a class will be to build a functional movie set. The Construction Program will be held in conjunction with the Scenic Painting program in order to further enhance each training program. The instructors will function as General Foremen would on an actual film set.

Students must be familiar with and able to safely operate the following workshop tools: table saw, chop saw, nail gun, router, circular saw, jig saw, planer, sander, etc. Basic reading and math skills are essential as well as the ability to learn how to read and understand drawings and blueprints.

Due to the nature of the film industry, the long hours worked from day to day, and the size and weight of the materials, stamina and physical strength are essential.

What is the LFCTP Scenic Painting Training Track?

The LFCTP Scenic Painting Training Track is a four-week curriculum that is designed to train a local workforce in the area of set and scenic painting for the film industry, as well as to expand the local union's membership with an experienced workforce.

Classes generally take place during weekdays and consist of around 6 hours of instruction per day. Classes will cover topics including overview of basic scenic equipment, basic set preparation, materials, techniques, color, signage, murals, cleanup and project philosophy.

Physical stamina is essential to all film production work. Work days are frequently 12 hours per day. This translates into a long day of constant, high-energy and often exhausting labor. Scenic work, although rewarding, is often tedious. Preparing and moving buckets of plaster or mortar require a degree of physical strength.

Dust masks are essential for plaster sanding. Respirators may be required for caustic fumes and any spraying of various chemicals. Anyone with chronic asthma or respiratory ailments may not be suited for this work. Furthermore, various potent chemicals are routinely used in scenic work. Some common examples are: shellac, oil paints, stains, lacquer, latex products, glazing liquids, sodium silicate and ammonia. Chemical reactions to surfaces are

common and are often desired. Please be aware of these facts and consider whether you are still interested in this work.

What is the WorkKeys Training component of the LFCTP?

In an effort to prepare students for the workplace, all students within the Louisiana Film Crew Training Program will be required to successfully complete the A.C.T. WorkKeys testing component. To successfully pass the WorkKeys component of the training program all students must take the four WorkKeys competency exams in:

Applied Math (AM)
Locating Information (LI)
Reading for Information (RI)
Applied Technology (AT)

and become Work Ready! certified. The WorkKeys testing will be incorporated within the class curriculum.

What is NOVAC Certification?

In addition to Work Ready! certification students who participate in the LFCTP are eligible to be NOVAC Certified. In order to earn NOVAC Certification students will be required to meet certain requirements including punctual attendance at all scheduled classes and demonstrate a readiness to work and good communication skills. NOVAC Certification indicates a degree of competency and serves as a way for us to communicate our top referrals for certain employment leads. Job placement assistance will be given to all students participating in the program, regardless of whether they are NOVAC Certified or not.

What is the job placement component of the LFCTP and how does it work?

Upon successfully completing one of the two LFCTP training tracks students will be listed on NOVAC's Louisiana Film Crew Training Program employee referral list. The list will be sent to employers throughout the state and will be posted on the NOVAC Website.

In addition to this NOVAC will continue to work with students following training to find paid employment. Students who have completed training will be expected to report their work information to a NOVAC representative monthly until the end of 2009.

Am I guaranteed to find work in the Film and/or Television Production Industry?

No. However, this training program is designed to help promote and secure employment for the participants. As with any training program, the most

talented, motivated and hard-working students will be in the best position for ongoing job opportunities and career advancement.

How Do I Participate?

If you are interested in applying to our program complete the online application at www.novacvideo.org Remember to print and mail your application to us at:

NOVAC LFCTP
532 Louisa Street
New Orleans, LA
70117

If you have additional questions that are not answered in the FAQ, please email them to crewtraining@novacvideo.org.

If you do not have access to a computer or to a printer to complete your application please contact us by phone at 504-940-5780 to make alternate arrangements.

Where will the training take place?

The Louisiana Film Crew Training Program will take place at locations within the City of New Orleans.

How Often and When Will Training Take Place?

We will be offering, on average, five classes per year until the end of 2009, when our grant runs out. Whenever we have info on class schedules it will be updated and posted on www.novacvideo.org.

What happens after I submit my application?

Be sure that you mail us a hard copy of the print-out of your application. Send this to:

NOVAC LFCTP
532 Louisa Street
New Orleans, LA
70117

Check back to our site at www.novacvideo.org regularly for updates. Notification of acceptance for each class is generally sent out four weeks before the start of that class. You may or may not be contacted for an interview before that date. Interviews may be considered mandatory for qualification and are generally scheduled sometime during the week before final notification is sent out. Interviews are generally conducted on one day and alternate times or locations will not be available. Please stay tuned to your email address as this date approaches (again about 5-6 weeks before a class to

which you have applied is scheduled to begin) for information. You will be expected to read this email communication from us thoroughly and respond accordingly. You must let us know if your email address changes as we use this as a primary means of communicating. Be sure to check that your spam filter settings are not too strict and/or check your spam box regularly if you suspect our emails are not getting to you. If you do not have an email address you must notify us of this - preferably by calling us.

Notifications of final acceptance and rejection are sent via email and regular mail.

Yet another note about email:

Please be advised that we predominantly use email to conduct correspondence with applicants, with students and with graduates regarding work opportunities. We can't stress this enough. While we don't rely solely on this we do assume that everyone uses and checks their email addresses regularly. Please let us know if this is not the case so that we can make a note to follow up with you separately by telephone or regular mail. Also, as we mentioned above, double check your spam filter settings or your spam box if you suspect you are not receiving emails as you should be.

Remember to contact us by phone at 504-319-6848 if you do not have access to a computer or a printer in order to submit your application.