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## **New Mexico Film Office and Stowe Story Labs announce 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Training Fellowship for Emerging New Mexico Screenwriters.**

**Santa Fe, NM** - The New Mexico Film Office is partnering with Stowe Story Labs to launch the third annual “New Voices • New Mexico,” a professional development and skills training program for emerging New Mexican screenwriters.

Through a grant from the New Mexico Film Office, there will be no programming costs for New Mexico resident screenwriters who are chosen to participate. New Voices • New Mexico helps emerging screenwriters develop their skills, work on individual scripts, learn approaches to navigating the film and TV industry, and reach new levels of confidence in their storytelling and potential career paths.

“We’ve collaborated with Stowe for the past three years, and the program has been incredibly successful,” Amber Dodson, Director of the New Mexico Film Office, stated. “Artists consistently report feeling significantly more advanced in their work after participating. This program is a springboard in teaching how to write a script, produce the project, and finish it in New Mexico, fostering our goal of New Mexico becoming a holistic film and TV ecosystem.”

2023 Fellow Emilie Blythe McDonald recently won the Sun Valley Film Festival’s 2024 High Scribe Competition with the project she developed through New Voices • New Mexico. She said, “I am so grateful to have had the chance to participate in the New Voices • New Mexico lab. The mentors’ expertise, artistry, and wisdom were incredibly meaningful.”

The three-part program is delivered over six months and offers participants rare, direct access to industry professionals currently working at a high level in film and television through roundtable pitching sessions, in-conversation interviews, Q&A panels, and one-on-one script note and development meetings. The 2024 series begins in June with the Online Writing Program, a four-month, weekly, long-form program led by Stowe Story Labs Co-founder and screenwriter David Pope. These sessions are comprised of structured writing time, one-on-one meetings, and technique training on building stories from a character-centered approach.

In July, artists will participate in the Online Narrative Lab, a three-day program focused on imparting foundational industry knowledge. The curriculum includes skills seminars and instructional content on story structure, character, and theme; creating and practicing a pitching strategy with industry mentors; elements of creative production such as casting, adaptation, finance, and distribution; and peer-to-peer script note sessions. The lab is facilitated by David Rocchio, Stowe Story Labs Founder & Director, and Emmy-nominated filmmaker.

Director Bertha Bay-Sa Pan mentored at the 2022 and 2023 New Voices • New Mexico

programs. She said, “Though all the Stowe Story Labs programs I’ve had the honor to mentor at have been inspiringly fruitful, New Voices • New Mexico’s unique sense of communal love amongst the participants, while vastly diverse in age range and project genres, their shared approach to the craft with curiosity and wonderment, their pure-hearted motivation to shape stories that shed light, bring healing and spread hope, all felt extra special and educational even to the mentors.”

Following the Lab and online writing program, participants will share their well-developed script with three different industry mentors in one-on-one script note meetings at the 4-day, in-person November Writers’ Retreat in Santa Fe, New Mexico. In addition to the individualized mentor meetings, Retreat programming includes in-conversation interviews and Q&A panels with mentors and other established filmmakers, peer-to-peer script note sessions, writing exercises, and instructional content, shared meals and social time with peers and mentors (designed to help form professional relationships in this collaborative industry), and project advancement planning. This year, the Retreat will include an optional site visit to an active production or film set for writers to learn more about how their words translate to screen.

“Stowe is much more than a one-time retreat; you join a community of storytellers all throughout the country. I’ve been fortunate to connect with writers from New York and Los Angeles,” said Enrique Cruz Torres, 2022 New Voices • New Mexico Fellow.

By the end of the program, participants will have a market-ready project and a strong sample of their voice, which can be used to secure representation and apply for professional writing jobs. They will be admitted into Stowe’s alumni network of more than 1,000 emerging artists, which offers an array of ongoing programming, one-on-one mentoring, networking opportunities, industry information, chances to collaborate, and community activities at Stowe events, festivals, and markets throughout North America, the UK, and EU.

“We are so proud to be partnering with the New Mexico Film Office to offer this program. New Mexico’s dedication to developing its industry and nurturing its talent base is inspiring, and we love being a part of it,” David Rocchio, Founder and Director of Stowe Story Labs, said.

Through this competitive application process, applicants are asked to present a compelling story idea and demonstrate that they have the talent and skill to turn that idea into a commercially viable film or TV project. There are no program, lodging, or meal fees if selected to participate. Selected participants are only responsible for travel expenses to the in-person Writers’ Retreat. There is a \$10 application fee to cover application review. Eligible applicants must be current residents of New Mexico or New Mexican students studying out-of-state.

Interested artists may apply [here](#) by the April 8 deadline.

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## **ABOUT STOWE STORY LABS**

Stowe Story Labs is a Vermont-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 2013. Stowe provides development support and skills training for top emerging screenwriters, filmmakers, and creative producers through labs, retreats, ongoing mentorship, fiscal sponsorship, a festival, and market experience programs. Their mission is to help artists develop skills and projects and through that work to bend the world a bit through story.

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*The New Mexico Film Office (NMFO), a division of the Economic Development Department, works to ensure the longevity and progress of New Mexico’s film incentive, grow the film, television, and digital media industry, and expand entertainment economic opportunities for New Mexico businesses and residents.*

- Named one of [Deadline’s Hot Spots](#).
- Three New Mexico cities were selected as [“2023 Best Place to Live and Work as a Moviemaker”](#) by *MovieMaker Magazine*.

To learn more, visit [nmfilm.com](http://nmfilm.com).

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A division of the [New Mexico Economic Development Department](#)



*The Economic Development Department's Mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.*



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