



Media Contact:
Donald Harrison
(734) 995-5356
PR@aafilmfest.org

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Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation Grant to Ann Arbor Film Festival Supports Technology Upgrades

Strategic database improvements will increase essential communication with filmmakers

Ann Arbor, June 18, 2008 – The Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (AAACF) has given a one-time grant of \$4,500 to the Ann Arbor Film Festival (AAFF) for a strategic redesign of the festival's database system.

The AAFF is one of the world's most renowned film festivals for independent filmmakers. The 46th festival, held last March, received more than 2,000 submissions from 30 countries. The new AAACF grant will drive key upgrades to create a more customized, integrated and sophisticated database system for the festival.

The changes will:

- Increase the efficient processing of the high volume of film submissions to the festival
- Enhance the AAFF's capacity to provide better and more timely information to filmmakers submitting films to the festival

Starting in 2009, the AAFF will increase the service it provides to filmmakers by offering direct screener feedback for all submitted films. The goal of this new initiative is to help improve the quality of filmmakers' work and future film projects. Only a handful of other film festivals offer direct screener feedback to all submitting filmmakers.

"We are strongly committed to supporting independent filmmakers. Our ability to provide direct feedback is critical in building relationships and helping filmmakers improve at their craft," said Donald Harrison, newly appointed AAFF Executive Director. "The Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation's timely support to the festival will make a significant impact on the quality of service we provide filmmakers."

The AAFF will work with a local database consultant and in-house technical staff to complete the project by early September, 2008.

About the Ann Arbor Film Festival

The Ann Arbor Film Festival is internationally recognized as a premiere showcase for creative, inspiring, and influential films of all types: avant-garde and experimental, story-based narratives, documentaries, and animation. As the longest-running film festival of its kind in North America, the AAFF is steeped in a rich tradition of ground-breaking cinema. Thousands of influential filmmakers have showcased early work at the AAFF, including luminaries such as Kenneth Anger, Agnes Varda, Andy Warhol, Yoko Ono, Gus Van Sant, Lawrence Kasdan, and George Lucas. The 47th Ann Arbor Film Festival takes place March 24 – 29th, 2009.