So You Want to Film a Project?*

circa 2017, by nalezyty
This guide is to help you figure out all the steps of putting together a project, from idea conception to getting it published on our YouTube channel.
Also, it's long because I put in ridiculous amounts of whatever detail I could think of. It's not so hard, I promise! - Cathleen

START HERE

The first thing you're going to want to do is make sure you have Document Outlines turned on (Tools > Document Outline) because that's going to help you move around in this guide. It's also recommended you have a copy of the ['Checklist'](#) handy because it's a shorter version of all the steps.

The Idea

First, you're going to have to have some sort of idea. It's OK if your idea is just a tiny flicker of a shadow right now, but you need to have *something* to start with. Don't have one? Throw stuff at the wall and see what sticks. Sorry, not going to be able to help you much here other than that.

The next thing you need to know is if it is a *scripted* or *non-scripted* piece. A non-scripted piece would be where you're just filming something being put on by someone else (eg. a play or performance). *ANYTHING* else is scripted. If you have to plan any part of it, then you should treat it as a scripted idea, even if you're not actually writing a script.

Proceed to > [Non-Scripted](#) or > [Scripted](#)

Non-Scripted Idea

Get in touch with the people who are putting on what you're filming. Make sure you get specific information about event date and time, location, rehearsals, AND at least two contacts. (One of the MUST be someone who you can reach if you need to on the day of the event, the other can be anyone else or even just the group's exec email).

Go to > [Recruiting](#)

Scripted Idea

> If your idea is fully fleshed out go to > [Recruiting](#)
> If you need some help with your idea go to > [Brainstorm](#)

Brainstorm

Okay, you have an idea, but it's not fully fleshed out yet. That's OK! It's why we work together. There's a couple of things you can do to brainstorm with other people. Feel free to pick the one that works best for you or do them all!

- **Workshop**: email studentcable-exec@mit.edu letting us know you have an idea that you'd like to workshop. We'll put it on the calendar and set aside some time during an upcoming meeting devoted to brainstorming and throwing out ideas for your project.
- **Small Group Workshop:** email studentcable@mit.edu with a short description of your idea and ask for other people who are interested to let you know. You can schedule your own workshops or work via an email thread.
- **Digital Workshop**: create a Google Doc and email the link out to studentcable@mit.edu inviting others to write down their ideas. Don't forget to give editing permissions on the link! It's a good start to have a general explanation of the project on their first and areas where you're most looking for help. It also makes it a lot easier if the front of the page has everyone 'sign-in' with their (Name, Email address) highlighted/in a different color so it's easy to see what each person added.

Once you've done this, go to > Recruiting

Script Writing

I'll put in some resources about scriptwriting here at some point. If you're having a traditional script, you obviously need to write that. Even if you're not 'scripting' it, there a a number of elements to make sure you've got written out.

- How many scenes are there?
  - Needs for each scene:
    - Who (actors / interviewees / etc)
    - What (props)
    - Where
- List of b-roll footage you want to capture
- Questions for interviews

Proceed to > Management

Recruiting

Have a list of people / roles that you'll need help with. Some ideas can include: Videographer, Editor, Special Effects Editor, Actors, Voice-over Actors, Production Crew / Gaffers, Script Writers, Publicity, Artists, Prop Makers, etc. These may change over time as your idea develops, so just let people know that!

Add your idea to the [Ideas/Projects](#) document AND email out to studentcable@mit.edu with a brief description of your project and what roles you're looking for.

Special: Actors

If you're looking for actors or other non-tech personnel, you'll also want to reach out beyond Student Cable. Try emailing the different acting groups on campus and sending out dormspam.

For scripted pieces, go to > [Script Writing](#)
For non-scripted pieces, go to > [Management](#)

Management

An important part of any project is to keep it managed and organized. Feel free to do this in whatever way works best for you, but it's important to keep track of WHO is responsible for WHAT and WHEN their deadline is. Keep in touch with the different people in your group so you know what the progress of things are and there aren't any surprises. You might also consider sending out quick emails to Student Cable about how the project is going along!

CHECK IN! AT THIS POINT, YOU SHOULD HAVE AN IDEA OF WHAT YOU'RE FILMING, WHEN YOU'RE FILMING, AND WHO IS FILMING.

For non-scripted work, go to > [Rehearsals](#)
For scripted work, go to > [Space Reservations](#)

Space Reservations

Hopefully by now, you have an idea of what kind of spaces you'll need. Many places on campus do not need a special reservation, but if you want to use a classroom or CAC space, you will have to make reservations. Use https://classrooms.mit.edu/ to look at pictures of rooms and reserve them. If you don't have reservation permissions, email studentcable-exec@mit.edu with all the details and they'll make it for you. If you need a CAC space, you'll have to email studentcable-exec@mit.edu .

Go to > [Rehearsals](#)

Rehearsals

You should either schedule rehearsals yourself, or attend rehearsals of the group you're filming. It's best if you can rehearse in the same area as where you plan to film, but that's not always possible. If you're doing something without people / with genuine reactions (ie interviews), your 'rehearsal' will be scoping out the location you'd like to use.

It's good for tech crew to attend final / dress rehearsals as well as the director. It will help you get a sense of the space, any preparations you'll need to make ("bring lights" or "bring a black curtain to hide that window") on the day of the actual shoot. It's also a good time for the director to mention any special shots they want to get.

Go to > Schedule Filming Dates

Schedule Filming Dates

If you're filming an event, congrats, this should be super easy! Make sure everyone knows and is on the same page about the date and times to show up.

If you have more than one day of filming, have a plan for where/what you'll be shooting each day. Also have a backup in case something doesn't work or if you finish early -- it'll save you time! If you're scheduling your own dates, here are some useful tools you can use to find times that work for everyone.

doodle.com & whenisgood.net

Proceed to > Everything Else

Everything Else

At this point, it doesn't much matter *what* you're filming, so I'll stop putting little direction markers in.

Reserve Equipment

Check out our equipment list and choose what you want to use. Don't forget to consider lighting or additional audio equipment if you want it. Email studentcable-exec@mit.edu with your kerberos and the list of things you want to check out. Arrange a time to get the equipment from the office AND a time to return the equipment to the office.

Film

See our Shooting Checklists if you want a super quick primer. Otherwise, fairly self explanatory.

Immediately (or soon thereafter) Filming

Upload all the footage on to the NAS (network storage). Use a Mac computer to do this, such as the laptop that lives in our office. This can only be done if you're on the campus network.

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Finder > Go > Connect to server > nfs://sctv-nas.mit.edu/Multimedia
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Make a new folder in the format `YYYY-MM-DD Title of Project`

For multiple days, make a new folder each day with the date you filmed and the same title. Copy all of the footage from the SD cards to that folder. Once you're sure the footage has been transferred, please clear the SD card for the next person. If you'd like, you're welcome to make your own personal backup.

Please put the equipment back in the office nicely. Each piece of equipment has a location (there's yellow or white tape labels on the racks!). Leave at least one SD card and one (charged) battery with each camera. Put used batteries on their respective chargers.

Edit

Again, feel free to do this however you would like. Make sure everyone is on the same page though (including which version of the software you're using).

There are mac clusters in 56 and a dedicated media work cluster in 26-139. Use your ID to access both. You can also use the student cable laptop, BUT it has a different update than the FCP X on the lab computers, so be aware of that.

Publish

Upload your finished, rendered project to the NAS and place it in the first folder for the project. For FCP X, we render at Master File > H26 > .

Email Student Cable with:
- The name and where the file is located
- The title to go up on YouTube
- The description to accompany your video
- If you want the video to go out on a specific date

Someone will upload it to the YouTube channel and give you the link.

congratulations! you filmed a project!

And above all else, remember that if you need help, just ASK! You're always welcome to email studentcable@mit.edu at any time for any question.

Checklist

- ❏ Set Up
    - ❏ Brainstorm Idea
    - ❏ Write script
- ❏ Coordination
    - ❏ Find actors
    - ❏ Create / find props
    - ❏ Find tech crew
- ❏ Rehearse
    - ❏ Schedule / attend rehearsals
- ❏ CHECK IN: make sure everyone knows their role(s) and all work is being done
- ❏ Decide on Filming Date(s)
    - ❏ Divide scenes up for each filming date
    - ❏ Reservation of space(s)
- ❏ Reserve Equipment
    - ❏ Make arrangements to check them out
- ❏ Film
    - ❏ Upload footage to the NAS after each shoot
    - ❏ Return equipment between shoots
- ❏ Post - Production
    - ❏ Divide editing work up with crew
    - ❏ Edit
- ❏ Publish
    - ❏ Upload finished file to NAS
    - ❏ Write YouTube title and description
    - ❏ Ask officers to publish on YouTube
    - ❏ Send out happy emails to Student Cable and everyone you know