



Lights! Camera! Action! For Climate Solutions

**Tips for Creating and Showing
Your Climate Solutions Film**

Creating your film:

More light!

Modern cameras are much better, but generally the more light you can put on a subject, the better your image quality will be.

Audio quality:

Audio quality is one invisible thing that can make a big difference. People generally don't notice good audio, but they will notice bad audio! Generally, the closer you can get a microphone to your speaker the better. If you can plug an external microphone into your camera that is a good option. Here are some inexpensive external microphones:

<https://littlecornerofamusiclover.com/best-lavalier-microphones/>

If your camera cannot accept an external microphone another option is to use an audio recorder and separately sync the two audio tracks. Used Zoom H1s are available on eBay for under \$50. Old versions of the recorders should still offer great quality.

Here are instructions for syncing audio: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hc5tHUa1Uu4>

Editing;

Less is more! People say great things, but they also drag on, repeat themselves, or repeat what others have said. Be prepared to cut ruthlessly. I remember hearing in film class that documentary filmmakers used to shoot 40 hours of footage for a 1-hour documentary. Don't be afraid to cut.

Illustrate with pictures or video!

Audiences get bored watching people speak. Superimposing pictures or video over the voices of your speakers helps to illustrate what they are saying and keeps the audience engaged. There are many tutorials on how to do this on different platforms. YouTube is your friend here.

There are many tutorials available, here are a few I found with some quick searching:

Tutorial for iMovie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuN9DCOuG90>

Tutorial for iPhone: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPoNkk3TYzE>

Tutorial for YouTube Studio: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q16UI8XcJXo>

The most basic type of effect, which iMovie calls "cutaway" is what I use most often. If you have a nice image there's no reason to overcomplicate what you put on the screen. It also allows you to hide edit points if you trim ums, ahhs, stutters and stumbles that your speakers make.

Where to get images:

One place to find images without copyright restrictions is Flickr.com. While most images on Flickr have some sort of restriction, many do not. To find the freely available images using a desktop browser, go to flickr.com and use the search bar at the top of the page. Once you have made an initial search, refine your search using the menus in the top left.

- “No known copyright restrictions” and “US government works” are the least restricted options.
- Images released with a Creative Commons “Attribution” license can be used if you follow their attribution guidelines.
- If your film is non-commercial then materials with a Creative Commons “Non Commercial” license are an option as well.
- Creative Commons “Share Alike” licenses are a little more complicated. If you are including other materials which are more restricted (such as copyrighted works) this may prevent you from releasing your film under a “Share Alike” license yourself. But depending on the materials you are working with, you may be able to use materials with a “Share Alike” license as well. Creative Commons Licenses information can be found at creativecommons.org/licenses

Pixabay.com is another site with free photos. Search this site in a similar way to Flickr.

Vectorstock has lots of graphic images (the logos and some of the graphics in *Maine Roadtrip to the Future* came from this online graphics company.) Most images cost \$1, but you create an account and pay \$50 that entitles you to download about 50 images. You might find a partner organization or business that would split the cost for the graphics if you only need a few. vectorstock.com

Music:

In addition to watching your movie, viewers are also listening to the music. The right music can make a big difference, and it is possible to get good music for free.

The Musopen kickstarter project (<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/Musopen/record-and-release-free-music-without-copyrights>) made a library of copyright-free music available on the web.

Here are two organizations providing free music:

musopen.org/music/
freemusicarchive.org/

Pond 5 is a commercial website, but they do have free material at: www.pond5.com/free

These tips can get you started, but on the web and in your community you may well find other resources. We would love to add to this toolkit and welcome helpful resources you come across as you are creating your film.

Showing your film:

Many groups in your community will be interested to see your film. Here are some suggested venues and organizations you might contact for a film presentation. If there is a particularly unique solution or solutionary you have interviewed for the film, invite them to come and add to the discussion and Q & A after the film. For public screenings, be sure to create a poster and press release, and spread the word through social media.

- ❖ Public library
- ❖ Community Access TV/Public TV station
- ❖ Schools and Colleges
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Civic organizations (Rotary Club, Lions Club, Kiwanis...they are often looking for lunchtime speakers...a short film or clips from your film with some commentary could be of interest to them)
- ❖ Local movie theater
- ❖ Environmental organizations
- ❖ Town Council Meeting
- ❖ Planning Board
- ❖ Peace and Justice/social justice groups
- ❖ Chamber of Commerce

Put your film up on vimeo or YouTube.

Be sure to invite local state legislators to any public screenings you do. It is important for them to see evidence of the transition to a resilient and just future taking place in the community and be encouraged to introduce/support public policies that enhance the solutions efforts.

Contact Down to Earth Storytelling so that we can link your film through our website. We are in the process of creating an interactive map (initially Maine) where film projects will be linked. We think this will inspire others to get on board as they see the climate solutions community expanding across a state and region.