Production

Key Production Roles

Executive Producer
The Executive Producer oversees the project and is often involved in the initial stages and pre production rather than the day to day running of the shoot during production.

Producer
The Producer is responsible for all aspects of pulling a project together including, finance, legals, insurance, booking crew and consulting with the Director for cast, scheduling, distribution and marketing decisions.

Director
The Director is one of the principal creative artists on a project and usually the driving artistic source behind the filming process. A Director communicates to the actors and crew the way that they would like a particular scene played. Their duties might also include casting, script editing, shot selection, shot composition, and editing. Typically, a Director has complete artistic control over all aspects of a film.

Writer
The writer sculpts the raw material of a story into a screenplay. The script may come from the writer’s own idea, or may be an adaptation of an existing play or novel. The writer may have varying influence in the interpretation of the script depending on their relationship with the director.

Script Editor
A Script Editor specialises in reviewing and changing a script based on input from the director and producer.

Composer
The Composer is responsible for creating the soundtrack for the film. Music can be essential to create a mood, evoke an emotion or enhance the story. The Composer may create a new score or source music that will work well with the film script.

Crew Roles & Responsibilities

Production Manager
The Production Manager is the producer’s delegate and is closely concerned with pre production and production. Usually based in an office, they take care of all the arrangements for the shoot including booking equipment, negotiating travel arrangements, watching the cash flow, etc.

First Assistant Director
The First Assistant Director is the Producer’s representative on the set. They are responsible for scheduling, safety and keeping the shoot on time. They
assist the Director by mediating between crewmembers and running a smooth shoot. They are also responsible for writing and amending daily call sheets and calling the day.

**Second Assistant Director**
The Second Assistant Director works with the First Assistant Director and their main duties include overseeing the movements of the cast.

**Third Assistant Director**
The Third Assistant Director is primarily responsible for directing the action and placement of extras.

**Script Supervisor/Continuity**
The Script Supervisor/Continuity person is responsible for making sure that various shots will cut together and that the details in the frame are the same for each take. They are also responsible for the timing of the script, scenes and shots. This ensures that there is enough tape or stock and that the film will reach its target length. On a low budget shoot, the continuity person may also log the shots being filmed so that the editor can see how many takes of a shot there were. When logging the continuity person also marks up the slate so that the tape and log sheet match.

**Runner**
The Runner is responsible for transporting people, scripts, call sheets, equipment, tapes etc. to and from various locations and departments. They can be required to make coffee, run errands, pick up cast and crew and do anything else that needs to be done.

**Unit Manager**
The Unit Manager is responsible for managing and supplying the unit while shooting. Before the shoot the Unit Manager needs adequate time to survey all the locations and purchase the unit supplies. They also need a day at the end of the shoot to return the gear and tidy up. On small projects the Second or Third Assistant Director may be able to cover this role.

**Safety Officer**
The Safety Officer is responsible for all occupational health and safety issues on the set. They may prepare a safety report for insurance purposes before shooting commences as well as overseeing all stunts or potentially hazardous activities that occur during shooting.

**Director of Photography (DOP)**
The Director of Photography is in charge of the Camera and Lighting crews. The DOP typically selects the film stock, lens, filters, etc. to realise the scene in accordance with the intentions of the Director. The Director will usually convey to the DOP what they want from a scene visually and then rely on the DOP to achieve that effect. The DOP is sometimes also the Camera Operator.

**Camera Operator**
The Camera Operator works with the DOP to devise camera set-ups and camera tracking moves to best interpret the Director’s vision. When shooting the film, the Camera Operator is responsible for physically operating the camera and for the composition and framing of each shot.

**Camera Assistant**
The role of the Camera Assistant varies depending on the size of the shoot. A Camera Assistant may be responsible for carrying and setting up the gear, pulling focus, clapper loading and marking tapes. On low budget shoots the Camera Assistant may also be the Grip.

**Sound Recordist**
The Sound Recordist is in charge of the Sound Department on the set and is responsible for the process of recording all sync dialog and sync sound effects in a scene. The Sound Recordist has a number of duties: selection and operation of the microphones, and recording equipment used on the set, directing the Boom Operator, combining the sound of multiple microphones used to capture dialog and effects on a set, recording sound ambiance and room tone for all scenes, and wild track that will aid the Editor in matching the different sound takes in a scene for smooth sound transitions.

**Boom Operator**
The Boom Operator is an assistant to the Sound Recordist and part of the Sound Department. The principle responsibility of the Boom Operator is microphone placement, sometimes using a “boom pole” with the microphone attached to the end. They also place lapel or radio microphones on actors when necessary.

**Gaffer**
The Gaffer is the head of the Lighting Department and is responsible for the design and execution of the lighting plan for a production. The Gaffer reports to the DOP and will usually have an assistant and a crew of rigging electricians. In Australia a gaffer is usually expected to own a truck complete with the most basic lighting equipment and then rent extra lighting equipment as needed.

**Best Boy**
The Best Boy is an assistant to the Gaffer and part of the Lighting Department. On short or low budget films the lighting team often only consists of a Gaffer and Best Boy. They are responsible for the lighting of the set or location and take direction from the DOP.

**Grip**
The Grip is responsible for camera mounting and support, generally anything excluding a basic tripod. Grips operate cranes, dollies and platforms as directed by the DOP.

**Production Designer**
The Production Designer is responsible for designing the overall visual appearance of a film.

**Art Director**
The Art Director works with a concept developed by the Production Designer. They make the best use of the budget to achieve the desired look of a production and oversee the artists and craftspeople that build the sets.

**Property Buyer**
The Props Buyer is responsible for buying, acquiring, and/or manufacturing any props needed for a production. They are also in charge of all aspects of prop use on the set and, in conjunction with the Script Supervisor/Continuity person, responsible for maintaining set continuity. On low, or no budget projects, the Props Buyer may also place and maintain the onset props.

**Set Dresser**
The Set Dresser is responsible for decorating the set with all furnishings, drapery, interior plants and anything seen on indoor or outdoor sets.

**Costume Designer**
The Costume Designer is responsible for designing or sourcing the costumes for a film. On small productions the Costume Designer may also be in charge of preparing the costumes for use and handling the costumes during shooting.

**Make-up Artist**
The Make-up Artist is responsible for applying cosmetic or prosthetic make-up to the skin of an actor to help create the character.

**Stills Photographer**
A Stills Photographer is responsible for photographing the action often alongside the camera, to be used in publicising the film.

**Editor**
The Editor is responsible for reconstructing the sequence of events depicted in the script by cutting the project together in consultation with the Director and/or Producer. On larger projects there is usually a Vision Editor and a Sound Editor.

**Foley Artist**
The Foley Artist is the person who creates and records many of a film’s sound effects. Sound effects are rarely recorded at the same time as the dialogue so the Foley Artist will listen to the dialogue track for incidental sounds, such as footsteps and then record them onto a new track in sync with the action onscreen. The Foley Artist also adds sounds that may not exist at all on the original track: for example thumping watermelons or cracking bamboo to create the sounds of a fight.