

CREW DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

In Partnership With Illumin8 Academy

INVESTOR & STRATEGIC PARTNER PROSPECTUS

Building Crews Who Build Shows

Diaspora-Driven • Local Crews • Global Standards

Program Launch: April 24, 2026

Ghana, West Africa

www.cdi-global.org

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1. Executive Summary

The Crew Development Institute (CDI), in partnership with Illumin8 Academy, is launching a workforce enablement initiative focused on strengthening live events infrastructure across Africa—beginning in Ghana and expanding throughout West Africa and additional regions.

Africa's live entertainment market continues to grow through international touring artists, major festivals, broadcast productions, and global cultural initiatives. Despite strong demand, promoters and technical partners remain cautious due to labor readiness gaps, inconsistent safety culture, and operational risk.

CDI exists to address this challenge by liberating crews through professional training, real-world production exposure, and direct pathways into live event work. The objective is market confidence that enables global partners to deploy shows across Africa with dependable local labor.

100+ Stagehands/Quarter	60-120 Specialists/Quarter	2 Weeks Quarterly Deployment	6 Senior Trainers
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2. The Market Opportunity

The Problem

Africa's entertainment industry is booming, but the technical infrastructure and trained crews haven't kept pace. International productions fly in crews at massive cost while local talent remains untrained and underemployed.

85% of African live events rely on imported technical crews	\$2B+ annual production spending leaves the continent	0 formal production training programs in most West African markets
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Why Africa

- Untapped Market Potential: Africa's live entertainment market is the fastest-growing globally, with major artists and brands seeking entry points.
- Ghana as Launch Market: The December in GH movement proves demand. Ghana offers stability, English-speaking workforce, and government support.
- Continental Scalability: Training model designed to replicate across Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and emerging markets.
- Diaspora Connection: Strong ties between African diaspora and homeland create natural bridge for knowledge transfer and investment.

\$5B+ African live entertainment market by 2030	13% Annual growth rate
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3. The CDI Solution

CDI is not a traditional school. CDI is workforce infrastructure.

Our model delivers free, high-volume stagehand training combined with specialized technical tracks across all core production departments. By liberating crews with knowledge, safety awareness, and real show experience, CDI builds a dependable labor pool that promoters, festivals, and vendors can trust.

Our approach combines hands-on learning, real-world production experience, and direct pathways into live event work. Our mission is simple: liberate local crews through knowledge, elevate productions through expertise, and create sustainable careers in live entertainment across Africa.

Three-Pillar Approach

Learning Arm	Technical Advisory	Production Arm
School programs and hands-on training for local technicians in lighting, audio, video, rigging, and production management.	On-site and virtual production management, implementing training to create world-class shows with industry mentorship.	Direct production support during transition period, phasing out as local teams become self-sufficient.

4. Training Model

Tier 1: Stagehand Fundamentals

2-Day Free Program | 100 Trainees Per Quarter

Load-in/load-out procedures, stage etiquette, power fundamentals, cable handling, safety awareness, and department workflow orientation.

Tier 2: Specialized Technical Tracks

3-Day Intensives | 15-30 Participants Per Track

AUDIO	LIGHTING	VIDEO	RIGGING
FOH/Monitor mixing, system design, RF coordination	GrandMA3 programming, fixture rigging, show design and implementation	LED wall systems, camera ops, Resolume media servers operation	Rigging safety, load-in logistics, operational awareness

Real-World Application

Each deployment concludes with a live show crewed by trained stagehands under professional supervision. This may include a concert, festival stage, or live activation delivered in partnership with promoters and artists. This creates real accountability and immediate validation of training outcomes.

5. Deployment Structure

CDI operates on a 2-week quarterly deployment model:

Days 1-2	Stagehand Fundamentals
Days 3-5	Audio Track
Days 6-8	Lighting Track
Days 9-11	Video Track
Days 12-14	Rigging Track + Partner Meetings + Equipment Demos + Show Prep

Staffing and Operations

- International Core Team: 6 senior professionals from the United States covering stagehand training, audio, lighting, video, rigging, and production coordination. Each contracted at \$950/day with lodging and \$100 per diem.
- Local Operations: Program director, production coordinator, transportation coordinator, and 10 production assistants.
- Media Team: Publicist, social media manager, 2 photographers, and 2 videographers.
- Food & Hospitality: Breakfast and lunch provided for all trainees and staff on training days. International team receives full meal service.

6. Leadership Team

50+ years combined experience in concert touring, television, film, and live event production

Erica D. Hayes

Co-Founder & Executive Director | Lighting Designer | Educator

15+ years across concert touring, television, and film. Designed for Amaarae, Fantasia, Sombr, The Isley Brothers, Anita Baker, Ledisi, and more. IATSE 728 member and ICLS Associate. Credits include HBO's Westworld, Nickelodeon, ABC, and House Party. Professor at California Baptist University.

Blake Brady

Producer | Operations Leader

10+ years specializing in technical direction, stage management, and live event production for large-scale events and touring. Hands-on expertise in LED wall systems, camera operations, and lighting. Known for decisive problem-solving and building sustainable production infrastructure.

Keith Bernard

Lighting Designer | Visual Director

Experience spanning film, television, high-profile national events, and concert touring for top-tier artists across hip-hop, R&B, and soul. Production lead on nationally recognized events. Career began in music videos and independent film. Specializes in cutting-edge, visually driven lighting looks.

7. Equipment Package

A complete shipping container of professional-grade production equipment valued at \$150,000 - \$300,000:

Lighting Package	Infrastructure	Audio Package
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile Moving Lights: 20-100 units • LED Fresnels: 50-100 units • Command Wings / OnPC: 5-10 units • Vectorworks Licenses: 5-10 seats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EcoFlow Generators: 100-200 units • StarLink WiFi Access Points • Stage Boxes • Power Distribution 	<p>Package in development with audio engineering specialists.</p> <p>Focus on stage boxes and essential front-of-house equipment.</p>

Potential Vendor Partners: Elation, GLP, MA Lighting, Vectorworks

8. University Partnerships

CDI maintains academic partnerships to develop a global program with an African focus:

- California Baptist University (USA) - Academic curriculum development and faculty support
- University of Ghana - Local academic partnership and student pipeline
- University of Nigeria - Regional expansion and cross-border collaboration

Our curriculum emphasizes hands-on learning, real-world application, and professional mentorship from industry veterans.

9. Partner Value Proposition

Dependable Trained Labor Pool	Reduced Touring Labor Costs	Improved Safety Culture	Faster Load-Ins	Increased Deployment Confidence
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What Partners Receive

- Access to professional equipment for training and productions
- Trained local workforce available for immediate deployment
- Technical advisory support from experienced US professionals
- Connection to US entertainment industry network
- University partnership and curriculum collaboration opportunities
- Brand visibility and CSR alignment with workforce development

This initiative is not revenue-driven. The return is risk reduction, operational efficiency, and market enablement.

10. Investment Summary

Per Quarter Investment

Category	Estimated Cost
International Trainer Day Rates	\$79,800
Flights	\$9,000 – \$12,000
Lodging	\$8,400 – \$12,600
Per Diems	\$8,400
Local Staff & Operations	\$12,000 – \$18,000
Catering	\$12,000 – \$18,000
Ground Transportation	\$2,000 – \$3,000
Venue	\$3,000 – \$5,000
Materials & Supplies	\$1,500 – \$2,500
Media & Documentation	\$2,000 – \$3,000
Contingency	\$5,000 – \$7,000
TOTAL QUARTERLY INVESTMENT	\$150,000 – \$160,000

This investment represents the cost of underwriting workforce confidence rather than training tuition. For promoters and festivals, the cost of one properly budgeted show per quarter can fully subsidize the workforce supporting the market for an entire season.

11. 2026 Roadmap

Jan – Feb 2026	Finalize equipment list, secure vendor partnerships, establish 501(c)(3)
April 24, 2026	CDI PROGRAM LAUNCH – Training programs begin
Mar – May 2026	Equipment procurement, container preparation
June 2026	Container ships from Baltimore (~3 weeks transit)
Jul – Sep 2026	Container arrival, equipment setup, first production support
Oct – Dec 2026	Local teams lead shows during December in GH season, evaluate & expand

2027 Vision

Train 100 local crew members per quarter to prepare the market for major tours and festivals. Expand to Lagos or Nairobi. Establish alumni network and develop the “train-the-trainer” program for sustainable local capacity building.

12. The Ask

What we need to launch CDI in Ghana:

1. Local Partnership A Ghanaian production company or event organizer to co-sign this initiative, provide local expertise, and navigate customs/logistics.	2. Equipment Storage Secure warehouse space in Accra to house the equipment container.
3. Training Venue A space to host training sessions, workshops, and classes for local technicians.	4. Government Endorsement Letter of support from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts.
5. Event Commitments 2-3 confirmed events in Q4 2026 where trained crews can apply their skills.	6. Training Candidates 10-20 motivated local technicians committed to the training program.

13. Contact Information

CREW DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Building Crews Who Build Shows

Erica D. Hayes

Co-Founder & Executive Director
Erica@EndangeredLX.com

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LET'S BUILD THIS TOGETHER

April 2026 Program Launch	June 2026 Container Ships	Q4 2026 First Local-Led Events	2027+ Sustainable Operations
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