



REWRITE THE FUTURE

NRDC Helps Hollywood Take On the Climate Crisis



Photograph by MAILE MASON PHOTOGRAPHY

BY NOW, THERE SHOULD BE NO DOUBT that the climate crisis is urgent and dire. So why aren't we rising up and demanding action?

In part, because we're telling ourselves the wrong stories about climate. That it's *not* urgent or even real. That we have plenty of time. That it's too expensive or too big to fix. That it's already too late. And other fairy tales that invite complacency.

We need a new climate narrative. A narrative that will help us face reality, confront our fear and grief, imagine possible futures, and inspire us to action.

We need Hollywood to help us rewrite the future.

"IT'S REALLY EXCITING WHEN STORYTELLING CAN RESONATE WITH THE GREATEST ISSUE OF OUR TIME. THERE CAN BE NO GREATER FOCUS THAN SAVING OUR HOME."

—Laura Dern, *Variety*, "[Is Hollywood Doing Enough to Fight the Climate Crisis?](#)"

THE POWER OF STORIES

SOCIAL SCIENTISTS TELL US that [entertainment can be a more effective way to change people's attitudes](#) and behavior than factual communication.

Entertainment reaches across demographics and national borders, and when a good story carries us away, we effortlessly absorb new information, identify with characters who may be very different from us, drop our defenses and identity group biases, and open our minds and hearts to new ways of thinking and living.

Over the decades, the entertainment community has focused its creative power on other social problems—the Vietnam War, racism, women in the workplace, the AIDS epidemic, marriage equality—and [helped bring about cultural transformations](#). But Hollywood hasn't told many stories about climate change.

Yes, there have been barriers to climate storytelling in the past, but they're falling now. The climate crisis is no longer abstract and remote—it is at our door. The power that network advertisers once had to influence content is waning with the rapid growth of subscription-based entertainment. Climate stories needn't be preachy, boring, or politically divisive, and the narrative possibilities go far beyond the clichés of disaster and apocalypse.

NRDC's **Rewrite the Future** initiative aims to enlist the power of storytelling to help us turn the climate crisis around. We offer a range of support to encourage more, varied, and compelling climate



Photograph by JOSE MANDOJANA/DOCVITAE

"Hollywood Takes on the Climate Crisis" industry event featuring a panel of TV writer/producers.

stories in entertainment, including industry dialogue and networking, climate story consultation, and help with project development.

Storytellers have a vital role to play in shaping our cultural narrative about climate. And a new narrative is necessary if we're going to meet the challenges ahead. Together, Hollywood's storytellers can help save the world.

CLIMATE STORYTELLING IS MORE THAN DISASTER MOVIES

THE CLIMATE CRISIS and its solutions offer endless story opportunities across genres, from comedy to drama, recent history to speculative futures, and everything in between.

- Realistic depictions of people dealing with climate anxiety, like this season's [“End of the World” episode of *Big Little Lies*](#).
- Absurdist comedy, like the recent [“The Gang Solves Global Warming” episode of *It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia*](#).
- How climate influences basic personal decisions, such as [whether to have children](#), [where and how to live](#), and [what kind of work to do](#).
- Stories that personalize the impacts of climate-related disasters on people around the world.
- Emotionally engaging stories that show people facing, feeling, and moving through their fear and helplessness to become part of the solution in small and large ways.
- Characters based on the heroines and heroes who are leading communities to better futures, innovating solutions, and inspiring others to act.
- Audiences need to see and feel what our future will be like if we do nothing—the hideous escalation of climate-related crises, the runaway climate feedback loops that could very well destroy us. ([The Day After Tomorrow](#), [Years and Years](#))
- Most important, we need visual storytelling to show us the alternative to climate apocalypse—the promise and [immense opportunity](#) of a healthy, sustainable, more equitable future if we leave complacency behind and rise to the challenge.



Photograph by JOSE MANDAJANA/DOCVITAE
Rewrite the Future director Daniel Hinerfeld speaking at climate storytelling event



Photograph by JOSE MANDAJANA/DOCVITAE
From left: Writer/producers Glenn Howerton (*It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia*), Alex Maggio (*Madam Secretary*), Donté Clark (*The North Pole*), and Dorothy Fortenberry (*The Handmaid’s Tale*).

REWRITE THE FUTURE offers support to entertainment professionals who wish to tell the greatest story of our time.

- Climate storytelling panels and workshops
- Industry dialogue and networking
- Customized climate story consulting
- Writers’ room presentations
- Working with studio and network executives to expand markets for climate stories
- Tip sheet of helpful climate mentions
- Science and policy expertise
- Packaging and development
- Promotion and amplification
- Legislative advocacy for climate production tax incentives
- Climate IP library

To learn more, please contact us:

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