



WOMEN IN VIEW
On Screen Report
Recommendations

June 2021

Recommendations

1. Prioritize Indigenous women.

While the industry has made important strides in recent years toward gender parity in response to intense community pressure, Indigenous women have made no gains in five years. We must make this an industry-wide priority.

- Prioritize the hiring of Indigenous women in key creative and on-set roles to ensure that Indigenous women are integrated into the larger film and TV talent pool. Use targeted commitments and incentives in pursuit of rapid change.
- Prioritize Indigenous-led projects. As research has shown, increasing leadership opportunities is the most effective way to create new film and TV opportunities for Indigenous women.
- Appoint and fund Indigenous women to create and lead initiatives intended to benefit them.
- Identify barriers. Research by WIV and other organizations helped the industry recognize gender disparity and find ways to overcome it. New research is needed to understand the barriers to Indigenous women's participation in the industry and how to overcome them.
- Make opportunities accessible. Resources, training, mentorship and networking opportunities must be delivered where they can be accessed by Indigenous women. Many live outside major centres, so access to existing professional training programs and resources is expensive and difficult. All initiatives must be accessible. This includes providing access to elders, high speed internet, transport, temporary housing and per diems.

2. Recognize the importance of creative leadership.

Creative leadership plays a key role in who gets hired on a production. But with very few Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour in leadership roles, the gains have not been shared equally by all women. The fastest and most effective way to increase opportunities for Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour is by increasing the number of TV series and films with Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour in leadership roles.

- The existing talent pool includes Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour with the experience and talent to immediately step into creative leadership roles. They have been underutilized and ignored. Prioritize moving their projects into production.
- Accelerate the progress of emerging Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour through hiring targets and incentives, investment, mentorship, on the job training and shadowing opportunities directly tied to employment.
- Mid-level Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour must be supported and promoted to more senior roles and responsibilities, with commensurate pay and decision-making powers.

3. Incentivize change.

Incentives are valuable tools. For example, regional tax credits have been effective in spreading production beyond the major centres. Tax credits and other financial incentives should be deployed to encourage productions to strive for gender and racial equity.

- All levels of government incentives should require gender equity and equitable representation of Black, Indigenous, and

People of Colour workers. Only productions that meet minimum hiring requirements should be eligible for financial support.

- Create Equitable Production bonuses, akin to CMF's English Regional Production Bonus, providing additional funding for productions that satisfy certain equity criteria. For example, there might be a bonus for productions on which two or more key creative roles (including showrunner, writer, director, lead actor and cinematographer) are filled by Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour. Another bonus might be offered for productions in which half of all on set positions are filled by women including a minimum of 20% of Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour. Exact guidelines should be developed by governments in consultation with equity seeking groups.
- CRTC should use time credits to incentivize more equitable hiring on Canadian productions. Drama programs earn broadcasters an extra 50% time credits toward their license requirements and Canadian-dubbed Canadian series earn them an extra 33%. Similarly, CRTC should create a time credit bonus for productions that meet minimum equity hiring requirements for women with higher credits for hiring Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour.
- Recognize that geographic residency requirements for accessing provincial tax credits can be problematic for Indigenous productions. To incentivize Indigenous productions, provincial boundaries should not be a barrier to collaboration between Indigenous artists or where they make their productions.

4. Mentor. Promote. Provide on-the-job-experience.

When equitable funding policies, hiring targets and incentives are in place, supportive initiatives -- like WIV's Five in Focus, Women in the Director's Chair, The Academy's Directors Program for Women and TIFF's Share Her Journey -- have proven to be key to effectively accelerate progress. These are programs that raise women's profiles and offer training, networking opportunities, and mentorship. In the best programs, professional development should include paid on-the-job experiences that will provide the all-important, but difficult to acquire, first professional credit.

- Guilds and unions, training organizations and other industry organizations can support change by creating new professional development programs for showrunning, television writing and cinematography.
- All organizations offering training, mentorship and career development programs can prioritize applications from Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour.

Recommendations (cont'd)

5. Collect data.

Data is the foundation for change. It provides concrete information about the current situation, allowing us to set goals and monitor our progress in achieving them. However, most organizations, including funders, guilds and associations have little or no equity data.

- Collect data on the participation of Black women, separate from Women of Colour and Indigenous Women, in recognition of pervasive anti-Black racism in Canada. Publish the results in annual reporting. National organizations should include regional breakdowns.
- Support third party data collection and analysis. External research can help prevent systemic bias from skewing results. It also offers organizations impartial insights into their progress as well as opportunities to compare their results with those of other organizations.

6. Set specific targets and commitments based on existing gaps.

Setting targets remains one of the most effective ways for organizations to make change. But as this report reveals, targets set to move toward gender parity have not benefited all women equally. Progress must be tracked and carefully analyzed, and if needed, revised and refined to eliminate unintended biases.

- Continue and expand all commitments for gender equity and equitable funding for women in all areas of the industry
- Set targets that address the historic exclusion and imbalances that Black women, Indigenous women, and Women of Colour have faced. Commit to equitable representation and equitable funding of projects by Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour and accelerate strategies and timelines to achieve this.
- Set clear timelines, monitor results, revise, repeat.

7. Equalize investment by Telefilm Canada

Efforts to increase participation by women have resulted in the underfunding of all projects by women, but in particular, Black women & Women of Colour. While increasing the number of women's projects funded is an important goal, investment must increase too. Microbudgets are not a recipe for success.

- Evaluate gender parity and equality initiatives in terms of the distribution of funding. Ensure that investments are made equitably.

8. Accelerate change by Private Broadcasters

Productions commissioned by Bell, Rogers and Corus lag far behind those commissioned by CBC in terms of gender parity and racial equity. The private broadcasters should take immediate steps to accelerate change:

- Set ambitious targets for gender parity and equity on independent productions that also include clear quantifiable commitments to Black women, Indigenous women, Women of Colour and non-binary individuals.
- Prioritize the commissioning of series led by women with an additional goal of immediately and equitably increasing the number of series led by Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour.
- Collaborate with equity seeking groups to identify and eliminate systemic barriers.

9. Make cinematography more inclusive.

More than 80% of television cinematography work still goes to men. It is time for gender equity in this area and equitable representation of Black women, Indigenous women, and Women of Colour.

- Prioritize the hiring of women as cinematographers using incentives to encourage the hiring of existing qualified women with additional incentives for hiring Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Colour currently in the talent pool.
- New programs should be created to train more women for this craft.

10. Recognize the Importance of Ownership by Women.

Ownership offers women greater creative and financial control. Little information is currently available about the ownership of Canada's productions and production companies.

- Support research to determine how many companies and productions are owned by women, Black women, Indigenous women, Women of Colour, and non-binary individuals within the screen industry.
- Using the data collected, initiate incentives to promote gender parity and racial equity in ownership.