

Supporting & Developing the Indigenous Screen-based Media Industry in Canada: A Strategy

Prepared for the CMF
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Table of Contents

PURPOSE	4
METHODOLOGY	4
STRATEGY OBJECTIVES	6
ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN FINDINGS	6
CURRENT CLIMATE	6
OVERVIEW OF THE INDUSTRY	8
SETTING THE STAGE FOR CHANGE	12
BARRIERS & RECOMMENDATIONS	12
UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD	13
FRAGMENTED & INADEQUATE FUNDING	13
MAP FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP INDIGENOUS STORYTELLERS NAVIGATE OPTIONS	14
ADDRESS INEQUITIES IN NORTHERN, RURAL AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES	14
SUPPORT FEATURE FILM FUNDING AND PRODUCTION	15
SUPPORT INDIGENOUS INNOVATION IN DIGITAL MEDIA	17
CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR SHORT-FILM PRODUCTION	17
ACCESSING “INDIGENOUS” FUNDS	17
DIFFICULTY ACCESSING DISTRIBUTION	18
“GHETTOIZATION”	18
INCENTIVES FOR OTHER BROADCASTERS	19
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES TELEVISION NETWORK	20
INVESTIGATE NEW DISTRIBUTION MODELS TO INCREASE AUDIENCES	22
BARRIERS TO PRODUCTION	23
ACCESS TO AND LEVERAGING FUNDING	23
PRODUCTION CAPACITY	24
RIGID APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL BORDERS BY CRTC AND ACTRA	24
DIVERSITY OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES	25
RIGHTS	26
GOVERNANCE	26
LACK OF CULTURAL AWARENESS IN THE MAINSTREAM INDUSTRY	26
ESTABLISH AN INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE	27
COLLECT BETTER DATA	27
CREATE A COORDINATING BODY TO REPRESENT INDIGENOUS PRODUCERS	28
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CAPACITY BUILDING	29
DEVELOPING PRODUCER’S SKILLS	30
STORY & SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT	31
MAINSTREAM MENTORSHIPS	31
FORUMS FOR MID-CAREER CREATORS	31
NORTHERN SPECIFIC TRAINING	31
MOVING FORWARD	32
APPENDIX A: COMPARISON OF BARRIERS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	33
APPENDIX B: CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF SUCCESSFUL TRAINING PROGRAMS	38

EXISTING TRAINING PROGRAMS	38
KEY COMPONENTS FOR SUCCESS	39
HANDS ON EXPERIENCE	39
QUALITY AND CULTURAL ACUITY OF MENTORS	39
CULTURAL SPACE TO CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	39
POST PROGRAM FOLLOWUP	39
FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ENABLE FULL PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING	39
<u>APPENDIX C: SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS SCREEN-BASED MEDIA</u>	<u>40</u>
GOVERNMENT FUNDED AGENCIES	40
CANADA MEDIA FUND	40
TELEFILM CANADA	40
CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS	41
NATIONAL FILM BOARD	42
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION	44
MANITOBA FILM & MUSIC	44
CHARITABLE NOT-FOR-PROFITS	45
NATIONAL SCREEN INSTITUTE (NSI)	45
CANADIAN FILM CENTRE	46
WHISTLER FILM FESTIVAL – ABORIGINAL FILMMAKER FELLOWSHIP	46
CANADIAN MEDIA PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION	46
INDIGENOUS CANADIAN ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS SCREEN-BASED MEDIA	47
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES TELEVISION NETWORK	47
IMAGINE NATIVE	48
WEENGUSHK FILM INSTITUTE	48
ADAM BEACH FILM INSTITUTE	49
WAPIKONI MOBILE	49
CAPILANO UNIVERSITY	50
ALLIANCE OF ABORIGINAL MEDIA PROFESSIONALS	50
SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS FILM ABROAD	50
SCREEN AUSTRALIA & THE INDIGENOUS DEPARTMENT	50
NEW ZEALAND FILM COMMISSION & TE PAEPAE ATAATA	52
SUNDANCE INSTITUTE NATIVE AMERICAN AND INDIGENOUS PROGRAM	52
NATIVE – A SPECIAL SERIES AT BERLINALE	53
<u>APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS</u>	<u>54</u>
<u>APPENDIX E: PERFORMANCE & FUNDING ENVELOPES</u>	<u>56</u>
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES TELEVISION NETWORK	56
CMF ABORIGINAL PROGRAM	57
TELEFILM INDIGENOUS COMMITMENTS (3 YEARS)	57
<u>APPENDIX F: UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>APPENDIX G: CANADA BROADCASTING ACT</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>APPENDIX H: MEDIA AND RECONCILIATION</u>	<u>62</u>

*Dear Canadian Broadcasters, Funders, Directors and Producers,
If you're making a film and your key cast members are all white, you're part of the problem.
If you're making a film and all your key creatives and key crew are white, you're part of the problem.
If you're part of the problem, you have no right to act as though you're an ally to people of colour out in the real world.
Canadian film has a Whiteness problem.
Whiteness contributes to systemic discrimination.
Whiteness takes up space and leaves little to no room for any voice that is not white.
Whiteness has very real impacts on people of colour.
If you don't want to be part of the problem, the solution is simple.
Stop taking up space with films rooted in Whiteness.*

Elle-Maija Tailfeathers, July 11, 2016

Purpose

Federal government commitments to support Indigenous screen-based storytelling have been in place for decades, yet we consistently hear that more needs to be done; that current and previous initiatives are not sufficient nor provide the tools to meet the needs and the very unique challenges faced by Indigenous screen storytellers. Although the Indigenous screen-based¹ media industry has grown significantly in the past decade, Indigenous people remain underrepresented and undercompensated relative to their mainstream Canadian counterparts. Indigenous artists, including in the screen-based media industry, are paid approximately 30% less than mainstream artists, on average.² Studies indicate that some of this discrepancy is the result of overt discrimination, while lack of awareness and misunderstanding also play big roles. Funders and industry at large should be providing better support to help achieve equity amongst screen-based storytellers.

The purpose of the strategy is to identify options for implementation to support and develop the Indigenous screen-based industry in Canada and ensure that industry will flourish and become widely available to Indigenous, mainstream Canadian and international audiences alike, to enhance Canada's reputation at home and abroad.

Methodology

In 2016 the Canada Media Fund (CMF) tasked the consultant with conducting an environmental scan of current and past screen-based programs, both mainstream and targeted to Aboriginal writers, directors, producers, broadcasters and funders to determine the successes, challenges and gaps in the field. In June & July 2016, as part of a larger "Environmental Scan", the CMF consultant conducted numerous phone interviews and in-person focus groups with Indigenous storytellers, creators and producers.³ The purpose of this engagement was to get feedback and input on how the CMF, and other industry partners, can help support a successful Indigenous screen-based media sector (including film, television and new digital media). The inputs, along with the literature review, serve as the basis for this strategy document.

¹ Includes television, digital media and film.

² Danis Goulet and Kerry Swanson (imagineNATIVE), Indigenous Feature Film Production in Canada: A National and International Perspective, 2013, p 9.

³ For a list of participants please see Appendix D of this summary.

In July 2016 the CMF convened a discussion between representatives of Canadian broadcasting companies, distributors and screen-based media funding agencies to discuss issues and options for working together to better support the Indigenous screen-based media sector. The discussion started by noting that the *Broadcasting Act* calls for broadcasting in Canada to support the creation of Indigenous productions and make them available to the public and by acknowledging that this responsibility applies to the entire broadcasting industry, not APTN alone. There was also a general discussion around the risk adverse nature of the industry at the moment, primarily due to changing audience habits and other factors. There was confirmation that the Minister of Canadian Heritage is genuinely open to proposals that will effect great change and transform the Indigenous screen-based media industry.

In addition to on-line resources and material provided by organizations, individual contributors and participants, the literature review cites the following publications:

- Jeff Bear, *At the Crossroads*, Prepared for Telefilm Canada, the Canadian Television Fund (CTF)⁴, the National Film Board (NFB), the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), 2004.
- Marilyn Burgess and Maria De Rosa (Communications MDR). *The Aboriginal Screen-based Production Sector in Review: Trends, Success Stories, and the Way Forward*, March 2013. Prepared for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), the CMF, the NFB, the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund, Telefilm Canada, the Canadian Council for the Arts (CCA) and the National Screen Institute (NSI).
- Danis Goulet and Kerry Swanson, *Indigenous Feature Film Production in Canada: A National and International Perspective*, 2013. Commissioned by imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, with funding provided by the Ontario Media Development Corporation's (OMDC) Research Grant Program and Telefilm Canada.
- Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) Association québécoise de la production médiatique (AQPM), the Department of Canadian Heritage, Telefilm Canada and Nordicity Group Ltd, *Profile 2015: Economic Report on the Screen-based Media Production Industry in Canada*.

It is safe to say that almost all of the issues and recommendations, eloquently stated in the reports and publications above, are still in play. Interviews and focus groups served to confirm the ideas presented by these authors and indicate that while interest has not waned, change has yet to occur.

Finally, in October and November 2016, participants vetted the draft strategy and recommendations, contributing further information and inputs for its finalization. Based on these discussions a *Path Forward* document was developed to focus on the key priorities and next steps.

⁴ In 2010, the CTF became the CMF.

Strategy Objectives

The objectives of strengthening the Indigenous screen-based media sector are multi-fold:

- Achieving equity for Indigenous creators and producers in the industry;
- Ensuring Indigenous people are in charge of telling stories about Indigenous people as custodians of Indigenous narrative;
- Meeting federal broadcast objectives and United Nations commitments;
- Increasing awareness of Indigenous realities;
- And perhaps most importantly, empowering Indigenous people to engage in and self-determine their own cultural reproduction, dialogues and processes.

Environmental Scan Findings

Current Climate

Considering the new federal government's promises to forge a new nation-to-nation relationship with the Indigenous peoples and commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) 94 Calls to Action, the timing for an Indigenous screen-based media strategy is impeccable.⁵

Bearing in mind that Indigenous people are the fastest growing population group in Canada, with close to half the Indigenous population younger than 24 years of age, it is important that opportunities to participate in the industry keep pace with these demographic changes; while also closing existing gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous screen-based media artists.

The timing for a strategy is also particularly appropriate considering the "Oscars so White" movement this year in mainstream industry. Audiences are far more diverse than reflected in mainstream screen-based media, and are looking for that diversity to be reflected in the programming they watch. The industry is calling for, and at the same time validating the audience for, a more diverse film industry. For example, early in 2016, author and screenwriter Emma Donoghue won the Golden Box Office Award from Telefilm Canada. The Award comes with a \$20,000 prize, which she graciously donated. "Greater diversity in the film industry benefits all of us. So I am delighted to pass this unexpected windfall on to the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, who do such crucial work promoting Indigenous cultural production in a range of media not only in Canada but worldwide"⁶.

In fact, it would appear that maintaining current industry and business practices is detrimental to the business writ large. The 2016 Hollywood Diversity Report "showed that films and television shows with casts that roughly reflect the nation's racial and ethnic diversity posted the highest box office and ratings numbers on average"⁷. Diversity is such a hot topic at the moment, industry and media are actively seeking it out, even where it may not exist. Most recently at TIFF:

⁵ UNDRIP and TRC commitments relative to the industry can be found in the Appendices to this report.

⁶ Nation Talk: [imagineNATIVE Receives Major Donation from Emma Donoghue](#), March 14, 2016.

⁷ Dave McNary, Variety Magazine: [Hollywood's Diversity Problem Potentially Costs Industry Billions \(Study\)](#), February 25, 2016.

“The director of *The Magnificent Seven*, Antoine Fuqua, says he wasn't trying to make a statement about racial diversity with his remake of the 1960 classic. "I just wanted to see Denzel Washington on a horse. I didn't think about colour. I didn't think about it as an event. It wasn't to make a statement," Fuqua said⁸.”

This would be funny, were it not a blatant indication of the dearth of inclusion in the industry.

The emerging diversity discussion has already spawned reactions:

Telefilm Canada today announced its goal to build, by 2020, a representative and diversified feature film portfolio that better reflects Canada's population. With a focus on how it can enhance existing diversity initiatives, Telefilm has set for itself the following objective: ***By 2020, have a more representative and diversified feature film portfolio that better reflects gender, diversity and Canada's Indigenous communities.*** "Building a portfolio that better reflects Canadian society is a priority for us," said Carolle Brabant, Telefilm's Executive Director. "I'm very pleased to see that the industry is committed to change. Establishing a working group with the Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) and the Association québécoise de la production médiatique (AQPM) will help us develop lasting and impactful solutions."⁹ The plan includes focusing on how to enhance existing diversity initiatives. Telefilm has also established industry partnerships to support representation and diversity in Canadian cinema, in areas including promotion, professional development and research.

It should be noted that a number of Indigenous storytellers are not looking for “diversity” consideration, but recognition of special rights flowing from their constitutional status as a founding nation.

Coupled with the acknowledgment for a need for greater diversity in film production, is the recognition that there is no diversity amongst decision makers. Canadaland, a Canadian audience-funded news site and podcast network focused on media criticism and media reporting, released a number of facts and figures on the current state of Canada's national public broadcaster, the CBC. Key findings of its report include that “just over 90% of CBC staff are Caucasian, just under 10% are (self-declared) visible minority, and just under 1.5% are Indigenous, despite the network's “federal mandate to reflect the ‘multicultural and multiracial nature of Canada.’” By contrast, Statistics Canada data shows approximately 20% of Canadians are visible minority and 4.3% are Indigenous.¹⁰ As this strategy demonstrates, the lack of diversity reflected in staff composition, is not an issue at CBC alone; and its persistence is an impediment to the growth of the Indigenous industry.

Finally, there is the matter of obligation – an obligation of the broadcasters to provide cultural cohesiveness to the nation. As Dr. Wade Rowland in the *Globe and Mail* so persuasively puts:

The CBC's decision to air the Tragically Hip's farewell concert Saturday ... demonstrated better than almost any event one could imagine the power of a

⁸ [TIFF 2016: Diversity buzz for TIFF's opening film is accidental, cast says](#), CBC News Posted: Sep 09, 2016 5:00

⁹ MONTREAL, Sept. 8, 2016 /CNW Telbec, [Newswire Canada](#).

¹⁰ Farnia Fekri. [Just How White is the CBC?](#) Canadaland. August 17, 2016.

national public broadcaster to bring a nation together to celebrate its shared values, to honour its prodigies, to connect. ...

[I]t was an investment in the country's future, in its social infrastructure, in its cultural cohesiveness. And it could be a prologue to a future in which we join the rest of the industrialized world with a well-funded, commercial-free, public broadcaster that cares about who we are rather than where we shop and what we might be persuaded to buy.

This fall, Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly will launch a federal broadcast policy review in which, she says, "everything will be on the table." That includes the role CBC/Radio-Canada might be asked to serve in today's chaotic media environment, in which private broadcasters are in full retreat from their traditional public service obligations.¹¹

With a new federal government focused on reconciliation with Indigenous people and providing greater funding support to the public broadcaster¹², now is an opportune time for the CBC to build its public service mandate – especially as it concerns systemic challenges expressed by Indigenous content producers and storytellers in Canada. The business of screen-based media in Canada to date is based on revenue; little thought is given to cultural preservation. As a business model this focus does not seem to be working and forgoes Canadian broadcasters' obligations under the *Broadcasting Act*: "a public service essential to the maintenance and enhancement of national identity and cultural sovereignty¹³". It should be noted that the responsibility does not fall to CBC alone – all Canadian Broadcasters are subject to the *Act*, and responsibilities include "programming that reflects the Aboriginal cultures of Canada should be provided within the Canadian broadcasting system as resources become available for the purpose".¹⁴

Overview of the Industry

This June, Hill Strategies released a report that "asserts that the estimated direct economic impact of Canada's culture industries (also known as value added or gross domestic product) was \$61.7 billion in 2014, or 3.3% of the country's GDP." In terms of cultural products, Audio-visual and interactive media represent \$18.4 billion and Visual and applied arts: \$11.2 billion. Nationally, the bulletin says, the GDP of culture industries is much larger than the value added of agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (\$29 billion); accommodation and food services (\$38 billion); and utilities (\$43 billion). Hill Strategies also estimates the direct economic impact of culture (\$61.7 billion) is 10 times larger than that of sports (\$6.1 billion).¹⁵

The screen-based industry is a major economic driver in Canada. According to Statistics Canada, in 2013, the film and video distribution industry's total operating revenue was \$1.8 billion and expenses were \$1.5 billion.¹⁶ The Canadian Media Production Association's

¹¹ Wade Rowland, [Canada was joined at the Hip – thanks to the CBC](#). Globe and Mail. August 23, 2016.

¹²The new federal government has pledged to restore \$25 million in funding to Telefilm Canada and the National Film Board, and to invest an additional \$150 million annually in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)/Radio Canada.

¹³ *Canadian Broadcasting Act*. (see Appendix G).

¹⁴ In fact, numerous clauses in the Broadcasting Act serve to support reconciliation of many of the issues addressed in recommendations. Full clauses can be found in Appendix B.

¹⁵ Canadian Art. Study: [Culture Affects Economy More Than Sports and Forestry](#). JUNE 22, 2016.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada. [Film and video distribution, 2013](#). Released: 2015-07-27.

(CMPA) *Profile 2015* shows that film and television production in Canada directly contributed 58,400 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and an additional 90,100 spin-off FTE positions, totalling close to 150,000 FTE positions in 2014/15 and totalling close to \$7 billion in wages and \$9 billion in GDP.¹⁷ 38% of films produced in 2014/15 were made in Ontario, while 32% were made in BC and 23% in Quebec.¹⁸

In addition to being a major component of the Canadian economy, screen-based media play a major role in shaping culture and identity for indigenous people and within mainstream society in Canada and help to influence intercultural understanding. In 1992, broadcaster and critic Fil Fraser noted that:

“Canada is currently having a challenging time determining if, in fact, a truly “Canadian” culture exists, and if it does, what it is ... defining Canadian culture becomes increasingly difficult as the evolving mainstream of real life shifts from a primarily British and northern European given, to a new reality which now includes Aboriginals as de facto, if not constitutionally recognized.”¹⁹

It has been widely acknowledged that years of colonial history have impacted Indigenous cultural expression. This legacy includes historic misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in screen-based media, perpetuating stereotypes both harmful to Indigenous people and contributing to ongoing racism within mainstream society, and a systematic repression of traditional Indigenous storytelling and cultural practices. Making Indigenous screen-based media is about more than creating a unique cultural, or niche, product, but is part of the process of cultural expression and revitalization. Indigenous storytellers²⁰ contest the understanding of Indigenous film as a genre. One producer said of the idea, “we’re caricatures, we’re not people with important things to say and inspirational stories to share and a perspective that’s worth being heard.”²¹

Better support for the representation and dissemination of Indigenous stories and perspectives can enable Canada to create a new legacy of more dynamic, accurate and creative representation of Indigenous experiences. Jesse Wenthe, Head of Film Programmes for TIFF Bell Lightbox, notes the work of Indigenous filmmakers “consciously establishes itself as a counter-cinema ... or rebuke to a century’s worth of falsities propagated by mainstream cinema.”²²

Going back to the 1970s, the main type of Indigenous screen-based media was documentary, pioneered by acclaimed filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin and supported by the National Film Board. In 1999, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, the first national network dedicated to Indigenous programming, launched supporting documentary and other media in addition to news. The first Canadian Indigenous dramatic feature film, shown at Sundance as *Backroads*, was in 2000. Also in 2000, imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival was launched in Toronto. It has become the largest presenter and market for Indigenous media in

¹⁷ Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA), the Department of Canadian Heritage and Telefilm Canada. [Profile 2015: Economic Report on the Screen-based Media Production Industry in Canada](#). Page 9.

¹⁸ CMPA. Profile 2015. p 11.

¹⁹ Jeff Bear, *At the Crossroads*, Prepared for Telefilm Canada, the Canadian Television Fund, the National Film Board, the Department of Canadian Heritage and the CBC, 2004.

²⁰ This term is used to refer to both indigenous creators (writers and directors) and indigenous producers.

²¹ imagineNATIVE, p 44.

²² Wenthe, Jesse. “First Peoples Cinema: 1500 Nations, One Tradition”. <http://tiff.net/1500nations>.

the world. In 2001, director Zacharias Kunuk's *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, the second Indigenous feature film ever made in Canada won the Camera d'Or at Cannes, six Genie awards, including Best Picture and Best Director. It was also included in the TIFF Group's list of Top 10 Canadian Films of All Time. A new generation of Indigenous filmmakers is achieving success with short films, gaining recognition at international film festivals. Between 2009 and 2013, because of Indigenous short films, there were 17.4% more Canadian short films at Sundance and 36.4% more at Berlin.

The growth of Indigenous screen-based media in Canada is supported within the context of an international Indigenous screen-based media network. The industry is evolving worldwide and gaining wider recognition and appreciation. Along with New Zealand, Australia and the United States, Canada is considered one of the key sources of Indigenous screen-based media. International film festivals have been critical for the development and testing of Indigenous filmmakers' talents, with examples such as *First Peoples Cinema: 1500 Nations, One Tradition*, the most expansive series on Indigenous film to date in North America, presented by the TIFF Bell Lightbox in 2012. The following year, the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) launched *NATIVE – A Journey into Indigenous Cinema*, a series dedicated to Indigenous film. In 2014, Berlinale, imagineNATIVE and the Canada Council brought together a consortium of partners to create the NATIVE booth, the first of its kind showcasing Indigenous film, at the European Film Market. The booth provides a “meeting point” to help foster relationship building between artists and producers with buyers, sales agents, distributors, exhibitors and financiers.

Both within the Canadian industry and the international industry, many Indigenous films experience success first at international film festivals, and then at the box office in their home countries. For example, *The Sapphires*, written and directed by Wayne Blair in Australia, premiered at Cannes and brought in over \$14 million in domestic box office sales in 2012, the highest grossing film in that country's history²³. As of May 2016, Taika Waititi's *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (which premiered at Sundance) has become the largest grossing local film at the New Zealand Box office ever with \$9,650,074. It overtook the 2010 classic *Boy*, (\$9,237,976), also directed by Waititi²⁴, and *Empire*, a UK Cinema publication, as recently named *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* the best film of 2016.

In addition to international festivals, there is also a strong network of Indigenous film festivals within Canada, including: imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival (Toronto); Terres En Vues / Land In Sight (Montreal); Dreamspeakers Film Festival (Edmonton); Vancouver Indigenous Media Arts Festival; Mison Festival (Regina); Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival; Biindigaate Indigenous Film Festival (Thunder Bay); and Asinabka Film & Media Arts Festival (Ottawa).

Overall, the Indigenous screen-based industry has been growing, particularly within television and documentary production. Communications MDR found that “television is the primary market with documentary being the most prevalent” for the Indigenous screen-based industry and that this success was bolstered by the targeted Aboriginal Program at the

²³ Also in 2012, *Redfern Now* became the first television drama series written, directed and produced by Indigenous Australians, including [Rachel Perkins](#), Catriona McKenzie, Wayne Blair and Leah Purcell as directors. It has been highly celebrated and received multiple awards and shown on [ABC1](#) in Australia and [Vibrant TV Network](#) in the United States.

²⁴ <http://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/film/80025439/hunt-for-the-wilderpeople-record-bittersweet-for-taika-waititi>

CMF.²⁵ There is a small but growing industry of Indigenous game development and interactive online platforms, such as APTN's DigitalDrum.ca, which it has made central to its future strategy. Overall, there are approximately 80 small- and medium-sized Indigenous production companies operating on a continuous basis in Canada.²⁶

The last two decades have given rise to a number of award-winning television programs and digital media by and about Indigenous Canadians. Indigenous Canadian programs have wide-ranging appeal, attracting growing Aboriginal and mainstream audiences across Canada and internationally. The ground-breaking drama series *Blackstone* (Prairie Dog Film + Video), which aired on APTN and briefly on Showcase, has won an impressive 20 awards including two Geminis and two Leo Awards. The series has been sold to New Zealand where it airs on Maori Television, to a U.S. distributor and recently to Netflix.

Produced in the Cree language by Dennis and Melanie Jackson, kids' show *Wapos Bay*, a light-hearted stop motion animation follows the adventures of three children growing up in a Cree community in northern Saskatchewan. The Gemini award-winning series was produced in Saskatchewan and aired on APTN and Saskatchewan Communications Network from 2005-2010. In 2009, Dennis and Melanie Jackson were awarded the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for the Arts for *Wapos Bay*, which over the years won almost 20 Canadian and international awards.²⁷ In 2016 *Mohawk Girls* was nominated for 4 Canadian Screen Awards, including best Comedy Series, Best Direction and Best Writing in a Comedy Series as well as Best Performance. *Mohawk Girls'* Tracey Deer was recognized as one of 12 remarkable women in film honoured by Telefilm Canada and Birks at the 2016 Birks Diamond Tribute at the Toronto International Film Festival²⁸. *Mohawk Girls* has been picked up by US distributor GRB for worldwide sales representation and debuted in Australia on June 6, 2016.

This list of successes is not exhaustive, and as Jeff Bear notes, with APTN in place and other needed development initiatives, Indigenous screen-based media are "poised to become a player in the Canadian economy."²⁹ Strengthening the Indigenous screen-based industry is also a core way for Indigenous peoples to strengthen their self-expression, self-determination and self-government.³⁰

²⁵ Communications MDR, 2013, p 4.

²⁶ Maria De Rosa (Communications MDR), Background Information on the Aboriginal Screen-Based Production Sector in Canada, 2016, p 3.

²⁷ Wapos Bay production blog, retrieved from <http://waposbay.com/blog/>.

²⁸ Telefilm website, retrieved from <https://www.telefilm.ca/en/news/releases/2016/07/27/telefilm-canada-and-birks-pay-tribute-12-canadian-women-film-2016-birks-dia>.

²⁹ Bear, p 10.

³⁰ Bear, p 22.

Setting the Stage for Change

In May 2016, Canada's Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs signaled our commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) at the United Nations General Assembly³¹. Several components of UNDRIP affect expectations for Canada's support of Indigenous cultural production and dissemination, including Indigenous peoples rights to:

- *Article 16* 1. establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity. States...should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect indigenous cultural diversity.
- *Article 31* 1. maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

In late June 2016, The Minister of Canadian Heritage announced the appointment of an expert panel to conduct consultations on Canadian content in a digital world to help the federal government re-examine its current cultural policy toolkit and help the creative and cultural sector become global leaders. The panel will serve as a sounding board for people in the industry to voice their concerns, desires and observations. One of the panellists is Jean La Rose, CEO of APTN. Consultations will be conducted in the fall with a Ministerial report expected by the end of the year.

This consultation presents an opportunity to encourage the Minister regarding her responsibilities under UNDRIP as well as under the *Broadcasting Act*, as the Minister responsible for the implementation and enforcement of that act. Upholding these commitments by the federal government will require significant and substantial changes on the part of funders and their industry counterparts. The CMF engagement process has recognized that as a founding nation, Indigenous peoples should be equitably supported to participate in their own cultural reproduction.

While broadcaster and funders acknowledged the risk adverse nature of the industry at the moment, primarily due to changing audience habits and other factors, there was confirmation at the focus group that the Minister of Canadian Heritage is genuinely open to proposals that will effect great change and transform the Indigenous screen-based media industry.

Barriers & Recommendations

This section describes the systemic barriers faced by Indigenous storytellers in Canada, along with emerging recommendations and options for change as iterated by participants³².

³¹ Full Articles the Declaration pertaining to language and cultural industries can be found in Appendix A.

³² Appendix A cross-references each barrier with recommendations in table format.

Uneven Playing Field

Canada's legacy of colonialism has led to great disparities between Indigenous people and other Canadians across a wide range of wellbeing indicators. These disparities result in fewer Indigenous productions being released. Indigenous storytellers are competing on an uneven playing field because of the historic advantage non-Indigenous storytellers have in the mainstream industry.³³ Overall, participants in this engagement process expressed that current funding frameworks do not reflect the unique cultural and linguistic circumstances of Indigenous producers, including costs relating to geography, appropriate cultural processes, and accessing Indigenous language holders. Funding frameworks should help build an industry in which Indigenous people can tell their stories and make a living.

CMF and Telefilm are the primary funding vehicles for Indigenous producers. Indigenous-targeted funds have grown slowly over the years but have not caught up with the funding French language producers outside of Quebec receive.³⁴ Quebec has appropriately recognized that higher funding coupled with a protected market is required to support a strong, successful Francophone screen-based media industry. Indigenous people seek the same cultural protections. In the context of reconciliation, government should support recovery of what has been lost, recognizing the impact the federal policy of Indian Residential Schools has had on Indigenous languages and cultures. The federal government retains a significant obligation to support the Indigenous screen-based sector equitably and there are many ways the existing landscape can be improved to help better serve the Indigenous industry.

To create an atmosphere of fairness in financing, Indigenous producers call on funders to increase funding until equity is achieved with respect to the two other founding nations, better reflecting the constitutional relationship and spirit of reconciliation the federal government has committed to. Based on population alone, Indigenous storytellers should be receiving at least 4 – 6 % percent of funding dedicated to support the screen-based media industry. An interim measure to equity would be to build capacity and remove some of the existing systemic barriers and current inequities.

Fragmented & Inadequate Funding

Participants expressed concern that current funding fragmentation – multiple sources, multiple programs, and multiple policies, multiple guidelines - only serves to feed the bureaucracy rather than the Indigenous screen-based industry. Changes in funding approaches and any additional dedicated supports for development of Indigenous screen-based media could both consolidate and expand upon existing funds administered by multiple funding entities. Almost everyone interviewed emphasized that the existing funding amounts are not sufficient to meet the actual costs of producing feature films, documentaries or series and stressed that Indigenous storytellers are working on shoestring budgets compared to others in the sector.

³³ Bear, p 32.

³⁴ In this way, the Official Languages Act, which recognizes only English and French as official languages, compounds the systemic disadvantage of Indigenous language storytelling in the competitive marketplace.

Map Funding Opportunities to Help Indigenous Storytellers Navigate Options

There was significant support from creators for the idea of mapping of all of the potential funding opportunities Indigenous storytellers could apply for at each stage of their journey as screen-based storytellers. Many people can find the bureaucracy difficult to navigate and may be unaware of the range of options available to help get their project made. Providing a centralized, clear resource to help navigate the system would help empower more Indigenous storytellers to create and produce or to do so more successfully.

Industry participants also expressed great interest in creating an inventory of existing initiatives offered by training organizations, broadcasters, and funders supporting Indigenous storytellers. This inventory would assist in identifying gaps and creating a roadmap for addressing gaps together.

Address Inequities in Northern, Rural and Remote Communities

Costs can be significantly higher in more rural, remote and northern communities – a significant barrier to participation in the industry by Indigenous storytellers who are not located in major urban centres with thriving film industries and institutions, such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Filmmakers from northern Canada noted that while in the past there were no funds supporting feature filmmaking in the north, now the funds and tax incentives available are simply not enough. Remote and northern funding envelopes require increased financial support and direct funding or regional bonuses. Targeted funds need to take into account: lack of and exorbitant cost of high-speed Internet³⁵, young populations, English as a second language, inability for film makers to leave the community (eg. local training), road and air travel infrastructure and conditions, travel time and cost of transportation for creators to participate in industry activities.

Funding application processes can serve as barriers for people in northern, rural and remote communities:

- Those who have not gone to university or who do not speak English or French as a first language³⁶ struggle with the length and language of applications;
- CMF has only one application date in the late spring. With this application date, producers hear back in July, and with summers being very short in the north, many have to wait until the following summer to start filming. These timelines may affect the entire viability of a project.

It was put forward that CMF reinstate having two application dates, or move the existing application date to a much earlier date in the year, to enable northern producers to shoot during the same summer they apply for funding.

Access to reliable, consistent, and affordable high-speed is another significant barrier. Given the shift in viewing habits away from cable to other digital formats, many northern and remote content creators are seeking ways to improve access to digital infrastructure in order to increase accessibility. Additional support is needed to provide audiences in remote Indigenous communities with access to Indigenous screen-based productions. These can be

³⁵ One producer noted that Internet in remote communities costs upwards of \$2,000 per month to accommodate online file storage and modest sharing.

³⁶ The more traditional an Indigenous person is, the less likely he or she will be able to access the system. Producers who assume this responsibility are concerned they may not be able to adequately represent all of the complex content in the application forms to people in another language and culture.

particularly hard to reach audiences, given expensive, limited or unavailable high-speed Internet, high costs to distribute hard copies to these communities and some limits with screening venues and equipment. Time and time again participants reiterated: in the north you will find audiences that are craving this type of content.

Finally, northern and remote Indigenous content creators would benefit from increased opportunities to pitch their work to producers, expand their networks and be mentored. To help address the significantly higher costs of production in remote communities and the high costs and time it takes to travel, the Canada Council could consider targeting support for travel grants so Indigenous content creators can attend industry events in the Indigenous and non-Indigenous screen-based industry.

Support Feature Film Funding and Production

The increased success seen amongst Indigenous filmmakers in the past decade and a half has not translated into the sustained production of feature length fictional films. The literature review consistently highlighted Canada is lagging in support for Indigenous feature films (particularly in comparison to countries like Australia and New Zealand). We also see less robust support for original voices, regional perspectives and small independent film companies.

“A recent Communications MDR study revealed that the Aboriginal films that are being produced are primarily documentaries and that there are few dramatic feature films being produced in Canada. Additionally, little financing in Canada is flowing to Aboriginal feature film production. From 2008-2012, Telefilm Canada funded the production of 310 feature films in Canada, with five of the feature films being made by Aboriginal filmmakers, an average of one Aboriginal feature film per year. From 2008-2012, the Ontario Media Development Corporation, a provincial agency, supported the production of a total of 115 theatrical feature films and, of this total only one was an Aboriginal feature film.”³⁷

Out of the major public funders, Telefilm has made the largest investment in Indigenous feature filmmakers, while the CMF has contributed the greatest amount to Indigenous production overall, across all screen-based media. Funding support from Telefilm is key to qualifying for other sources of funding for feature film.³⁸ With that said, 1.61% of Telefilm funding for features films goes to Indigenous films - clearly not a robust number.³⁹ While there are components of other Telefilm programs targeted for Indigenous filmmakers, such as the Indigenous component of the Microbudget program, the end of Telefilm’s Featuring Aboriginal Stories Program (FASP) in 2011, coupled with significant Telefilm budget cuts, have made it more challenging for Indigenous feature filmmakers to fund their projects.

Under new Development program guidelines, to be eligible for funding, production companies must have produced a film that was theatrically released in Canada in the past five years. Because there are not many Indigenous producers who meet this criterion, most are no longer eligible to directly access development funds.⁴⁰ Telefilm created a mentorship component within their mainstream development program that highlights Indigenous

³⁷ *Indigenous Feature Film Production in Canada: A National and International Perspective*, imagineNATIVE 2013 p 8.

³⁸ Provinces also offer tax credits and offer direct film funding. The Ontario Media Development Corporation and its Film Fund is a key example.

³⁹ This figure is based on the number of Indigenous films over the total number of films, between 2007/08 and 2011/12. *imagineNATIVE. Indigenous Feature Film Production in Canada: A National and International Perspective*. 2013. P.25.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 23.

producers as a priority group. The goal of this mentorship component is to enable Indigenous (and other target groups) producers to partner with eligible production companies who become their mentor and help shepherd their project through production. Indigenous filmmakers have noted that the requirement for mainstream production partnerships can create an uneven power dynamic, where their creative control and story rights may not be protected. A film's vision is driven by the writer/director, and mainstream industry partners often do not understand the position or choices of an Indigenous creator. Some mainstream producers can be heavy handed in this regard. It was suggested that when applying to Telefilm for funding, a creator should not have to have a producer lined up at such an early stage in the process but these relationships should be allowed to develop organically.

Broadcasters also noted that there is a mainstream trend of slowly declining feature film producer pool, presumably because audiences are attending theatres less and have become more agnostic about viewing platforms.

Recommendations to bolster Indigenous feature film production include finding ways to align resources between funders and industry partners to create an Indigenous Screen Office that would include feature film development. "It is proposed that several agencies including Telefilm, the Canada Council, the CMF, APTN and CBC/Radio-Canada pool resources to launch a pilot initiative to support the production of a slate of feature films by Aboriginal producers. These funders could consider the possibility of partnering with existing initiatives in the Aboriginal feature film sector, as a means of further consolidating the industry."⁴¹ Industry players such as Bell and Shaw also have a responsibility to support and provide Indigenous content to Canadians and should be contributing funding support for production and development. Partners would begin by exploring options and initiating discussions around an appropriate model and delivery; investigating the benefits of dedicated Indigenous screen-based media offices abroad, such as the Indigenous Department within Screen Australia in that country.

A related recommendation: partner in the development of an Indigenous film production fund – or an endowment - targeted towards feature films. "The Canada Media Fund's targeted Aboriginal television fund has played a key role in the vitality of the Aboriginal television sector in Canada, the most robust sector of the Aboriginal screen-based media industry. Targeted funding at the Canada Council for the Arts, and internationally at Screen Australia, have also made a significant impact. An Aboriginal feature film production fund could be feasible if funders and industry partners aligned resources."⁴²

Another recommendation was increasing the existing Telefilm Microbudget funding for Indigenous filmmakers – helping to compensate for systemic challenges Indigenous filmmakers face in finding other sources of funding that help make productions financially viable. Status quo pushes Indigenous filmmakers to rely on in kind contributions, often from people who deserve and need compensation; it pushes them to perform multiple roles because they cannot afford to pay other contributors; or, to go into debt to create their productions. Finally, Telefilm's Indigenous-dedicated funding is only available for first time filmmakers. Mid-career filmmakers would like to be able to access these funds.

⁴¹ Communications MDR p8.

⁴² imagineNATIVE, 2013 p. 12.

Support Indigenous Innovation in Digital Media

Producers have expressed the need for the CMF to increase funding for Indigenous-language interactive digital media productions and to help build capacity in digital media production. Writers and directors would like to be able to transition to digital storytelling, increasing the need for capacity building in Indigenous digital production.⁴³ Specifically, the CMF, the Bell Fund and APTN could organize funding clinics for Indigenous producers who would like support for growing their capacity and success in digital media.⁴⁴ More analysis of this topic is needed to arrive at some concrete solutions. There is potential for content distribution that bypasses established distribution channels as well as opportunities for production directly for the Internet, for example, YouTube recently offered training seminars in Toronto on how to build a successful YouTube channel. Indigenous producers might benefit from similar training opportunities, generating the potential for creators to form their own portals to exhibit and monetize these works.

Continue Support for Short-Film Production

Continued support for short-film production by funders will increase the number of Indigenous filmmakers with the capacity to advance to feature film development and production. Most feature film funders require filmmakers to have experience producing a short film before they will finance a feature length film.⁴⁵

APTN supports Indigenous short films through partnership with NSI on their Aboriginal Documentary program. APTN also acquires short films from the festival circuit and packages them into half-hour programs (Short Cuts and Tout Court). Funders such as Telefilm, CMF and Canadian Heritage should provide more support for short film production. Recommendations included targeting short film funding to filmmakers with the best potential to move into feature film.

Accessing “Indigenous” Funds

There is growing recognition that as important as it is to have Indigenous people represented in screen-based media, it is as important or more so for the media to be made by an Indigenous person; for Indigenous people to move beyond the role of subjects to being agents of their creation, the storytellers behind the story. As Jeff Barnaby said, “I think in a really crazy way, native films are undoing a lot of the damage that the films that came before did, in giving native people an identity onscreen.”⁴⁶

A number of respondents perceived the funders, particularly Telefilm and CMF, as funding projects under the Indigenous funding envelope that are not led by Indigenous storytellers, enabling non-Indigenous leads to claim funding meant to support Indigenous storytellers. To Indigenous creators, an Indigenous production is determined by whether the people in the “above-the-line positions” are Indigenous⁴⁷. Participants felt productions are able to receive Indigenous funding based on an Indigenous-themed story, or by demonstrating that there are Indigenous staff involved – even though they created and produced by non-Indigenous people. Indigenous storytellers raised concern that non-Indigenous teams are able to access significant levels of dedicated funding by this means; wherein broadcasters and distributors

⁴³ Communications MDR, 2013, p 5.

⁴⁴ Communications MDR, 2013, 7.

⁴⁵ imagineNATIVE, p 13.

⁴⁶ The Canadian Press. “[Big year for First Nations films at TIFF.](#)” Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Sept 2, 2013.

⁴⁷ The CMF Aboriginal Program requires the producer to be Aboriginal (self-declared). He/she must control at least 51% of the production.

are meeting their Indigenous quotas. The Canada Council for the Arts was seen as managing the issue well, prioritizing funding for Indigenous creators and producers.

Some felt that companies that are only 51% Indigenous owned should not be able to access the limited pool of Indigenous-dedicated funding, fearing that the Indigenous partner does not play a lead role in the company. They felt the funders should invest more in 100% Indigenous companies to build more capacity, or that CMF should verify Indigenous status. Others felt partnering with a non-Indigenous partner, so long as the Indigenous partner retained the majority share of the company, was helpful in enabling them to compete in the industry. Regardless of stance on the matter, flexibility around partnerships and clear guidelines to access Indigenous-specific funds, ensuring Indigenous creators have prominent roles in Indigenous productions, should be put in place.

Difficulty Accessing Distribution

It has long been known that one of the core issues affecting Indigenous productions is access to distribution. Whether in film or television, a small set of distributors determines whose productions have the opportunity to be seen. Since licensing agreements act as a trigger for CMF or Telefilm funding, inability to equitably access distribution also puts Indigenous storytellers at a disadvantage in terms of securing funding for their projects. There are also challenges getting Indigenous stories, particularly feature films, to the production stage and then further barriers finding outlets for wide distribution, particularly in theatres. Limiting access to audiences in this way is a significant impact on creator's ability to tell their stories.

“Ghettoization”

Indigenous producers have noted that the creation of APTN has had the unintended consequence of making it more difficult for Indigenous producers to access mainstream markets, as mainstream broadcasters see APTN as the exclusive place for Indigenous produced content.⁴⁸ The mainstream industry is viewed as exclusionary, ghettoizing Indigenous creators to APTN; if APTN does not pick up a project, it is very difficult for that producer or creator to get their story picked up by any other Canadian broadcaster. This “ghettoization” also means that other broadcasters are not reflecting the actual diversity of this country; as a diverse and multicultural society, Canada and its broadcasters should be leaders in supporting diversity on screen.

Indigenous producers consistently felt that mainstream broadcasters have not acted on their responsibilities under the *Broadcasting Act* to reflect Aboriginal content. This is perceived as a failing of mainstream broadcasters, the CRTC and the funders. The CRTC is responsible for each network's license renewal.⁴⁹ Each renewal application is an opportunity for the federal government to ensure the commitment to fairly represent Indigenous peoples. Indigenous storytellers called on the CRTC to hold mainstream broadcasters to account for this exclusion; and for support to increase Indigenous distribution platforms, particularly given the number and diversity of Indigenous cultures requiring representation. While other broadcasters push Indigenous storytellers exclusively to APTN and APTN remains crowded, Indigenous storytellers want funders and the CRTC to provide conditional licenses that explicitly require

⁴⁸ Bear, p 20.

⁴⁹ Interviewees stated they have written letters and emails to the CRTC for years on these matters, noting that the CRTC has the greatest power of any government entity to hold the broadcasters accountable.

mainstream broadcasters to show Indigenous-created programming, including Indigenous language based programming.

Some broadcasters expressed that they would like better access to Indigenous storytellers and do not know many of the Indigenous writers, directors and producers working in Canada. Industry confirmed that risk aversion is contributing to their lack of awareness of who the emerging Indigenous storytellers are today. APTN noted years ago they initiated numerous partnerships with other broadcasters, helping ensure Indigenous-created content reached mainstream audiences outside of APTN; however over time, they found less interest in maintaining these partnerships. Broadcasters acknowledged that in a changing industry, partnerships are incredibly important to create content and maximize audiences and impact.

Incentives for Other Broadcasters

Several producers felt CBC, as the national broadcaster, is the worst offender of all of the networks for failing to equitably represent Indigenous-made stories. As a diverse and multicultural society, Canada and its broadcasters should be a leader in supporting realistic diversity on screen. All broadcasters in Canada bear this responsibility, but the public broadcaster has a particular responsibility to reflect the diversity of this country and the role of Indigenous people as a founding nation.

As the national broadcaster, the CBC should be a leader in not only portraying Indigenous stories, but in buying or commissioning productions from the Indigenous producers. “CBC/Radio Canada has a special responsibility as a public broadcaster to reflect Aboriginal peoples on television and to provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal producers, writers and directors.⁵⁰” While CBC has made some significant efforts to feature stories about Indigenous people, they rarely buy or commission productions from the Indigenous producers. For example, while the CBC paid to have Indigenous storytellers assist on developing and Indigenous approach to *Canada: A People’s History*, the CBC produced the series themselves using ideas generated by those Indigenous storytellers. This is reflective of a prevalent industry practice - using Indigenous storytellers as consultants on productions written, directed and produced by non-Indigenous people. Indigenous people are asked to make non-Indigenous stories more culturally appropriate, rather than putting or crediting these “consultants” as writers, directors and/or producers.

Incentives and mitigating strategies to encourage mainstream broadcasters to support and distribute Indigenous created programming include:

- Consult with Canadian broadcasters on incentives that would create favourable conditions for their financial participation in Aboriginal productions.⁵¹
- Offer tax credits to encourage broadcasters and other distributors to increase their distribution of projects created by Indigenous storytellers; or providing them funding incentives for airing Indigenous productions.
- Mitigate the prevailing and persistent mainstream practice of using Indigenous storytellers as consultants on productions written, directed and produced by non-

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Communications MDR, 2013, p 7.

Indigenous people.

- Mainstream industry should develop training initiatives for Indigenous creators and producers wherever they are not able to hire Indigenous people in those key roles. Funders could offer incentives to broadcasters encouraging experienced writers, directors and producers to act as mentors for emerging Indigenous storytellers.
- People in positions of influence within funding agencies and the broadcast industry should attend festivals like imagineNATIVE to see Indigenous content, meet key creatives, and understand the depth and breadth of the Indigenous screen-based industry.
- Broadcasters should provide an annual inventory on the Indigenous programming they have pre-licensed, acquired and developed and specify how many of these programs were produced by Indigenous controlled-production companies, to enable the federal government to assess compliance with its obligations to Indigenous people under the *Broadcasting Act*. This would significantly add to the existing dearth of data and information available on the Indigenous screen sector.
- CMF to maintain the Aboriginal Program's current Licence Fee Threshold of 10%, allowing producers to pay the lead/first window broadcaster 5% back in marketing fees so the broadcaster's net cash commitment would only then be 5%. This could increase the promotion on projects funded through the Aboriginal Program, and in turn, raise the broadcaster's visibility and dispel the myth that non-Indigenous audiences have no interest in Indigenous content (although it was conceded that it may get logistically difficult if there are overages on the production).

While there was some support for restructuring licencing incentives for other Canadian broadcasters to show more Indigenous-made content, others felt they should not be given incentives to uphold their responsibilities to carry Indigenous content under the Broadcasting Act and should be fined for failing to meet these responsibilities.

Aboriginal Peoples Television Network

APTN's revenue model, like that of other broadcasters, has depended on broad-based distribution by cable and satellite distributors to reach the bulk of its audience. Changes in the distribution environment have gradually been eroding this source of revenue. This compounded with concentration of ownership and other structural elements in the mainstream broadcasting industry have created additional challenges for a stand-alone service like APTN.

There was a lot of appreciation expressed for the efforts of APTN, coupled with a number of concerns. Almost all respondents indicated ways in which APTN could better deliver on its mandate. Key issues to be addressed, including:

- There is a common perception that APTN has underutilized CMF funding by not developing or producing enough new dramatic content, and that APTN prioritizes programming that will appeal to mainstream audiences, rather than distinctively Indigenous programming. APTN has stated that it does not have sufficient funding for doing so, at the same time, showing acquisitions and reruns from other networks. If APTN is inclined to show content more appealing to mainstream audiences, creators question

whether APTN is fulfilling its mandate⁵².

- While there is a mechanism in place to answer producer inquiries regarding funding decisions, many feel APTN is not accountable program selection and needs to provide feedback to Indigenous storytellers on why programs were not selected for broadcast.
- “Television producers are challenged by low license fees that APTN offers, a lack of interim financing and the lack of participation by other broadcasters in financing television programming. There is a need for higher license fees, and in this regard, producers support an increase in APTN’s resources. Some producers would like to have APTN’s investment in productions produced by its related company, Animiki See⁵³, instead of independent production companies.”⁵⁴
- While APTN licenses every year, there is often a year lag in renewing programs. If a producer is given a one-year licence for, they then have to wait a year to get licensed for a second year. Many production companies cannot survive the wait and lose their audiences during this time.
- APTN no longer commissions one-off documentaries (save first-time directors). The expectation for documentary series limits what is considered a primary story-telling platform for Indigenous creators.

As it noted in its CRTC license renewal application, APTN has “triggered the development of a much more substantial Aboriginal independent production industry than had previously been considered possible leading to the emergence of distinctive, professional content reflecting a wide range of Aboriginal perspectives.” Increased support to APTN could help to significantly amplify the innovative role it is playing in changing perspective on Indigenous media. If so supported, APTN could have a greater impact by taking on higher budget production for drama series and feature films, higher licensing fees for television productions, and digital media production.⁵⁵

Other recommendations include that APTN should provide interim financing to compensate for the timing of licensing payments; and provide more up front licencing funding to producers in the manner of CMF. Further, considering the number of issues affecting Indigenous people today, including missing and murdered Indigenous women, the impact of residential schools, and resource extraction, one-off documentaries are an important advocacy tool for Indigenous storytellers and should remain a priority of APTN.

On the whole, Indigenous storytellers felt that without APTN, many could not do the work they do; yet, all felt APTN needed to do a better job delivering on its mandate as opposed to emulating the traditional broadcaster format.

⁵² APTN has a CRTC condition of license to broadcast 75% Canadian original (commissioned) content on their schedule.

⁵³ Animiki See productions are generally a partnership with another Aboriginal production company, with Animiki as the minority shareholder. Animiki is open to discussing partnerships with any Aboriginal production company, and could bring many of the benefits that a non-Aboriginal production partner usually brings, including the ability to access interim financing.

⁵⁴ Communications MDR 2013, p 53.

⁵⁵ Ibid p 6-7.

Investigate New Distribution Models to Increase Audiences

Digital distribution is an emerging platform for the distribution of screen-based media. Viewing habits are changing, with more and more people moving away from the traditional broadcast spectrum to a multi-tiered, multi device approach to viewing. “Digital distribution models may be moving towards niche audiences for packaging content, with the idea that global audiences will drive demand for niche and targeted programming. If this proves to be the case, Indigenous films will have the potential to reach a global niche market of Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences seeking this content.”⁵⁶ There are a variety of associated opportunities emerging from alternative platforms, including books, apps and merchandise. Indigenous storytellers are not only engaging in cultural creation, but in creating industry and commerce. Access to venture capital necessary to open up these opportunities.

Many participants felt that it is time to diversify distribution platforms for Indigenous programming, particularly at the regional level, rather than having one network for all Indigenous people across the entire country. Others noted more support is needed for self-distribution, especially in the instance producers can demonstrate audience numbers similar to APTN. At the same time, several called for and supported the creation of an additional Indigenous network, which would be collectively owned and operated by Indigenous people, since APTN is unable to show all of the Indigenous content storytellers are creating. Such a forum could potentially be web-based.

“APTN also recognizes that interactive digital production and distribution is a priority and has made its DigitalDrum.ca platform a centrepiece of its future strategy.”⁵⁷ In determining the impact of new distribution models it would prudent to quantify the impact of DigitalDrum on stimulating new production.

Indigenous storytellers have decades of experience creating and producing impactful and informative documentaries, which have been used to educate Indigenous people, the Canadian public and international audiences about the realities diverse Indigenous people face in this country and the issues that impact and concern them. Educational settings - ranging from elementary schools to universities and adult education centres - are an ideal distribution platform for Indigenous storytellers to share their work and transform Indigenous realities and mainstream cultural realities. Indigenous storytellers call on funders to be flexible regarding distribution through education channels and learning platforms.

“Digital media production budgets are low on average and producers are expressing the need for the CMF to make more funding available for Aboriginal-language interactive digital media production and generally for the government to take a lead in helping to build the digital media production capacity of the sector.”⁵⁸ Indigenous producers were hopeful that access to subsidies similar to the mainstream would result in the development this sector into a robust alternate distribution system. There was also a call for Telefilm to reinstate funding for independent alternate distribution⁵⁹.

Some have called for a shift in focus from the conventional television model, which an increasing number of audiences are already doing, toward newer digital showcases like

⁵⁶ imagineNATIVE, 2013, p. 13

⁵⁷ MDR p. 4

⁵⁸ MDR p 5

⁵⁹ Telefilm has recently made marketing funding available to producers as well as distributors. Other Telefilm marketing support includes their Promotion Program and Marketing and Festival Participation Program.

Isuma.tv. *Isuma.TV* (Igloolik Isuma Productions) is the first international online platform for Aboriginal audiovisual productions from around the world. The site currently carries over 6000 videos in more than 80 languages on over 800 user-controlled channels created by producers in Canada, the U.S.A., Greenland, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Australia, New Zealand and all over Latin America.⁶⁰ Already, Isuma.tv has created servers in five communities to provide access to its programming and serve as a community channel, greatly benefiting those communities.

Alternative platforms could be more multi-lingual, multi-disciplinary and inclusive, providing additional opportunities for Indigenous producers to access audiences. NFB, CBC and APTN could assist in supporting a new system that includes an online Indigenous movie channel or channels where Indigenous children can watch programming in their own languages. The CMF Experimental Stream could help fund the development of these alternatives. In fact, in a November 2013 letter, AAMP advocated to the CMF to “ earmark 5% of the development, production and marketing budget of the Experimental Stream specifically for Aboriginal-owned projects⁶¹”.

Barriers to Production

Access to and Leveraging Funding

A number of creators expressed serious concern about the requirement to access other funding sources to qualify for professional funding (CMF or Telefilm), while at the same time not being able to combine arts council funding with professional funding. The government has restricted the ability to leverage Canada Council funding, seeing this as a duplication of funding from federal sources. Further, the Canada Council for the Arts requires storytellers retain the rights to their stories, while the mainstream industry largely requires storytellers to sign away rights to their stories. Reviewing and opening the restrictions for CMF Convergent and Experimental Streams - including the ability to leverage Canada Council funding as a trigger to access CMF funding - is considered necessary to begin to level the playing field. It was also put forward that CMF program funding streams - Convergent and Experimental - should each have an “indigenous” component.

Indigenous storytellers noted that to be eligible for funding to make a feature length film, one is required to have produced at least one or two features distributed through cinematic release, even after extensive experience producing television shows. Funders should give greater recognition to experience in television, short film and other screen-based media in funding eligibility for features.

Tax credit programs are a significant source of funding, yet many Indigenous producers do not have credit access to secure bridge financing for tax credits they will later receive. Respondents noted that it takes far too long to receive the tax credit, threatening the viability of Indigenous production companies. Moreover, tax credits apply only to the province in which the production is made and do not apply to Indigenous crew from outside that province. One suggested strategy is to provide Indigenous-dedicated bonuses for work in under-served and under-represented regions of the country (eg. eastern regions).

⁶⁰ Isuma TV website, retrieved from <http://www.isuma.tv/about-us>.

⁶¹ The letter can be found online [here](#).

Production Capacity

In some cases, producers identified a lack of capacity when it came to complex navigation of industry funding, including trigger financing, getting a distributor on board and casting⁶². Writers and directors have expressed the desire to work with Indigenous producers, but few Indigenous producers are able to access development and production funding, hindering their ability to help Indigenous writers and directors. Indigenous storytellers face more difficulty finding project partners outside their own networks, particularly for those living outside of city centres.

Many Indigenous storytellers wear several hats when it comes to making a film, which can make the process very challenging. In Indigenous production companies, on average, fewer than five people are employed on a permanent basis.⁶³ Most Indigenous production companies are going project to project without being able to accumulate enough capital to invest in significant infrastructure for improved ongoing capacity.⁶⁴

“[Producers are] concerned about the long-term sustainability of their businesses since their lack of access to broadcasters other than APTN represents a key barrier in their growth... An analysis of the financial structures of projects funded through the CMF reveals that Aboriginal language productions have less access to financing beyond the CMF than other Canadian productions.”⁶⁵

Some of the strategies to mitigate production capacity are noted within the previous funding sections, others can be found in the capacity building section of this strategy.

Rigid Application of International Borders by CRTC and ACTRA

Creators and producers raised two ways in which rigid application of rules relating to international borders put barriers in the way of their ability to make Indigenous content:

- 1) Canadian content requirements; and,
- 2) Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) penalties for using actors from outside of Canada⁶⁶.

A number of creators noted that Canadian content rules make it more difficult to collaborate with other Indigenous colleagues across colonial borders. Producers want to be able to co-produce across borders and show their programs on networks in other countries. Indigenous storytellers cited Article III of the 1794 Jay Treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America⁶⁷ and Article 36 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples⁶⁸ as a demonstration of the Indigenous right to freely collaborate with

⁶² imagineNATIVE p 46.

⁶³ Communications MDR, 2013, p 3

⁶⁴ Bear, p 32.

⁶⁵ MDR p 5.

⁶⁶ ACTRA will waive these charges on a case-by-case basis, but this poses an undue burden on Indigenous producers and is simply not appropriate in the case of Indigenous storytelling.

⁶⁷ “It is agreed, that it shall at all times be free to His Majesty’s subjects, and to the citizens of the United States, and also to the Indians dwelling on either side of the said boundary line, freely to pass and repass, by land or inland navigation into the respective territories and countries of the two parties on the continent of America ... and freely carry on trade and commerce with each other.” The Jay Treaty; November 19, 1794. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/jay.asp

⁶⁸ “Article 36 1. Indigenous peoples, in particular those divided by international borders, have the right to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with their own members as well as other peoples across borders. 2. States, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, shall take effective measures to facilitate the exercise and ensure the implementation of this right.” United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. 2008. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

Indigenous partners from across borders. Funding entities generally should not reinforce colonial borders, but should encourage international co-productions, training and mentoring opportunities. Broadcasters in other countries, like PBS in the United States, have demonstrated interest and Indigenous people in Canada would like to be able to work across these borders.

Similarly, ACTRA should enable international indigenous collaborations and co-productions by removing barriers for the use of American actors. ACTRA currently charges a production 10 percent more on actors used from outside Canada. The conundrum for Indigenous productions is the industry expectation to use prominent actors to ensure a film's commercial success; however, the only known Indigenous actor recognized by the industry in Canada seems to be Adam Beach⁶⁹. Changing the existing barriers/perceptions will assist Indigenous storytellers make greater connections with Indigenous talent across borders and eventually assist in building a larger cadre of known talent in Canada.

Diversity of Indigenous Languages

Funders and broadcasters need to be cognizant of the wide variety of Indigenous languages and cultures across the country. Current funding for Aboriginal language versioning is not sufficient to enable Indigenous producers to reflect their languages in their productions without affecting the quality of their productions. Because there are so many Indigenous languages with few remaining speakers left, it can be more challenging and often more expensive to produce content in Indigenous languages rather than in English or French. When working with elders, trying to capture their stories and their use of a language before they pass, Indigenous storytellers need support for the additional time it takes to work with elders at the pace and energy level they can sustain. Indigenous language teachers, practitioners and educators should be involved in program development to ensure public funds are put to effective use in revitalizing languages. It is important to have language specific funding, but this requires innovative approaches to language programs that are flexible (e.g. if there are few fluent speakers, how does participating in the medium build language skills and learning into the process). Versioning funding needs to address production realities.

Participants also called on the funders not to see versioning as an investment in restoring Indigenous languages in the spirit of reconciliation, acknowledging the role residential schools played in driving these languages to the verge of extinction. In recognition of the role of screen-based media in cultural dialogue and self-determination, funding eligibility assessment should be revised to focus on “culturally and linguistically relevant objectives”, rather than restricting Indigenous creators to commercial viability.

Given former federal funding cuts and reallocations, and considering the commitment to reconciliation by the new federal government, it is reasonable to expect increased funding for Indigenous language support. In addition to increasing funding for Indigenous language versioning, interviewees also suggested the creation of Indigenous language media incubators. Heritage Canada has also been called upon to promote the experience and talent of Indigenous storytellers, to remind Canadians how Indigenous storytellers are central to Canadian culture and national identity.

⁶⁹ Almost every director/producer interviewed cited the industry as asking them to use Adam Beach in their production.

Rights

Mainstream industry-standard practices can be at odds with Indigenous values and right to cultural expression. Indigenous writers and directors are often asked, as part of the mainstream industry-standard practice, to sign away their story rights to access funding. Indigenous storytellers have expressed concern that the mainstream industry does not understand their point of view - many of their stories belong to others within their communities or to nations collectively - which can hamper potential working relationships before they begin.⁷⁰ Most distributors want an exclusive arrangement, limiting an artist's ability to promote their work to the variety of audiences they find it important to connect with. There are a few exceptions that were noted, including Vtape and universities such as Concordia.

Governance

Lack of Cultural Awareness in the Mainstream Industry

There remain few, if any, Aboriginal people represented in the film industry at large, within funding agencies, broadcasting networks, distribution companies, festivals and other film-related organizations. The under representation of Aboriginal people within the industry means that Aboriginal filmmakers must often navigate a "culture gap" when it comes to their work. Aboriginal writers, directors and producers alike cited a lack of cultural understanding of Aboriginal content, process and stories as a barrier to working within the larger industry to develop and produce content. ...

Pre-conceptions about what defines an Aboriginal film affected the feedback received on scripts. Some filmmakers reported that they had received the critique that their content was too niche and specific, and in other cases no specifically "Indian" enough...As a result, filmmakers reported being asked to repeatedly confirm to non-Aboriginal preconceptions about what is commercially viable.⁷¹

Many Indigenous storytellers reiterated the need to navigate a 'culture gap' in their work, a gap which implicates many aspects of production from training, to development, to script, to screen. Issues of cultural awareness / cultural competency extend to funders as well. The existing perception of many is that while well meaning, the staff at CMF and Telefilm in particular have more of a project management background and are less attuned to artistic considerations and Indigenous realities than is ideal to provide the support needed to develop a thriving Indigenous screen-based storytelling industry. Participants heralded recent changes within the Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) where the Aboriginal Media Arts is run by an Indigenous program officer and makes funding decisions through an all-Indigenous panel.⁷² Both the Ontario and Toronto Arts Councils have also hired Indigenous staff to administer their programs. Indigenous-specific funding is most successful when it empowers Indigenous people to play leadership and decision-making roles. This pattern is seen in other successful programs in Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

"An increase in Aboriginal representation within organizations and institutions in the screen-based sector would address a number of challenges and create a crucial bridge between

⁷⁰ imagineNATIVE, p 45.

⁷¹ imagineNATIVE, p. 43-44

⁷² imagineNATIVE, p 3.

institutions and communities by boosting outreach efforts and talent scouting.”⁷³ Increasing Indigenous representation within key decision-making roles in the industry – whether it be on the boards of agencies or at the program staff level - will help to close the ‘culture gap’ Indigenous creators and producers have had to navigate, and will enable greater cultural understanding within organizations and institutions. Having Indigenous people in key roles in the industry also helps attract new Indigenous creators and producers to participate in the industry.

Establish an Indigenous Screen Office

In June 2016 a group of 24 prominent, award winning Canadian Indigenous film makers wrote Telefilm requesting the creation of an Indigenous-run film office to support the development, production and marketing of Indigenous feature films. “The creation of an Indigenous film office is a crucial step towards a long-term strategy to better reflect and invest in Indigenous stories on screen — as these narratives shape our cultural landscape, reflect the richness and diversity of the country and are fundamental to our identity as a nation.” Throughout the CMF engagement process discussions on the idea have grown to include partners such as CMF, NFB and APTN. An Indigenous-managed Screen Office with dedicated funding and resources to support the development, production and marketing of Indigenous screen-based works is a priority for Indigenous filmmakers. Many felt that establishing an Indigenous-managed Screen Office would be the single most important way to ensure real progress and transformation of relationships. An Indigenous Screen Office would serve to “build on the proven success of Indigenous filmmakers to forge a new era of innovative Indigenous screen-based stories to connect with audiences in Canada and around the world.”

Initial steps may include investigating the benefits of dedicated Indigenous screen offices abroad, such as Screen Australia which is widely regarded to be one of the greatest models for success, or the Te Pae Pae Ataata in New Zealand which has a growing impact in developing Maori filmmakers and growing distribution opportunities. The Indigenous screen office could serve to develop and implement a long-term strategy supporting all levels of talent development, including short film production and feature script development; provide hands-on training; administer substantial project financing and; broker relationships with broadcasters, distributors and federal funders.

Collect Better Data

It is currently difficult to track productions made by Indigenous writers, directors and producers, due in part to a clear definition of what an Indigenous production is. If the industry could adopt one standard, such as the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival definition of an Indigenous film as one that has been “written, directed and/or produced by someone who self-identifies as Indigenous”, better data could be tracked and collected, helping demonstrate the viability and circulation of Indigenous-created content.⁷⁴ Including an optional declaration on funding application forms could be a particularly effective way of tracking Indigenous-created content. For example, all CMF programs ask for (voluntary, not mandatory): producers and key creative citizenship, Aboriginal nation (self-declared) and,

⁷³ imagineNATIVE p.12.

⁷⁴ imagineNATIVE, p 9.

now, gender⁷⁵. Broadcasters / distributors considered identifying Indigenous producers / production houses as a matter for further research.

Many Indigenous storytellers resort to self-distribution of their films to Indigenous communities; however, these figures are not generally reflected in box office sales. As a key mainstream indicator of the success of a film, low official box office figures can be a barrier for Indigenous filmmakers. The same is true in television, given that audience data from Numeris does not include Indigenous audiences. Audience levels need to be counted for screenings in educational settings and Indigenous communities to better reflect the distribution reach of Indigenous productions. A better means of tracking viewing numbers will demonstrate Indigenous-created content's success relative to mainstream viewing figures, such as box office numbers for feature films or Numeris data for television, in turn demonstrating strong market interest. Finally, CMF, Telefilm and the Canada Council could help gather information, data and statistics to enable an informed approach to the unique cultural and linguistic circumstances of the Indigenous audience.

Create a Coordinating Body to Represent Indigenous Producers

Most agreed that an effective producers association could play a major role in strengthening the Indigenous screen-based industry in Canada. As Jeff Bear (2004) notes, there has been a growing call for “an anchor, a place to call the ‘commons,’” or a coordinating body to organize Indigenous producers into an association so an Indigenous workforce can be promoted and to support and represent Indigenous screen-based media generally.⁷⁶

The Alliance of Aboriginal Media Professionals (AAMP) is an association of Canadian First Nations, Inuit and Metis producers, directors, writers and other television, film and digital media professionals. It advocates for equitable funding from government agencies and access to Canadian audiences. Most producers interviewed felt that AMP is not currently able to serve effectively as a representative voice of Indigenous producers.⁷⁷ Participants acknowledged that AAMP is volunteer run, with a very limited budget, thus limited in what it can do.

It was suggested that a producers association⁷⁸, supported by funding and an appropriate governance structure, could serve to:

- conduct market research to increase awareness amongst Indigenous producers of audience and marketplace conditions, including festivals, forums, and seminars;
- purchase promotional booths at major trade shows and festivals in Canada and internationally;
- facilitate the mentoring of new Indigenous producers in the productions of more established Indigenous producers;
- provide support for Indigenous storytellers from northern and remote communities who need to come to the major urban film centres to work or train;
- help to create and manage a talent bank, making it easier to find and draw on an array of Indigenous talent, whether looking for a producer, actors, or other technicians; and

⁷⁵ Telefilm noted that due to restrictions in the *Privacy Act* they are unable to collect data on the individuals attached to a project, unless there is a requirement in the Program that necessitates this (eg. FASP required applicants to self-declare).

⁷⁶ Bear, p 15.

⁷⁷ Producers taking part in the discussions did not speak about the Canadian Media Producers Association.

⁷⁸ One producer suggested the Association used by francophone producers outside of Quebec, in which the Executive Director of that association is not a producer, is a working model to be explored.

- lobby Indigenous organizations and governments to increase Indigenous political support for the funding a variety of initiatives to support the growth of the Indigenous industry.

By way of example, in August 2014, the Alliance of Aboriginal Media Professionals (AAMP) and the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network concluded a Terms of Trade Agreement (the “Terms of Trade Agreement” or the “Agreement”). The Agreement governs a number of key aspects of projects produced by independent First Nations, Inuit and Métis producers and licensed by APTN.

Professional Development & Capacity Building

Capacity building is about more than training. It is also the broader culture and economy of innovation and excellence. This is achieved through fostering talent, validating social and cultural values that support creativity and innovation and development of structures and processes to support this innovation.

Excellence is at the core of our cultural expression with our traditional forms of expression. We must see ourselves as more than “just making television.” We must see ourselves as the inheritors of a great cultural wealth – cultural wealth that must be nurtured, respected and enhanced. High standards, innovation and unique forms of expression and storytelling should inform our work and “brand” – if you like – our form of media as unique in the world.⁷⁹

Feedback received around capacity building demonstrated that while there have been many training initiatives over the past several decades, Indigenous storytellers remain without opportunities to produce and show their projects as intended. Funding to ensure projects move from development to production helps prevent training from being a “development loop” that never completes itself. Many felt that Indigenous storytellers are in a state of perpetual training and that without the ability to make connections with production houses, broadcasters and other distributors, any further training will make little difference in the “endless vortex”. “Although many training, development and pilot programs offered by funders and training institutions were valued by filmmakers, many filmmakers still found it very challenging to access funds for production, and wanted to see more training programs that resulted in the outcome of a produced work.⁸⁰”

Funders acknowledged the cyclical structure of training initiatives wherein Indigenous storytellers lacking opportunities to develop their careers and hands-on experience. Broadcasters acknowledged that many very talented Indigenous storytellers are trapped in a cycle of training programs, or perpetual apprenticeship, and need to be able to access more hands-on opportunities, starting with shadowing on set. They supported the idea of bringing new Indigenous storytellers onto existing productions to shadow and develop their skills in a hands-on environment.

Representatives from training organizations reiterated sentiments of Indigenous storytellers - building and improving on training programs is one thing, but without projects and

⁷⁹ Bear, p 31-33.

⁸⁰ imagineNATIVE, p. 46.

opportunities from industry, the cycle of training will have no end. More support for the creation of short films, television and digital programs via grants was suggested to provide tangible opportunities with deliverables to move beyond the cycle of apprenticeship. Funders also acknowledged that supporting the existing Indigenous talent pool requires a shift away from an almost exclusive focus on “emergence” to longevity.

Indigenous creators and producers provided extensive feedback on their experience with training programs and have identified key components to successful training initiatives (see Appendix B). What follows are areas identified for initiatives or targeted funding. It was widely commented that Indigenous-led and created training programs should be supported and recognized, versus funding mainstream organizations to deliver Indigenous components.

Developing Producer’s Skills

Perhaps the biggest challenge highlighted by Indigenous storytellers is the opportunity to access distribution. Indigenous directors are seeking a course to help them understand how to do their work in a way that will best connect with distributors and funders to ensure the success of their projects. A fulsome and realistic understanding of how the mainstream industry works and how to navigate it successfully, was considered important to success. Such training would walk Indigenous storytellers from the beginning of their project through the end, including:

- Understanding the industry landscape: who’s who and what’s what.
- Building financial structures both within Canada and internationally.
- Building audiences both within Canada and internationally.
- Pitching projects to producers, distributors and marketers.

While existing training initiatives should be maintained, special emphasis on developing Indigenous producers would help create a strong pool of talent to increase the production of Indigenous screen based content. Support is needed for developing the full range of producer skills, from proposal writing, cinematography, sound, lighting, editing, raising money, promotion, and scheduling to develop the whole industry and move away from a focus on one-off productions. This includes exposure to festivals and other capacity building initiatives. Improved training would provide more Indigenous producers the financial and management capabilities to ensure there are enough human, financial and technical resources to “pull off the job.”⁸¹ More training in business development would improve Indigenous filmmakers’ ability to help those who self-produce their films because they are unable to find like-minded producing partners.

⁸¹ Bear, p 23.

Story & Script Development

Story and script development were considered cornerstones of the industry. Writers noted that there are few supports for filmmakers to move from treatment to outline to first and then second draft. It was suggested that this is why there are so few Indigenous feature films. Story is fundamental starting place. It was suggested writing programs should span four to five months – including enough time to write, meet with mentors for feedback, then rewrite, and repeat to ensure stories are simple and effective. Support for script development and intensive screenwriting labs could be delivered through existing training institutions, though it is important they are Indigenous-managed and include Indigenous mentors. Participants from the inaugural imagineNATIVE lab suggested that this was a model program to build on /from.

Mainstream Mentorships

Shadowing / mentoring opportunities with mainstream broadcasters or on mainstream productions are also considered critical to the development of Indigenous talent and considered the cornerstone of success. The opportunity to shadow established directors or producers (with cultural acuity), or work with story editors, over extended periods of time often served to bolster filmmaker's careers. Particularly paid internships for mid career and senior filmmakers on projects that would include credits were considered a key goal.

Forums for Mid-Career Creators

Originally, one of Telefilm's key strategic objectives has been to promote professional development and help indigenous filmmakers advance their careers. With the end of the Featuring Aboriginal Stories Program (FASP), there has been less emphasis on Indigenous filmmaker's career development. A number of Indigenous creators noted that most of the existing training opportunities are designed for people just getting started in the industry and that there is very little support for creators in the mid-stage of their career who want to take their skill to the next level.

The desire to connect with one's colleagues, to create a team of peers that could keep in touch and support each other throughout their careers, was common for Indigenous storytellers at all stages of their careers. Creators supported the idea of a retreat style approach for Indigenous creators in this stage of their career, bringing people with considerable experience together to share ideas and further develop them in discussion with others in a similar situation. The "retreat style" facilitates creativity, brainstorming and the ability for colleagues to push each other. They also emphasized the need to tie this form of training to funding to complete the projects.

Northern Specific Training

A northern-based producer noted that there are a lot of mainstream productions that go to the Arctic, but that they usually engage through larger institutions. These productions offer opportunities for apprenticeship/mentorship not currently accessed. Northern Indigenous storytellers would like to see more support for local training led by experienced northern Indigenous storytellers, enabling leadership over their own training.

Moving Forward

Supporting & Developing the Indigenous Screen-based Media Industry in Canada: A Path Forward is a document serving as an accompanying piece to this report which summarizes the objectives of the strategy and focuses on the key initial first steps for moving forward. Many industry and funding participants have been briefing their organizations on the report findings. In addition, ongoing discussions have emerged, stakeholders have begun to take measures to implement several recommendations, and others have indicated a willingness to participate in joint processes moving forward.

By way of example, CMF, APTN, and Telefilm have met to confirm a joint commitment to the creation of an Indigenous Screen Office, the details of which will emerge over the next few months.

Further, Telefilm recently made a number of commitments to enhance their own programs, including allocating upwards of 3.5 - 4 million dollars average to Indigenous-led projects per year for the next 5 years, starting in 2017/18. Telefilm will begin a wider consultation process for the new funding, and when a position becomes available, will hire an Indigenous staff representative at the analyst level. Telefilm has also indicated interest in pursuing discussion around the creation of Indigenous co-production treaties with Australia and New Zealand.

It is important for all organizations to address the recommendations and make commitments on behalf of their respective entities.

Appendix A: Comparison of Barriers and Recommendations

	Barriers	Recommendations /Options
Funding	<p>Uneven playing field. Indigenous content creators are under-resourced.</p>	<p>Funders to review current funding frameworks to ensure funding models commensurate with unique costs of making films in Indigenous communities including costs relating to geography, appropriate cultural processes, and accessing Indigenous language holders.</p> <p>As an interim measure, funders and government should serve to build capacity and remove some of the existing systemic barriers and current inequities.</p> <p>Federal government (Heritage) has a significant obligation to equitably support Indigenous languages and cultures through screen-based media.</p>
	<p>Fragmented and inadequate funding</p>	<p>Provide a centralized, clear resource – such as an overview map - of all of the potential funding opportunities Indigenous storytellers. Use inventory to identify gaps and create a roadmap for addressing gaps together.</p> <p>Align and merge smaller pots of Indigenous-dedicated screen-based media funding into an Indigenous Screen Fund, governed by Indigenous people, which could help advocate for Indigenous storytellers with distributors and broadcasters. Possible partners to pool resources include: Telefilm, the Canada Council, the CMF, NFB, APTN and CBC/Radio-Canada.</p> <p>An amalgamated funding pool with two streams: 1) supporting Indigenous languages 2) focussed on Indigenous stories to speak to Indigenous and mainstream audiences.</p>
	<p>Indigenous feature length fiction filmmaking is lagging behind.</p>	<p>Continue support for short-film production. Target short film funding to filmmakers with the best potential to cross over into feature film.</p> <p>Partner in the development of a targeted Indigenous feature film production fund.</p> <p>Increase the existing Telefilm Microbudget funding from a maximum of \$127,500 per year to \$250,000-\$300,000 for Indigenous filmmakers.</p> <p>Make Telefilm’s Indigenous-dedicated funding available to mid-career filmmakers.</p> <p>Funders should give greater recognition to experience in television, short film and other screen-based media in funding eligibility for features.</p> <p>CMF program funding streams - Convergent and Experimental – should each have an “indigenous” component.</p> <p>Government should reconsider the ability to leverage Canada Council funding as a trigger to access CMF funding for Indigenous productions.</p>

	<p>Creators have expressed the need for increased funding for interactive digital media productions and to build capacity in digital media production.</p> <p>Costs can be significantly higher in more remote regions and communities, such as on many reserves.</p>	<p>Increased CMF funding for Indigenous-language interactive digital media productions to build capacity.</p> <p>CMF, the Bell Fund and APTN partner to present funding clinics for Indigenous producers who would like support for growing their capacity and success in digital media.</p> <p>Remote and northern funding envelopes require increased financial support and direct funding or regional bonuses. Targeted funds need to take into account: lack and exorbitant cost of high-speed internet, young populations, English as a second language, local training initiatives, and cost of transportation to participate in industry activities.</p>
	<p>Perception that non-Indigenous people are accessing Indigenous-specific funds; ensuring projects are actually driven by the Indigenous partner.</p>	<p>Federal government initiatives to improve access to digital infrastructure in order to increase accessibility – akin to connectivity initiatives in the late 90s – through Heritage.</p> <p>Analysis of funding eligibility aiming towards a standardized method of identifying an Indigenous production to access Indigenous-specific funds.</p> <p>Improving flexibility around non-Indigenous partnerships with mechanisms to ensure Indigenous creators have prominent roles in Indigenous productions.</p>
Distribution		
<p>Distribution</p>	<p>Mainstream broadcasters have not acted on their responsibilities under the <i>Broadcasting Act</i> to reflect Indigenous content.</p> <p>The mainstream industry is viewed as exclusionary, ghettoizing Indigenous creators to APTN as the place for Indigenous storytellers.</p>	<p>CRTC to change the licensing agreements for broadcasters to offer them better incentives and enforce requirements for mainstream broadcasters to air Indigenous-created programming, including language programming.</p> <p>Consult with Canadian broadcasters on incentives that would create favourable conditions for their financial participation in Indigenous productions.</p> <p>Offer tax credits to encourage broadcasters and other distributors to increase their distribution of projects created by Indigenous storytellers; or providing them funding incentives for airing Indigenous productions.</p> <p>Encourage broadcasters other than APTN to trigger projects by Aboriginal producers.</p> <p>Mitigate the prevailing and persistent mainstream practice of using Indigenous storytellers as consultants on productions written, directed and produced by non-Indigenous people.</p> <p>Partnerships amongst broadcasters to create content and maximize audiences and impact.</p> <p>Decision makers within funding agencies and the broadcast industry should attend festivals like imagineNATIVE to see Indigenous content and understand the depth and breadth of the Indigenous screen-based industry.</p> <p>Mainstream industry development training / mentorships for Indigenous creators: writers, directors and producers.</p>

	<p>Broadcasters should provide an annual inventory on the Indigenous programming they have pre-licensed, acquired and developed and specify how many of these programs were produced by Indigenous controlled-production companies.</p> <p>Maintain CMF's Aboriginal Program current Licence Fee Threshold of 10%, allowing producers to pay the lead/first window broadcaster 5% back in marketing fees so the broadcaster's net cash commitment would only be 5%.</p>
<p>Changes in the distribution environment have gradually eroded APTN's source of revenue.</p>	<p>Increase funding to APTN to amplify the innovative role it plays in changing perspective on Indigenous media and allow for higher budget production for drama series and feature films, higher licensing fees for television productions, and digital media production.</p>
<p>There is a perception that APTN has underutilized CMF funding by not developing or producing enough new content.</p>	<p>CMF should work with APTN to encourage it to develop more unique Indigenous content and reduce acquisitions and reruns on the country's only dedicated Indigenous television network.</p> <p>APTN should re-instate commissions one-off documentaries which are considered a primary story-telling platform for Indigenous creators.</p>
<p>2 year licensing means production companies cannot survive the wait and lose their audiences.</p>	<p>APTN should provide interim financing to compensate for the timing of licensing payments; and provide more up front licencing funding to producers in the manner of CMF.</p>
<p>Need to diversify distribution platforms to assist access to niche markets for content distribution and create a robust alternate distribution system.</p>	<p>Investigate and support new distribution models and platforms to increase audiences, particularly at the regional level.</p> <p>CMF to make more funding available for Aboriginal-language interactive digital media production and government to take a lead in helping to build the digital media production capacity of the sector.</p> <p>Provide funding and support for self-distribution; especially in the instance producers can demonstrate audience numbers similar to APTN.</p> <p>Telefilm should reinstate funding for independent alternate distribution and other marketing subsidies.</p> <p>Funder's support for the creation of an additional Indigenous network – possibly web-based - which would be collectively owned and operated by Indigenous people. NFB, CBC and APTN could assist in supporting a new system that includes an online Indigenous movie channel or channels where Indigenous children can watch programming in their own languages.</p> <p>Funders should increase flexibility regarding distribution through education channels and learning platforms.</p>

Production	Limits on leveraging funding sources, keeps the overall level of funding limited.	Funders should give greater recognition to experience in television, short film and other screen-based media in funding eligibility.
		Funders should reconsider the ability to combine arts council funding with professional funding.
		Provide Indigenous-dedicated bonuses for work in under-served and under-represented regions of the country.
	Threats to the long-term viability of Indigenous production companies.	Enable credit access to secure bridge financing for tax credits.
		Telefilm should reconsider eligibility requirements for production funds.
	Rigid application of rules relating to international borders put barriers in the way of their ability to make Indigenous content.	Funding entities should encourage international co-productions, training and mentoring opportunities by reviewing Canadian content requirements in the context of UNDRIP and the Jay Treaty. (ACTRA) penalties for using actors from outside of Canada should be waved for Indigenous productions.
Because there are so many Indigenous languages with few remaining speakers left, it can be more challenging and often more expensive to produce content in Indigenous languages rather than in French or English.	Versioning funding needs to address the reality of the challenges and expense associated with producing Indigenous language content.	
	Indigenous language teachers, practitioners and educators should be involved in program development to ensure public funds are put to effective use in revitalizing languages.	
	Funding eligibility assessment should be revised to focus on “culturally and linguistically relevant objectives”, rather than restricting Indigenous creators to commercial viability.	
	Increased federal funding support for Indigenous language productions.	
Mainstream industry-standard practices at odds with Indigenous values and right to cultural expression.	Funding for the creation of Indigenous language media incubators.	
	Canada Council for the Arts requires storytellers retain the rights to their stories, while the mainstream industry largely requires storytellers to sign away rights to their stories. Explore alternatives.	
Governance	Lack of cultural awareness in the mainstream screen-based media industry.	Increase Indigenous representation in decision-making roles within the industry (boards, juries, core staff).
		Targeted hiring of Indigenous decision makers by funders. Bringing and Aboriginal presence to the boards of cultural agencies and public and private broadcasters.
	Lack of representation within key decision-making roles.	Creation of an Indigenous Screen Office (CMF in partnership with Telefilm and the National Film Board and other key stakeholders). Investigate the benefits of dedicated indigenous film offices abroad, such as the Indigenous Department within Screen Australia in that country.

	<p>Industry perception of Indigenous screening success as reflected by audience numbers.</p> <p>Need for increased support in the mainstream industry.</p>	<p>Industry could adopt one standard definition for “Indigenous”-created content. For example, APTN requires all licensed programs accessing CMF funding to be from a company with minimum 51% Aboriginal ownership (ie. control of shares). APTN also requires a majority of the key creatives (writer or director categories) to be Aboriginal).</p> <p>Audience levels need to be counted for screenings in educational settings and Indigenous communities to better reflect the distribution reach of Indigenous productions.</p> <p>Implement an industry standard for optional declaration on funding applications to effectively track Indigenous content.</p> <p>CMF, Telefilm and the Canada Council to gather information, data and statistics to enable an informed approach to the unique cultural and linguistic circumstances of the Indigenous audience.</p> <p>Establish an effective, funded Indigenous producer’s association.</p> <p>Explore models and mandates for an organization that supports career development.</p>
<p>Capacity Building & Professional Development</p>	<p>Indigenous storytellers remain without opportunities to produce and show their projects as intended (the development vortex).</p> <p>Increase Professional Development opportunities.</p>	<p>Indigenous-led and created training programs that should be supported and recognized, versus funding mainstream organizations to deliver Indigenous components.</p> <p>Tie funding for making projects – moving from development to production - to training initiatives.</p> <p>Support for the creation of short films, television and digital programs via grants to provide tangible opportunities with deliverables to move beyond the cycle of apprenticeship.</p> <p>Re-examine the models in Australia and New Zealand, where government supports the development of Indigenous storytellers from the very beginning throughout their careers.</p> <p>Funders could offer incentives to broadcasters encouraging experienced writers, directors and producers to act as mentors for emerging Indigenous storytellers (such as the creation of a “Match Making” initiative for producers).</p> <p>Develop a “Production 101” course, and similar supports to develop a full range of producer skills.</p> <p>Support for script development and intensive screenwriting labs.</p> <p>Develop forums for mid-career development.</p> <p>Increased support for northern local training led by experienced Indigenous storytellers.</p>

Appendix B: Critical Components of Successful Training Programs

Existing Training Programs

Indigenous writers, directors and producers spoke to their participation in national and international training programs, defining the strengths and weaknesses of those programs and what they consider the important elements of well designed training programs. These interviews focused mainly on Indigenous writers and directors, though a number of producers provided feedback on training experience and future design. Respondents had participated in a variety of training programs hosted or sponsored by the National Screen Institute, Telefilm, imagineNATIVE, Sundance, the Bell Media Diverse Screenwriters Program and the Whistler Film Festival Aboriginal Filmmaker Fellowship, among others.

The aspects of these programs creators found most beneficial included:

- Supporting project development (getting projects made and getting on-screen credits);
- Building relationships between directors and producers in a hands-on way;
- Pitching and developing relationships with funders and broadcasters;
- Funding to support the writing process;
- Learning how to write a screenplay/working with a story editor over a period of a year;
- Shadowing existing/established directors; and
- The opportunity of time and pressure of a deadline encouraged them to finish their projects.

Shortcomings of existing programs highlighted include:

- Mentors who were not suitable, either due to experience (e.g., actors as mentors in a program designed for writers and directors) or lack of cultural awareness and acuity;
- Lack of post-program follow-up;
- Lack of financial support to enable participation, including support for transportation and meals;
- Imbalance between the mentees earning a low honourariums with crew who were paid union scale;
- High focus on pitching to distributors, production considerations and how to structure a script, without enough focus on the art and business of directing;
- Lack of fit between training offered and the experience level of those in the program;
- Not enough opportunities for building relationships amongst participants with a view to working together post completion;
- Lack of one-on-one training meetings;
- Box office and marketing considerations often overshadow the creative voice;
- Lack of training in Indigenous languages;
- A push to fit one's ideas into the pattern of Western filmmaking.

It was widely commented that there are Indigenous-led and created training programs that should be supported and recognized, versus funding mainstream organizations to deliver Indigenous components. Some producers noted that most training programs are geared toward writers and directors and that there are not many programs teaching the technical aspects of production.

Key Components for Success

Aspects of existing programs that creators found most beneficial included supporting project development (getting projects made and getting on-screen credits) and pitching and developing relationships with funders and broadcasters. In brief, others include:

Hands On Experience

Perhaps the most consistent suggestion from Indigenous producers and creators, was for training to occur in a hands on context, where trainees or mentees would gain a more holistic applied experience practicing their craft. Mentorship, and hands on practice on set were considered the cornerstone of success. The opportunity to shadow established directors or producers, or work with story editors, over extended periods of time often served to bolster filmmaker's careers.

Quality and Cultural Acuity of Mentors

There was consistent feedback that mentors should be Indigenous and that training programs should be managed by Indigenous people whenever possible. Several storytellers noted challenges with mentors who did not understand the Indigenous context of their stories and needed to be given a "101" background. Continual need to justify story choices based in culture was found to be exhausting, or outright alienating. Indigenous mentors alleviate this step. Storytellers noted that mainstream mentors and industry frequently lack awareness of or misunderstand Indigenous ideas around collectivity / community and nonlinearity of space-time, or have assumptions about what an Indigenous story should look like (e.g., poverty porn). An Indigenous person from another country would be preferred to a non-Indigenous person because of some of the fundamentally different worldview of Indigenous peoples.

Cultural Space to Create a Safe Environment for Creative Development

It is important to balance industry survival skills with programs that take place in an Indigenous cultural context, to create an Indigenous space and not a colonial, settler or mainstream industry space. This will help enable Indigenous creators to freely generate and develop their story ideas in line with their own vision. Several creators noted they want to be supported in developing the stories they want to tell, rather than being shoehorned in to external standards or mainstream story constructs. Elements of these cultural spaces include: on the land; in a traditional ceremonial space; or where ceremony is practiced. This is particularly important in nurturing the authenticity of creative work, in generating and developing the ideas in one's story.

Post Program Followup

Another critical aspect of a meaningful training program is having a deliverable(s) that the trainees would work toward: for example, a script, a film, a showing on a particular date. This helps trainees stay on track and prevents their projects from getting lost in the ether.

Financial Support to Enable Full Participation in Training

The ability to put aside at least a significant amount time in order to fully immerse in creation was flagged as very important for all types of training programs, especially writing programs. Writing requires one's full attention and presence, which is not possible if one is juggling many jobs or gigs to make ends meet. Supports for transportation and honorariums help to ensure participation.

Appendix C: Support for Indigenous Screen-Based Media

Government Funded Agencies

Canadian Heritage supports the development of the Indigenous screen-based sector through the CMF for television and digital media, Telefilm for feature film production, the CCA for film development support and the NFB for support for documentaries, animation and digital media. The department and agencies have recognized that Indigenous people participating in the cultural sector face specific barriers and their perspectives have historically been mis- or under-represented.

Canada Media Fund

The CMF provides support to Indigenous-made television and digital media productions. The CMF was created by the 2009 by merging the Canadian Television Fund and the Canada New Media Fund. The goal of the CMF is to support the ongoing production of successful television and digital media programming accessible to Canadians through multiple platforms.⁸² CMF provides funding through its Convergent (television) and Experimental (digital media) Streams. From 2012/13 through 2015/16, the CMF provided \$65.9 million to Indigenous productions. Combined with other funding sources, this investment stimulated \$160.3 million in convergent production activity.⁸³ CMF supports producers that are triggered by APTN.

The CMF offers a variety of programs that support a range of activities and productions accessible to the Aboriginal production community, including its Performance Envelope Program, Experimental Program, Versioning Program and the Northern Incentive. English Regional Production Bonus can also be accessed as well as Co-development and Coproduction Incentives.

CMF recognizes the unique circumstances of the Aboriginal-language television market and the Aboriginal production community, and while the CMF's Aboriginal Program falls under the CMF's Convergent Stream (i.e., eligible projects must include content to be developed for distribution on at least two platforms, one of which must be television), it has been tailored to reflect those distinct realities. Notable characteristics of the Aboriginal Program include:

- A broader interpretation/application of the CMF's requirement of an eligible license fee from a "Canadian broadcaster" to include eligible license fees from qualified digital distributors for Applicants in northern Canada (i.e., Nunavut, the Yukon Territory, or the Northwest Territories);
- A requirement that an Aboriginal-language version of the project's Television Component be broadcast; and
- A requirement that Applicants make best efforts to ensure that, on average, at least 20% of the original Aboriginal version of the Television Component's on-screen dialogues and/or narration must have been originally shot in an Aboriginal language.

Telefilm Canada

The key public funder for dramatic feature films is Telefilm Canada, who administers the Canada Feature Film Fund. This fund provides support for development, production, marketing, documentary and micro-budget production. While the CCA and NFB, discussed

⁸² Canada Media Fund, CMF History, <http://www.cmf-fmc.ca/about-cmf/overview/cmf-history/>

⁸³ Communications MDR, 2016, 10.

below, also support film, Telefilm alone focuses primarily on feature film production. It does not distribute films nor does it fund the production of short films, except under the Micro-Budget Program as described below.

FASP was launched in 2008 in partnership with APTN, to support the development of feature length scripts. The training component of this program was delivered by the NSI. Telefilm described the goal of the FASP as such: “The Featuring Aboriginal Stories Program aims to encourage and support Aboriginal filmmakers to develop original script material that will be attractive to producers, financiers and other film industry representatives in the marketplace.”⁸⁴ The creation of FASP stemmed from recognition of inequity of access to the Fund by Indigenous filmmakers and aimed to facilitate greater access by Indigenous filmmakers. The FASP pilot was discontinued in 2011. This ended targeted funding for Indigenous filmmakers by Telefilm for the time being. \$1.2 million in funding was provided to FASP over three years, to set up a professional development program for Indigenous filmmakers. APTN provided \$750,000 of this funding.⁸⁵ On average, in its most active three years of operation, FASP doubled the amount of Indigenous development funding. FASP supported 35 projects, though none of these has made it to production to date. Adam Garnet Jones’ *Wild Medicine* won the Jim Burt Screenwriting Prize at the Writers Guild of Canada Screenwriting Awards in 2013.

In 2013, Telefilm established the *Micro-Budget Production Program*, to support emerging filmmakers in using new digital distribution platforms and in developing expertise in digital marketing and promotion. The program has an Indigenous component as well as a mainstream component and an official-language minority component.⁸⁶ The Micro-budget program is targeted to emerging talent and supports production of 8-10 first feature projects per year. Microbudget’s maximum contribution is up to \$127,500 per project⁸⁷. Eligibility criteria require filmmakers have completed a production program or belong to a film cooperative recognized as a Telefilm partner.

Indigenous producers can apply directly to Telefilm for such funding without having to partner with a company that has theatrically released a film in Canada within the past five years. More recently, between 2013-14 and 2015-16, Telefilm has contributed \$10.7 million in funding to projects with Aboriginal content, supporting development, events, marketing, post-production and production.⁸⁸ During this same time period, through its Aboriginal envelope, Telefilm provided \$522,000 in funding to support the development 16 films. From 2014-15 through 2016-17, through the aboriginal component of the Micro-Budget Production Program, Telefilm provided funding to support 7 projects. The main Micro-Budget Production Program funded an Aboriginal team⁸⁹ in 2015-16 and an Indigenous filmmaker in 2016-17.

Canada Council for the Arts

The Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) is the national funding body for artistic work and the development of artistic careers. Film is one of the many disciplines it supports. It provides

⁸⁴“[Telefilm Canada Launches the Second Edition of the Featuring Aboriginal Stories Program.](#)”

⁸⁵ “[Featuring Aboriginal Stories Program, a new Telefilm Canada program launched in partnership with the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network \(APTN\).](#)”

⁸⁶ Telefilm Canada. Micro-Budget Production Program: [Funding of micro-budget projects from emerging filmmakers.](#)

⁸⁷ Maximum total film budget for this program must not be higher than \$250,000.

⁸⁸ See detailed chart on p. 50 of this report.

⁸⁹ Data provided did not clarify if the indigenous members of this team were in above the line positions.

support for short and full feature length films and documentaries. CCA funding requires the artist retain full creative control and rights to their projects, which can be a challenge because mainstream industry-standard practice often requires signing away story rights.

The CCA created an Aboriginal Arts Office in 1994 to advocate for support for development of Indigenous arts in Canada. In addition, the Aboriginal Media Arts Program (AMAP) is a dedicated program within the CCA aiming to reduce historical barriers Indigenous artists face in working in the media arts.

The CCA plays a key role in supporting the development of Indigenous film and media. From 2007 through 2011, the AMAP granted close to \$2.5 million to Indigenous media artists, including filmmakers from all genres and lengths. The CCA has provided funding to most professional filmmakers working in independent film during some part of their careers. Its support for short films has served as a stepping-stone for filmmakers who want to make feature films.

In response to new funding from the federal government, the CCA has created a new funding model with six new streams of funding, which commence in 2017.⁹⁰ One stream is dedicated toward supporting Indigenous artists - *Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples* – aiming to:

- support the creative capacity and professional development of First Nations, Inuit and Métis artists and arts organizations.
- facilitate the reclamation, retention, renewal and transmission of First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultural knowledge and creative practice.
- support exploration, creation and production of customary and contemporary First Nations, Inuit and Métis arts practice.
- support the presentation, exhibition, and sharing of works by First Nations, Inuit and Métis artists in Canada and internationally.
- strengthen and support the presence of First Nations, Inuit and Métis arts in communities.⁹¹

National Film Board

The National Film Board (NFB) is a public producer and distributor of Canadian audio-visual works. Its focus has largely been on documentary, animation and digital media creation. In 1968, the NFB launched the Indian Film Crew, marking the beginning of Indigenous filmmaking at the NFB. The first film made by the Indian Film Crew was *The Ballad of Crowfoot* by Willy Dunn (1968). Since then the NFB has produced/co-produced approximately 280 films by Indigenous director including luminaries like Gil Cardinal, Carole Geddes, Loretta Todd, Tasha Hubbard, Zach Kunuk, Mike Mitchell, Duke Redbird, Caroline Monnet, Lisa Jackson.

Alanis Obomsawin's was first hired on contract at the NFB as a consultant in 1968. She completed her first film as director, *Christmas in Moose Factory*, in 1971. *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice* was released in 2016 and is the 49th film of her celebrated career. Having received support from the NFB since the early 1970s to develop and apply her talent,

⁹⁰ Canada Council for the Arts. New Funding Model. <http://newfundingmodel.canadacouncil.ca/>.

⁹¹ *Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples*. <http://newfundingmodel.canadacouncil.ca/creating-knowing-and-sharing-aboriginal-arts>

Obomsawin has become a member of the Order of Canada and has produced over 40 documentaries, many of which have won worldwide acclaim and awards.

In 1991, the NFB launched Studio One. Films made with support from Studio One would only be made by Indigenous filmmakers, to correct the tendency in film featuring or about Indigenous people for stories to be told by and from the perspective of non-Indigenous people. Graydon McCrea, executive Director of NFB's North West Centre at the time noted:

Non-native people have documented what they perceived to be the mystery and romance of North America's Indian, Inuit and Métis people since the earliest days of filmmaking ... it is no longer acceptable for Native people to be portrayed as only others see them - they must be portrayed as they see themselves.⁹²

Then, in response to concerns that Studio One (headquartered in Edmonton) was not easily accessible to filmmakers in other parts of the country, in 1996 the Aboriginal Filmmaking Program replaced this program.⁹³ This program was highly effective in developing Indigenous filmmakers. Many of the most successful Canadian Indigenous filmmakers today have received support from this program for past films they have created.⁹⁴

Next, in 2005, the NFB launched the First Stories initiative to provide training opportunities and produce short films. This was followed by Second Stories, which was focused on creating half-hour documentaries. Combined with the creation of APTN as a platform for such documentaries, this support from the NFB helped develop a robust Aboriginal documentary production industry. More recent initiatives that, like First Stories, have focused on creating specific opportunities for Indigenous creators include:

- Stories From Our Land 1.0, Stories from Our Land 1.5 and Stories from Our Land 2.0, a training program with Inuit directors (2010 - 2012);
- The Nunavut Animation Lab (2010);
- NFB is a partner on NSI Aboriginal Documentary (post production - online and mix - is done at NFB) (2015 - ongoing);
- The [Open Immersion Lab](#), a Virtual Reality Lab held in October 2016 in partnership with CFC and Ford Foundation; and
- [Deranger](#), the 2016 creative Lab focused on creation of audio-visual installations.

Today, the NFB does not have a dedicated Aboriginal Film Program but takes a more integrated approach both supporting indigenous talent through our regular programming process (recent titles include Angry Inuk, this river, We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice, Red Path, Hipster Headress, Nowhere Land) and through specific initiatives such as those listed above.

A core shortcoming of the NFB's support for Indigenous filmmaking, as noted by Bear (2004) is that most of the documentaries made with NFB support used NFB producers or were co-produced by the NFB with non-Indigenous production companies.⁹⁵

⁹² "The Aboriginal Voice: the National Film Board and Aboriginal Filmmaking through the Years". <http://www.nfb.ca/playlists/gil-cardinal/aboriginal-voice-national-film-board/>

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ imagineNATIVE, p 18.

⁹⁵ Bear, p 15.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) is a Crown Corporation that has a number of indigenous-specific initiatives, including:

- **Call for Emerging Indigenous Documentary Makers:** reaching out to emerging indigenous content creators, seeking short documentary content that offers a modern reflection of Canada through the eyes of emerging Indigenous creators, telling the stories of young Canadians who are challenging the past to define their future. Short docs will be distributed across CBC's multiple digital platforms throughout 2017.
- **Internships:** this year, CBC piloted a national Indigenous Internship program, a four-month internship. The internship starts with a week of training alongside interns from the existing Gzowski Internship program in Toronto then moves to the Aboriginal Unit in Winnipeg where they receive first hand experience with content creation. The bulk of the internship is spent in the newsroom of their home region. The intention is for this program to recruit annually.
- **In-Language Programming:** CBC provides in-language programming in eight indigenous languages in the north.
- **Development Workshop for Diverse Creators:** to serve as an incubator and help cultivate diverse talent through a series of workshops, networking events and learning opportunities. This year 3 out of 15 emerging content creators are indigenous.
- **CBC Match-Up:** each year, CBC invites diverse writers, directors and producers to connect and network with creative decision makers and partners in production. The intention is to help break down barriers.

In late February/early March 2016, over 20 CBC indigenous staff – including reporters, producers and assistant producers – met in Winnipeg to build relationships and collaborate on ways to increase quantity and range of programming by and about indigenous people in Canada.

Manitoba Film & Music

Manitoba Film & Music (MFM) is funded by the Province of Manitoba to help Manitoba's film and music industry flourish. It seeks to create, stimulate, employ and invest in Manitoba by developing and promoting Manitoba companies, producing and marketing film, television, video and music recording projects as well as to promote Manitoba as a film location for off-shore production companies. MFM provides marketing and advocacy services for the Manitoba film and music sector. In addition to general outreach to increase awareness and reduce barriers to accessing its programs amongst diverse groups in Manitoba, MFM supports the development and production of indigenous content either directly or through partnerships with third parties. MFM's Television Production Fund has a 15% bonus for (self-declared) Indigenous producers. MFM mainstream funding programs have provided support to production including *We Were Children* (a documentary on residential schools), *Cashing In* (a four-season dramatic series for APTN); and *Taken* (a true crime documentary series on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls).⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Email from MFM to CMF dated August 15, 2016 and Manitoba Film & Music website: <http://mbfilmmusic.ca/en/about>.

Charitable Not-for-Profits

National Screen Institute (NSI)

The National Screen Institute – Canada (NSI) is a charitable, not-for-profit organization established in 1986, headquartered in Winnipeg since 2001. It is the oldest national film, television and digital media training school for writers, directors and producers, and the only one based in Western Canada. It has two programs for Indigenous content creators:

NSI New Voices is a full-time 14-week culturally sensitive training program based in Winnipeg for Indigenous people aged 18 to 35 interested in a film, television and digital media career. The program combines classroom training with practical exercises, a short film production and an industry internship. Students receive minimum wage throughout. 73% of NSI New Voices graduates are working in the arts sector or obtaining further related education. The program was created in response to internal NSI research revealing underrepresentation of Indigenous people in the industry in terms of numbers and the types of positions held (usually non-key creative roles, or below-the-line positions).

NSI IndigiDocs (formerly Aboriginal Documentary) is a development launch pad for producer/director teams looking to produce a short documentary. A two-week boot camp is held in Winnipeg each February. Teams are paired with an industry mentor to help with the final development and production of a 10-minute documentary with a guaranteed broadcast on APTN. Students attend Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and do their post-production in Montreal with the National Film Board. The films also stream on aptn.ca and nfb.ca. The program is in its fifth year.

Since 2003 NSI has offered other courses, including: Aboriginal Cultural Trade Initiative – established Aboriginal producers went on trade missions to Australia and New Zealand; NSI Storytellers – writers, directors and producers combined to develop *Cashing In*, a long-running program for APTN; NSI Aboriginal Journalism – for emerging reporters; Telefilm's Featuring Aboriginal Stories Program – for emerging and established filmmakers working on a feature film; Telefilm Canada Spark Plug Program – for mid to advanced level visible minority and Aboriginal producers; DiverseTV – created by NSI and VisionTV for mid to advanced level visible minority and Aboriginal writers. The series *SOUL* was created through this program and was broadcast on VisionTV. In 2015 NSI introduced the **Corus Diverse TV Director** program for film directors ready to make the leap to directing series television.

The NSI's *Business for Producers* course, while not a dedicated Indigenous program, provides training Indigenous producers have highlighted a need for. It brings together up to 12 film, television and digital media content producers for two boot camps of intensive practical training in best practices for effectively running their companies. It also includes training in audience engagement, online best practices, creation of a business plan, negotiation and leadership skills and access to mentoring by high-level industry professionals, program advisors and business plan experts. This course is intended for mid-level and senior content producers. It is currently offered in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta (and for Francophones in BC) and may be rolled out across the country in the next year, depending on funding. Currently, 2 out of 9 producers in the program are Indigenous.

Canadian Film Centre

The CFC is a registered charity focused on developing new content creators and entrepreneurs in the screen-based entertainment industry. It delivers multi-disciplinary programs in film, television, music, screen acting and digital media and provides industry collaborations, strategic partnerships and opportunities for talent within the industry. With just over 100 participants each year, the CFC supports original projects and building relationships between students/graduates and industry. CFC operates two key programs, neither of which are specifically targeted to Indigenous filmmakers, nor appear to prioritize Indigenous filmmakers in any clear way.

1. Started in 1992, the CFC Features Lab⁹⁷ is intended for writers, directors and producers with feature films in the million-dollar range, to enable them to make their films a reality. It supports script improvement and the ability to achieve maximum critical and commercial success. The program takes a tailored collaborative approach with filmmakers. Applicants are required to own and control the intellectual property on which the proposed film is based⁹⁸. CFC provides up to \$500,000 in production financing.
2. CFC Director's Lab⁹⁹ is intended for directors who want to sharpen their skills as cinematic storytellers. The Lab is meant to improve the toolbox at a director's disposal and challenge a director's creative vision in workshops, writing assignments and story editing sessions and independently. The goal is to complete the lab with an advanced feature project that will be viable in an evolving media landscape. Directors will meet with producers, distributors, funders and other key players to understand how the marketplace works and what that means for their long term career strategies. The program will coach them on how to best represent themselves and their projects in these engagements.

Whistler Film Festival – Aboriginal Filmmaker Fellowship

The Whistler Film Festival offers an Aboriginal Filmmaker Fellowship, a three-day creative and business immersion experience held during the Whistler Film Festival + Summit. Open to applicants from across the country, the fellowship supports up to six emerging Indigenous Canadian filmmakers in attending short film, webisode projects or television pilots. It focuses on improving short script projects through feedback from a group of mentor filmmakers who are successful, well-respected members of the Canadian film community. WFF's Aboriginal Filmmaker Fellowship is sponsored by Canada Media Fund, Creative BC and APTN, and is supported by the National Screen Institute and Squamish Lil'Wat Cultural Centre.¹⁰⁰

Canadian Media Producers Association

The Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) is a leading English-language association for independent producers, representing hundreds of companies involved in development, production and distribution of television programs, feature films and digital media. It lobbies the federal and provincial governments on policy relating to broadcasting, copyright, taxation, trade and other matters. It negotiates labour agreements with a number of unions and guilds and provides support to producers in dealing with these agreements. It also

⁹⁷ <http://cfccreates.com/programs/7-cfc-features>

⁹⁸ This understanding of ownership could pose a challenge for Indigenous filmmakers.

⁹⁹ <http://cfccreates.com/programs/2-directors-lab>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.whistlerfilmfestival.com/industry/aboriginal-filmmaker-fellowship>

manages mentorship programs to partner new and mid-level producers with experienced members.

Though the CMPA's efforts are not indigenous-specific, they have emphasized during CMF focus group discussions that they want their member services to be useful to all independent producers. CMPA has two mentorship programs, one focused on marketing and one on production. These programs are federally funded and pay half of a mentee's salary, which provides a significant incentive for a production company to agree to mentor an emerging producer. However, CMPA requires that applicants have a post-secondary certificate or degree to be eligible, which makes the programs inaccessible to many indigenous storytellers. The CMPA has expressed interest in building or supporting tools for members to distribute content online.

Indigenous Canadian Organizations Supporting Indigenous Screen-Based Media

Aboriginal Peoples Television Network

The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), the world's first Indigenous national television broadcaster, was launched in 1999 to help ensure Indigenous people were engaged and reflected in the Canadian broadcasting system. APTN provides daily national news programs, regular in-depth investigative reports, dramatic programs, documentaries, lifestyle, music and other entertainment programs. APTN's programs are broadcast in English, French and in a minimum of 15 different Aboriginal languages. APTN notes that all of its programming, other than news and current events, is commissioned or acquired from independent producers and distributors, primarily from independent Canadian Indigenous producers. APTN's revenue model, like that of other broadcasters, has depended on broad-based distribution by cable and satellite distributors to reach the bulk of its audience.

APTN's performance envelope fell from \$9.7 million in 2012/13 to \$6.1 million in 2016/17. However, the program budget of the CMF Aboriginal program increased from \$7 million in 2015/16 to \$8 million in 2016/17. CMFFM has contributed significantly to Indigenous screen-based media, providing an average of 39% of project funding for the projects it supported between 2012/13 and 2015/16.¹⁰¹ This funding has played an important role in helping sustain Indigenous languages and has helped grow the presence of Indigenous creators in the screen-based sector.

In 2015/16 APTN issued its first feature film request for proposals (RPF) as a way to support Aboriginal dramatic screenplays. From that RFP, APTN is supporting two scripts for development and one for licensing. All three projects are from female producers and based on scripts by female author. APTN plans to issue another RFP for feature films in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission identified APTN as holding a key leadership role in encouraging reconciliation between Indigenous people and the Canadian public.

¹⁰¹ Communications MDR, 2016, p 4-5.

imagineNATIVE

imagineNATIVE is the largest presenter of Indigenous film and media arts in the world. Aiming to connect and inspire communities through original Indigenous screen-based content, improving understanding by audiences of Indigenous peoples, cultures and artistic expressions. imagineNATIVE showcases film, video, radio and new media made by Canadian and international Indigenous artists.¹⁰²

imagineNATIVE created the organization's first Screenwriting Lab, which focused on the creative development of long-form projects within an Indigenous context. Four Canadian Indigenous media artists were selected for the lab from an open call to develop long-form treatments into first draft scripts. The lab occurred in three stages. The first stage was an immersive five-day retreat-style workshop where the four selected participants received guidance and feedback on their projects from established creative advisors. The second stage was development, where the artists developed their treatments into first-draft screenplays within five months of completing the workshop. The third stage brought the four artists to the 2014 imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival to participate in the festival. The festival hosted a free Script Lab Reading that presented actors reading selected scenes from the artists' screenplays. The reading was followed by a facilitated discussion with the screenwriters about creative development and what discoveries were made throughout this process.

This lab was a unique offering and unprecedented in Canada, as it provided an opportunity for creative development of a feature-length screenplay within an Indigenous context – on Indigenous land, with majority Indigenous creative advisors and with cultural practices integrated into the structure of the workshop.

Weengushk Film Institute

Weengushk Film Institute (WFI) is a charity that provides an opportunity for Indigenous youth to experience storytelling through the medium of film, with the purpose of encouraging them to bring their stories to life through film. It is based on Manitoulin Island in Ontario and attracts students from across the province and the country. WFI started as community-based weekend filmmaking workshops and has now blossomed into a four year, residential, media-arts training and creation program for new and experienced artists. Its lab *Certificate in Film Production* enables students to receive a Brock Certificate in Film Production and a year's worth of university credits to apply to a degree program if desired.

Several WFI students/alumni have received awards in Canadian film festivals for the short films they created at WFI, including Best Short at the Cherokee Film Festival, and Best Short and Honorary Jury Selected Special Recognition at Cinefest Sudbury Film Festival. To date, WFI participants have produced:

- A televised commercial for a major network, CTV
- 2 Web Series for Television
- 23 Short Films that screened at adjudicated international film festivals, 7 of which were award winning
- 3 Public Service Announcements for Frontier College, in association with APTN
- Over 300 WFI program-trained participants
- Numerous promotional videos and PSAs
- Health-related documentaries commissioned by Northern Ontario communities

¹⁰² ImagineNATIVE, p i.

- 10 weekend workshops per year since 2007, covering various industry trades
- 7 annual Summer Scenes Film Camps for youth aged 7 to 17, where some of the participants' films were accepted into an International Film festival
- Successful Northern Ontario partnerships
- Continued artistic development for WFI participants through placements and internships in the media-arts sector

WFI notes that 90% of its students graduate; 80% go on to work within the industry and 20% pursue higher education.¹⁰³

Adam Beach Film Institute

The Adam Beach Film Institute was started by Adam Beach, well-known Indigenous actor, to enable at-risk Indigenous youth to find a better way in life through film, by providing them with experience in various roles in the industry. The Institute's core course, Enhanced Filmmaking Skills & Techniques, aims to teach the basic knowledge of how each department works together in the heated environment of a film set. The course aims to achieve this through instructional theory and practical on set experience. In addition to learning how to navigate the multi-disciplinary set environment, students end up with produced short films and learn these concrete skills:

- Planning for all stages of production including location scouting, casting, budgeting, and working with film department heads.
- Operate digital cinema camera equipment.
- Compose scenes with a professional digital cinema camera including lighting, framing compositions, depth-of-field, shutter and ISO techniques, and camera movement.
- Copy, ingest and manage digital media.
- Operate and edit footage.
- Understanding casting and directing actors.
- Effective lighting and audio recording techniques.
- Identify basics in script writing, and understand how to tell a story.
- Produce professional quality videos for a variety of media.

Wapikoni Mobile

Wapikoni Mobile¹⁰⁴ was launched in 2004 during the Montreal First Peoples Festival, co-founded by Manon Barbeau, the Council of the Atikamekw Nation Youth Council and the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, with the support of the Assembly of First Nations and collaboration of the NFB. Wapikoni Mobile travels to Indigenous communities providing workshops to youth, allowing them to master digital tools by directing short films and musical pieces. Mentor filmmakers train youth in all stages of creation. Training involves two young mentor-filmmaker professionals and an assistant filmmaker from the community trained by Wapikoni to supervise the workshops. A social worker and Aboriginal coordinator are also part of the team. A key goal of Wapikoni is to provide a safe space for youth who may be facing difficult personal and family situations and to act as a front-line support and referral service for community resources. Before heading to communities, the teams are trained on topics relating to Indigenous culture, history and contemporary social reality.

To date, Wapikoni Mobile has visited 30 communities from 9 different First Nations. More than 3,500 youth have been trained or initiated into documentary film or musical recording,

¹⁰³ <http://weengushk.com/about-us/>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.wapikoni.ca>

with 300-500 new participants each year. 50 short films and 30 musical recordings have been made annually. Wapikoni has amassed a collection of 850 films and 500 musical recordings, creating an exceptional repository of Indigenous cultural heritage¹⁰⁵.

Capilano University

The Indigenous Independent Digital Filmmaking (IIDF) program, formerly Aboriginal Film & TV Production Training program, at the Bosa Centre of Capilano University has been providing basic production training for Aboriginal students since the spring of 2000. The program is a response to the expanding demand for trained professionals in all areas of the Aboriginal production industry. The industry is growing and so are the opportunities for creative, committed and skilled producers, writers, directors and technicians. The Indigenous Independent Digital Filmmaking Program is committed to providing Aboriginal students with high-quality production training from the Aboriginal perspective. Instructors are experienced, connected and respected Aboriginal professionals working in the industry.

Alliance of Aboriginal Media Professionals

AAMP is an association of Canadian First Nations, Inuit and Metis producers, directors, writers and other professionals who work in the television, film and digital media industries. AAMP advocates on behalf of its members for an equitable share of funding from government agencies and access to Canadian audiences for Aboriginal-produced and owned content.

Support for Indigenous Film Abroad

The Indigenous film sector is international in scope. Indigenous film festivals and other initiatives have created growing networks of Indigenous filmmakers. In recent years, Australia and New Zealand have been leading the way with innovative, successful and compelling Indigenous film featured in international film festivals and going on to break domestic box office records.

Screen Australia & the Indigenous Department

Screen Australia is that country's national funding body for film production, with a budget similar to that of Telefilm.¹⁰⁶ Screen Australia has two mainstream programs: Development Support and Production Support. Indigenous people can apply to these programs and shorts programs; internships, placements and workshops; special topic workshops (e.g., scriptwriting); travel grants to festivals; and promotion. In 1993, Screen Australia established an Indigenous Department with a long-term mandate to develop Indigenous writers, directors and producers.

The Department manages its own budget and designs its own program at the same time as having access to the resources of the larger organization of which it is a part, including marketing and communications. Support for this program is reflective of recognition of the

¹⁰⁵ Creations supported by Wapikoni have earned more than 100 awards and mentions at prestigious national and international festivals and forums, including the 2014 Intercultural Innovation Award from the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the BMW Group, the 2011 Rights and Freedoms Prize, the Honorable Mention Award at Plural +, a festival organized by UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the 28th Grand Prize of the Montreal Council of Arts, film category.

¹⁰⁶ Official statistics hold that 2.7% of the Australian population is Indigenous, as compared to 4.3% of the Canadian population. The total population of Australia is 23 million, while Canada's total population is 35 million. However, there are challenges in conducting the Canadian census, for example, in Indigenous communities, especially in light of the distrust engendered by the Indian Residential Schools policy and other policies. Bear (2004) estimates that closer to 10% of the Canadian population is Indigenous (p 30).

distinct cultural value Indigenous film has to play in a country still working out issues and tensions stemming from colonization. The Department is Indigenous run and takes an active approach to filmmaking, working hands on with artists to help them develop and produce their first films. It provides 'stepping stone' programs including professional development and production funding. The Department also brokers relationship between distributors, Screen Australia and the national broadcasters, who provide funding and broadcast most of the works produced through the Department. The Department also scouts talent, supports the development of filmmakers' careers over the long term and helps finance projects with distribution commitments. Since 1993, the annual budget has grown from \$800,000 to approximately \$5 million.

The Short Black Program is the first initiative created by the Department. A revised model is still used today. It is a drama initiative leading to the production of six to eight films, with budgets of approximately \$100,000 to \$150,000. The goal is to develop talent for feature filmmaking through supporting the development of that talent applied to short filmmaking. It involves careful mentoring and monitored development of a short film, including workshops.

After investing in developing talent in the Indigenous film community, the Indigenous Department created the Long Black Feature Program to bring Indigenous-made stories to the big screen. Funding of up to \$1 million is available for those who have shown talent in short filmmaking and are ready to make the leap to feature film. It provides hands-on training to facilitate filmmakers making their first feature film. The Indigenous films Screen Australia has helped create made up 2.9% of all films it has supported; while Indigenous films supported by Telefilm made up 1.6% of the films it supported. The Department maintains the Black Book, a directory of Indigenous people and organizations working in the arts, media and cultural industries. The Department also works with Screen Australia to advance audiences. The key strengths of the Australian approach to supporting Indigenous filmmaking include:

1. A dedicated Indigenous-run branch within an agency.
2. Scouting and building talent, while tracking the careers of the filmmakers it supports.
3. A long-term strategy supporting all levels of talent development, including short film production and feature script development.
4. Hands-on training, substantial project financing and a guaranteed broadcaster.¹⁰⁷

Screen Australia has created an environment to enable Indigenous filmmakers to flourish:

The development of Australian Indigenous screen practice has not been an overnight success. It is the culmination of decades of groundwork by countless individuals and a range of organizations, with various state funding bodies, government film agencies, Indigenous media associations, the ABC and SBS and training institutions ... playing a role. This support is unprecedented anywhere else in the world and we, the audience, are all the better for it.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ imagineNATIVE, pp 29-37.

¹⁰⁸ "Cinema Culture Richer After Rise in Indigenous Cinema," in Bordermail, <http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/1550454/cinema-culture-richer-after-rise-of-indigenous-voices/>

New Zealand Film Commission & Te Paepae Ataata

Support for Maori film is in the founding principles of the New Zealand Film Commission. Between 2009 and 2013, 18.5% of the 27 feature films produced with support of the commission were written, directed and/or produced by an Indigenous person, as compared with 2.9% for Screen Australia and 1.6% for Telefilm. By comparison, Indigenous people represent 22% of the New Zealand population, while they represent 2.7% in Australia and 4.3% in Canada. New Zealand never instituted a reserve system, unlike Australia, Canada and the United States and the 1840 Waitangi Treaty, which enshrined Maori rights, created a more equal dynamic between the British and Maori.

The Commission does not have a dedicated Indigenous branch, but takes a more integrated approach, both supporting indigenous talent across the board and through specific initiatives. This integrated ethos combined with the boost provided by the production of *Lord of the Rings* and a strong Maori television industry have supported the development of a thriving Indigenous film sector with the capacity to successfully take on all stages of feature filmmaking. The Commission supports Indigenous filmmaking through two targeted funds: Maori Script Development Initiative and the Maori Short Film Initiative. Approximately 30% of the Commission's mainstream funding goes to Indigenous filmmakers each year. The Commission helped develop the careers of many Indigenous filmmakers, including Taika Waititi, writer and director of the classic *Boy* (\$9,237,976), a hit at the Sundance and Berlin festivals. As of May 2016, Taika Waititi's *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (which premiered at Sundance) has become the largest grossing local film at the New Zealand Box office ever with \$9,650,074.

The Commission also funds the Te Paepae Ataata (meaning Speaker's Bench), an autonomous feature film development organization supporting the production and distribution of Maori films. The Commission supports Te Paepae Ataata through a devolved fund that represents 20% of the Commission's annual budget. Te Paepae Ataata focus is to help develop feature film scripts and seek out first features. When scripts are ready for production, Te Paepae Ataata performs a similar brokering role with the Commission as the Indigenous Department does with Screen Australia. The role of Te Paepae Ataata is to bring a Maori sensibility to the industry and to act as a bridge to those who haven't worked with the Commission before or who find barriers engaging with the institutional environment. It aims to develop relationships with communities and tribes and develop new ways to fund, market and distribute Indigenous films.¹⁰⁹

Sundance Institute Native American and Indigenous Program

From the founding of the Sundance Institute by Robert Redford in 1981, Native American filmmaking has been part of the Institute's vision. In 1994, a Native Forum was established at the Sundance Film Festival, run by a Native director. Since its founding, the Institute has supported close to 300 Indigenous artists via creative labs, funding and the Festival. The Native American and Indigenous Program at the Institute has supported the development of the international Indigenous film community. Key functions of the program include: overseeing the fellowship; Indigenous panels; networking opportunities via the Festival; and scouts for Indigenous projects across the globe. The program allows Indigenous filmmakers from across the globe access to the prominent Festival and into the world of independent film.

¹⁰⁹ imagineNATIVE, pp 37-40.

A key focus of the program is the NativeLab Fellowship, to support early-stage development to strengthen projects. The first stage involves an intensive five-day workshop where filmmakers receive feedback on their work from creative advisors. The second stage brings fellows together at the Festival, gives them the opportunity to take in the festival and network with others in the industry. For several years, the NativeLab Fellowship has occurred on the Mescalero Apache Reservation in southern New Mexico, creating a safe and nurturing environment for Indigenous filmmakers. Filmmakers participate in cultural events, engage with museums and integrate family and culture into the structure of the lab. At least 50% of creative advisors are Indigenous, to address the issue that Indigenous artists are frequently challenged to over-explain the cultural specificity of their work in the mainstream industry.

NATIVE – A Special Series at Berlinale

Since 2013, the Berlinale has featured a special series: *NATIVE – A Journey into Indigenous Cinema*. Its mission is the cinematic storytelling of Indigenous peoples from around the world through short and feature length documentaries and fictional films. It also hosts discussions and Industry Talks and Storytelling-Slams to provide greater insight into the context of Indigenous film and filmmaking. The series is highlighted on the Berlinale’s website and in its brochure. With *NATIVE*, the Berlinale aims to highlight the international significance of Indigenous cinema.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ Berlinale, NATIVE – A Journey Into Indigenous Cinema:
https://www.berlinale.de/en/das_festival/sektionen_sonderveranstaltungen/native/index.html.

Appendix D: Interview and Focus Group Participants

Creator Interviews:

Adam Garnet, Michelle Latimer, Caroline Monnet, Tasha Hubbard, Sonia Bolieau, Shane Belcourt, Jeff Barnaby, Danis Goulet, Amos Scott

Producer Interviews:

Jerry Thevenet, Norman Cohn, George Hargrave, Paul Rickard, Jason Brennan, Lisa Meeches, Marie-Hélène Cousineau

Email Contributions:

Richard Van Camp, Jeremy Torrie, Jesse Wentte, Annie Frazier Henry, Danis Goulet, Jeff Bear, Jennifer Podemski

June 22, 2016 Toronto Creators & Producers Focus Group Participants:

Stacey Aglok, Lisa Jackson, Cara Mumford, Peter Strutt, Marguerite Pigott CMPA

July 7, 2016 Vancouver Focus Group:

Loretta Todd, Pieter Romer, Tracey Kim Bonneau, Tihemme Gagnon, Renae Morriseau, Gregory Coyes, Kim Kaufmann, Delores Smith, Barb Hager, Cynde Harmon, Joe Thornton, Stéphane Cardin

July 13, 2016 Teleconference Focus Group:

Zoe Hopkins, Jim Compton, Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers, Christina Fon, Alethea Arnaquq-Baril

Toronto Focus Group for Broadcasters/Funders – June 21, 2016

In Person Participants

Tom Hastings, Bell
Rachel Nelson, Corus + Shaw
Chris Dunn, OMDC
Agnes Augustin, Shaw Rocket Fund
Sally Catto, CBC
Lisa Clarkson, CBC
Monika Ille, APTN
Justin Whyte, CFC
Anita Lee, NFB
Elisa Suppa, Telefilm

By Phone

Sebastien Nasse, MFM
Iris Meritt, Yukon Film and Sound
Prem Gill, Creative BC
Nataline Rodrigues, Rogers
John Gill, NSI
Marie-Philippe Bouchard, TV5
Marie-Claude Wolfe, Radio Canada
Martin Picard, TVA
Nancy Chappelle, Bell Fund
Camilla MacEachern, NWT Film Commission

Rod Butler, CMF Policy Analyst

Valerie Creighton, CMF

Emanuelle Carriere, CMF

Toronto Focus Group Creators, Broadcasters, Funders – October 21, 2016

Greg Coyes, Good Medicine Media + AAMP Board Member
Jeremy Torrie, High Definition Pictures + AAMP Board Member
Barbara Hager, Aarrow Productions + AAMP Board Member
Hank White, Stone Cold Productions + AAMP Board Member
Cynde Harmon, Really Real Films Inc + AAMP Board Member
Jim Compton, Rising Day Media + Adam Beach Institute
Katsi Tsionnifox, Two Row Productions

Glen Gould, db Productions
Tasha Hubbard, Independent Filmmaker
Danis Goulet, Writer/Director/Programmer
Sonia Bolieau, Writer/Director
Adam Garnet Jones, Writer/Director
Michelle St. John, Decolonization Road Productions + Actor/Producer/Director
Michelle Latimer, Writer/Director
Regan Jacobs, First Nations TV + Akwesasne TV
Jason Brennan, Producer
Zoe Hopkins, Writer/Director

Chris Dunn, OMDC
John Gill, National Screen Institute
Marguerite Pigot, CMPA
Kathleen Meek, Bell Media
Elisa Suppa, Telefilm
Nataline Rodrigues, Rogers Media
Rachel Nelson, Corus
Samuel Cohn Cousineau, Isuma Distribution International
Marie-Andrée Poliquin, Radio-Canada
Lisa Ann Clarkson, CBC
Heather Boyce, CBC
Jill Samson, Telefilm
Ian Reid, Canada Council
Sandra Collins, CMF
Rod Butler, CMF
Nathalie Clermont, CMF
Emanuelle Carriere, CMF
Valerie Creighton, CMF

Vancouver Focus Group – November 30th, 2016

Tihemme Gagnon
Nate Wyman
Tracey Kim Bonneau
Maryssa Bonneau
Prem Gill, Creative BC
Jay Cardinal Villeneuve
Marie Clément
Margueritte Pigot, CMPA
Monika Ille, APTN
Renaë Morriveau
Michelle McMahon, Bell
Kathleen Meek, Bell
Loretta Todd
Ella Maija Tailfeathers
Maryssa Bonneau
Barbara Hager
Delores Smith

Appendix E: Performance & Funding Envelopes

Aboriginal Peoples Television Network

The first chart below provides information on APTN's licensing over the past 5 years. Although there are variances over this period by genre and language, the average has remained relatively consistent, at approximately 9.2M\$. Between the APTN fiscal years of 2012/13, until the end of fiscal 2015/16, APTN supported the development of 928 hours and supported the production of 1,300 hours.

APTN Licensing trends

\$ K	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Total	9,333	8,740	8,136	10,646	9,227

CMF-funded convergent production (TV and DM) licenses and other forms of financing from APTN.

This licensing activity has in part determined APTN's PE over this same period. However, Performance Envelopes are a competitive system and as a result, any broadcaster's envelope is determined by its performance relative to other broadcasters participating in the system, calculated by each PE factor, which include: Audience Success, Regional Licensing, Historic Performance and Digital Media Investment. Results are also influenced by the budget allocation CMF provides to the Performance Envelope program each year. The second chart below provides information on APTN's PE over the past 5 years. Although there are again variances over this period by genre and language, we have only provided the totals.

APTN Performance Envelopes

\$ K	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Total	9,703	4,566	5,127	6,271	6,113

As shown above, the significant decline in APTN's PE occurred between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Our analysis demonstrated that this decline was due to the following factors:

- A one-time decline in the number of hours of CMF-funded programming aired by APTN (this number has since steadily increased year over year);
- A decline in performance relative to other broadcasters in Regional licensing in the children and youth genre (which had earned APTN almost 1M\$ in the prior year); and
- An absence of investment in Digital Media (which had earned APTN almost 4M\$ in the prior year).

APTN changed their strategy in 2013-14 by increasing their investment in Digital Media and Regional Licensing. Since then, APTN has increased their participation in these factors and seen an overall incremental growth of total PE dollars earned. Since 2012-2013, the CMF has also made a number of changes to its PE Program, which have assisted APTN in recovering some of the lost ground.

Over this time period, the CMF has also increased the budget allocation of the Aboriginal Program, from 6M\$ to 7M\$ starting in 2011-2012, then from 7M\$ to 8M\$ starting in 2016-2017.

CMF Aboriginal Program

In 2013-2014, all CMF programs, including the Aboriginal Program of the CMF experienced a reduction of 4% from the previous year due to a diminution in the CMF's revenues.

\$ K	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Total	7,000	7,000	6,720*	7,000	7,000	8,000

With an allocation of \$8M in 2016-2017, the Aboriginal Program budget has doubled from the \$4M budget in 2009-2010.

Telefilm Indigenous Commitments (3 years)

Commitments for projects with aboriginal content over the last 3 years by activity (in thousands \$)

Activity	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Total
Development	\$465	\$404	\$460	\$1,329
Event	\$131	\$90	\$56	\$277
Marketing	\$231	\$221	\$32	\$484
Post-production	\$50			\$50
Production	\$2,450	\$3,830	\$2,298	\$8,577
Total	\$3,327	\$4,545	\$2,846	\$10,717

Development Program – Aboriginal Envelope

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
# of portfolio	11	8	25
# of films*	111	4	16
\$(in thousands)	\$265	\$167	\$522
*9 films received funding in two different years.			

2014-2015 was the first year of the Aboriginal component in the Micro-budget program. Overall, 7 projects have received funding, and in addition the main component of the Micro-budget program funded “The Land of Rock and Gold” in 2015-16 (an Indigenous production); and in 2016-17 an Aboriginal film maker for “Luk Luk”.

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
# of projects funded	3	2	2
Titles of projects	Fire Song Le Dep Road of Iniquity	Northlander River of Silence	The Road Behind The Road Trip

Appendix F: United Nations Declaration Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly [without reference to a Main Committee (A/61/L.67 and Add.1)] **61/295**.

Article 5

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

Article 8

1. Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.

Article 11

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

2. States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.

Article 13

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Article 15

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.

Article 16

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.

2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudice to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect indigenous cultural diversity.

Article 18

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

Article 31

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

Article 36

1. Indigenous peoples, in particular those divided by international borders, have the right to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with their own members as well as other peoples across borders.

2. States, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, shall take effective measures to facilitate the exercise and ensure the implementation of this right.

Appendix G: Canada Broadcasting Act

3 (1) It is hereby declared as the broadcasting policy for Canada that:

(b) the Canadian broadcasting system, operating primarily in the English and French languages and comprising public, private and community elements, makes use of radio frequencies that are public property and provides, through its programming, a public service essential to the maintenance and enhancement of national identity and cultural sovereignty;

(d) the Canadian broadcasting system should:

(i) serve to safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada,

(ii) encourage the development of Canadian expression by providing a wide range of programming that reflects Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity, by displaying Canadian talent in entertainment programming and by offering information and analysis concerning Canada and other countries from a Canadian point of view,

(iii) through its programming and the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations, of Canadian men, women and children, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of aboriginal peoples within that society, and

(f) each broadcasting undertaking shall make maximum use, and in no case less than predominant use, of Canadian creative and other resources in the creation and presentation of programming, unless the nature of the service provided by the undertaking, such as specialized content or format or the use of languages other than French and English, renders that use impracticable, in which case the undertaking shall make the greatest practicable use of those resources;

(i) the programming provided by the Canadian broadcasting system should

(i) be varied and comprehensive, providing a balance of information, enlightenment and entertainment for men, women and children of all ages, interests and tastes,

(ii) be drawn from local, regional, national and international sources,

(iii) include educational and community programs,

(iv) provide a reasonable opportunity for the public to be exposed to the expression of differing views on matters of public concern, and

(v) include a significant contribution from the Canadian independent production sector;

(m) the programming provided by the Corporation should:

(i) be predominantly and distinctively Canadian,

(ii) reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while serving the special needs of those regions,

(iii) actively contribute to the flow and exchange of cultural expression,

(iv) be in English and in French, reflecting the different needs and circumstances of each official language community, including the particular needs and circumstances of English and French linguistic minorities,

(v) strive to be of equivalent quality in English and in French,

- (vi) contribute to shared national consciousness and identity,
 - (vii) be made available throughout Canada by the most appropriate and efficient means and as resources become available for the purpose, and
 - (viii) reflect the multicultural and multiracial nature of Canada;
- (o) programming that reflects the aboriginal cultures of Canada should be provided within the Canadian broadcasting system as resources become available for the purpose;
- (r) the programming provided by alternative television programming services should:
- (i) be innovative and be complementary to the programming provided for mass audiences,
 - (ii) cater to tastes and interests not adequately provided for by the programming provided for mass audiences, and include programming devoted to culture and the arts,
 - (iii) reflect Canada's regions and multicultural nature,
 - (iv) as far as possible, be acquired rather than produced by those services, and
 - (v) be made available throughout Canada by the most cost-efficient means;
- (s) private networks and programming undertakings should, to an extent consistent with the financial and other resources available to them,
- (i) contribute significantly to the creation and presentation of Canadian programming, and
 - (ii) be responsive to the evolving demands of the public;

Appendix H: Media and Reconciliation

2015 Truth & Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action:

84. We call upon the federal government to restore and increase funding to the CBC/Radio-Canada, to enable Canada's national public broadcaster to support reconciliation, and be properly reflective of the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to:

- i. Increasing Aboriginal programming, including Aboriginal-language speakers.
- ii. Increasing equitable access for Aboriginal peoples to jobs, leadership positions, and professional development opportunities within the organization.
- iii. Continuing to provide dedicated news coverage and online public information resources on issues of concern to Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, including the history and legacy of residential schools and the reconciliation process.

85. We call upon the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, as an independent non-profit broadcaster with programming by, for, and about Aboriginal peoples, to support reconciliation, including but not limited to:

- i. Continuing to provide leadership in programming and organizational culture that reflects the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples.
- ii. Continuing to develop media initiatives that inform and educate the Canadian public, and connect