

FUNDING ANALYSIS FOR BIPOC DOCUMENTARY CONTENT IN CANADA

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The DOC Institute engaged Nordicity to analyze three years of funding awarded to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) documentary creators in the Canadian film and television industry and produce a snapshot report on the composition of BIPOC documentary content produced in Canada. More specifically, the project aimed to answer the following research questions:

- ▶ How successful are BIPOC documentary creators at securing funding as compared to non-BIPOC applicants?
- ▶ Do BIPOC documentary creators who are funded receive the same amount of discretionary screen-based funding support as compared to the average funding levels?
- ▶ What is the breakdown of BIPOC documentary creators by role including owners of production companies, key crew members, etc.? Where and why are there discrepancies in BIPOC representation?

To answer these research questions, data was collected directly from Telefilm Canada, the Canada Media Fund (CMF), the National Film Board (NFB), and TV Ontario (TVO). Each funder filled out relevant data on: total funding by calendar/fiscal year, province, format, source of funding, as well as the number of key creatives supported. A survey was conducted to supplement the data provided by funders.

1.1 KEY FINDINGS- BIPOC DOCUMENTARY CREATORS AND PUBLIC FUNDING

Nordicity's analysis revealed several key findings on the experiences of BIPOC documentary creators who are navigating public funding for documentary production.

Funding distribution

- ▶ Due to the inconsistent and lack of data across the industry, Nordicity's analysis of funding distribution was limited to Indigenous creators. Based on the data collected, less than 1/5 th of documentary creators supported identify as Indigenous, and less than 1/5 th of documentary funding is provided to Indigenous documentaries.
- ▶ The data provided by funders indicates that the proportion of funding provided to Indigenous works is higher in documentary production (16% from this study) than in the broader film and television industry (less than 1% based on research conducted by Nordicity and the REMC). Due to the lack of data on Black people and People of Colour, a similar comparison cannot be made for BPOC works.
- ▶ Of the funders who were part of this study, TVO was the only funder to collect data on Black, Indigenous and People of Colour documentaries and creators. TVO's data showed a decline in the number of BIPOC creatives supported between 2017 and 2020, however, it should be noted that these numbers are likely not unique to TVO. Anecdotal evidence suggests that representation is low across the industry.

Applying for funding

- ▶ Caucasian/White identifying documentary creators apply for funding more often than their BIPOC counterparts. The survey revealed that the majority (88%) of respondents identifying as Caucasian / White applied for funding for documentary production at least once between 2017 and 2020, compared to 67% of Black survey respondents, 20% of those identifying as Indigenous, and the 47% identifying as a Person of Colour. These numbers may indicate and be a result of unique barriers experienced by historically marginalized groups that disqualify and dissuade them from applying.

Barriers to Applying for Public Funding

- ▶ The survey asked respondents about the barriers they experience when applying for public funding for documentary production. Black, Indigenous, and creators identifying as People of Colour experience barriers to applying for funding at higher rates than their Caucasian / White counterparts. The same is true for those identifying as genders other than cisgender woman or cisgender man. The most common barriers selected for each group is presented below.

Table 1: Most common barriers by group

BLACK	INDIGENOUS	PEOPLE OF COLOUR	CAUCASIAN / WHITE
Meeting eligibility criteria (54%)	A lack of time/resources (100%)	A lack of time/resources (48%)	No one barrier stood out as most common.
A lack of time/resources (46%)	Difficulty navigating funding application language (80%)	A lack of awareness of funding programs (43%)	20% stated they do not face any of the barriers listed.
Lack of access to operating funding (46%)	A lack of acknowledgement/awareness of my culture/my organization's culture in public funding models (60%)	A lack of acknowledgement/awareness of my culture/my organization's culture in public funding models (35%)	
	A lack of access to operating funding (60%)		

Intellectual Property Ownership

- ▶ Caucasian / White creators are typically more successful at retaining the IP for projects they get funded than their Black, Indigenous and People of Colour counterparts. The majority (80%) of Caucasian/White survey respondents stated they typically retain the IP for projects they get funded, compared to just 61% of respondents identifying as People of Colour and 54% identifying as Black.

Despite initiatives at various levels of the industry to earmark funding for BIPOC groups and collect demographic data on funding distribution, an industry-wide system of data collection, monitoring and reporting still does not exist. This research plays a key role in filling in major knowledge gaps in the Canadian film and television industry by revealing inequities in funding distribution for documentary production, as well as key barriers to public funding and IP ownership for BIPOC documentary creators.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 BACKGROUND

In 2020, the Canadian film and television industry produced \$9.3 billion worth of content, contributing \$12.2 billion to Canada's GDP and creating over 244,000 jobs. Canadian documentary production – a niche but important segment of the industry- was valued at \$213 million. This number, that includes both English and French-language, represented a 27.2% reduction in production from 2019, illustrating the COVID-19's impact on the Canadian documentary-making sector.

Across Canada, there are several organizations that fund documentary content production, including the large national funders – the Canada Media Fund (CMF), Telefilm Canada (Telefilm), and the National Film Board (NFB). In 2020, by far the largest funder of documentary content- the CMF -supported 1,051 hours of documentary television production and financed 33% of Canadian documentary television production. Provincial tax credits were the next largest funding mechanism for documentary television production, making up another 17% of total funding.¹

Preliminary and anecdotal evidence have suggested that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC)² creators in Canada experience unique barriers to entry to the industry and are severely underrepresented behind the camera. Funding has often been guaranteed to established and mostly white producers, and gender equity initiatives have successfully increased the number of women in key creative roles but have had limited impact on diversity. For example, a recent study by Women in View, a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to strengthening gender representation and diversity in Canadian media, found that of the 43% of women in key creative TV roles in 2019, only 6.44% were black women and women of colour, and only 0.94% were Indigenous. The same study found that BIPOC women are almost entirely absent from the highest funding levels.³ Another study by the Writers' Guild of Canada (WGC) found that the percentage of Indigenous writers working on Canadian TV was only 1%, and that Black people earned only 5.5% of writing credits, despite representing 9.2% of working writers.⁴

Funders have attempted to acknowledge and address these disparities through programs that earmark funding for historically underrepresented groups including Indigenous and racialized creators. Many of these programs also aim to protect the narrative sovereignty and intellectual property ownership of BIPOC creators. For example, the national funders Telefilm and the CMF each have targeted programs for Indigenous creators and racialized creators. The CMF has also tied diversity, including racial representation, to the broadcast performance envelope - its largest funding mechanism. For documentaries specifically, Hot Docs has funding earmarked for filmmakers who are BIPOC and from other equity-seeking groups through its CrossCurrents Doc Funds and its Blue Ice Docs Fund.

Unfortunately, the amount of funding distributed through earmarked industry programs is limited, making up approximately 0.71% of total financing for Canadian film and television.⁵ Their estimated impact is therefore limited as well. Furthermore, the largest single source of public money – tax credits – are not subject to equity-related standards.

¹[Profile 2020, CMPA](#)

²In this report, the term BIPOC refers to Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. We recognize that this term is considered problematic by some and conversations about the term BIPOC are ongoing. How the Black, Indigenous and racially diverse communities refer to themselves may evolve; what is acceptable today may not be in the future. The decision was made to use the term BIPOC in this report after discussions with equity-deserving groups with the understanding that language is fluid and continues to evolve.

³[Women in View, On Screen Report, June 2021](#)

⁴[Writers Guild of Canada, 2021 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Report](#)

⁵[REMC and Nordicity, Racialized Funding Data in the Canadian Film and Television Industry.](#)

In addition, a robust industry-wide system of data collection, monitoring and reporting does not exist. Past attempts at data collection and reporting have been limited by privacy legislation and have relied on poor practices including asking producers to identify and fill in demographic characteristics on behalf of their teams. More recently, however, key stakeholders have taken initiative to collect and report on this data properly. For example, as a part of the distribution of their COVID-19 Emergency Support allocations, the CMF and Telefilm collected self-reported diversity data and reported on the distribution of the funding. The CMF's new tool called Persona-ID, serves as another promising example of change within the industry. Persona-ID measures and monitors the demographic representation and participation of all content creators involved in projects submitted to the CMF as well as those supported by the CMF.

Other countries have implemented systems to track, report on, and increase diversity in their screen sectors as well. These models provide opportunities for knowledge-sharing and learning for the Canadian film and tv industry. The work of the British Film Institute (BFI) and the Creative Diversity Network (CDN), driven by overarching legislation in the Equality Act 2010, represent arguably the most robust system of responding to inequality in the screen industries that currently exists. Despite major gaps and ongoing challenges, together, they have made the UK a leader in this space.

The BFI's Diversity Standards are a contractual agreement for all BFI funding, including fiction and documentary films. To meet the standards, projects must demonstrate a commitment to inclusion and meet a strict criterion for diversity on-screen, in creative leadership, crew and project staff, training and career progression, and in audience outreach and development. The Diversity Standards have gained acclaim and have become a requirement for most of the public funding for film in the UK. In 2022, the standards were adopted by Screen Scotland as well.

CDN's Diamond system is a single online system used by British broadcasters including the BBC, to collect and report on consistent diversity data on programs they commission. At this time, no other broadcasting industry in the world has developed a cross-industry approach where competing broadcasters collect and publish diversity data together at this scale. Action and new initiatives have already been undertaken in response to data from the Diamond system. For example, the Doubling Disability initiative aimed to double the percentage of disabled people working in off-screen UK broadcasting by the end of 2021. Although the initiative did not have the massive impact it had hoped to have, it still serves as an example of the momentum that can be gained from clear, accessible data to address gaps in representation and improve the experience of equity-deserving groups in the industry.

The Australian film and television industry has also developed a system for diversity data measurement. The system is called the Everyone Project. The Everyone Project collects comprehensive and voluntary self-identified demographic data, and provides aggregated, confidential, and de-identified reports to organizations looking to measure their diversity. Learnings from the U.K., Australia, and other jurisdictions that have completed several iterations of their diversity data processes can and should be applied to emerging Canadian initiatives.

Another interesting model for increasing diversity in film and television has been used in Illinois, USA, where diversity has been tied to tax credits. No production can receive the Illinois Film Services Tax Credit without the submission of a diversity plan that details, "the manner in which the Applicant proposes to achieve its goals to ensure employment of minorities that represent the State of Illinois rather than merely to assure nondiscrimination. The Applicant must also document that it made 'good faith efforts' in attempting to achieve a racially diverse crew."⁶ Similar policies are either in development, or already in effect in both New York⁷ and

⁶ [Diversity Documents – Film Tax Credit \(illinois.gov\)](#)

⁷ [New York Women in Film & Television, New York TV Diversity Tax Credit Bill Passes to Boost State's Female & Minority Writers and Directors.](#)

2. Introduction

the U.K.⁸ A similar policy targeting tax credits in Canada would address a major gap in industry efforts for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

While the initiatives undertaken in Canada thus far represent progress, it remains impossible to obtain a holistic understanding of screen-based funding distribution in Canada or to implement and adapt programs and policies to address ongoing, systemic gaps. This research, conducted by Nordicity and commissioned by the DOC Institute, plays a key role in filling in elements of this knowledge gap. It considers funding data, as well as survey responses about barriers to accessing funding and intellectual property ownership, to provide an understanding of the unique experiences of BIPOC artists in the Canadian documentary industry. A report by the Racial Equity Media Collective (REMC) on racialized funding data outlines in detail various diversity data management initiatives undertaken across Canada and the world.⁹

2.2 NORDICITY'S MANDATE

Nordicity's mandate was to analyze three years of funding awarded to BIPOC documentary creators and produce a snapshot report on the composition of BIPOC documentary content produced in Canada. The project aimed to answer the following research questions:

- ▶ How successful are BIPOC documentary creators at securing funding as compared to non-BIPOC applicants?
- ▶ Do BIPOC documentary creators who are funded receive the same amount of discretionary screen-based funding support as compared to the average funding levels?
- ▶ What is the breakdown of BIPOC documentary creators by role including owners of production companies, key crew members, etc.? Where and why are there discrepancies in BIPOC representation?

2.3 METHODOLOGY

This report is intended to provide an overview of funding distribution from key documentary funders to documentary creators in Canada. The REMC was consulted in the development of the methodology for this project. Data was collected directly from Telefilm Canada, the Canada Media Fund (CMF), the National Film Board (NFB), and TV Ontario (TVO). The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was contacted to participate. However, at the time of this study, the CBC did not have the human resources in place to process and share the requested data.

Each funder was provided a detailed data sheet to fill out that requested a breakdown of total funding by calendar/fiscal year, province, format, and source of funding. The data sheet also requested data on the numbers of key creatives supported. Data was also requested on funding for BIPOC documentaries, and the number of key creatives supported who identified as BIPOC.

Each funder filled out the data sheet based on all formats of documentaries funded by the organization. For example, TVO's numbers were based on TVO-commissioned documentaries which include features, hours, half-hour series, and some shorts. The CMF's numbers were based on one-offs, feature-length, and series.

The number of key creatives supported who identified as BIPOC includes those who were working together on projects, and does not reflect the number of BIPOC key creatives supported on individually distinct projects.

A survey was conducted to supplement the data provided by funders. DOC Institute executed outreach for the survey through e-blasts, social media posts, a DOC members listserve, and individual emails to community partners. A total of 46 complete responses were collected. Due to data limitations, the analysis was limited in its scope, but revealed some key learnings about the state of affairs in the industry.

⁸ [Film Diversity Action Group, It shouldn't get the money if it doesn't have the mix, 2018.](#)

⁹ [REMC and Nordicity, Racialized Funding Data in the Canadian Film and Television Industry.](#)

Table 2: Definitions

DEFINITION	
Key Creative	Producer, Director, Writer
Indigenous Documentary	51% of key creatives identify as Indigenous
BIPOC Documentary	51% of key creatives identify as Black, Indigenous, or Person of Colour
Black	Those who self-identified as “Black” on survey
Person of Colour	Those who identified as any race other than “Black”, “Caucasian / White”, or Indigenous
Indigenous	Those who self-identified as “First Nations”, “Inuk (Inuit)”, and/or “Métis” on survey

DATA LIMITATIONS

The primary limitation of this study was data. There is currently no industry-wide system of data collection and reporting in the Canadian film and television industry. In addition, no data is collected on the distributions of tax credits, that make up a large portion of funding to the industry and to documentary production specifically (approximately 27% of total funding for documentary production).¹⁰

This study therefore chose to focus on specific funders in the industry, each of whom have made attempts to collect data on various demographic characteristics of the documentary creators they fund. However, due to inconsistent data collection, the different types of data being collected, as well as the different ways in which it is being collected and reported on, only a limited understanding can be gleaned of documentary funding distribution in Canada. For example, in the past, the majority of funders have only collected data on Indigenous identity of documentary creators, and not on other race categories. Only TVO collected data across Black, Indigenous and Person of Colour identity, and consented to reporting their data individually.

Due to limited data collected through the survey, Nordicity combined responses from respondents who identified as a gender other than cisgender woman or cisgender man. In addition, Nordicity did not include data for groups that had less than 5 survey respondents for a specific question. While we acknowledge that it is important to understand the differences and nuances of each group’s experience, this step was taken in accordance with best practice to protect the privacy of survey respondents.

In addition, analysis on specific race and gender groups was limited by the low number of responses on each question, and consequently, the low number of responses from each identity group. The number of respondents for each question, or n-value, is included for charts and tables derived from the survey data. Nevertheless, the results from the survey provide valuable insight into the experiences of documentary creators in Canada but should not be interpreted as concrete findings that represent the entire Canadian documentary industry.

⁹ [Profile 2020, Economic Report on the Screen-Based Media Production Industry in Canada](#)

3. BIPOC DOCUMENTARY CONTENT IN CANADA

This section analyzes and presents the findings from the survey that was circulated to documentary creators across Canada, and the data obtained directly from funders.

3.1 PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey respondents identified with a wide range of racial and gender identities. People of Colour made up the majority of survey respondents, as did cisgender women.

Figure 1: Survey respondents by race

n=64

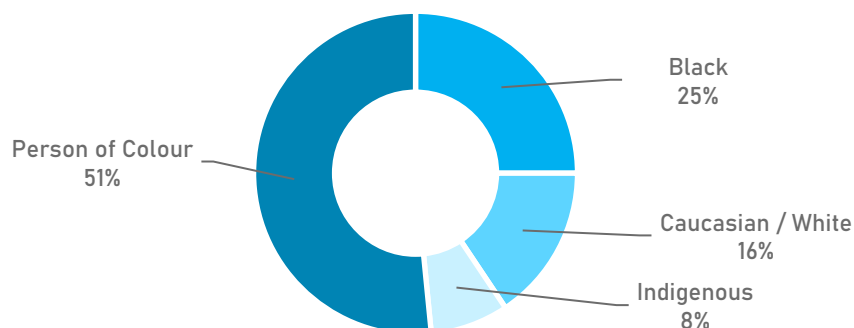
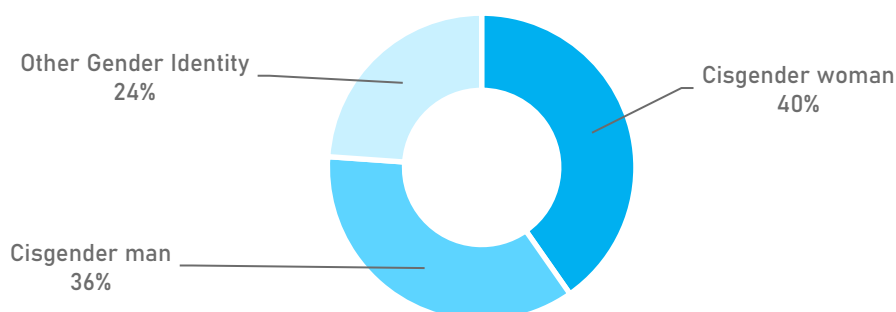


Figure 2: Survey respondents by gender

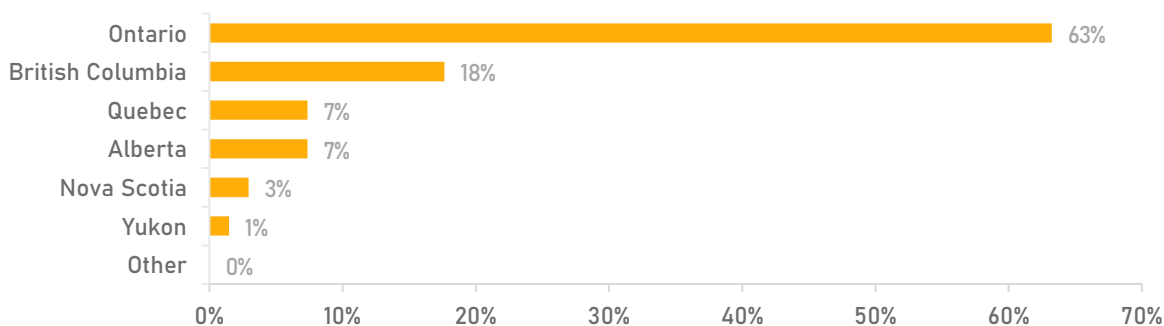
n=67



The majority of survey respondents were from Ontario (63%), followed by British Columbia (18%), Quebec (7%) and Alberta (7%). A small percentage were from Nova Scotia (3%) and the Yukon (1%). There were no survey respondents from the other provinces and territories.

Figure 3: Survey respondents by province

n=68



3.2 APPLYING FOR PUBLIC FUNDING

The survey asked creators in which years between 2017 and 2020 they applied for funding. 88% of survey respondents identifying as Caucasian / White applied for funding for documentary production in at least one of the three years. This rate is significantly higher than the 67% of Black survey respondents, 20% of those identifying as Indigenous, and the 47% identifying as a Person of Colour. These numbers may indicate and be a result of unique barriers experienced by historically marginalized groups that disqualify and dissuade them from applying. These barriers include a lack of time/resources, inability to meet eligibility criteria, and a lack of awareness of funding programs. Barriers experienced by documentary creators, including those who are Indigenous and People of Colour, are discussed further in section 2.4.

Table 3: Proportion of creators who applied for public funding

n=62

	APPLIED FOR FUNDING	DID NOT APPLY FOR FUNDING
Caucasian / White	88%	22%
Black	67%	33%
Person of Colour	47%	53%
Indigenous	20%	80%

3.3 FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

Nordicity's ability to analyze funding distribution to BIPOC documentary creators was limited by the inconsistent data that was available and provided by funders. For example, TVO was the only funder to be able to provide data on funding for BIPOC-led documentaries and BIPOC creators. Telefilm and the NFB were only able to provide data on Indigenous documentaries and creators. The CMF was only able to provide data on Indigenous documentaries and did not have data on creators. Unfortunately, even after combining race categories, the data obtained from the survey was insufficient to fill in the missing data points from funders, therefore Nordicity's industry analysis was limited to Indigenous creators.

Indigenous creators supported: Based on the data Nordicity received from the NFB, Telefilm and TVO, a total of 352 creators (directors, writers, or producers) were supported in 2018, 375 in 2019, and 362 in 2020. Of the total number of key creatives supported, 40 (11%) Indigenous creators were supported in 2018, 44 (12%) in 2019, and 58 (16%) in 2020.¹¹ The CMF did not have this data available.

Table 4: Indigenous creators supported

YEAR	INDIGENOUS CREATORS SUPPORTED
2018	40 (11%)
2019	44 (12%)
2020	58 (16%)

Funding for Indigenous documentaries: When looking at total funding distributed by the NFB and Telefilm, approximately \$11.9 million was distributed in 2018, \$12.2 million in 2019, and \$11 million in 2020. Of this, approximately \$2.2 million (18%) was provided to Indigenous documentaries in 2018, \$1.9 million (16%) in 2019, and \$1.9 million (17%) in 2020.¹²

Table 5: Funding for Indigenous documentaries

YEAR	FUNDING FOR INDIGENOUS DOCUMENTARIES
2018	\$2.2M (18%)
2019	\$1.9M (16%)
2020	\$1.9M (17%)

¹¹ Numbers based on data from the National Film Board, Telefilm Canada and TV Ontario (TVO).

¹² Numbers based on data from the National Film Board and Telefilm Canada.

3.3.1 BIPOC FUNDING DISTRIBUTION AT TVO

TVO was the only funder to collect data on Black, Indigenous and People of Colour documentaries and artists. The data they shared for this study showed a decline in the number of BIPOC creatives supported over the three years, with the proportion of Indigenous creators varying significantly from year to year.

In 2018, approximately 5% of total funding distributed by TVO for documentaries was provided to BIPOC documentaries. This same data was unavailable for 2019 and 2020.

In 2018, 21(15%) of the total number of key creatives supported by TVO identified as BIPOC. In 2019, this number was 8 (8%) and in 2020, it was 6 (6%). Of those creatives who identified as BIPOC, 38% were Indigenous in 2018, none were Indigenous in 2019, and 17% were Indigenous in 2020.

Table 6: TVO Funding distribution

	FUNDING FOR BIPOC DOCUMENTARIES	BIPOC KEY CREATIVES SUPPORTED	BIPOC ARTISTS SUPPORTED WHO ARE INDIGENOUS
2018	\$725,000 (5%)	21 (15%)	8 (38%)
2019	---	8 (8%)	0 (0%)
2020	---	6 (6%)	1 (17%)

It should be noted that the low numbers presented here are likely not unique to TVO. Anecdotal evidence suggests that representation is low across the industry, however, TVO was the only organization to have taken the initiative to collect this data in the period this study considers.

4. BARRIERS TO APPLYING FOR PUBLIC FUNDING

The survey asked about barriers that creators experience when applying for public funding for documentary production, and survey respondents indicated they face several barriers. For Black survey respondents, meeting eligibility criteria (54%), a lack of time/resources (46%) and lack of access to operating funding (46%) were the most common barriers faced. A lack of acknowledgement/awareness of my culture/my organization's culture in public funding models (38%) and lack of awareness of funding programs (38%) were also common barriers.

All (100%) of Indigenous survey respondents identified a lack of time/resources as a barrier to applying for public funding. A significant proportion also identified difficulty navigating funding application language (80%), a lack of acknowledgement/awareness of my culture/my organization's culture in public funding models (60%) and a lack of access to operating funding (60%) as barriers.

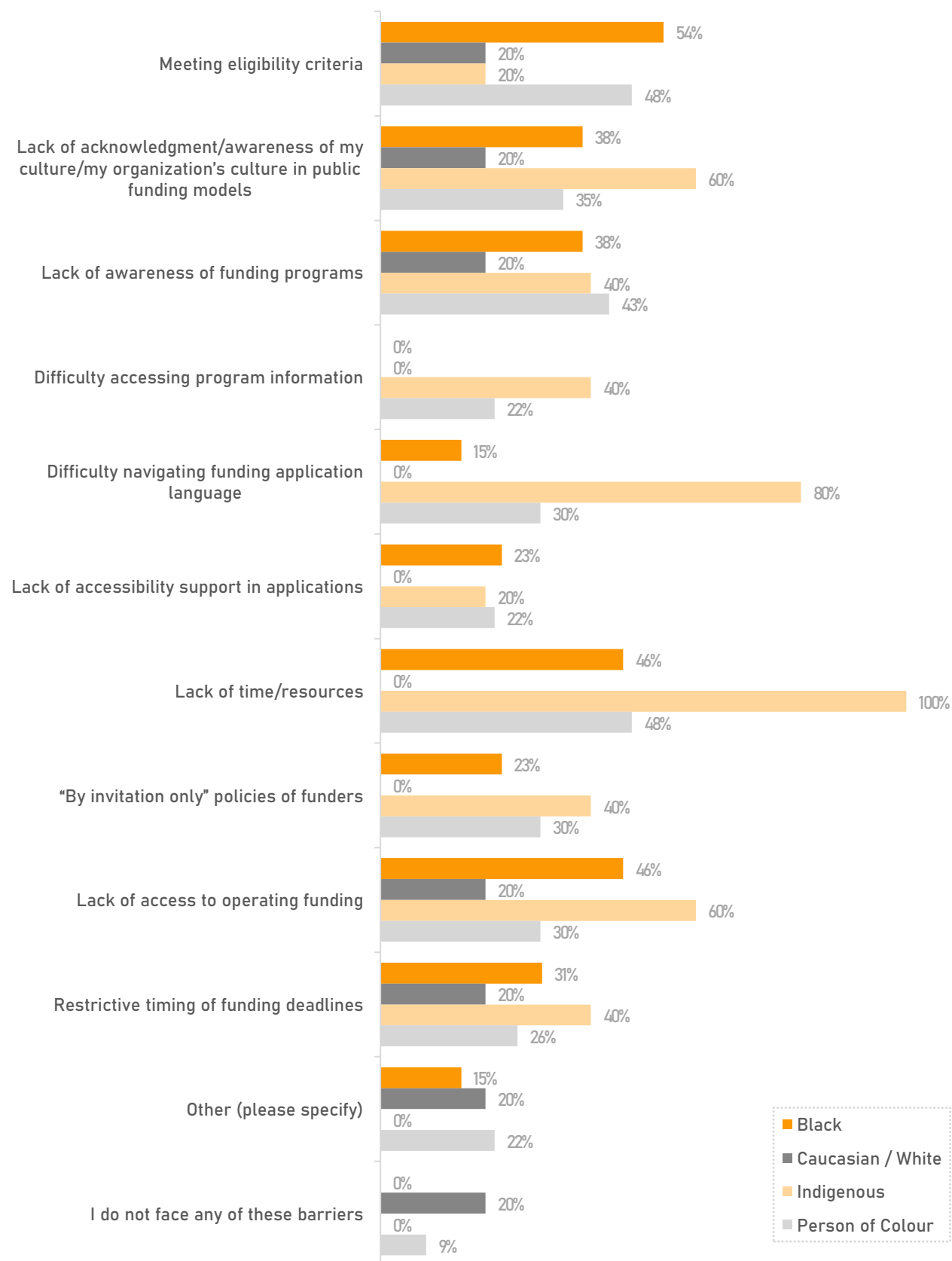
For survey respondents identifying as People of Colour, a lack of time/resources and meeting eligibility criteria were the most common barriers (48%). This was followed by a lack of awareness of funding programs (43%) and a lack of acknowledgement/awareness of my culture/my organization's culture in public funding models (35%). 9% of survey respondents identifying as a Person of Colour stated they did not face any of the barriers listed in the survey.

For Caucasian/White respondents, no one barrier stood out as the most common. 20% of respondents stated they did not face any of the barriers listed in the survey.

Several survey respondents shared further details of the barriers they experience. Concerns raised included limited opportunities for funding for emerging filmmakers, and reliance on subjective opinions for decision-making versus the use of set criteria. Challenges around inclusion were also raised. For example, one survey respondent mentioned the lack of inclusion and acknowledgement of invisible minorities such as immigrants, who face unique barriers, including ill treatment in the industry. Another discussed the challenge of receiving funding on projects that tell every day, authentic stories of minority groups. They claimed the industry tends to fund stories that perpetuate racial stereotypes.

Figure 4: Barriers to Applying for Public Funding by Race

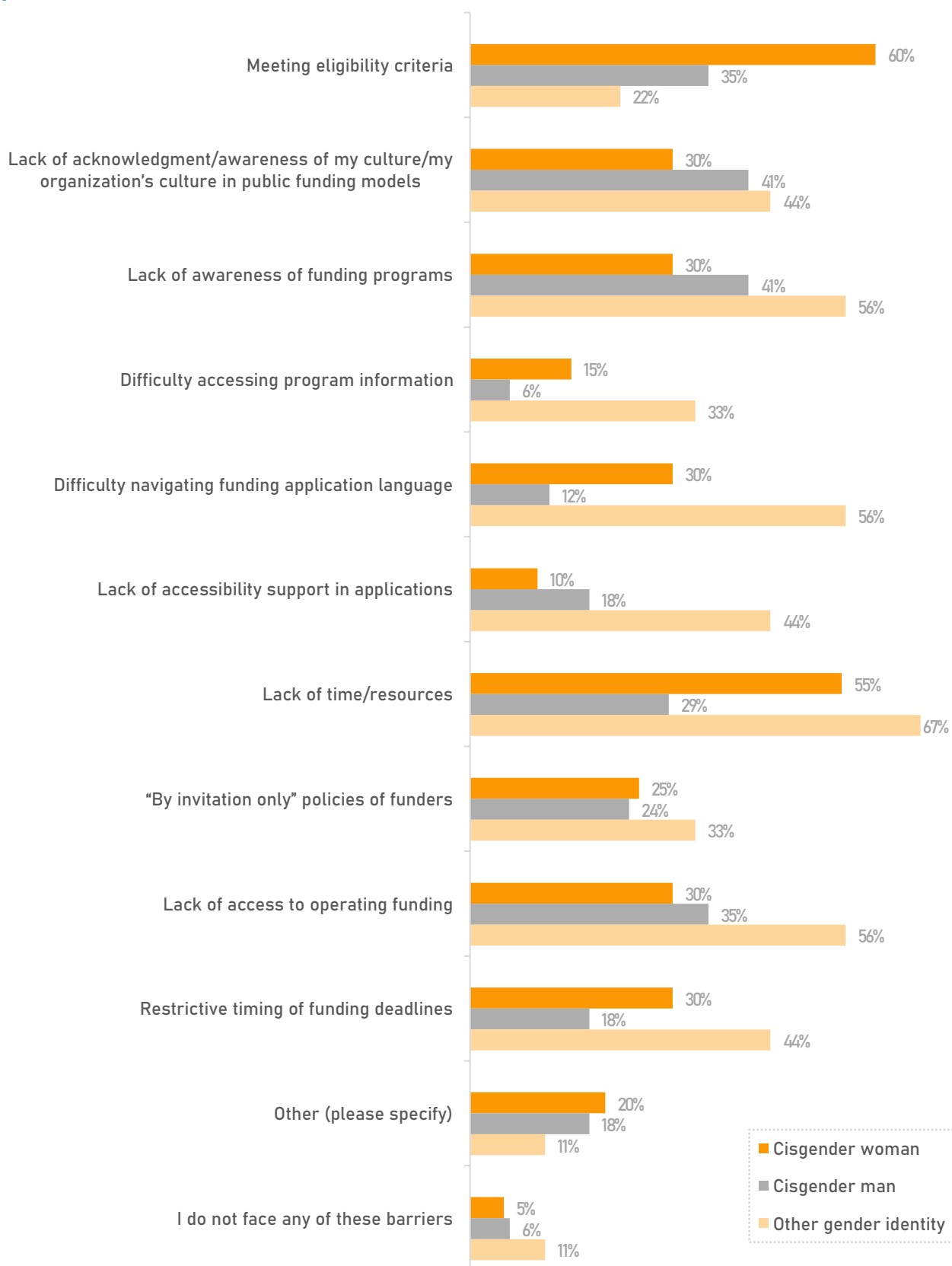
n=46



4. Barriers to Applying for Public Funding

Figure 5: Barriers to Applying for Public Funding by Gender

n=46



Among survey respondents who identified as cisgender women, the most common barriers to applying for public funding for documentary production was meeting eligibility criteria (60%), followed by a lack of time/resources (55%). For cisgender men, the most common barriers were a lack of awareness of funding programs (41%) and, interestingly- a lack of acknowledgement/awareness of my culture/my organization's culture in public funding models (41%). For those who identified as a gender other than cisgender man or cisgender woman, the most common barrier by far was a lack of time/resources (67%) followed by lack of awareness of funding programs (56%), difficultly navigating funding application language (56%) and lack of access to operating funding (56%).

4.1 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

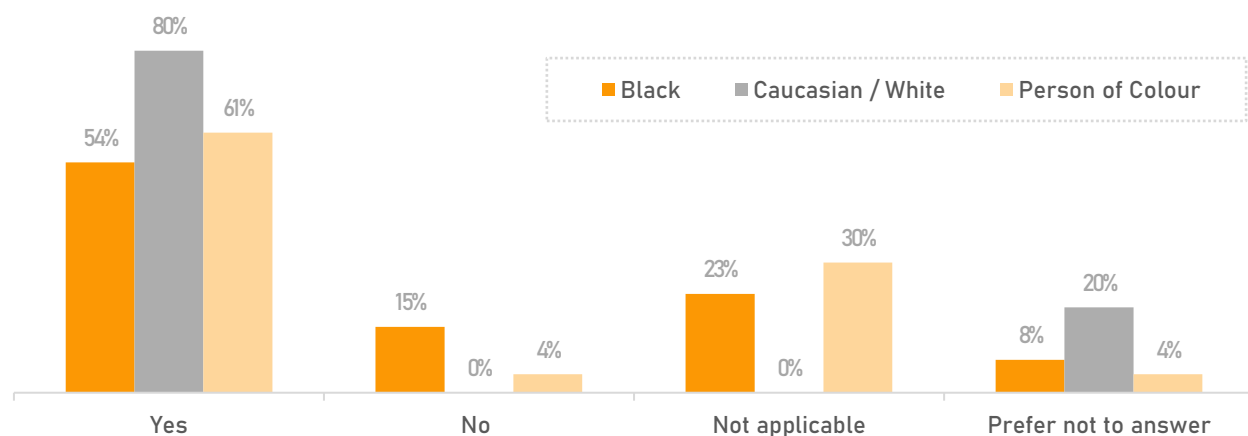
Protecting the narrative sovereignty and intellectual property of documentary creators, particularly those from historically marginalized groups, is a key consideration for the Canadian documentary and broader film and television industry. The survey therefore explored intellectual property ownership.

The results of the survey suggested that Caucasian/White creators were more successful at retaining the IP for projects they get funded. 54% of Black survey respondents and 61% of survey respondents identifying as People of Colour said they typically retain the IP for projects they get funded. 15% of Black survey respondents and 4% of survey respondents identifying as People of Colour said they do not typically retain the IP for projects they get funded. Another 23% of Black survey respondents and 30% of survey respondents identifying People of Colour said that the question was not applicable to them. This contrasts the 80% of Caucasian/White respondents who stated they typically retain the IP for the projects they get funded, and 0% who said they do not or that the question is not applicable to them.

This finding was reflected in further details shared by survey respondents. For example, one survey respondent explained that despite doing the work of a producer, they had to apply for public funding via a white producer and therefore did not own the IP of the project. The perception of funders only working through white creators was echoed in responses from other respondents as well.

Figure 6: Intellectual Property Ownership by Race¹³

n=45



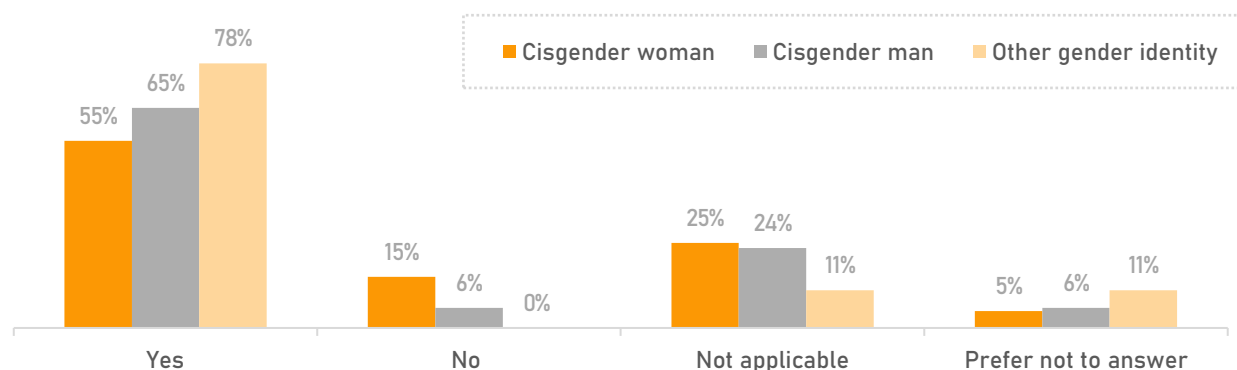
55% of survey respondents identifying as cisgender women stated that they typically retain IP on the projects they get funded, with another 15% saying they do not, and 25% saying the question was not applicable. Amongst cisgender men, 65% said they typically retain IP on the projects they get funded, 6% said they do not, and 24% said the question was not applicable. For those identify as a different gender, a much higher 78% said they typically retain IP on projects they get funded, with 0% saying they do not.

¹³ Indigenous responses were not included in this analysis as there were less than 5 survey respondents to the question. This was done to protect the privacy of survey respondents.

5. Key Findings

Figure 7: Intellectual Property Ownership by Gender

n=45



5. KEY FINDINGS

Despite data limitations, Nordicity's analysis revealed several key findings worth further exploration.

- ▶ BIPOC creators appear to apply for funding at lower rates than their white counterparts. Various barriers to both applying for and being awarded funding likely disqualify and dissuade diverse creators from applying. These barriers include a lack of time and resources, difficulty meeting eligibility criteria and navigating funding application language, ill treatment in the industry, and difficulty maintaining Intellectual Property (IP) ownership of their creative works. The wide range of barriers experienced by BIPOC folks when applying for funding suggest that earmarked funding programs are insufficient in addressing inequities in funding distribution.
- ▶ Of the funders that were a part of this study, TVO was the only one to collect data on Black, Indigenous and People of Colour creatives and documentaries between 2018 and 2020. The data from TVO shows an underrepresentation of BIPOC artists that is likely mirrored across the industry. For example, the Knowledge Network's (KNC) Equity Audit- a first of its kind review of the KNC's prelicences from 2014 to 2021- revealed that only 1.7% of prelicense funding supported majority racialized owned production firms. Unfortunately, without data from other funders, it is impossible to obtain an accurate and complete picture of funding distribution for documentaries.
- ▶ The data provided by funders indicates that the proportion of funding provided to Indigenous works is higher in documentary production (16% in 2020 based on Tables 3 and 4) than in the broader film and television industry (less than 1% based on research conducted by Nordicity and the REMC). Due to the lack of data on Black people and People of Colour, a similar comparison cannot be made for BIPOC works.
- ▶ Barriers faced by documentary creators when applying for funding are impacted by race, both with regard to the types of barriers experienced, and with regard to the proportion of key creatives who experience them. As hypothesized, groups typically understood to be under-represented in the industry face the most challenges. Black, Indigenous, and creators identifying as People of Colour experience barriers to applying for funding at higher rates than their Caucasian / White counterparts. The same is true for those identifying as genders other than cisgender woman or cisgender man.

Similarly, and unsurprisingly, Caucasian / White creators are typically more successful at retaining the IP for projects they get funded than their Black, Indigenous and People of Colour counterparts. The same is true for those identifying as a cisgender man, when compared to those identifying as a cisgender woman. Based on the data obtained in this study, most creators identifying as a gender other than cisgender man or cisgender woman typically retain IP ownership of projects they get funded.

APPENDIX A. SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

DOC Institute executed outreach for the survey through e-blasts, social media posts, a DOC members listserve, and individual emails to community partners, with overall outreach going out to over 15,000, including over 2000 individuals that subscribe to the DOC Institute electronic newsletter. Noteworthy, 245 of Ontario's 450 members identify as Indigenous, Black, or as a Person of Colour.

Through the channels listed above, as well as partnering with our affiliates (which include post-secondary institutions, film festivals, and cultural institutions), DOC Institute reaches several professional communities nationally.

Five communications e-blasts were resulting as follows:

- ▶ **October 4:** 47% open rate, 16.4% clicks per unique opens
- ▶ **October 6:** 42% open rate, 9.3% clicks per unique opens
- ▶ **October 26:** 48% open rate, 10.4% clicks per unique opens
- ▶ **November 2:** National: 59% open rate, 7.2% clicks per unique opens
Ontario: 48% open rate, 12.7% clicks per unique opens
- ▶ **November 3:** National: 52% open rate, 6.3% clicks per unique opens
Ontario: 38% open rate, 3.8% clicks per unique opens

Social Media impressions resulted as follows:

- ▶ **Twitter:** 3 tweets with a total of 2,145 impressions, 56 engagements, and 14 link clicks.
- ▶ **Facebook:** 2 posts with 220 people reached, and 5 engagements.

Instagram stories do not provide analytics as they were not paid promotions.

In addition to DOC Members, community partners include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▶ Asinabka Film & Media Arts Festival | ▶ National Film Board |
| ▶ Belleville Downtown DocFest | ▶ National Screen Institute |
| ▶ BIPOC Film & TV | ▶ POV Magazine |
| ▶ Black Women Film | ▶ Racial Equity Media Collective |
| ▶ Canadian Media Production Association | ▶ Reel Asian Festival |
| ▶ Canadian Cinema Editors | ▶ Reel World Film Festival |
| ▶ Canadian Society of Cinematographers | ▶ ReFrame Film Festival |
| ▶ Cinefest Sudbury | ▶ Regent Park Film Festival |
| ▶ Digi60 Festival | ▶ Toronto International Film Festival |
| ▶ Directors Guild of Ontario | ▶ Toronto International Latin Film Festival |
| ▶ Hot Docs | ▶ Weengushk Film Festival |
| ▶ imagineNATIVE Festival | ▶ Women In Film and Television |
| ▶ Inside Out Film Festival | |
| ▶ Interactive Ontario | |
| ▶ Kingston Canadian Film Festival | |
| ▶ Indigenous Screen Office | |
| ▶ IMPACT | |
| ▶ Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto | |

Special thanks to the **Racial Equity Media Collective (REMC)** for their expertise and leadership in advocacy work.