

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW SCREEN FUND FOR BPOC CREATORS

Key leaders from BIPOC TV & Film, Racial Equity Media Collective, IMPACT, Black Screen Office Group, the Indigenous Screen Office (ISO), the National Screen Institute (NSI), BlackWomenFilm! Canada, Being Black in Halifax, Reelworld Screen Institute and independent producers from across Canada have come together with the board of the former Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund (CIFVF) to repurpose and rebrand the CIFVF as **The Canadian Independent Screen Fund (CISF) for BPOC creators**. The CISF will be a new project development and production screen fund for BPOC (Black and People of Colour) creators.

The Indigenous Screen Office participated in the consultation process for this proposed initiative and is in full solidarity with the intent and direction of this fund.

The CIFVF ran successfully as an independent fund from 1991 to 2008 when it fell victim to the series of arts cuts imposed by the Tory government. A group of board members continued to operate the charity in the hope of reviving it at an opportune time.

“The time is now. The clarion call for accountability led by the Black Lives Matter movement has been amplified by various organizations and groups concerned with media production in Canada. We have all come together under this banner as artistic creators and producers from Black and People of Colour communities. We need a program that responds to our needs”, said Lalita Krishna, Co-chair of the Board of the CISF.

Operating under its new name- **The Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC creators**, the fund will provide development and production support to emerging, mid-level and established content creators from BPOC communities for screen-based and interactive digital projects.

The Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC creators has approached the Federal Government for a contribution of Ten Million Dollars (\$10M) each fiscal year for the next five fiscal years.

The Fund will:

- Support projects submitted by BPOC owned companies or productions where BPOC creatives own 60% of the copyright.

- Provide support for the development and production of Scripted and Non-Scripted projects, as well as a last-in top-up during the production (market-ready) phase of interactive digital media content.
- An independent jury of media professionals will assess the projects based on criteria developed and approved by the board.
- 50% of the funding will go to Black applicants.
- Additional points of intersectionality from equity-seeking groups^[1] will be prioritized.
- The projects will be evaluated in three separate tiers: Emerging, Intermediate and Experienced.

The guidelines, eligibility criteria and timelines will be developed in continued consultation with the ISO, CMF and other screen-based agencies that adjudicate by jury.

“Filmmakers from BPOC communities have historically faced systemic barriers which prevent storytellers from getting our projects greenlit by gatekeepers”, says Jennifer Holness, Co-chair of the Board of the Canadian Independent Screen Fund. “Strategic and targeted investments lead to increased job opportunities and this will in turn have a positive economic ripple effect among racialized communities”.

The board has made a submission to The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Heritage.

Contact: Lalita Krishna Co-Chair
 Telephone: 1 416 720 0394
 Canindscreenfund@gmail.com
 Twitter: @BpocCisf

BOARD MEMBERS

Sobaz Benjamin (Independent, Halifax)
 Adeline Bird (BIPOC TV & FILM)
 Tendisai Cromwell (Independent, (Independent, Toronto)
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 Sarah Spring (Independent, Quebec)

Mahalia Verna (Quebec)
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Amar Wala (Racial Equity Media Collective)

^[1] Intersectionality includes LGBTQQI2SAA+ and disabled and religious minorities from BPOC communities