



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sally Lee to lead the Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC creators as Executive Director

The Board of Directors of the Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC creators (CISF) is pleased to announce the appointment of Sally Lee as Executive Director (ED).



Lee brings over three decades of experience working in the arts and culture sector to this newly created leadership role at CISF. Previous leadership positions include serving as ED at the Reel Asian International Film Festival and at artist's rights organization CARFAC Ontario. She has also held management positions at the Toronto International Film Festival, Soupepper Theatre Company, and Workman Arts (RWM Festival). She has served on boards, committees, and sectoral working groups at numerous organizations, including the Images Festival, Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre, Toronto Arts Council, the Independent Media Arts Alliance, and Access Copyright. In recent years, she has been active as an independent consultant, leading strategic planning and organizational development initiatives for a broad range of arts organizations including Reelworld Screen Institute, Winnipeg's FascinAsian Film Festival, and the Toronto Biennial of Art.

As ED of the CISF, Sally will work closely with the Board to establish a sustainable \$10-million annual fund to support the development and production of screen-based content by BPOC creators.

“We are delighted to have an experienced and highly regarded cultural leader like Sally heading up the CISF. Her background in fundraising, partnerships, government relations, and advocacy will be put to good use as we work with public funders, industry stakeholders, and community partners to reinstate the CISF. Our diverse board with representation from Atlantic Canada, BC, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec reflect the regional priorities of the fund to support filmmakers from Black and racially diverse communities from coast to coast.” -CISF Co-Chair Lalita Krishna.

“I am excited to be joining the CISF with its revitalized mandate to focus on supporting BPOC creators. As an independent fund run both for and by members of racialized communities, CISF is uniquely positioned to meaningfully address some of the historical and systemic inequities in bringing BPOC stories to the screen. I am honoured to work with a board made up of respected BPOC industry veterans who are committed to eliminating some of the many barriers I’m sure they themselves faced in building their careers. I also look forward to working with public, industry, and other community partners who understand the enormous potential of a fund like ours to bring authentic new voices from racially diverse communities to the fore.” -Sally Lee

“We are all well aware of the limited funding available to filmmakers and artists from the regions who are Black and from racially diverse communities. It’s time we had a stable fund that is run and managed by the BPOC community. The CISF is at a pivotal point after partnering with the Black Screen Office to successfully administer the first round of the \$750,000 Rogers-BSO development fund. Now with Sally on board, we should be able to build on this success and we aim to grow the CISF to a stable annual \$10 million fund that is run and managed by the BPOC community.” -CISF Co-Chair Jennifer Holness.

About CISF:

The Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC creators ran successfully as the CIFVF, an independent fund from 1991 to 2008, when it fell victim to the series of arts cuts taking place at that time. A group of board members continued to maintain the organization and its charitable status in the hope of reviving it at an opportune time. The fund was revived in 2020 with a newly constituted board and a revised mandate to focus exclusively on the development and production of screen-based projects by BPOC (Black and People of Colour) creators.

Representatives from BIPOC TV & Film, the Black Screen Office, Creatives Empowered, IMPACT, VAFF, Reelworld Film Festival, M.É.D.I.A and independent producers from across Canada sit on the board and advisory of the CISF, which also operates in solidarity with the Indigenous Screen Office.

For more information please contact:

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