

Rogers extends funding support for Black Screen Office's BPOC storytelling fund

\$900,000 multi-year commitment to Black and People of Colour creators

TORONTO, ON (January 31, 2024) – Rogers and the Black Screen Office (BSO) announced today the extension of a first-of-its-kind Canadian fund to support Black and People of Colour storytellers.

Rogers Group of Funds will invest \$900,000 over the next three years to continue supporting the Rogers-BSO Script Development Fund, a total investment of \$1.65 million since it [launched in 2021](#). The fund is administered by the Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC Creators (CISF).

“We’re committed to removing barriers and creating opportunities so Black and People of Colour creators have equitable access to funding and other supports to help them tell stories here in Canada and abroad,” said Robin Mirsky, Director, Rogers Group of Funds. “We’re proud to collaborate with the Black Screen Office and CISF to extend this important fund that is making a meaningful impact and amplifying diverse voices.”

The fund provides financial support to Black and People of Colour storytellers across the country throughout the writing process, from early stages of script development to refinement and creation of pitch-ready projects. To date, more than 45 projects from across Canada have received funding.

"The renewed support from Rogers is a milestone in our mission to create equity for Black and People of Colour storytellers," said Joan Jenkinson, Executive Director, Black Screen Office. "With the Fund, we are not just financing creative projects, but nurturing the voices and talents that have long been overlooked in our industry. This partnership is pivotal in bringing forward rich, varied narratives from across Canada, ensuring their rightful place in both local and global markets. It is the groundwork for a future where every storyteller has the opportunity to share their unique perspective and experiences."

"The increase in Rogers' level of support demonstrates their strong commitment to improving racial equity in our sector and is a resounding endorsement of the work being achieved through this important funding program," said Sally Lee, Executive Director, Canadian Independent Screen Fund. "CISF is delighted to continue working closely with Rogers and BSO to elevate the voices of Black and other racialized creators, and looks forward to receiving applications for another round of exciting new projects later this year."

Key findings from BSO's 2022 report [Being Heard: Black Canadians in the Canadian Screen Industries](#) point to significant underrepresentation by Black professionals in Canada's screen industry. It found 91% of screen executives cite an inability to find qualified talent, leading to fewer than 3% of study participants occupying key decision-making roles like executive producer or showrunner. The Rogers-BSO Script Development Fund directly addresses these barriers to support BPOC storytellers.

To learn more about the fund, including eligibility criteria, please visit:

<https://bso-ben.ca/opportunities/script-development-fund>

About the Black Screen Office (BSO)

The Black Screen Office is dedicated to building a screen industry free of anti-Black racism. By collaborating with industry decision makers, BSO works to change practices and build systems for accountability. BSO also directly catalyzes the production of Black-led content and supports the career advancement of Black professionals, ensuring a more inclusive and representative entertainment

industry. For more information about the Black Screen Office and the Black Creators Film Festival Initiative, please visit bso-ben.ca.

About Rogers Communications Inc.

Rogers is Canada's leading wireless, cable and media company that provides connectivity and entertainment to Canadian consumers and businesses across the country. Rogers shares are publicly traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: RCI.A and RCI.B) and on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: RCI). For more information, please visit: rogers.com or investors.rogers.com.

About the Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC Creators

CISF is a national funder dedicated to supporting emerging, mid-level and established creators from BPOC (Black and People of Color) communities, for the development and production of their screen-based projects. Governed and operated by the BPOC communities it serves, CISF is also a registered charity and has status as a Certified Independent Production Fund with the CRTC. For more information, please visit independentfund.org.

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