



**BNC 2023-138 - The Path Forward: Working towards a modernized regulatory framework regarding contributions to support Canadian and Indigenous content**

**Hearing Presentation – Racial Equity Media Collective**

## Introduction

1. Good morning/afternoon, Madam Chair, panel members and Commission staff. My name is Julian Carrington and I am the Managing Director of the Racial Equity Media Collective, or REMC.
2. Founded in 2019, REMC is a national not-for-profit organization committed to equity for racialized creators in Canada's screen media industries. Focused on data-led advocacy, REMC has produced several research reports, including most recently a study on data collection and benchmarking for equity, which was co-authored with Nordicity and published earlier this month.
3. Along with our research activities, we are rooted in community engagement and work closely with fellow BIPOC advocacy organizations. REMC is a member of the Canadian Racial Screen Leadership Collective and a participant in the Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups convened by the CMF and Telefilm Canada. REMC also holds a seat on the board of the Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC Creators.
4. My comments today will focus on the third of the Commission's specified issues for discussion, concerning existing and potential funds to support Canadian content.

## Funds to Support Canadian Content – CIPF Certification Criteria

5. The Commission has asked whether existing funds sufficiently support the objectives of the current *Broadcasting Act* and has raised the prospect of amending the CIPF certification criteria. Last week, the government issued policy directions mandating the Commission to ensure that expenditures from broadcasting undertakings support creators from racialized communities. In light of these directions, we submit that the CIPF criteria should indeed be amended.
6. Specifically, we propose three amendments to foster the diversity aims of the *Broadcasting Act*.
  - i) Firstly, we submit that all CIPFs should be required to collect data in order to measure progress towards equity, diversity, and inclusion. In 2016, the Commission mandated CIPFs to introduce evaluative measures that gauge the success of funded projects. We submit that given the stated diversity goals of the current *Broadcasting Act*, "success" must now also be taken to include the degree to which funded projects reflect the diversity of Canada. These evaluative measures should include the solicitation of self-identification data for the copyright owners and key creatives of all funded projects.
  - ii) Secondly, and again building on the Commission's 2016 amendments, we urge that CIPFs be mandated to include equity data in their annual reports. In 2016, the Commission noted the value of annual reports in fostering transparency and accountability; it is time for CIPFs to commit to transparency and accountability in service of diversity and inclusion.

- iii) Thirdly, we call for equitable representation on CIPF selection committees, again taking inspiration from the 2016 amendments. In 2016, the Commission mandated that CIPF committees must feature at least one member to reflect the interests of official language minority communities. Today, we submit that CIPF committees should also feature at least one member to represent the interests of equity-seeking communities more broadly. Such representation would be a natural evolution of the requirement imposed in 2016, reflecting the Commission's cognizance of the importance of decision-makers who are sensitive to the lived realities of, and potential barriers faced by, members of minoritized communities.

## **Funds to Support Canadian Content – Diversity and Inclusion**

7. The second issue we wish to address today concerns the Commission's general inquiry as to how production funds can better support diversity and inclusion as they relate to representation in programming and creators.
8. Most efficiently, these goals can be better supported by directing robust contributions to existing programs targeted at racialized communities. These programs include:
  - The CMF's Pilot Program for Racialized Communities;
  - Telefilm's Development Stream for Black and People of Colour; and
  - The Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC Creators (CISF).
9. These funds are currently significantly oversubscribed. As online undertakings are brought into the contribution framework, these programs should be prioritized for additional support to promote sustainable and accountable access to funding for creators from equity-seeking communities.
10. We note that the CISF is currently the only content production fund among the CIPFs that is BPOC-governed and operated. This makes it particularly well positioned to provide accountability to its target communities.

## **Conclusion**

11. As I conclude, I note that the Commission has sought comments on a number of ancillary points concerning funds, including the kinds of selection processes, eligibility criteria, and reporting requirements that would foster diversity and inclusion. Given our limited time today, I don't propose to comment on those matters here.

I do wish, however, to underscore that the government's recent policy directions instruct the Commission to engage with equity-seeking groups concerning the most appropriate tools and frameworks to support our communities. REMC is well qualified to contribute to such engagement, and we would welcome a dedicated opportunity to provide input to the Commission on these matters, alongside our colleagues in the BIPOC advocacy community.

12. Thank you for the opportunity to comment today.