

## KNOWLEDGE NETWORK RESPONSE - PRE-LICENSING EQUITY AUDIT

Knowledge Network is committed to being a fully inclusive public broadcaster. Today, we released an [independent equity audit report](#) that shows we still have much work to do to achieve this objective. The report provides important insights into Knowledge Network's commissioning and secondary broadcast licensing (i.e., "second window" support<sup>1</sup>) for independent productions. The findings from the equity audit indicate that over the last seven years, Knowledge Network supported only a small percentage of projects owned by Indigenous and racialized producers<sup>2</sup>.

- 7.1% of total funds were directed to racialized owned production firms
- 3.9% of total funds were directed to Indigenous majority owned firms
- 5.2% of leads<sup>3</sup> funding supported majority racialized owned production firms
- 1% of leads funding supported Indigenous majority owned production firms
- 1.7% of commissions funding supported majority racialized owned production firms
- 0% of commissions funding supported Indigenous majority owned production firms

There is a clear disparity in funding when comparing investment in other production firms to those allocated to Indigenous and racialized majority owned firms. We are taking immediate action to address this substantial gap. This is being achieved through establishing measurable targets to support improved access for equity-deserving filmmakers over the next three years of our [mandate](#) from government; and our firm commitment is to continue this work into the future. These include but are not limited to:

- Commission 25 per cent of Knowledge Original documentary features and shorts from B.C. independent Indigenous production companies (total commissions, over three years). Intersections of additional equity deserving groups will be applied across all of Knowledge Network's commissioning efforts to ensure representation of women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ2S+.
- Commission at least 50 per cent of Knowledge Original documentary features and shorts from independent, Black and People of Colour (BPOC) led production companies (total commissions, over three years). Intersections of additional equity deserving groups will be applied across all of Knowledge Network's commissioning efforts to ensure representation of women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ2S+.
- Prioritizing better accessibility for viewers with disabilities, including visual impairment.

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<sup>1</sup> A second window project is when Knowledge Network prelicenses the broadcast rights for a program after the lead broadcaster. Knowledge Network is not involved in the development of the project and pays a lower license fee which helps the producer close their financing.

<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding the limitations of data collection.

<sup>3</sup> The term "lead" is used internally at Knowledge Network to differentiate between solicited and unsolicited commissions. It is an unsolicited commission where a producer comes to Knowledge Network with a project.

- Collecting race-based and other disaggregated data (e.g., age, gender, disability status) through voluntary online user profiles and work with industry partners to find data solutions for television to better understand viewership.

In recognition of the true diversity of British Columbian filmmakers and in an effort to address historic inequities, intersections of equity deserving groups will be applied across all of Knowledge Network's commissioning efforts to ensure representation of women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ2S+.

Castlemain Group led the independent equity audit of Knowledge Network's commissioning efforts as part of our overall diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) action plan. The action plan includes goals and objectives to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive from both an employee experience and external stakeholder perspective.

In an effort to be more responsive to provincial stakeholder requests for transparency and data on funding, the equity audit prioritizes a quantitative assessment of the funding over a more qualitative approach that looks at uncovering potential barriers to access to funding. This report is therefore not conclusive on a broad equity query which would seek to understand the degree to which Knowledge Network's funding processes and practices result in equitable access to funding for IBOC creatives or majority owned IBPOC production companies.

This equity audit was prompted by a call to action from provincial stakeholders and organizations, including the Vancouver Asian Film Festival, the Racial Equity Screen Office, the Documentary Organization of Canada (specifically the British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories Chapter), and the Canadian Media Producers Association, BC Producers Branch. Specifically, these stakeholders requested an equity audit of Production Companies for Commissioned work at KNC over the past seven years.

We are grateful to the organizational representatives who committed their time to advocate for accountability and meaningful change and provided valuable insights and feedback on the equity audit. Knowledge Network accepts the considerations and recommendations within the report and is moving ahead with implementation. We recognize that there is much more work to be done to improve opportunities and access for equity-deserving filmmakers, including Indigenous, racialized, LGBTQ2S+, people with disabilities and women. Knowledge Network is committed to a long-term approach that results in a public broadcaster which represents all British Columbians, and we look forward to sharing our ongoing progress and achievements. We will be reporting out on this progress through our annual Service Plan. This can be accessed via the [Governance page](#) of our web site.