

KNOWLEDGE NETWORK'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Over the last months, Knowledge Network's Board and staff have been actively engaging in discussions about our role in supporting racial equity and inclusion in British Columbia's broadcasting sector and how we can do better. These conversations have been occurring in light of the many events in 2020 that brought systemic racism to the forefront as a reality that is pervasive in our society and institutions.

While many industry organizations and broadcasters responded to these outcries early on, Knowledge Network did not. We regret this fact and are committed to doing better. Knowledge Network has neglected to increase the number of IBPOC (Indigenous, Black, people of colour) producers behind the stories we share. We acknowledge that insufficient representation of IBPOC producers harms not only IBPOC communities but all Canadians as well; and that inequitable representation of IBPOC producers has resulted in urgent calls to action. We are responding to those calls.

We are grateful to industry organizations' representatives who have committed their time to advocate for accountability and meaningful change including the Vancouver Asian Film Festival, the Documentary Organization of Canada, specifically the British Columbia, Yukon, and Northwest Territories Chapter, the Canadian Media Producers Association, BC Producers Branch and the Racial Equity Screen Office. In response to these calls, we have initiated an audit of past and current Knowledge Network documentary commissions. The initial audit finding has shown that over the past seven years, only a few projects were awarded to IBPOC producers. We have contracted the Castlemain Group, an external consulting firm to validate results by conducting an independent audit. Once completed in the coming weeks, the findings will be made public.

We must do better – and will do better -- to ensure the stories Knowledge Network commissions from B.C.'s independent producers reflect the diverse make-up of the province.

As a public broadcaster with a public mandate, it is our duty to set an example by advancing racial equity and inclusion. We know there is significant work to do to address broader issues of systemic racism in our province.

Currently, we are undergoing a comprehensive review of our organization that will result in broad and specific actions to help us reach the goal of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This includes strategies and targets to increase projects with IBPOC producers, policy reviews, employee surveys and focus groups, and industry stakeholder engagement to identify and address barriers racialized producers experience when interacting with Knowledge Network. We are committed to engaging in change that will advance reconciliation and increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in all areas of our work.

We recognize that accountability on our part is overdue and that the required change will come from working together with IBPOC producers.

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President & CEO

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