



INDIGENOUS
SCREEN
OFFICE

**3-YEAR
STRATEGIC PLAN
APRIL 2022**

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STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTANT
Marcia Nickerson

About Us

The Indigenous Screen Office (ISO) is an independent national advocacy and funding organization serving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis creators of screen content in Canada. The ISO’s mandate is to foster and support narrative sovereignty by increasing Indigenous representation across the screen sector.

Launched in 2017, the creation of the ISO is the result of decades of advocacy from Indigenous industry professionals and creators who identified that an organization supporting Indigenous storytellers was a crucial component to a healthy and robust media landscape in Canada.

The ISO was founded in collaboration with APTN, CBC, Telefilm, The Canadian Media Fund, NFB and CMPA, and tasked with supporting the development, production, and marketing of Indigenous content within Canada and abroad, celebrating contributions to a vibrant Canadian Indigenous screen-based industry.

ISO supports Indigenous storytelling across ALL screen-based platforms through two

key streams: the ISO Story Fund and Sector Development. ISO currently funds programs and initiatives for Indigenous screen creators and professionals with a focus on the key areas of training and mentorship, project development, production support and market development. ISO also hosts regular training and workshops and develops resources around On-Screen Protocols and Pathways: A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Inuit and Metis Culture, Concepts and Communities. Protocols are central to shifting industry practices for Indigenous productions, and for furthering the ISO’s mandate to foster and support Indigenous narrative sovereignty on screens.

Since inception, and under tremendous leadership, the ISO is well on the way to implementing the long-term strategy of supporting and advocating on behalf of Indigenous filmmakers, storytellers, and producers. To accommodate the unprecedented level of investment in the Indigenous screen sector and the significant period of accelerated growth and change over the past couple of years, the planning cycle is

a three-year period. This plan was developed in collaboration with and in thanks to ISO staff, Board and Circle members.

In addition to stabilizing the organization following the inaugural program launch and building of the staff complement, the ISO will focus on the following strategic goals:

**LEAD SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN
CANADIAN SCREEN-BASED
INDUSTRIES**

**GROW AUDIENCE APPRECIATION
AND ACCESS TO INDIGENOUS
SCREEN CONTENT**

**INVEST IN A CONNECTED
TALENT STREAM**

**BUILD A THRIVING
ORGANIZATION**

Our Plan

OUR VISION

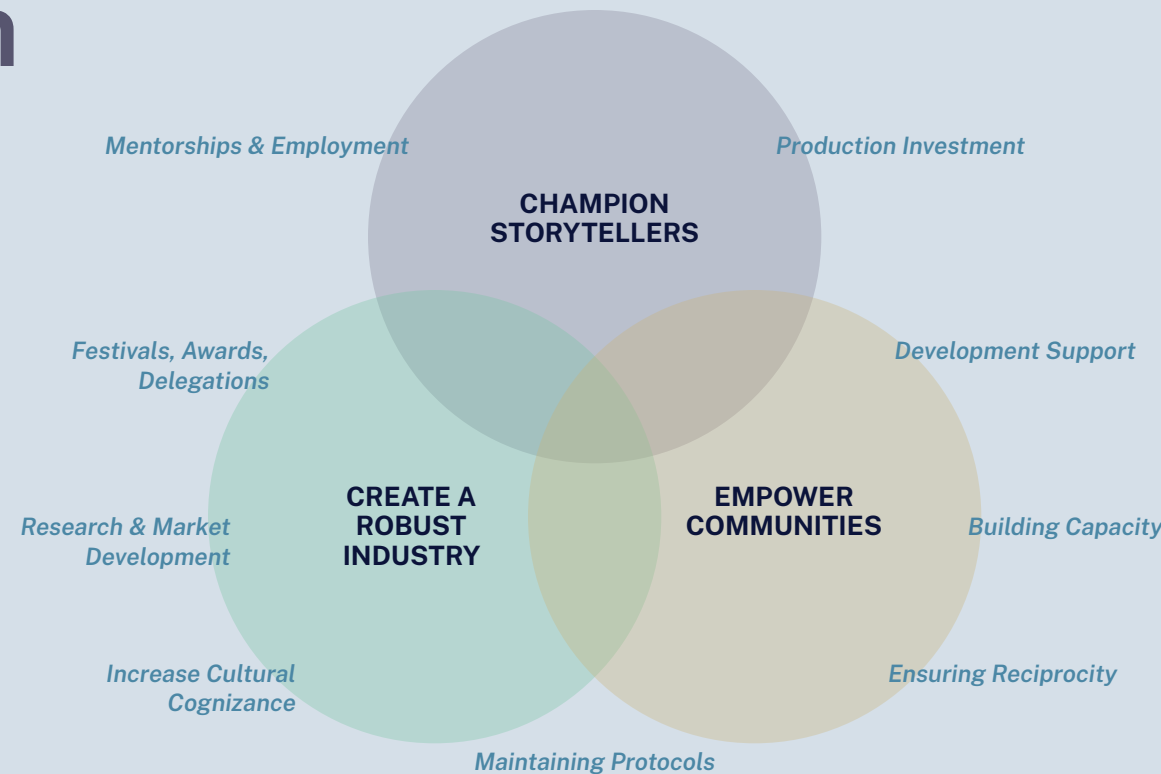
A thriving Indigenous screen industry that uplifts people and communities through storytelling on screen.

OUR MISSION

The ISO's mission is to foster and support narrative sovereignty and cultural revitalization by increasing Indigenous storytelling on screens and promoting Indigenous values and participation across the sector.

OUR MANDATE

Through strategic partnerships, the ISO delivers relevant, responsive, and innovative funding that responds to the needs of Indigenous screen-based creators. We fund content creation, professional development, and sector capacity building.



WE CHAMPION STORYTELLERS

The ISO's mandate is to elevate the unique voices of Indigenous storytellers, who are skilled, talented and have exciting perspectives to share.



WE EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

We support Indigenous companies, communities and individuals to share their diverse stories and perspectives across all screen platforms.



WE CREATE A ROBUST INDUSTRY

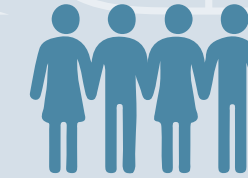
ISO's work is in supporting Canada's diverse community of Indigenous screen-based storytellers and the workforce to support screen-based production.



WE CHAMPION STORYTELLERS

The mandate of the ISO is to elevate the unique voices of Indigenous storytellers, who have been historically marginalized due to colonial practices, racism, and systemic exclusion. The ISO:

- supports talent development for filmmakers in the early stages of their careers and emerging voices.
- provides advocacy, training and funding for Indigenous storytellers and professionals working in any screen-based context in Canada, including film, television, web, gaming, digital and emerging technologies.
- provides funding to Indigenous screen practitioners and creators for the development, creation, and production of screen-based content, which includes international co-productions and completion funding.
- is committed to ensuring Indigenous stories on screens are in the control of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis storytellers.



WE EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

The ISO strives to support Indigenous storytelling where it is happening across regions. This means:

- reflecting regional representation and representation of Indigenous language groups.
- supporting community language revitalization and reclamation as a key aspect of narrative sovereignty.
- building capacity at the grass roots by supporting productions to pay elders, knowledge keepers, language holders and work with community members.
- representing under-represented regions such as northern and remote communities and nations.



WE CREATE A ROBUST INDUSTRY

The mandate of the ISO is to build a robust Indigenous screen sector creating opportunities for the workforce of professionals that support screen-based creation. This means:

- creating paid employment and career development opportunities for Indigenous people.
- supporting training, apprenticeships, and mentorships across skill levels to Indigenous creatives and workforce development opportunities for crew members / community.
- ensuring that the Indigenous industry is more visible, more attainable, more trained, more professional, and has a larger budget.

Our Values



WE ARE INDIGENOUS LED

As an Indigenous-led, community-centred organization, we engage with our communities directly. ISO policies and activities are grounded in and informed by Indigenous knowledge(s), which means respecting Indigenous ways of knowing, seeing, doing, acting, and listening. We acknowledge, and strive to uphold the principles of respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relevance in our working relationships. Indigenous led also means that funds and programs to support Indigenous creators will be guided by Indigenous peoples' values and worldviews, administered by Indigenous staff, assessed by Indigenous arts professionals, and their impact will be measured and reported on in an Indigenous cultural and artistic context.



WE USE CONSENSUS BUILDING

Consensus building is intrinsic to the way our leadership works – in part because we are not a hierarchical organization. We use consensus approaches where everyone is given the opportunity to use their voice. The expectation is that you exercise the gifts that you have been given and that you be a person of excellence through honoring those gifts – not putting yourself above anyone else. This spirit of collaboration allows the sharing of knowledge.



WE ARE INNOVATIVE

Indigenous people are inherently innovative, and we walk that path as part of that legacy. We are inspired by the history of Indigenous storytelling and innovation to take risks and invest in good storytelling. The ISO is looked to for our leadership in creating change for the screen-based industry. We reimagine programs and opportunities that align with Indigenous values and ways of working. We rebuild old structures to develop new processes and funding streams that meet the needs of our communities. Through training and partnerships, we show industry partners and professionals a more powerful way to work with Indigenous storytellers in Canada.



WE ARE RESPONSIVE

As a listening organization, we are constantly responding to those living in different circumstances to be relevant and useful. We strive to meet people where they are at (physically, interests, experience). As Indigenous storytellers identify system gaps, barriers, and needs, we respond. We are an agile organization and are generous with our time and flexible in accommodating needs. ISO will be steadfast in reaching out to communities with new funding, training, and storytelling initiatives.



WE ARE RELATIONAL

The ISO provides support to authentic Indigenous storytellers. We support storytelling that is rooted in distinct cultural and community contexts and nationhood; reflects diverse Indigenous perspectives and intersections including women, non-binary, and 2SLGBTQIAP+ people; and encourage work that is innovative in content and form and shows a diversity of perspectives and voices. As an Indigenous advocacy and funding organization we firmly believe that Indigenous opportunities should be directed to Indigenous People.



WE BELIEVE IN THE ABUNDANCE OF OUR COMMUNITIES AND STORIES

We do not work through the lens of scarcity. We work through a lens of abundance and giving.

Our Strategic Goals

- 1. LEAD SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN CANADIAN SCREEN-BASED INDUSTRIES**
- 3. INVEST IN A CONNECTED TALENT STREAM**

- 2. GROW AUDIENCE APPRECIATION AND ACCESS TO INDIGENOUS SCREEN CONTENT**
- 4. BUILD A THRIVING ORGANIZATION**

STRATEGIC GOALS

OBJECTIVES

1. Lead Systemic Change in Canadian Screen-based industries	2. Grow Audience Appreciation and Access to Indigenous Screen Content	3. Invest in a Connected Talent Stream	4. Build a Thriving Organization
1.1 Implement Pathways & Protocols Phase II	2.1 Expose more work to international markets	3.1 Invest in storytellers, administrators, and industry professionals	4.1 Foster clear internal and external communications
1.2 Change the legislative, funding, and regulatory environment	2.2 Partner with domestic broadcasters and streamers to increase content	3.2 Create reciprocal relationships in the professional development space	4.2 Invest in organizational capacity and culture
1.3 Grow meaningful partnerships with Industry leaders	2.3 Support community screenings and access	3.3 Create mentoring and training opportunities leading to paid employment and career advancement	4.3 Develop a strong funding strategy
1.4 Build our Solidarity Network			

1. Lead Systemic Change in Canadian Screen-based Industries

OBJECTIVES	1.1 Implement Pathways & Protocols Phase II	1.2 Change the legislative, funding, and regulatory environment	1.3 Grow meaningful partnerships with Industry leaders	1.4 Build our Solidarity Network
STRATEGIES	<p>1.1.1 Develop a protocol Tool Kit for implementation as a driver of transformation.</p> <p>1.1.2 Support industry standards for cultural, personal, and emotional safety.</p> <p>1.1.3 Lead eligibility considerations and processes in relation to identity.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Participate in / lead responses in / Broadcasting Act consultation.</p> <p>1.2.2 Work with Heritage Canada to secure flexible and sustainable Contribution Agreement / transform federal agreement into something more flexible and reflective of the relationship</p> <p>1.2.3 Support advocacy efforts on tax credits and CAVCO definitions.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Implement and communicate policies and processes to reflect the eligibility report.</p> <p>1.3.2 Communicate around the unique needs of Indigenous projects and the obligations of various industry partners.</p> <p>1.3.3 Work with mainstream organizations to ensure Indigenous specific funding or partner to offer opportunities.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Be a leader for other Indigenous organizations to ensure Indigenous staff, management, and executive at all levels.</p> <p>1.4.2 Identify solidarity points on major policy and legislation advocacy.</p> <p>1.4.3 Create advocacy tools and resources for individuals and communities.</p>

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Harm reduction through safer, healthier environments with cultural competency
- Dismantled barriers through holding industry and government accountable
- The largest independent Indigenous screen funding portfolio

2. Grow Audience Appreciation and Access to Indigenous Screen Content

OBJECTIVES	2.1 Expose more work to international markets	2.2 Partner with domestic broadcasters and streamers to increase content	2.3 Support community screenings and access
STRATEGIES	<p>2.1.1 Support higher budget productions to compete in global markets</p> <p>2.1.2 Participate in international festivals and markets and create opportunities to support delegates at different markets.</p> <p>2.1.3 Research and explore international treaty making, large-scale agreements and how to support international co-productions.</p>	<p>2.2.1 Continue advocating for increased federal funding; collaborate with other funders to support high-potential projects and talent</p> <p>2.2.2 Partner with Telefilm and CMF to support an international strategy; work with partners with expertise; identify key markets; create targeted programs for different creators and experience levels.</p> <p>2.2.3 Support Independent / Alternative Distribution</p>	<p>2.3.1 Develop relationships and partner with regional Indigenous organizations for the purpose of community outreach</p> <p>2.3.2 Identify a language-based community led pilot-project and document the process</p> <p>2.3.3 Identify a language-based community led pilot-project and document the process</p>

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Growth in International and Domestic sales
- Show the world the power and possibility of Indigenous stories
- Uplifting communities through storytelling on screen

3. Invest in a Connected Talent Stream

OBJECTIVES	3.1 Invest in professional development of storytellers, administrators, and industry professionals	3.2 Create reciprocal relationships in the professional development space	3.3 Create mentoring and training opportunities leading to paid employment and career advancement
STRATEGIES	<p>3.1.1 Research existing and evolving barriers to access</p> <p>3.1.2 Support Professional development around executive training (e.g., Rothmans, Banff)</p> <p>3.1.3 Create mentorships for Arts and media-based critics and curators</p>	<p>3.2.1 Researching existing organizations and their talent development success stories</p> <p>3.2.2 Create diverse mentoring and training opportunities within the sector from crew to executives leading to paid employment and career advancement</p> <p>3.2.3 Partner with specialized employment and training organizations with a focus on new media, gaming, VR, YouTube, and podcasts.</p>	<p>3.3.1 Partner in the creation of mainstream mentorship and apprenticeship programs</p> <p>3.3.2 Support Indigenous production companies in training the next generation</p> <p>3.3.3 Create professional development opportunities for directors to gain hands-on experience on set of larger productions</p> <p>3.3.4 Partner with communities to meet community demands for Indigenous crew members</p>

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Building Indigenous producers and production community
- Taking Indigenous talent to the next level
- Storytelling is seen as a viable career

4. Build a Thriving Organization

OBJECTIVES	4.1 Foster clear internal and external communications	4.2 Invest in organizational capacity and culture	4.3 Develop a strong funding strategy
STRATEGIES	<p>4.1.1 Develop a communications strategy that includes targeted outreach across northern, remote, and rural communities; town halls; a regular newsletter; and reference to and use of the Pathways & Protocols document and eligibility processes.</p> <p>4.1.2 Ad buys targeted community contents social media campaigns</p> <p>4.1.3 Identify a marketing budget that includes sponsoring festival panels</p>	<p>4.2.1 Nurture a circular work and organizational culture</p> <p>4.2.2 Empower staff and board to represent the ISO and build relationships in respective regions (consider training: advocacy, production, communications, Banff leadership)</p> <p>4.2.3 Develop robust retention strategies (including career growth, professional development opportunities, benefits, and wellness)</p> <p>4.2.4 Create mechanisms for feedback to ensure continuous improvement.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Diversify by identifying new revenue opportunities (e.g., private funders for partnership)</p> <p>4.3.2 Advocating for increased federal funding while leveraging / triggering existing funds</p> <p>4.3.3 Create a path for extra funds from other organizations to flow through ISO</p>

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Building, growing, and empowering the next generation of administration leaders
- Empowered employees serving as story defenders



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