



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE
BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

April 2025 – April 2028

www.iso-bea.ca

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About the Indigenous Screen Office

The **Indigenous Screen Office (ISO)** is an independent national advocacy and funding organization dedicated to supporting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis screen creators in Canada. Committed to **Indigenous narrative sovereignty**, ISO works to increase Indigenous representation across the screen sector.

Founded in late 2017 after decades of advocacy by Indigenous industry professionals and creators, ISO was established in collaboration with APTN, CBC, Telefilm, the Canadian Media Fund, and CMPA. ISO is tasked with the development, production, and marketing of Indigenous content both in Canada and internationally, strengthening the Indigenous screen industry.

ISO funds Indigenous storytelling across all screen-based platforms through two key streams: the **ISO Story Fund** and **Sector Development**. These initiatives provide financial support for training, mentorship, project development, production, and market expansion.

In addition, ISO has multiple programs and initiatives delivered with public and private-sector partners in response to community needs.

With strong leadership, the organization remains focused on advocacy, capacity building, and long-term sustainability for Indigenous filmmakers, storytellers, and producers.

As ISO navigates a period of rapid growth and increased investment in the Indigenous screen sector, the ISO will focus on the following strategic priorities from 2025-2028:

- Amplify Indigenous innovation and ingenuity in storytelling
- Sustain and grow funding, organizational capacity, and programs
- Approaches informed by screen-based communities and rooted in diverse Indigenous worldviews
- Harness allyship and partnerships to realize global and mainstream success

Each priority is essential and not listed in order of importance recognizing that all contribute equally to the overall vision of the Indigenous Screen Office.

Our Vision

A thriving, sustainable Indigenous screen industry that uplifts diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and communities through storytelling on screen, with long-term impact achieving national and global recognition.

Our Mission

ISO's mission is rooted in Indigenous ways to foster and support narrative sovereignty, cultural revitalization, and economic prosperity. We achieve this by inspiring Indigenous creators; centering Indigenous voices as leaders in systems change; increasing Indigenous storytelling on screens; and promoting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis values and participation across the sector.

Our Mandate

To deliver relevant, responsive, and innovative funding and strategic opportunities for Indigenous screen-based creators. We fund content creation, professional development, and sector capacity building. Working alongside First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and communities, we provide leadership, education, and advocacy; equity for Indigenous storytellers; and the promotion of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing for the screen industry.

How We Achieve our Vision, Mission and Mandate

We Empower Storytellers

The ISO empowers Indigenous storytellers by amplifying their voices and addressing historical marginalization in the screen industry.

- We support emerging Indigenous filmmakers, advocates for Indigenous screen creators, and provides training and funding across film, television, web, gaming, digital media, and emerging technologies.
- The ISO funds the development, creation, and production of screen-based content, including international co-productions and completion funding.
- Committed to Indigenous self-determination, it ensures that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis storytellers maintain full control over their narratives on screen.

We Uplift Communities

The ISO supports Indigenous storytelling across regions by:

- Ensuring regional and Indigenous language group representation.
- Advancing language revitalization and reclamation as part of narrative sovereignty.
- Strengthening grassroots capacity by funding productions to compensate Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and language holders.
- Amplifying voices from underrepresented northern and remote communities.

We Champion a Robust Industry

The ISO's mandate is to strengthen the Indigenous screen sector by expanding opportunities for Indigenous professionals. This includes:

- Creating paid employment and career development opportunities.
- Supporting training, apprenticeships, and mentorships for Indigenous creatives and crew members.
- Enhancing the industry's visibility, accessibility, skill level, professionalism, and financial resources.

Our Values

Indigenous Led and Community Centred

As an Indigenous-led, community-centered organization, we engage directly with our communities, ensuring our policies and activities are rooted in Indigenous knowledge systems. We uphold the principles of respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relevance in our relationships. Our funding and programs for Indigenous creators are guided by Indigenous values, administered by Indigenous staff, assessed by Indigenous arts professionals, and evaluated within an Indigenous cultural and artistic context.

Consensus Building

Consensus building is central to our leadership approach, reflecting our non-hierarchical structure. Everyone has a voice, and each person is expected to honor their gifts with excellence while remaining humble. This collaborative approach fosters knowledge sharing and collective growth.

Innovative

Indigenous peoples have a legacy of innovation, guided by our rich history of storytelling. Inspired by this tradition, we take risks to invest in impactful storytelling and lead change within the screen-based industry. We reimagine programs and opportunities that reflect Indigenous values, rebuilding structures to create processes and funding that better serve our communities. Through training and partnerships, we empower industry professionals to work more effectively with Indigenous storytellers across Canada.

Responsive

As a listening organization, we prioritize adaptability and relevance by responding to the diverse circumstances, experiences, and needs of individuals and communities. By embracing Indigenous storytelling, we identify system gaps, barriers, and opportunities, offering flexible support through time, resources, and accommodations. ISO is committed to proactively engaging communities through new funding, training, and storytelling initiatives to drive meaningful change.

Relational

The ISO supports authentic Indigenous storytellers, prioritizing storytelling rooted in cultural, community, and nationhood contexts. We embrace diverse Indigenous perspectives, including those of women, non-binary, and 2SLGBTQIAP+ individuals, and encourage innovative work that showcases a range of voices. As an Indigenous advocacy and funding organization, we believe Indigenous opportunities should be directed to Indigenous Peoples.

Abundance of Community and Story

We believe in the abundance of community and stories. We choose to work through a lens of abundance, not scarcity. Our focus is on giving, sharing, and cultivating a mindset that fosters growth, collaboration, and empowerment for all.

Our Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Amplify Indigenous innovation and ingenuity in storytelling	Priority 2: Sustain and grow funding, organizational capacity, and programs	Priority 3: Create opportunities that are rooted in diverse Indigenous worldviews and communities	Priority 4: Harness allyship and partnerships to realize global and mainstream success
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Increase Indigenous-made production in the audio-visual sector 1.2 Advocate for audience access and awareness 1.3 Support access to global markets and networks 	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Advocate all levels of government to promote the Indigenous screen sector 2.2 Expand and maintain current partnerships 2.3 Access diversified funding 2.4 Strengthen organizational capacity and staff development 	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Support Indigenous-language productions 3.2 Increase production infrastructure and capacity outside urban centres 3.3 Foster the next generation of audio-visual storytellers 	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Broaden impact of ISO, build on existing partnerships and relationships 4.2 Identify pathways for Indigenous storytellers to have global and mainstream success 4.3 Advocate for global and national policies and treaties

Priority 1: Amplify Indigenous innovation and ingenuity in storytelling

Objective:

1.1 Increase Indigenous-made production in the audio-visual sector

Key Actions:

- Support the creative resilience of the Indigenous Screen sector with targeted programs and initiatives
- Increase advocacy with broadcasters, funders, and governments
- Make strategic investment in projects
- Develop policies and processes to support script writing and editing, with a focus on feature film
- Support more mentorship with top-level experienced industry professionals

Objective:

1.2 Advocate for audience access and awareness

Key Actions:

- Support Indigenous distribution pathways
- Increase social media presence and develop communications strategy
- Create profiles and stories about ISO projects and storytellers to illuminate and amplify funded projects

Objective:

1.3 Support access to global markets and networks

Key Actions:

- Review and update international strategy
- Educate international festivals and network executives
- Rigorous follow up and reporting on initiatives
- Ensure maximum engagement and Indigenous activations for delegations and storytellers at international events

Priority 2: Sustain and grow funding, organizational capacity, and programs

Objective: 2.1 Advocate all levels of government	Objective: 2.2 Expand and maintain partnerships	Objective: 2.3 Access diversified funding	Objective: 2.4 Organizational and staff development and capacity strengthening
Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage provincial and municipal governments, and Nation-based organizations • Engage government relations experts • Participate actively in CRTC processes • Build relationships across government parties 	Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful implementation of the Canada Media Fund's Indigenous Program as administrator • Increase presence at industry events • Nurture relationships through acknowledgments and honouring events • Draft partnership engagement framework • Actively pursue new partnership opportunities that bring funding and capacity to ISO • Identify areas of partnership development, particularly in opportunity areas of podcasting, immersive and interactive. 	Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research private funding in Canada and USA • Engage with successful projects to learn about unique funding structures • Develop an Indigenous screen-based foundation • Launch a new charitable organization as a sister to ISO with a focus on training, education and youth • Explore the creation of an endowment fund 	Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve internal processes for delivering programs, including successful implementation of new Salesforce portal • Conduct annual policy review and address existing policy gaps • Explore annual staff development opportunities which may include language • Updates to staff from all levels of leadership: CEO, VP and Directors

Priority 3: Develop approaches informed by screen-based communities and rooted in diverse Indigenous worldviews		
Objective: 3.1 Support Indigenous- language productions	Objective: 3.2 Increase production infrastructure and capacity outside urban centres	Objective: 3.3 Foster the next generation of audio-visual storytellers
Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure and develop funding for Indigenous language productions and initiatives • Partner with language-based broadcasters • Support versioning across all productions through research on process and challenges 	Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct community engagement and outreach to identify needs and priorities • Expand sector development program funding • Expand community outreach for ISO programs and initiatives • Build relationships with studios and soundstages • Be a liaison for other Indigenous organizations 	Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase mentorship and support for youth-based programs • Create new multigenerational opportunities for emerging storytellers • Engagement with youth and emerging talent • Highlight crew and other film jobs • Increase ISO-supported networking opportunities

Priority 4: Harness allyship and partnerships to realize global and mainstream success

Objective:

4.1 Broaden impact of ISO, building on existing partnerships and relationships

Key Actions:

- Support the creative resilience of the Indigenous Screen sector with targeted programs and initiatives
- Increase advocacy with broadcasters, funders, and governments
- Make strategic investment in projects
- Develop policies and processes to support script writing and editing, with a focus on feature film
- Support more mentorship with top-level experienced industry professionals

Objective:

4.2 Identify pathways for Indigenous storytellers to have global and mainstream success

Key Actions:

- Engage industry experts and connect with Indigenous storytellers
- Create a strategy for international delegations with specific goals and impact measurements
- Create a dynamic feedback loop for existing market initiatives
- Leverage existing provincial, national, and international trade missions for our creators
- Identify service production opportunities for Indigenous owned companies

Objective:

4.3 Advocate for global and national policies and treaties

Key Actions:

- Take a leadership role in the new TIFF Industry Market
- Explore increased opportunities for International co-production
- Support circumpolar initiatives and partnerships
- Engage new global partners



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