

## **The Documentary Organization of Canada's (DOC) member community consultations on the National Film Board**

In December 2023, the NFB began a process of restructuring that is still ongoing. Many DOC members expressed concerns about how these changes might impact them and their communities. Between February and March 2024, DOC convened our members to reflect on the NFB's mandate, and to share ideas and aspirations for our vision of the NFB that meets the needs of Canadian and Indigenous filmmakers in every region of the country.

The reflections took place virtually in February, March, April and in-person in May 2024. The following are a consolidated list of the nine priorities.

# MANDATE

- **Embody the spirit of Canadian cinema**
- **Support and develop a Canadian cinematic language**
- **Nurture, grow and support the independent filmmaking community**
- **Champion filmmakers**
- **Support non-commercial projects**
- **Root the NFB in the regions**
- **Be a Community Hub**
- **Support a diversity of stories by a diversity of storytellers**
- **Support Canadian filmmakers in telling international stories**

# MANDATE

- **Adhere to and advocate for Indigenous narrative sovereignty**
- **Develop audiences**
- **Engage Communities**
- **Take risks**
- **Be innovative**
- **Be an Archive**
- **Support Educators with content and resources**
- **Be accountable to the Public**
- **Adhere to industry best practices**

# TRANSPARENCY

**Increase overall transparency on:**

- **Programming objectives**
- **Operational spending and studio allocations**
- **The reach the NFB has within educational institutions**
- **The progress that has been made on the NFB's February 2021 Equity plan**
- **Which of the 2017-2020 Indigenous Action Plan's recommendations have been put into place**
- **The structural changes that the NFB has made to address racial equity beyond supporting individual filmmakers' work**
- **The structural changes the NFB has made to incorporate the principles of Indigenous narrative sovereignty within the NFB, beyond supporting Indigenous filmmakers' work**

# STRATEGIC AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES

- **Reduce bureaucracy**
- **Decentralize decision-making and budgets**
- **Increase regional autonomy**
- **Reconfigure the current top-heavy structure of the organization**
- **Rebalance spend on bureaucratic operations vs. independent production**
- **Consider term limits for NFB producers, and restructuring their role on some productions to consultants rather than producers**
- **Separate the role of the Commissioner from Board Chair of the NFB**

# INDIGENOUS NARRATIVE SOVEREIGNTY

- **Implement the recommendations of the 2017-2020 Indigenous Working Group**
- **Consult with Indigenous filmmakers before implementing any changes that directly impact the Indigenous filmmaking community**
- **Create Indigenous Executives positions that have connections to regional Indigenous communities**
- **Create an Indigenous studio that has authority over the budgets, productions, and legal agreements for all Indigenous productions**
- **Do not take any copyright on Indigenous films**
- **Ensure that Indigenous filmmakers are able to access NFB archives about Indigenous communities free of charge**

# COMMUNITIES WHO HAVE BEEN HISTORICALLY UNDER-REPRESENTED AT THE NFB

- **Implement regular consultations with these communities and seek their input on proposed changes at the NFB**
- **Ensure that the NFB has a diversity of lived experiences and perspectives at the Executive decision-making level, and that there is meaningful engagement**
- **Ongoing anti-racism training for all staff and Executives**
- **Recognize that many Black and racialized filmmakers make films that take place outside of Canada's borders and that this must be integral to the NFB's programming framework**

# PRODUCING

- **Produce films that are not intended for a global audience, but are there to celebrate and capture small community stories**
- **Produce a diversity of types of stories that do not stem from one central editorial line or storytelling style**
- **Produce films that defy the idea that there is one kind of Canadian or Indigenous story**
- **Produce films that are innovative in form and content**
- **Produce films that amplify social justice issues**
- **Increase collaborations with other partners to get short documentaries made and distributed, such as the “Calling Card” program with CBC**
- **Reduce the emphasis on owning films that are made with the NFB**
- **Simplify the language in coproduction agreements and production documentation**
- **On productions that do not require a producer, explore the option of not having a public producer on NFB coproductions**

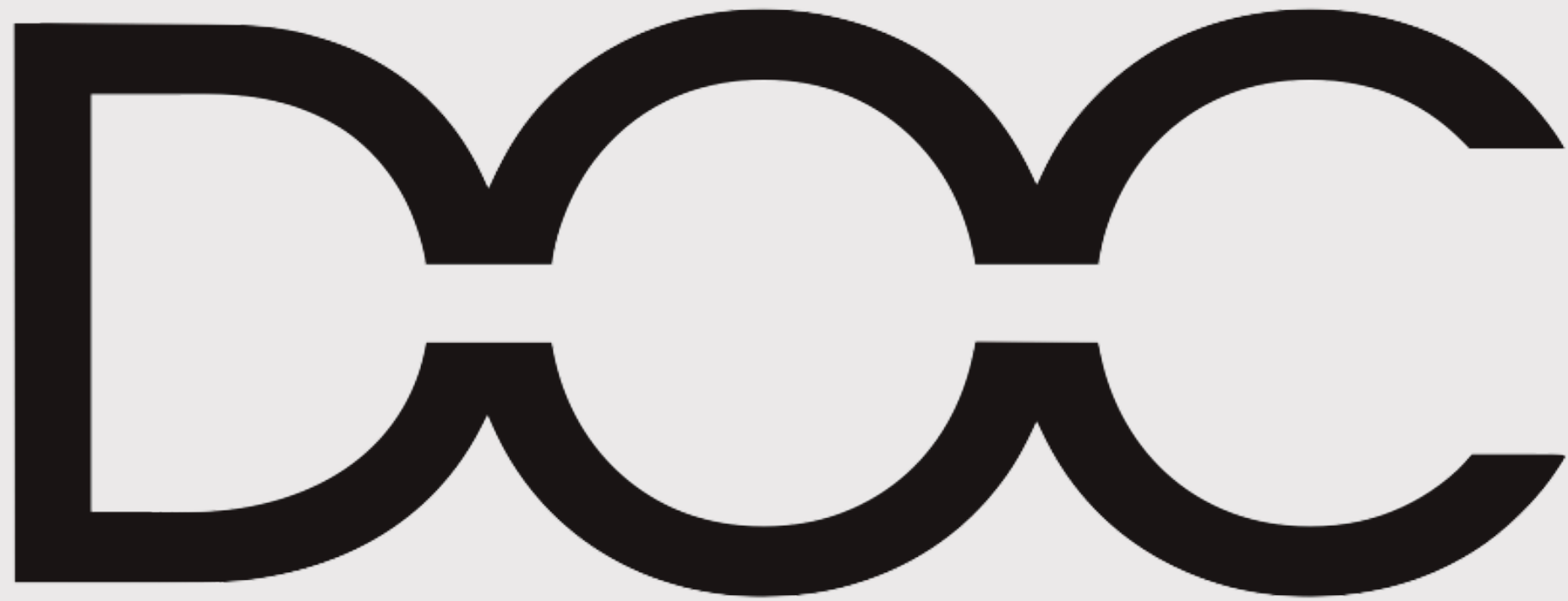


# DISTRIBUTING

- **The NFB should have the capacity to distribute, but should not oblige filmmakers to have their films distributed by the NFB**
- **Empower filmmakers to be able to produce, own and distribute their films**
- **Offer distribution services to films that are not NFB productions, in order to help grow the film community's ability to access funding**
- **Offer outreach or "impact" distribution services to film that are not NFB productions**
- **Offer filmmakers the option of housing their film on nfb.ca**
- **Focus distribution on Canada**
- **Focus distribution on outreach into communities**
- **Focus marketing strategy on films rather than on the NFB's brand**

# THE NFB AND THE COMMUNITY

- **Prioritize listening to the community and being attentive to each community's needs**
- **Bring in filmmakers as consultants on productions**
- **Be a natural home for first time filmmakers**
- **Be accessible to those who need a public producer to make their early works**
- **Provide mentorship to new producers / filmmakers and new Canadians**
- **Be a community hub: provide and encourage access to NFB spaces, including the cinema in Montreal**
- **Encourage NFB production spending across the independent sector from production and postproduction studios to crew, especially in the regions**



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