Women in Production

Gender Parity Action Plan

30 September 2019
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INTRODUCTION

Bell Media is one of Canada's largest television companies. We operate channels in both English and French, and provide a broad range of entertainment, factual and information programming across a wide variety of different platforms. Each and every day, millions of Canadians tune in to watch high-quality television content from our local stations, discretionary services and video on-demand properties.

An important part of our commitment to high-quality programming is our focus on the development and production of Canadian content. Across all of our services, and in almost every genre, our television services try to reflect the interests of Canadians. In an industry facing significant change, Canadian content, be it dramas, documentaries, lifestyle programs or reality shows, continues to forge a specific and unique connection between our television services and Canadian audiences.

The Commission regularly examines issues and policies affecting Canadian television and the Canadian broadcasting system more generally. In December 2018, the Commission hosted an industry summit to discuss concerns regarding the participation and involvement of Canadian women in key creative areas of production. At that meeting, the Commission invited senior executives of leading Canadian broadcasting companies to discuss the potential for action plans that could specifically address this issue going forward.

Canadian broadcasters, independent producers and the industry overall have made concerted efforts to develop a more inclusive Canadian production industry. While progress has been made, more needs to be done. At the roundtable, it was acknowledged that women continue to face barriers in the production sector. Data shows that the participation level of women in key creative roles is lower than it should be. The Commission highlighted to us the importance of developing broadcaster action plans to increase the participation of women in these key roles of Canadian independent production.

We recognize the importance of this initiative and are certainly willing to re-double our efforts in this area, as part of what will ultimately be a joint industry approach to addressing this issue.
As will be outlined in more detail below, we are filing an initial Gender Parity Action Plan and that plan is comprised of these four key components:

1. **Gender Parity by 2025**
   The objective of our action plan is to achieve gender parity in key creative roles (i.e. Producer, Director, Writer, Showrunner, Director of Photography and Editor) for our Canadian independent productions by 2025.

2. **Awareness and Outreach**
   We have participated in industry initiatives which sought to address the issue of women in production. And we regularly meet with independent producers to discuss their programming projects. Going forward, all of these industry touch points will provide greater opportunities for us to work together to meet our stated objective for gender parity.

3. **Collective Industry Action**
   We cannot achieve these targets without the participation of independent producers, industry partners as well as other broadcasters. Collective industry action is needed and will provide the support structure to assist us in meeting our gender parity target.

4. **Accountability**
   Accountability is key. We have provided baseline information and committed to detailed annual reporting to inform the Commission as to the progress made on a year-over-year basis.

1.0 **OUR GENDER PARITY OBJECTIVE FOR 2025**

At the roundtable, we acknowledged the importance of providing the Commission with information about the participation of Canadian women in independently-produced programming at Bell Media. We also recognized the need to set targets, which can then form the parameters for further discussions going forward.

Target-setting is important, as data has the potential to prompt further action.
The purpose of this action plan is to outline to the Commission our objective of achieving gender parity in key creative roles for Bell Media’s Canadian independent production by 2025 (Producer, Director, Writer, Showrunner, Director of Photography and Editor). That objective would apply to both our English- and French-language programming, reflecting our support and involvement in Canadian independent production in both languages.

To begin that process and to assist in evaluating our progress in meeting this target, we are providing baseline information about current levels for independent productions at Bell Media. For that purpose, as Appendix A, we are enclosing information for certain roles averaged over the last three years.

More specifically, we have provided information for the following roles: Producer, Director, Writer, Director of Photography and Editor. We have not provided information relating to the position of Showrunner. To date, we have not tracked that position and questions have been posed as to how that position should be defined and categorized. That issue will soon be resolved by working with our production partners, and showrunner information will be provided and counted as we work towards our goal of gender parity by 2025.

Going forward, data collection and annual reporting will provide the context within which we can discuss our efforts to address this concern, in collaboration with the Commission, independent producers and industry partners.

2.0 AWARENESS AND OUTREACH

At Bell, we are proud of our commitment to foster an inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplace where all team members and customers feel valued, respected, and supported. We are dedicated to building a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve, with a commitment to ensuring every team member has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

- The Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) champions diversity and inclusion across the organization, defining Bell’s diversity and inclusion strategy and developing company-wide implementation plans for specific actions. The DLC is comprised of 13 diverse senior leaders, with representation from all business groups and geographies. Under their leadership, we work to ensure our business strategy and human resources policies align with our diversity and inclusion goals.
– Bell is an active member of a number of prominent organizations that support the advancement of women in the workplace, including Catalyst, 30% Club and Women's Business Enterprises (WBE).

– Bell Media is an active partner with Women in Film and Television (WIFT), Women in Communications and Technology (WCT) and the Women's Executive Network (WXN), organizations that engage and advance careers of women through networking, mentoring, and professional development.

– Our programs made it possible for Bell to be named one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers in 2018, an award that recognizes employers who lead the way in creating an inclusive environment where individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds are valued. Building on our recognition as one of Canada’s Top 100 Employers and a Top Montréal Employer, Mediacorp has again named Bell a Top Employer for Young People based on our award-winning recruitment and career development programs.

– In September 2018, Bell’s commitment to gender equity in the workplace was recognized by Women in Governance, an organization supporting women in leadership development, career advancement and board governance. Bell was one of only 31 Canadian companies to receive the parity certification following an assessment of our progress on gender parity and the effectiveness of systemic enablers including governance, data analysis, talent development and leadership.

As we discussed with the Commission at the roundtable meeting, Bell Media already works closely with Canadian independent producers in an effort to ensure that our independently-produced Canadian programming includes a variety of creative inputs and points of view. As such, we are currently involved in a significant number of Canadian program projects which already include the participation of Canadian women in key creative roles.

Outside of production itself, we have also participated in industry initiatives which sought to increase the participation of women in production. As such, we welcome the opportunity to work with other broadcasters, producers and industry partners to further develop ways to address this issue.
– We have supported the research efforts of Women in View, whose On Screen Report has, since 2012, tracked the engagement of women writers, directors and cinematographers in Canada’s publicly-funded film and television industry as well as other initiatives.

– We are also involved in the 2x more, an initiative launched at Prime Time in February of 2016 by Women in View to support a sustainable shift towards gender equity in Canada’s media industries. Bell Media’s Corrie Coe was part of the Advisory Group for the development and implementation of this industry initiative.

– Femmes du cinéma, de la télévision et des médias numériques (FCTMN) is an association for professional women in the industry of film, television and digital media, showcasing talent through conferences, mentoring, networking and special events. We have been a principal partner of the organization almost since its inception. Bell Media’s Marie-Eve Bergeron is a Vice-President and a member of the Board of Directors.

– We also recently sponsored the Making Waves program developed by WIFT-Atlantic. The program is a series comprised of five, four-hour workshops that focus on key areas of screen-based media covering a wide range of skills (screenwriting, editing, directing, producing and documentary filmmaking). Participants are also provided with WIFT-Atlantic memberships and registration at the annual Women Making Waves Conference.

Bell Media’s strong relationship with the independent production community remains a cornerstone of its success on air. We rely on a close collaboration between our development and production executives and Canadian independent producers to create unique programming that resonates with audiences. Under the leadership of our senior executives, the Original Programming team continues to be in regular contact with the talented Canadian production community and with writers, directors and actors. They are proactive in their ongoing search to identify new creative talent involved in productions throughout Canada, and to continually review emerging Canadian talent and current programming trends to stimulate new programming and outreach ideas.

On an annual basis, Bell Media’s production executives attend almost 2,000 meetings with producers, writers and showrunners from across the country, and receive more than 1,900 pitches for English and French-language programming project ideas. They also attend more than 50 industry events and are actively involved in educational initiatives throughout Canada.
All of these industry outreach meetings provide us with a unique opportunity to broaden the awareness of this important issue and strengthen our resolve to work together with our industry partners as we strive to meet our gender parity objective for our independent production slate.

3.0 **COLLECTIVE INDUSTRY ACTION**

While we are prepared to work with the Commission and pursue the objective of gender parity by 2025, the reality is that we cannot do it alone. There are practical considerations that effectively impact our ability to develop and implement initiatives in this area.

As we move forward, we must also emphasize the importance of involving the Canadian independent production sector in this process. In setting these gender parity targets, we understand that we will need the support of independent producers. They play an important role in the development and production of Canadian content. The collaborative relationship between broadcaster and independent producer has contributed to the development of a vibrant production industry in Canada. They are key partners in the creative process.

While we commission and work on program projects, independent producers are more directly involved in the production process and have significant operational authority throughout the steps of that process. As a result, while we can set gender parity targets and develop action plans, Canadian independent producers must also become involved, and allocate the appropriate time, attention and resources that we may need for any number of industry initiatives in the years ahead.

We must also work with other broadcasters and other digital media companies, now and going forward. It will take a concerted and collaborative industry effort to apply principles and best practices on an industry-wide basis.

Moreover, the Canadian broadcasting industry has also felt the significant impact of large, over-the-top (OTT) digital media content providers. They are formidable, well-funded competitors who continue to generate significant revenues from the Canadian market. With Crave and other GO services, we are certainly investing in developing digital services of our own, and will continue to offer our own dynamic options for the Canadian television market.
But there is no doubt that our industry has changed. There is no going back. Quite the contrary, more and more foreign OTT services are coming to market every year. They now form part of the Canadian television market. The question becomes what contributions they are making to our television industry.

These foreign OTT services should also participate in this industry initiative to increase the participation of women in key creative roles, and should put forward their own commitments to address this important issue going forward.

4.0 ACCOUNTABILITY

On an annual basis, we will provide the Commission with a detailed report which will contain updated production participation information as well as the initiatives undertaken during the year to increase the participation of women in our Canadian independent productions. In parallel with other reports, we would also propose that such a report be filed in November of each year, a few months following the end of each broadcast year. Starting in 2019-2020 (i.e., 30 November 2020), these reports will inform the Commission of both our successes and challenges as we strive to meet the gender parity objective we have set for 2025.

5.0 CONCLUSION

We look forward to continuing our work on this ambitious and important industry initiative over the years to come, and in working with the Commission, and alongside other industry partners, to further expand the contributions of Canadian women in key areas of Canadian programming.
Appendix A

Bell Media - Women in Production

Percentage of Key Roles held by women (BY GENRE)
(as of August 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH-LANGUAGE GROUP</th>
<th>Key Role</th>
<th>DRAMA</th>
<th>COMEDY</th>
<th>FACTUAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>60.24%</td>
<td>19.19%</td>
<td>55.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>8.21%</td>
<td>46.87%</td>
<td>9.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>47.03%</td>
<td>26.75%</td>
<td>50.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DOP</td>
<td>3.24%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>16.53%</td>
<td>3.62%</td>
<td>7.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Average</td>
<td>27.05%</td>
<td>19.29%</td>
<td>24.47%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRENCH-LANGUAGE GROUP</th>
<th>Key Role</th>
<th>DRAMA</th>
<th>COMEDY</th>
<th>FACTUAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>54.64%</td>
<td>38.53%</td>
<td>47.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>31.04%</td>
<td>9.97%</td>
<td>24.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>64.47%</td>
<td>22.67%</td>
<td>36.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DOP</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>7.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>72.05%</td>
<td>15.92%</td>
<td>21.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Average</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td>17.42%</td>
<td>27.58%</td>
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</table>

Based on Canadian independently-produced programs