



# **Equality & Diversity**

**More diverse voices in the creation of films and television shows in the  
audio-visual industry.**



*In December 2015, Screen Ireland (SI) announced plans to address the under-representation of women in the Irish screen sector. Five years on Screen Ireland has introduced both strategic and practical initiatives to support its intention to achieve gender parity in funding for directors, writers and producers. There is a growing body of women's voices funded by Screen Ireland today. 2021 has continued to amplify issues like equality and racial injustice amidst a global pandemic. Below are recommendations from the Screen Directors Guild of Ireland for a conversation about further broadening the equality and diversity of storytellers for the screen, in particular directors.*

## **A NEW VOICE FOR DIVERSITY**

Earlier this year Screen Ireland recognised the value of director talent in instigating innovative stories for the screen with a new initiative THE VOICE. We believe in the power of THE VOICE as a key tool in diversifying and empowering talent by restructuring the process of filmmaking and putting directors in the centre of development. 50/50 gender balance was achieved in the selection process, with 14 of the 27 projects helmed by female directors. We recommend THE VOICE scheme be continued.

## **10,000 HOURS**

Many say it takes 10,000 hours to become a master at any skill. Building the 'flying hours' on set for a director is crucial to becoming successful and yet an almost impossible challenge for most directors. The key here we believe is in mentorship. Mentorship provides immediate opportunities to shadow and helps create continuity between directors' projects and increase experience on set and in the edit. It takes a leap of faith for a producer to work with an experienced director and an attached mentor provided that extra support. We recommend TV series in Ireland that are commonly done by one director assign at least one episode to a young female or minority talent.

## **BUILD COMMUNITY**

Some of the most unique elements of filmmaking lie within the collaboration and convergent areas of creativity, where directors work with producers, writers, commissioning editors etc. as part of a team. Whether in coordinated efforts with like-minded colleagues or informally, the role of an *advocate* can be used to support a director's career. An advocate being a person that helps provide a director with an opportunity or endorsement. It can be that distributor that sees a director's work and champions it, or a positive reference from a colleague that helps a director over that hurdle.



## PRODUCER POWER

Great films thrive in a strong relationship between the director and the producer. Producers do so much more than produce a film. Producers back a vision and often the career of a director and champion their work right from the early short films to the bigger budget projects. When directors build key relationships with producers this can transform the career of a director for their entire working life.

## TRANSFORMING THE SCREEN INDUSTRY

We are at an inflection point in the screen industry. There is a potential levelling of the playing field if we seize this opportunity for more equitable filmmaking support across race, gender, and class. There are macro questions we are asking such as, how will Covid-19 impact our stories for the next decade and beyond? How can we build in long term childcare into film making process to allow female directors to thrive? We are also asking questions such as, how can we support more female and minority directors to tell the stories they authentically want to tell? What lessons can we learn from the challenges directors have today to create immediate and lasting progress? We believe change is possible only a few years ago directors would have been told that female stories like the *THE BRIGHT SIDE*, *FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY* and *THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT* did not have a big enough audience and now we see the opposite is the case as audiences are captivated by these stories worldwide.