



Women's Media Organizations Call on Government for Gender Equity Policy

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Fourteen leaders of women's media organizations and unions, representing over 40,000 professional members of Canada's film and television industry met at a landmark summit in St. John's, NL on Oct. 14. Delegates unanimously supported the release of seven recommendations designed to address the current gender imbalance behind the camera and on screen. The recommendations call for changes in government policy to promote gender equity in employment and in the allocation of public funds for media production. They also recommend the establishment of an annual reporting system to increase accountability in Canada's media industries.

Screen-based media constitute a significant part of the Canadian economy and play a crucial role in reflecting and shaping Canadian society. Both Canadian and international studies have shown that women are still significantly under-represented in the film and television industry, especially in positions of creative and financial authority. This inequity has negative implications not only for the industries involved and the employment pool for those industries, but for society as a whole.

"The Government of Canada, as well as many provincial governments, provide billions of dollars to media industries in the form of investments and tax incentives", says Summit Co-Chair Rina Fraticelli, Executive Director of Women In View, a Toronto-based industry research organization. Since women make up over 50% of the population, employment in Canadian media production needs to truly reflect the gender balance and diversity of contemporary Canada."

In Canada, as pointed out in 2013 CUES (Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen) "Focus on Women" report, screen-based media industries are still significantly gender-segregated both vertically and horizontally.

In the latest Women In View report, also released at the summit, statistics reveal that the situation is getting worse. In 2013, Telefilm Canada invested less than 6% of its feature film funding in productions directed by women.

The summit was hosted by the St John's International Women's Film Festival as part of its 25th anniversary celebrations. Noreen Golfman, Festival Chair, states, "We are proud to have hosted this historic summit demonstrating such a powerful consensus among women in the industry from coast to coast."



Encl: Organization List and profiles and Communique

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