

September 30, 2019

## Rogers Media Women in Production Action Plan

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On December 13, 2018, the CRTC brought together the presidents of Canada's largest public and private-sector broadcasters and key stakeholders for a Women in Production Summit that was focused on how to create more leadership opportunities for women in the Canadian television production industry.

As a result of that Summit, broadcasters – including Rogers Media Inc. – committed to creating voluntary action plans tailored to their business that will detail efforts to increase women in key creative roles. Today, Rogers Media is pleased to share its Women in Production Action Plan detailing the ongoing and future efforts and strategic initiatives it will take to achieve gender parity.

The Rogers Media Action Plan is focused on increasing gender parity in both the programming we commission from the independent production sector and in our in-house production where we have the best opportunity to effect change.

Through retention, development and advancement, and partnerships with organizations Rogers Media is committed to working towards gender parity by 2025, and we believe the Rogers Media Women in Production Action Plan, released today, provides our roadmap to achieving that goal.



Jordan Banks  
President, Rogers Media Inc.



**Rogers Media Inc.**  
**Women in Production Action Plan**  
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## Introduction

In a Joint Statement issued March 6, 2019 by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and Canada's largest public and private-sector broadcasters, Rogers Media Inc. (Rogers Media) committed to developing a voluntary action plan to ensure more women play leading roles in the Canadian film and television production industry. The Joint Statement was issued after a Women in Production Summit, during which Canada's broadcasters, along with the CRTC, discussed lasting solutions to addressing gender parity in Canada's production industry.

Women continue to face barriers to advancement in production, and the CRTC has identified specific key creative positions where the lack of gender parity should be most urgently addressed: producer, director, writer, cinematographer, showrunner, and first- and second-lead performers.

In the television and media production industry, equality behind the camera continues to lag behind what is depicted on screen, particularly in editorial roles and positions that influence the creative end product. At Rogers Media, we are committed to driving change in this area. Rogers has developed a number of corporate policies and programs that enact real, substantive improvements in gender parity in key creative roles, and have identified a number of initiatives in this Action Plan to effect change and establish progress in advancing parity.

In developing our Action Plan, we believed it was important to not only focus on the programming we commission from the independent production sector but also on where we have a better opportunity to effect change, which is in our in-house production. In building our Rogers Media Action Plan, we undertook a comprehensive review of the key creative roles currently held by women in both our in-house production and commissioned programming.

In doing so, we also recognized that the key creative roles in our in-house production (sports and non-sports) differ from those identified and accepted as key creative roles by the independent production sector. To this end, we focused on the roles that have the greatest impact on the editorial and creative output within our television programming and production talent pool. Using this lens, we have identified roles that in our view are equivalent in creative input, decision-making responsibility, and editorial control to the key creative roles identified by the CRTC.

The key categories of decision-making roles that we identified for inclusion in the Rogers Media Action Plan for in-house production are:

1. Managerial roles in production and news
2. Programming and planning roles
3. On-air performers/journalists

We are pleased to report that 48% of the key roles in these categories are held by women at Rogers Media.

While we have made progress on increasing the proportion of women in these roles, it will continue to be an area of focus for Rogers Media and aligns with our corporate-wide Inclusion and Diversity strategy. Rogers Media is committed to working towards achieving gender parity by 2025. And we are committed to continuing to advance women in production and support their careers, a goal that is an entrenched part of our corporate culture.

The Rogers Media Action plan details the initiatives we have in place to work towards the goal of gender parity by 2025. Rogers Media will evaluate our progress annually and continue to search for and identify additional means of increasing the representation of women in our programming and production talent pool.

Rogers Media is committed to creating a workplace environment where women and men have equal status and opportunity based on merit. Inclusion and diversity are part of our culture and values, and we continuously work to promote and cultivate an inclusive environment driven by action, making us one of the top-ranked employers in Canada.

At Rogers Media, leadership is not just about innovation in the marketplace. It's about leading by example through a progressive approach to hiring and retention of creative talent. We believe in creating an inclusive workplace where all of our employees feel they belong and are accepted, valued, supported, and engaged to bring their whole selves to work. Only then can they reach their full potential in pursuit of high performance and the creation of compelling content.

## Corporate Accountability

Rogers has a strong history of building diverse teams while promoting an inclusive culture and has been publicly recognized and awarded for our work in this space. In 2015 Rogers created an Inclusion & Diversity Council comprised of a variety of leaders from across the business that oversee the development and execution of our Inclusion & Diversity strategy, while leading the direction of our efforts to foster an inclusive culture that embraces the benefits of our diversity.

Our strategy includes five priority groups: Women in Leadership, Visible Minorities, Persons with Disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and two-spirited (LGBTQ2S+). Teams of employees representing these groups, and their allies, come together as Employee Resources Groups (ERGs) to organize awareness events, skill-building opportunities, mentorship and community sponsorships

that develop and engage in these areas. With the support of the Inclusion & Diversity Team, the Inclusion & Diversity Council and ERGs have access to expertise and financial resources to drive initiatives aligned with Rogers' strategic pillar of "developing our people and a high performing culture".

As a result of our efforts, feelings of inclusion amongst our employees over the past year improved 2 points to 84% in 2019.

Rogers Media's Women in Production Action Plan will build on the important work that has already been done to promote and advance women within the entire Rogers organization.

## Recognized and Rewarded

Rogers was once again recognized as one of *Canada's Best Diversity Employers 2019*, marking the seventh year Rogers received this designation based on our inclusive programs for women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and members of the LGBTQ2S+ communities. The competition has highlighted the many initiatives Rogers has developed over the years to promote gender parity throughout the organization, including:

- Launch of an Inclusion & Diversity Council to implement targets for increasing representation of women, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, LGBTQ2S+ and Indigenous Peoples;
- Ongoing support for the Rogers Women's Network to promote the retention and professional development of female employees. The group organizes various workshops and networking events throughout the year and manages a group mentoring program. The ERG was expanded in 2018 to launch mentoring circles to match employees (regardless of gender) with peers and mentors at various levels to become a model for other ERGs, creating dedicated mentoring circles for employee communities across Canada;
- Conducting an internal analysis to identify opportunities for the retention and advancement of female employees and launching a sponsorship program to help accelerate the development of female directors;
- We also send select top talent women Directors to The Judy Project, a one-week comprehensive workshop run by UofT for women on the rise.

In 2018 and 2019 Rogers was included in the Bloomberg Gender Equality Index, recognized as one of 230 companies globally that is actively advancing gender equality in its workforce, workplace, and marketplace. Benchmarking itself against best-in-class practices enables Rogers to develop solutions that effectively position the company to increase its opportunities to attract talent in pursuit of equality.

## The Rogers Media Action Plan

Rogers Media is committed to working towards achieving gender parity in the key creative roles identified by the CRTC for commissioned programming, as well as in the comparable roles we have identified in our television programming and production talent pool.

48% of key creative, editorial and decision-making roles in Rogers in-house programming and production and 43% of key creative roles<sup>1</sup> in our commissioned independent production are held by women. Rogers Media is committed to working towards gender parity by 2025.

The Rogers Media Action Plan was created to support closing the gap between women and men in key creative, editorial and decision-making roles within our programming and production teams, and details the initiatives Rogers has developed to close those gaps. Our Action Plan also outlines the steps we take to promote gender parity in commissioned original programming.

The Rogers Media Action Plan will work towards achieving gender parity, particularly in leadership roles, through:

- Recruitment and Retention
- Development and Advancement
- Organizational Partnerships

### Recruitment and Retention

Recruiting women to work at Rogers Media, and retaining their talent, is a key step as we work towards gender parity in our programming and production teams. The following initiatives will support women being brought into our talent pool:

*Balanced Recruitment Slates*

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<sup>1</sup> Using the key creative roles identified by the CRTC in Broadcasting Information Bulletin 2019-304

As part of Rogers' hiring guidelines, all recruitment slates consider gender diversity and will target a composition of 50% women and 50% men.

### *Unconscious Bias*

An in-person workshop for employees at the Director level and above, this training focuses on recognizing unconscious bias and the effects it has on their work. The training is aimed at creating an open, trusting, and inclusive workplace where diversity of thought, honest conversations, and meritocracy are embraced and enforced. Workshop learnings are sustained through key unconscious bias tools that are integrated into talent reviews and performance management. There are also plans to roll out a company-wide unconscious bias training to all employees by year end.

### *Thrive*

Thrive is a Rogers employee program that provides safety, well-being, and financial support and resources for employees, including a phased return-to-work program that provides support for new parents and resources to ensure a comfortable transition back to work.

## **Development and Advancement**

One of the key findings of the CRTC Women in Production Summit was that women continue to face barriers to career advancement. Once women are in the Rogers Media talent pool, they need opportunities to advance and grow their careers. The following initiatives are designed to promote and advance women into senior leadership positions:

### *Annual Management/Talent Meetings*

The division leaders within Rogers sports and non-sports production and programming conduct annual meetings with top female talent to discuss advancement opportunities and barriers to success. This initiative is also designed to identify opportunities to involve high-performing women in projects that will both increase their exposure to higher-level business discussions and their visibility to the company's leadership team.

### *Accelerated Development Program (ADP)*

A highly targeted sponsorship program aimed at supporting women Directors with a variety of customized development activities based on assessment and feedback of their individual performance. At the end of the program, participants have stronger



strategic leadership skills and are ready to take on expanded roles and assignments. The program also helps to build a gender-diverse executive pipeline.

### *Women in Leadership (WIL)*

The WIL committee operates under the mandate to close the gap in advancing women in leadership at Rogers, specifically increasing the number of women in Director and VP+ roles. The primary focus areas for the committee are recruitment, retainment, development and coaching, and education. The committee is formed by volunteers, consisting of executive women and executive male allies. Rogers' Chief Digital Officer (female) is the Executive Sponsor.

### *Rogers Women's Network (RWN)*

In operation since 2004, the Rogers Women's Network was formed to cultivate the unique strengths of women and to share stories of work life across Rogers. RWN creates opportunities for women to connect and network, to educate, to nurture leadership, and to drive diversity and support for one another. The network invites motivated women at all stages of their career to develop and share their leadership competencies through education, networking, coaching, and mentoring.

The Rogers Women's Network facilitates mentoring programs and networking events (such as the "Speed Networking" event, which gives participants five minutes each with 20 Vice-Presidents from across Rogers), organizes panel discussions around topics relevant to women in the workplace (from topics such as "Micro Aggression" to "Board Governance for Not-For-Profits"), and has expanded over the years to create Employee Resource Groups across Canada so that women can benefit from RWN no matter where they are located.

## **Partnerships with Organizations**

In addition to the internal initiatives described above, Rogers partners with organizations that provide expertise and resources for advancing women in the workplace:

### *WISE*

Women in Sports and Entertainment (WISE) is an organization that assists women in navigating and accelerating their careers in the business of sports, while championing the hiring and advancement of women in the industry. Our partnership includes providing 10 free memberships for high-potential women in sports leadership at Rogers



Media, as well as hosting an event at Rogers for women to learn more about the organization.

### *Catalyst*

Catalyst is an organization that works with companies to build “workplaces that work for women” and to accelerate women’s progress. They provide educational resources, research, consulting and facilitation to Rogers with the goal of advancing women into leadership positions.

## **Commissioned Original Programming**

Rogers is committed to supporting gender parity in the key creative roles of producers, showrunners, writers, directors, cinematographers, editors, and first- and second-lead performers in the television and film productions we commission from independent producers and broadcaster affiliated productions.

While the independent production sector is ultimately responsible for ensuring parity in their productions, Rogers has approval over all hires, including the key roles of Executive Producers, Producers, Showrunners (Head Writers), Writers and Directors.

This allows us to support the hiring of women in these roles so that independent productions are working towards gender parity. These key decision makers are then encouraged to identify and put forward a diverse workforce for all heads of departments within the production, inclusive of women. Executive Producers and Producers make key hiring decisions, as do Showrunners and Directors; across-the-board gender parity in independent productions will only be possible if they are also accountable for demonstrating progress. We encourage our partners in the independent production sector to develop and communicate their plans to advance gender parity in key creative roles so that we may work collectively towards advancing this goal.

The Canadian Media Fund (CMF) has separately developed initiatives to increase gender parity in key creative positions, specifically by requiring broadcasters to spend a minimum of their allocations on projects where at least 40% of the total number of their key creative positions (which differ from those identified by the CRTC, and differ again from those identified by the CAVCO system) are held by women, starting with 15% of the envelope in 2017 and growing to 30% of the envelope in 2020. Rogers is currently tracking to have 80% of our CMF envelope allocated to projects where at least 40% of key creative positions are held by women (in the specific roles identified by the CMF).

In line with CMF requirements, Rogers program licence agreements contractually require that all independent original productions we commission meet a minimum target of 40% women in the roles of producer, showrunner, director, and writer, and will expand the 40% target to include editors and first and second lead performers by 2025.

Our licence agreements also contractually require independent producers to report on gender parity and the inclusion of diversity in commissioned productions.

In addition to our contractual requirements, Rogers works to promote gender parity in the productions we commission by:

- Seeking out, meeting, and actively promoting women as candidates for key creative roles in the productions we commission when they are in the development stage;
- Prioritising meetings with female creators for pitches, and ensuring that all pitch sessions include a discussion around female voices and whether or how they have been considered in the story idea;
- Seeking out stories with female characters that tell stories relevant to women (such as “Second Jen”, which is helmed by an all female creators who star, direct write and produce the show) or by ensuring female creators have opportunities to work and tell female focussed stories with contemporary resonance on all of our series (such as “The Murders” “Hudson & Rex”);
- Ensuring lead roles are being offered to women and that stories portray women equitably;
- Mentoring and developing our programming staff (both on original independent productions and broadcaster affiliated shows);
- Attending industry events, film festivals and education programs and donating time to mentor and support female talent, across the country.

Rogers appreciates the opportunity to share the work that we have done - and are still doing - to achieve gender parity. The Rogers Media Action Plan builds on Rogers’ history of inclusiveness and diversity, and through the goals identified in this Action Plan, Rogers looks forward to advancing our progress as we work towards achieving gender parity in key creative, editorial, and decision-making roles by 2025.