



**Women in Production Action Plan – Annual Report**  
**January 31, 2025**

## Introduction

On March 6, 2019, a Joint Statement was issued by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and Canada's largest public- and private-sector broadcasters. This Statement resulted from their discussions on the need to develop lasting solutions to address gender parity in Canada's production industry during the 2018 CRTC Women in Production Summit. It includes Rogers Sports & Media's (RSM) commitment to developing a voluntary action plan aimed at ensuring that more women are in decision-making capacities and play leading roles in the Canadian film and television production industry. On a practical level, the commitment reflects RSM's ongoing support of industry efforts to ensure greater representation of women and people from other underrepresented groups and speaks to our role in influencing independent producers we work with to achieve gender parity in Rogers-supported productions.

RSM's 2019 Action Plan focuses on programming and productions where we can make the biggest impact, that is, on content that we own and control. With the majority of RSM's programming investments being devoted to in-house productions such as sports, news, and lifestyle & entertainment programming, we looked to the editorial and creative output of our television programming and production teams to develop this Plan. This entailed identifying roles that we considered to be equivalent in creative input, decision-making responsibility, and editorial control to the CRTC's key creative roles for independent productions.

Independent production represents a very small portion of our overall programming investment. Within those productions, 48% of the key creative roles were held by women in the 2023-2024 broadcast year.<sup>1</sup> This is an increase of 6% from last year and of 21% since our first report was published in 2020.<sup>2</sup> The efforts to achieve gender parity within Canada's independent production community appear to be having their intended effect.

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<sup>1</sup> See attached Women in Production detailed report.

<sup>2</sup> 27% in the 2018/2019 broadcast year.

# Achieving Gender Parity

## Key Decision-Making Roles at Rogers Sports & Media

RSM identified the following key categories of decision-making roles for inclusion in our Action Plan for in-house productions:

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

In the 2023-2024 broadcast year, 53% of key creative, editorial, and decision-making roles in Rogers in-house programming were held by women:

Category	Total Employees	Total Female	Percentage
Managerial roles in production and news	65	22	34%
Programming and planning	6	4	67%
On-air (journalists)	109	70	64%
Total	180	96	53%

When compared to our 2022-2023 report:

- We have increased the total amount of women in decision-making roles by 2%
- We have increased the total amount of women within the on-air (journalist) category by 4%

RSM has maintained over 50% representation of women in these key roles for the last five reporting years (2020-2025), an increase from the 48% we reported in our original Action Plan.

As articulated in our Action Plan, RSM works towards achieving gender parity, particularly in leadership roles, through:

- Recruitment and Retention
- Development and Advancement
- Organizational Partnerships

Our work in these areas in 2024 is detailed further in this report.

## Commissioned and Affiliated/In-House Programming

RSM supports 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. An outstanding example of this commitment is **Law & Order Toronto: Criminal Intent**, which launched its first season in February to outstanding ratings success, earning the #1 Prime-Time Scripted Premiere on Citytv in its history, the #1 Prime-Time Drama Premiere of the Year, and #1 Prime-Time Scripted Telecast of the Year.

*Law & Order Toronto: Criminal Intent* is helmed by a diverse lead cast in Kathleen Munroe (Detective Sergeant Frankie Bateman), K.C. Collins (Deputy Crown Attorney Theo Forrester), Karen Robinson (Inspector Vivienne Holness), Araya Mengesha (Mark Yohannes) and Nicola Carreia-Damude (Forensic Pathologist Lucy Da Silva); the series is developed, produced and led by a team of powerhouse women at Cameron Pictures and Lark Productions, including writer and Executive Producer Tassie Cameron.

In 2024, Tassie Cameron was recognized by Playback Magazine as “Showrunner of the Year” and by Toronto Life Magazine as one of the most influential Torontonians of the year.

As the attached Women in Production report indicates, women were:

- 67% of *Law & Order Toronto*’s producers
- 50% of *Law & Order Toronto*’s directors
- 71% of *Law & Order Toronto*’s writers
- 67% of *Law & Order Toronto*’s editors

### **OMNI Television**

In 2024, Season 3 of the English and Tagalog sketch-comedy series *Abroad* premiered on OMNI in May and Season 4 completed production in December. The diverse production is co-created by Filipina comedian Isabel Kanaan, directed by Kara Harun and Carly Heffernan, produced by Meghan Hood and this year included a director shadow program for emerging talent from equity-seeking groups.

In 2024, *Abroad* was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award for Best Sketch Comedy Program or Series.

As the attached Women in Production report indicates, women were:

- 50% of *Abroad*’s producers
- 100% of *Abroad*’s directors

- 63% of *Abroad's* writers
- 50% of *Abroad's* editors
- 100% of *Abroad's* cinematographers

## All IN 2024

In 2020, [Rogers Sports & Media launched All IN](#), an Inclusion & Diversity strategy that encompasses all areas of the media business and complements the wider diversity strategies implemented by Rogers Communications Inc. (the parent company of Rogers Sports & Media).

The **All IN** plan has five key pillars:

- **Business:** Give \$5 million over 5 years in free advertising and creative services to support local businesses owned by BIPOC, LGBTQ2S+, PWD, or **women**
- **Community:** Give \$5 million over 5 years in free advertising and creative services to charities that support all equity-seeking communities
- **Content:** With input from RSM's Content Advisory Council, comprised of diverse employees, increase diversity of thought and focus in our content and programming
- **Mentorship & Sponsorship:** Give young people from equity-seeking communities (both from inside and outside of Rogers) the tools, support, and resources to successfully enter and advance in the sports and media industry
- **Hiring and Career Advancement Practices:** Develop Rogers Sports & Media-specific programs and recruitment strategies to improve diversity at all levels of the organization, including leadership positions

### ***Initiatives supported in 2024 include:***

#### ***Pillar 1: Business***

RSM continued its support of **Women's Para Hockey of Canada**, whose mission is to contribute to the health and well-being of girls and women with disabilities by developing, promoting, and providing opportunities to participate in the sport of para hockey from grassroots development to an elite level throughout Canada.

The organization's short-term goal (within five years) is to grow participation numbers by building and enabling equitable and fair participation in women's para hockey at the local and national level.

The long-term goal (5+ years) is to see international development of the sport (led by Canada) with ultimate participation in the first-ever women's para hockey event at the 2030 Paralympic Games to go alongside more consistent sanctioned international competitions that raise awareness of, and participation in, the sport.

## ***Pillar 2: Community***

### **Citytv**

Citytv actively pursues sponsorships and event opportunities that reflect our diverse audiences across Canada. Host appearances play a large part in our diversity sponsorships and are a very important part of developing our relationships with pillars in the community. As an example, CityNews anchor Faiza Amin hosted and was a panelist at the Canadian Black Standard black women in finance discussion called Money Moves on July 8, 2024.

## ***Pillar 3: Content***

RSM uses its sports and media assets to amplify voices that historically have not been heard with equal measure, including those of women.

### **Sportsnet**

In 2024, Rogers announced a new multi-year partnership with the **Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL)** as their official telecommunications partner, greatly increasing our support for women's hockey in Canada. The partnership includes specific support for PWHL Montreal to provide once-in-a-lifetime experiences for girls in local minor hockey programs and to host PWHL Montreal games at the Rogers Arena.

A few other notable features that Sportsnet has covered include:

- **Mama Mentality:** Sportsnet featured a profile on Canada Basketball senior women's national team captain, Natalie Achonwa, as she returns to the court as a working mom in the hopes of winning an Olympic medal for Canada in the summer Olympics.
- **Muslim Women's Basketball League:** Sportsnet interviewed Masai Ujiri, Vice-Chairman and President of the Toronto Raptors, to discuss a basketball clinic which took place in partnership with the Muslim Women's Summer Basketball League. Renowned female basketball stars taught this underserved population about leadership, discipline and confidence in the sport.

Various other women's sports events that were broadcast by Sportsnet in 2024 that are noteworthy include:

- **UFC (Women)**

- **Grand Slam of Curling**
- **Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA)**
- **Women’s Super League (Soccer)**
- **Women’s National Rugby League**
- **National Bank Open**

In honour of **International Women’s Day:**

- **Sportsnet** used its digital properties to provide extensive additional coverage of important stories related to **International Women’s Day**, including stories such as “Inside the unprecedented, unstoppable rise of women’s pro sports” and “Empowering Young Ladies at the Muslim Women’s Summer Basketball League.”
- Rogers’ rock-format **radio stations** across the nation aired profiles of women who shaped the rock ‘n’ roll format, both on-air and online.
- **CityNews** featured interviews with women who break professional gender stereotypes such as a welder and a lab technician.
- **Rogers** hosted an employee speaker event featuring women in senior leadership roles within the company celebrating women’s achievements, raising awareness about discrimination and taking action to drive gender parity.

### **Canadian Content Development**

RSM’s CCD support in 2024 continued to support emerging artists from equity-seeking groups across Canada in meaningful ways, providing direct financial contributions to local artists for performances to local audiences. We again supported The Vanguard, an annual fashion, art and musical event in support of the Rainbow Railroad, a global non-profit organization dedicated to assisting 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals who face persecution to find safety through emergency relocation and other forms of aid. Our support paid for the performances of three emerging artists, all female and all from underrepresented groups. Likewise, our ongoing support of PhemPhat’s annual Honey Jam concert directly funds performances by emerging female artists from diverse backgrounds.

### **Corporate Accountability**

RSM benefits from Rogers Communications’ industry-leading HR practices aimed at enhancing diversity and inclusion.

In 2020, Rogers Communications launched the 2025 Inclusion & Diversity Strategy, which is guided by four pathways to action:

- Embed inclusion into our employee experience.
- Broaden the talent pipeline and increase leadership diversity.

- Partner with communities to foster inclusion and address inequalities.
- Create a customer experience that is reflective of, and supports, the diverse needs of all Canadians.

These four pathways each have specific and measurable action items and are key components of our commitment to increase representation across the board at Rogers by 2025.

In order to align with our organization's strategy, our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) council, spanning the entire business, advocates for equity deserving groups (i.e., *Black, Indigenous peoples, people of colour, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+, and women*), emphasizing Business Unit specific DEIB plans. With collective team support, we aim to realize the benefits of inclusion for our people, customers, and communities, fulfilling our organizational purpose and enhancing Rogers as a workplace.

Rogers Communications' long-standing commitment to inclusion and diversity is the backbone of the Rogers Sports & Media Women in Production Action Plan, which builds on the important work that has already been done to promote and advance women within the entire Rogers organization.

## Recruitment and Retention

Recruiting women to work at RSM, and retaining their talent, is crucial as we work towards gender parity in our programming and production teams. Key to that success is increasing representation of women in the talent pipeline, particularly in sports media where representation of women has historically been low.

### Hiring Strategy

Rogers Sports & Media implements best practices from our **ALL IN** hiring campaign to ensure that our hiring practices inclusive. As part of the ongoing efforts of the campaign, we continuously revamp the ways we attract, recruit, and select talent. For example, job descriptions are constructed using gender-neutral language, and our recruitment teams amplify job postings to job boards such as HireBIPOC, LimeConnect, Indigenous link and others. The interview process is regularly updated to ensure that job interviews consist of a diverse hiring panel, and that structured interview guides are used to reduce bias.

### Sportsnet BIPOC Sports Media Onboarding

The sports media industry lacks diversity both in-front and behind the camera, partially due to barriers to entry that face equity-seeking communities. To address these



barriers, Sportsnet developed an intensive training/development opportunity for young BIPOC persons looking to enter the sports media industry.

Sportsnet hosts an annual series of skill-building and networking workshops for a select group of young BIPOC professionals and students from across Canada. The workshops consist of 60–90-minute weekly information sessions over 8-10 weeks, in which industry leaders and key internal talent provided specific lessons and insights into their careers and core areas of expertise. At the end of the workshops, participants are connected with key hiring managers to develop ongoing relationships and mentorship to assist in career placement.

As part of the program, mentees are also provided the opportunity to apply for paid summer internships in their mentorship year with the hope of securing long-term employment in their chosen career path. In 2024, 10 students joined the mentorship program. Among active participants and alumni, five went on to hold paid roles in Sportsnet in 2024.

### Scholarships

- **OMNI Regional Scholarship:** As part of an ongoing commitment, OMNI Television awarded \$20,000 in scholarships this past year to post-secondary students across Canada who are pursuing careers in ethnic and third-language journalism. Scholarships of \$2000/each were awarded to applicants in the following regions: East (5 winners), Prairies (3 winners), Pacific (1 winner) and Quebec (1 winner).
- **College of Sports Media Scholarships:** Four scholarships of \$2500 were distributed to students studying radio broadcasting using Canadian Content Development funding from our radio division. Criteria for recipients are based on overall scholastic achievement and representation from diverse backgrounds.

Corporately, in 2024 Rogers Communications:

- Completed a third-party comprehensive review of our people practices, including talent policies and procedures to help inform our next DEIB Strategy.
- Held information sessions at colleges to showcase career paths within Rogers and provide coaching on resume writing and interviewing.
- Added pronoun-sharing options in our applicant tools, helping recruiters and hiring managers refer to candidates accurately and respectfully throughout the recruitment process.

## 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. Rogers is committed to providing opportunities to advance and grow the careers of women who are part of our talent pool. The following are some of the initiatives that we designed to promote and advance women into senior leadership positions:

- Implemented leadership development and sponsorship programs empowering Women and Black talent to excel while creating a robust pipeline of leaders into executive roles.
- Launched group mentoring pilots to support the professional development and networking of women in Retail and Persons with Disabilities within the employee-led Rogers AccessAbility Network.

*RISE for Women (includes Rogers Women of Colour and Rogers Women in Technology)*

RISE for Women supports women at Rogers with a focus on networking and personal and professional development to foster leadership potential, with a mandate to increase the representation of women across all levels at Rogers.

Notable initiatives undertaken in 2024 include the following:

- Encouraging mentorship, sponsorship and networking for women of colour through a two-part event featuring a panel discussion with three vice presidents (men and women) as well as networking opportunities with senior leadership following the event.
- Recognition Awards to recognize the accomplishments of Women of Colour and increase their visibility across the organization.
- Career Goals and Development Networking Event for Women in Technology to learn from industry leaders and experts and form new mentoring relationships.

## Partnerships with Organizations

Rogers continues to partner with **Women in Communications and Technology (WCT)**, a Canadian non-profit organization that inspires and supports women to achieve their highest career potential in Canada's digital economy through professional development, mentorship, advocacy and research. Through our partnership with WCT, women at Rogers Communications have access to conferences, virtual learning, research and tools, in-person and virtual networking events, webinars and more.

## Recognized and Rewarded

### **Women in Communications Technology Leadership Excellence Awards**

Each year, the Women in Communications and Technology Leadership Excellence Awards honours outstanding women in the industry from across Canada. We are proud to celebrate the achievements of two women leaders at Rogers who were recognized with an award at this year's WCT Awards. Their efforts play an important role in our journey to creating an inclusive workplace where everyone feels they belong.

- Sharon Hinds, Manager, Revenue Operations, won the Trailblazer Award, which honours women who have created their own career path in professions where women are absent or underrepresented. Sharon has been instrumental in advocating for a culture at Rogers where Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) principles are top of mind. She fearlessly champions conversations around embedding DEIB into our policies and practices. As a Black professional woman, she is a driving force to validate all efforts to creating a more equitable, inclusive workplace where everyone feels like they belong.
- Emily Smith, Senior Legal Counsel, Content Acquisition and Distribution, won the WCT Leader of the Year award, which is awarded to a woman who has made exceptional contributions to the organization in which they work, including helping to shape the experience of future women leaders. Emily dedicates her time to the mission of advancing the careers of women at Rogers and in the workplace as a whole. She currently serves as a mentor in the Women in Communications and Technology's mentorship Pods program and as a board member at the WCT-GTA chapter.

## Summary

Rogers Sports & Media appreciates the opportunity to provide an update on the progress that we were able to make in 2024 in achieving and maintaining gender parity in key creative, editorial, and decision-making roles. As this report demonstrates, we have achieved consistent year-over-year growth of female representation in leadership roles since we first began reporting in 2020. While we hope the Commission finds the information contained in this report useful in its pursuit of encouraging inclusion of equity-seeking groups within Canadian production, we remain of the view that its stated purpose – to track and ultimately increase women in key creative positions within independent productions – would be better served by requesting data directly from independent producers or the organizations that represent them, such as the Canadian Media Producers Association.

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