



“Breaking in” to Toronto’s Film & TV Production Sector

Overview

In 2019, POV conducted system-mapping research in partnership with the Toronto Screen Office as part of the 'Spotlight on Toronto' action plan with the goal to:

1. Provide a holistic view of the key sector stakeholders, economic access points, gatekeepers, and sector enablers who regulate access for diverse creatives; and,
2. Fill a gap in current demographic data about sector workforce composition



Methodology

The research was conducted in two phases from August 2019 to the end of December 2019:



Landscape Scan: review of secondary data sources & industry artifacts to identify major players defining sector practices, sources of skill development, & pathways to entry.

Industry Survey & Sector Interviews

- 2 Surveys (n=249)
- 3 Focus Groups (n=37)
- 48 Sector interviews

Limitations

Diversity information is not collected in the Canadian Film and TV Production sector

Many minoritized participants are reluctant to self-identify due to long histories of oppression and discrimination.

Oppressive experiences that have made it unsafe for minoritized professionals to self-identify are equally likely to discourage participation in these early research efforts (due to historic lack of trust).

Inconsistency in definitions and measures of diversity and workforce composition.

Terms & Definitions

Youth: Young people between the ages of 18 and 29

Diverse/Diversity: Differences based on ethnicity, gender, age, race, national origin and sexual orientation.

Breaking in: Having / attempting to access continued sector employment.

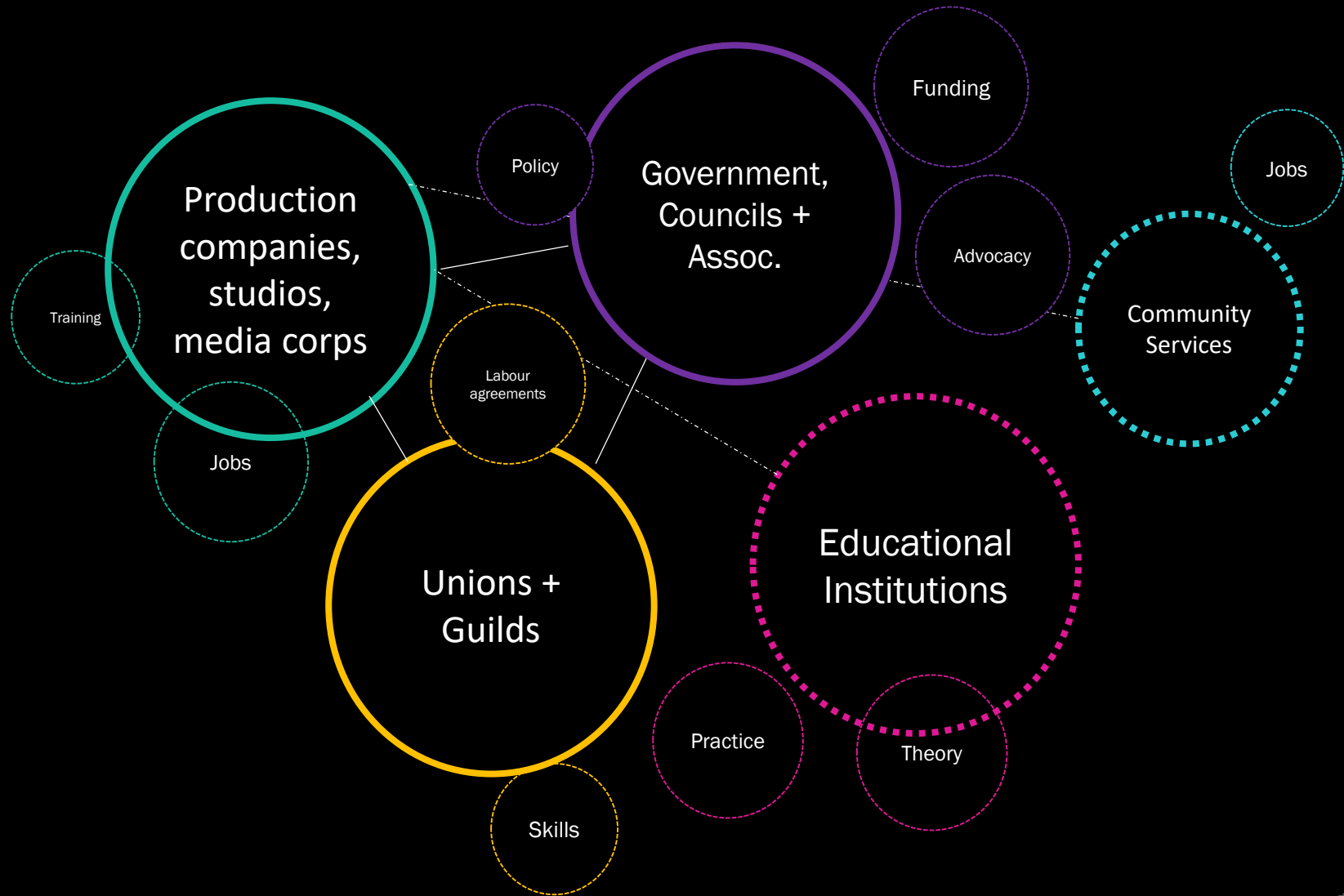
Minoritized: “Minoritized” vs. “minority” or “marginalized” captures the systemic and structural mechanisms that constitute a minority status. *Minoritization is an ongoing process, not a static location.*

Sector savvy: Explicit & implicit knowledge of sector that permits navigation and contributes to access.

Key Findings

The “breaking in” narrative is that success is directly connected to effort, framing success as a personal achievement while ignoring the social and systemic forces that shape the individual experience.

Sector is disconnected, complicated & hidden



Social Capital Mediates Access

Enablers:

- 88% - making the right connections
- 74% - finding a mentor

Value of education:

- 56.1% - network access

Critical career-building steps:

- 69% - expanding network
- 59% - creating (funding) my own opportunities
- 43% - gaining a mentor



Lack of awareness does not explain lack of progress

Most significant barriers for equity-seeking creatives:

- 74.7% - Lack of access to advancement opportunities
- 69.9%- Microaggressions or harassment by superior or colleagues
- 67.5% - Negative assumptions about skills/abilities
- 65.1% - Feeling/being 'othered'

Current interventions reflect the dominant narrative:

- White—identifying respondents identify **diversity initiatives & education** as the **best way** to increase workforce diversity
- Equity-seeking creatives identify **diversity initiatives & education** as the **least effective** interventions

100% of diverse-identifying respondents reported experiences of harassment in the workplace

Diverse creatives build alternative paths to entry

COMMUNITY IS A BRIDGE TO CAPITAL

71.1% - Hard work

63.9% - **Finding community & peer support**

60.2% - Creating (funding) own opportunities

60.2% - **Professional mentorship**



Sector supports are partial and disconnected

- Training & education focus on ‘what’ not ‘how’
- Limited partnerships between sector stakeholders
- Conflicting criteria among stakeholders (e.g., needing paid experience to get a job)
- Inconsistencies in terminology & measures (e.g., career stage)

“...A LOT OF THESE PROGRAMS
GIVE ME THE SKILLS AND TEACH
ME WHAT TO DO ONCE I GET
WHERE I WANT TO BE, BUT DON'T
HELP ME IN GETTING THERE.”

Young people are multiply-barriered

- Limited sector knowledge, lack of experience & life circumstances amplify barriers
- **Diverse youth do more unpaid work**
- Inaccessible supports lead youth to pursue a variety of paths at great cost, with limited return.



Recommendations

*“People in positions of power or privilege are able to open doors
for those who can’t even access the doorbell”*

Recommendations

Sector

- Focus on Access
- Standardize & measure
- Foster stakeholder synergy
- Build community

Partners

- Prioritize stakeholder partnerships
- Expand research
- Standardize & measure impact
- Modularize a wrap-around curriculum
- Extend & build community



