



**SCREEN INDUSTRY PATHWAYS**  
**TORONTO CAREER GUIDE**



# ROLES IN FILM & TELEVISION PRODUCTION, VFX AND ANIMATION

The Toronto screen industry is growing fast and the city has become a preeminent centre of production and post-production excellence. The infrastructure and workforce are set to expand significantly in the coming years to service production volumes expected in Toronto. This creative, collaborative and increasingly diverse industry can be complex to navigate, especially at the beginning of one's career.

This guide will assist you in understanding the roles and departmental structures of a screen project and what each position entails. The guide will help contextualize the entry points and resources available at Toronto training and educational institutions, community groups, labour organizations and industry hubs.

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# 1. ROLES IN FILM & TELEVISION PRODUCTION, VFX and ANIMATION

Roles are presented on the following chart in three categories (Production, Visual Effects and Animation). The roles within each often overlap and vary in processes and sequencing. For example, the post-production process starts as soon as a project has been greenlight and is in many ways a part of the pre-production phase. Production departments are also often significantly involved from beginning to end. Virtual Production, a relatively new film production method, is on the rise and modifying production workflows and as such, new roles have emerged.



# ROLES IN FILM & TELEVISION PRODUCTION, VFX and ANIMATION

Click on the section title for full descriptions of the jobs available. [toronto.ca/CareersInFilm](https://toronto.ca/CareersInFilm)

## FILM & TELEVISION PRODUCTION

### Pre-Production

- Story Development
- Directors
- Casting
- Locations
- Producers + Production Office
- Art Department
- Performers

### Production

- Camera and Digital
- Set Decoration and Props
- Costume
- Special Effects
- Script Continuity
- Craft Service
- Carpentry and Paint/Scenic
- Grip and Electric
- Hair & Makeup
- Sound
- Transportation
- Publicity

### Post-Production

- Post-Production Supervision
- Picture Editing
- Sound Editing
- Music

## VISUAL EFFECTS (VFX)

### VFX Production Management

- VFX Producers and Supervisors
- VFX Supervisors
- VFX Production Managers and Coordinators

### VFX Artists & Technicians

- Research and Development
- Pre-Visualisation (Pre-Viz)
- Virtual Assets
- Animator
- Matchmoving
- FX Art
- Lighting
- Matte Painting
- Rotoscoping (Roto)
- Compositing

### Virtual Production

- Virtual Production Supervisor
- Previs, Postvis and Techvis
- Motion Capture
- Art Department roles
- Unreal or Unity Engine Operator
- LED Technician

## ANIMATION

### Production Management

- Producers and Production Office
- Director

### Development & Pre-Production

- Writer
- Concept Art
- Storyboard Art
- Art Director

### Animation Artists & Technicians

- Animator
- Character Design
- Rigging
- Modelling
- Background Design
- Layout Art
- Lighting Art
- Compositing

### Post-Production

- Sound Design
- Composer
- Performers
- Editing



## 2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Toronto region has a robust network of educational and training institutions preparing people to enter the screen industry and to upskill them to be the best at their craft throughout their careers. There is a multitude of entry-points to work in Film & Television production, Post-Production, VFX and Animation. Roles require different types of training: some are more hands-on than others while some are more managerial in nature. Creativity remains the key driver behind all roles no matter how technical in application.

Keep in mind that the majority of people working in the screen industry occupy different positions through their career as they change departments, discover new areas of interests and seek new opportunities. Networking at online or in-person events, reading industry news, participating in workshops and information sessions and constantly being interested in developing new skills are strategic means to establishing yourself in the industry. Although sector-specific training can be important, experience or training in music, theatre, fashion, hair & makeup, construction and associated trades, bookkeeping, coding and software development are highly valuable and transferable.





In the following pages we explore educational and training options offered by Toronto **film schools, colleges and universities** as well as organizations that aim to lower entry barriers and increase diversity in the industry. Educational and networking opportunities are also integral to **industry hubs** which have a wide array of mandates, from talent promotion to government advocacy, networking initiatives and specific demographics' outreach and professional development. We also present a breakdown of Toronto's **unions and guilds** that represent the majority of screen industry production workers and offer invaluable training for their members throughout their careers.

The programs listed in the next pages are directly related to training and education specific to the needs of the film and television industry. A combination of formal training courses and degrees, hands-on experience, community entry points and ongoing industry development is often the key to making it in Production, VFX and Animation. The industry is growing fast and there are multiple, exciting and accessible pathways to success.





## EDUCATION AND TRAINING: FILM SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Most college and university degree programs require applicants to possess an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent, or for the participant to have mature student status, and in some cases will ask applicants to submit a portfolio of original work.

### CANADIAN FILM CENTRE

Cineplex Film Program (5 months), Bell Media Prime Time TV Program, CBC Actors Conservatory

### CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

School of Communications, Media Arts and Design : Animation 3D (2 years), Art and Design Fundamentals (1 year), Broadcasting – Radio, Television, Film and Digital Media (3 years), Television & Film Business (1 year), Digital Visual Effects (2 years)

### GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

Media & Performing Arts: Acting for Media (2 years), Sound Design & Production Postgraduate (1 year), Visual Effects Postgraduate (1 year)

Continuing Education: Film and Video Production, Voice Acting



## **HUMBER COLLEGE**

Full Time Programs include: Film and Media Production (4 years), Broadcast Television/Videography Diploma (2 years), Film and Television Production (3 years), Acting for Film and Television (2 Years), Animation 3D (3 years)

## **MAX THE MUTT ANIMATION SCHOOL**

Diplomas in Classical & Computer Animation & Production, Illustration & Storytelling for Sequential Arts, and Concept Art for Animation & Video Games.

## **OCAD UNIVERSITY**

Undergraduate Programs include: Integrated Media (4 years) and cross-disciplinary programs in art design and media that interact with screen entertainment.

## **RYERSON UNIVERSITY**

Faculty of Communication and Design:

Film Studies (4 years), Creative Industries (4 years)

Continuing Education Certificate in Film Studies

Graduate Programs: Media Production, Documentary Media, Digital Media (1 year)

## **SENECA COLLEGE**

Faculty of Media and Communications: Broadcasting – Television (4 years), Documentary and Non-Fiction Media Production (8 months)

Faculty of Creative Arts, Animation and Design programs: 3D Animation (8 months), Animation (3 years), Visual Effects for Film & Television (8 months) and Art Fundamentals (8 months)

## **SHERIDAN COLLEGE**

Faculty of Animation, Arts & Design: Animation and Game Design (4 years), Computer Animation (1 year), Digital Creature Animation (1 year), Visual Effects (1 year)

Film, TV & Journalism: Film and Television (4 years), Advanced Special Effects, Makeup, Prosthetics and Props (1 year), Advanced Television and Film (1 year), Makeup for Media and Creative Arts (1 year), Media Fundamentals (1 year)

## **SIRT (Screen Industries Research and Training Centre)**

Introductory to advanced levels in the latest technology in virtual production.



## TORONTO FILM SCHOOL

Film and Television programs include: Film Production (18 months), Acting for Film, TV and the Theatre (18 months), Writing for Film and TV (18 months)

Related: Programs in Fashion

## UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Continuing Studies: Screenwriting Programs and Advanced Screenwriting

## YORK UNIVERSITY

School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design: Cinema & Media Studies (4 years) Digital Media (4 years), Film Production (4 years), Production and Screenwriting (Masters), Media Arts (4 years), Screenwriting Bachelor (4 years)





## EDUCATION AND TRAINING: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

### BIPOC TV & FILM

A grassroots organization and collective of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in Canada's screen industry. Hosting panels, Q&A sessions, workshops, networking events and opportunities to secure employment. The organization also spearheads creative roster database [HireBIPOC.ca](https://hirebi poc.ca).

### BEING BLACK IN CANADA

Mentorship, training, and creation program entirely dedicated to Black filmmakers across Canadian cities, including the Toronto chapter (Being Black in Toronto 1 year program).

### BLACK WOMEN FILM!

A leadership program and collective dedicated to forwarding the careers, networks and skills of filmmakers and media artists who are Black female identified of the Canadian African diaspora. The organization also operates the [Black Women Film Directory](#) for Black women in film.

### CARIBBEANTALES' Creators of Colour Incubator:

A year-round development and production hub for Canadian women of colour producers.



### **CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals**

Addressing the economic and social barriers that affect Black youth with a focus on workforce development, education and advocacy, with training programs in several sectors including the entertainment industry.

### **HXOUSE**

Serving its community as an incubator and accelerator, HXOUSE runs programmes and workshops for individuals in creative industries and internal programs for those that have been accepted into the Tenancy Program.

### **imagineNATIVE INSTITUTE**

Houses year-round professional development programs within imagineNATIVE, events and talks for Indigenous screen and digital content creators.

### **Liaison of Independent Filmmakers Toronto (LIFT)**

An artist-run, membership-based organization dedicated to media arts education and production resources. Training includes introductory level workshops.

### **NIA Centre for the Arts**

Nia Centre is building Canada's first professional multi-disciplinary Black Arts Centre. It offers professional development, youth mentorship including programs in film and television.

### **OYA Media Group Emerging Filmmakers**

Bridging Black Canadian perspective to media platforms, the group runs the OYA Emerging Filmmakers training program for emerging Black youth in the film, television and digital media.

### **POV**

Provides industry led training, skills development, scholarships, mentorship and employment to young creatives who want to develop their skills, build their networks and launch their careers into the TV & Film production sector.

### **Reelworld Screen Institute**

The Institute runs several training programs for participants of all ages and experience levels and operates [Access Reelworld](#), a database of Canadian Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American in the Creative Industries.

### **The Remix Project**

The programs and services serve youth who are trying to enter into the creative industries including film and television or further their formal education.



## HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

- **xoTO Schools**
- **Reel Canada**
- **The Stratagem – TDSB Creative Industries Co-op Program**

Most Film Festivals in Toronto have industry programming that includes training and workshop opportunities for emerging creatives to participate in. [TIFF Industry](#), [HOT DOCS Industry](#), [Inside Out](#) (reelLGBTG2 focus), [Reel Asian Film Festival](#) and [Regent Park Film Festival](#) all offer year-round talent development programming and offer additional entry points.





### 3. UNIONS & GUILDS

The screen industry workforce in Toronto is in large parts represented by unions and guilds. Television series and feature films are on average signatories of unions and guilds labour agreements, making the majority of workers on these sets union or guild members. Commercials, independent production music videos, broadcasts, short films, etc. are often non-union projects, meaning that the workforce associated with the production can but does not have to be a member of a union or guild to perform their work. You can often be a member of more than one union or guild at the same time and gain valuable experience as an apprentice or permittee before becoming a full member of one or some of these organizations. Unions and guilds offer significant training for their members to broaden their skills and make it to the next level in their craft.



## ACTRA Toronto

[ACTRA](#) is a member-driven union that secures the rights of, and promotes respect for the work of professional performers in the recorded media across Canada, in languages other than French. ACTRA Toronto represents 15,000 Ontario performers.

## Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA)

[The Canadian Media Producers Association](#) is Canada's trade association for independent producers. It represents hundreds of companies engaged in the development, production and distribution of English-language content for TV, feature film and digital media channels.

## Directors Guild of Canada - Ontario (DGC-ON)

The [DGC Ontario](#) is a provincial labour organization representing more than 2,600 key creative and logistical personnel working in the areas of direction, assistant direction, design, production management, locations, accounting and editing. Entry point for individuals not yet eligible for membership: [Guild Apprentices Program](#) (GAP).

## IATSE Local 411

[IATSE Local 411](#) of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees represents members across the province of Ontario in the categories of Production Coordinators, Office Production Assistants Craftservice Providers, Honeywagon Operator.

## IATSE Local 667

[IATSE Local 667](#) represents camera professionals, unit publicists and Visual Effects Supervisors who work in all phases of the screen industry. It runs a [Camera Trainee](#) program for individuals with some experience but not yet eligible for membership.

## IATSE Local 873

[IATSE Local 873](#) is the largest entertainment technicians union in Toronto and North America and represents nearly 2300 members in the categories of Boom Microphone Operator, Carpentry, Costume, Craftservice, Electric, Grip, Hair and Makeup, Props/Set Decoration/Greens, Scenic, Script Continuity On-Set, Sound Recordist and Utility, Special Effects and Transportation.

## NABET 700-M UNIFOR

[NABET 700-M](#) represents film, television and new media technicians in the GTA in the categories of Continuity, Construction/Carpentry, Costume, Grip, Hair, Make-up, Labour, Lighting, Paint, Props, Set Decoration, Sound, Special Effects, Videotape and Transportation. Entry point: [Apprenticeship Program](#).

## Writers Guild of Canada

The [Writers Guild of Canada \(WGC\)](#) is a professional association of more than 2,300 English-language screenwriters and also represents Story Coordinators.



A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a black blazer, is smiling and shaking hands with a man in a blue suit. In the background, another woman with glasses and a light-colored blazer is also smiling. They are in a professional setting, possibly a conference or meeting.

## 4. INDUSTRY HUBS

Becoming a member of an industry organization, as an individual or a company can broaden your understanding of the intricacies of the screen industry, offer numerous networking opportunities, allow for constant learning and enable you to stay attuned to industry developments.

## Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television

The [Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television](#) is a non-profit, membership-based organization with a mandate to honour outstanding achievements; to heighten public awareness of and increase audience attendance of and appreciation of Canadian film and television productions; and to provide critically needed, high-quality professional development programs, conferences and publications. Professional development programs include the Directors Program for Women and the Ways & Means Panel series.

## Association of Canadian Commercial Production (ACCP)

[ACCP](#) is the not-for-profit trade association for the television commercial production industry in Toronto. Our members are engaged in the production of screen based digital advertising content for distribution on television and over the internet. ACCP represents 90% of all commercial production companies in Toronto and draws upon a hugely diverse group of companies and individuals involved in the production of television and screen-based commercials.

## Canadian Alliance of Film & Television Costume Arts & Design (CAFTCAD)

[CAFTCAD](#) brings together costume professionals from all corners of the industry, regardless of union affiliation, experience, background, ethnicity, and identity. Through shared interest, CAFTCAD provides its members with an online and physical forum, promoting open discussion, shared learning, resources, professional networking and year-round training for members.

## Canadian Cinema Editors (CCE)

The [Canadian Cinema Editors](#) is a professional, educational and cultural association. Its mission is to support the pursuit of artistic and technological pre-eminence, and excellence in post production and to promote the education of peers, producers and students in the art and science of editing. The CCE offers membership, events and mentorship opportunities for career development.

## Computer Animation Studios of Ontario (CASO)

[CASO](#) is the only industry association that solely represents the priorities and interests of Ontario studio owners and operators in VFX and/or animation, through advocacy, professional development, and marketing initiatives specific to the needs of the VFX and animation studios in Ontario.





## FilmOntario

**FilmOntario** is an industry consortium representing the over 35,000 individuals working in the screen-based industry in Ontario. Its member organizations are from all parts of the film, television and digital media industries, including unions and guilds, production companies, studios, suppliers, and financial and legal services organizations. FilmOntario's emphasis is on marketing Ontario as a screen-based content creator and production jurisdiction and working with all levels of government so that policies and programs ensure our international competitiveness.

## Liaison of Independent Filmmakers Toronto (LIFT)

The **Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT)** is an artist-run charitable organization dedicated to facilitating excellence in the moving image through media arts education and production resources. Training includes introductory level workshops, camera, sound, writing and producing, from entry-level to skilled creatives.

## Visual Effects Society – Toronto Section

The **Visual Effects Society (VES)** is the entertainment industry's only organization representing the full breadth of visual effects practitioners including artists, animators, technologists, model makers, educators, studio leaders, supervisors, PR/marketing specialists and producers in all areas of entertainment from film, television and commercials to music videos and games. It consists of a diverse group of over 3,700 members in more than 35 countries. It aims to celebrate the achievement of its members and industry as well as put on networking and educational events.

## Women in Film and Television-Toronto (WIFT-T)

**WIFT Toronto** is a member-based, not-for-profit organization of passionate individuals dedicated to the development, advancement, and celebration of women in the screen media industry. WIFT Toronto offers mentorships, internships, networking opportunities, bursaries and industry programming for all levels of experience.



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