

# Glossary of Application Terminology

Creative BC RIFF Program

This Glossary of Application Terminology is a living document that will be updated based on feedback from program participants and program partners for the Rogers Indigenous Film Fund. It is intended to provide some initial insights into the terminologies that are frequently used in film and creative industries.

It is not an exhaustive list or reference source, but if you're new to the creative sector, some of these definitions may come in handy – especially when looking at the different types of program supports available to filmmakers and creatives.

## Terms Related to Eligibility

**Indigenous:** While the term Indigenous has become more commonly used around the world, it is contested by some because it does not acknowledge the unique identities or distinct rights of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Always refer to the specific group (First Nations, Inuit, or Métis) rather than generalizing with a collective phrase like Indigenous.

**First Nations:** “First Nation” is a term used to describe the First Peoples of Canada who do not otherwise identify as Métis or Inuit.

This term came into common usage in the 1970s and '80s and replaced the term “Indian,” although unlike “Indian,” the term “First Nation” does not have a legal definition.

While “First Nations” typically refers to communities or political designations of historically connected First Nations peoples, the singular “First Nation” refers to a Band (use capitalized, as this is an official federal organizational name) which is typically a community established on “lands reserved for Indians” or “Indian reserves.”

Outdated terms such as “Aboriginal” or “Indian” aren't widely accepted.

**Inuit:** This term refers to specific groups of people who are not considered “Indians” under Canadian law and relates to peoples living in the northern portions of Canada; the territorial names are Nunavut, Inuvialuit, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut.

**Inuk:** An individual member of the Inuit people.

**Inuktitut:** The group of Inuit dialects spoken by the Inuit people chiefly of central and eastern arctic Canada.

**Métis:** The term *Métis* refers to a collective of cultures and ethnic identities that resulted from unions between Indigenous and European people in what is now Canada. This term has general and specific uses, and the differences between them are often contentious. It is sometimes used as a general term

to refer to people of mixed ancestry, whereas in a legal context, “Métis” refers to descendants of specific historic Métis communities.

**Band:** In Canada, an Indian band is also referred to as a First Nation band, a First Nation, or Nation. Bands are organizational and administrative entities created by the federal government through the Indian Act. Each Band has a Council (Band Council) which serves as the decision-making body for the Band’s programs and services. Terms such as “tribe” are still used by some First Nations communities, but not all.

**Territory:** First Nations, Metis or Inuit territory — also referred to as traditional territory — **describes the ancestral and contemporary connections of Indigenous peoples to a geographical area.** Different than reserve lands, traditional territories historically encompass a larger area of land and water than what is allotted by the federal government (i.e., ‘lands reserved for Indians’ Section 91(24) Constitution Act).

**Métis Settlement:** Different from ‘lands reserved for Indians’ (reserves) or reservations (which is a USA term), these are lands set aside and self-governed by Métis groups within Canada.

These settlements emerged from the activism of Métis political leaders in the 1920s and ’30s who were concerned about the social plight of landless Métis who struggled to feed their families.

There are eight settlements recognized and currently situated in Alberta, these settlements are: Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement, East Prairie Metis Settlement, Elizabeth Metis Settlement, Fishing Lake Metis Settlement, Gift Lake Metis Settlement, Kikino Metis Settlement, Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement, Peavine Metis Settlement. The core of the Métis community and culture in Manitoba was the Red River Settlement, particularly St. François Xavier and St. Norbert parishes.

**Inuit Community:** Many Inuit in Canada live in [53 communities across the northern regions of Canada in Inuit Nunangat](#), which means “the place where Inuit live. Inuit Nunangat is comprised of 4 regions: Inuvialuit (Northwest Territories and Yukon), Nunavik (Northern Quebec), Nunatsiavut (Labrador), Nunavut

**Turtle Island:** For some Indigenous groups, Turtle Island refers to the continent of North America. The name comes from various Indigenous oral histories that tell stories of a turtle that holds the world on its back. For some Indigenous peoples, the turtle is therefore considered an icon of life, and the story of Turtle Island consequently speaks to various spiritual and cultural beliefs. Some applicants might refer to North America as Turtle Island in their stories, scripts, visual art pieces, films or grant applications as “Turtle Island”. This term is commonly used by Indigenous groups in eastern and central Canada.

**Band Council:** Use this term only to describe leadership operating under the Indian Act. The term may not be appropriate when self-government agreements such as treaties are in place. Review the link at the end of this document to learn more about the government structure of a Nation.

**Reserve:** A shortened term that is derived from Section 91(24) of the Constitution Act – the actual term is 'lands reserved for Indians' (I.e., by the Crown). Similar to the term 'reservation' which is used in the United States only.

**Reservation:** A USA federal Indian reservation is an area of land reserved for a tribe or tribes under treaty or other agreement with the United States, executive order, or federal statute or administrative action as permanent tribal homelands, and where the federal government holds title to the land in trust on behalf of the tribe.

**Urban Indigenous:** Urban Indigenous are American Indians and Canadian First Nations peoples who live in urban areas versus on reserve lands. Urban Indians represent a growing proportion of the Indigenous population in the United States.

**On-Reserve:** Often used to describe an individual Indigenous person's place of residence i.e., on reserve lands.

**Off-Reserve:** An Indigenous person(s) residing away from the reserve-lands set aside for their Nation. Also used to reference 'urban Indigenous'.

**Status:** Indian status is **the legal standing of a person who is registered under the Indian Act** . As a registered person, you have certain benefits and rights and are eligible for a range of federal and provincial or territorial programs and services.

**Non-Status:** In Canada, the term non-status Indian refers to any First Nations person who for whatever reason is not registered or not eligible to be registered under the Indian Act. Being non-status does not automatically mean that one is Metis.

## Career Levels

Currently, there aren't any universally accepted industry rules or definitions around career levels; instead -- generally speaking, career levels are typically a combination of education / training / apprenticeships plus the time spent working in a creative capacity; and direct experience resulting in film credits.

These factors and a few others help individuals to self-determine the career level they have attained - this is often part of the process of determining which types of grant funding and other supports can be accessed by filmmakers and creatives.

For the purposes of the RIFF program, we have created a working definition of 'emerging' plus 'early career' and 'mid career' that we hope will help potential applicants to decide if this funding program is appropriate for them. If you have any questions about any of the words and phrases in our Glossary – please do contact us directly.

**Emerging / Early Career** applicants are relatively new to the creative sector with 1-2 years' experience in one or more creative roles and 1-2 professional credits (I.e., have previously produced, directed

and/or written at least a short film, one or more web productions, a work for television, commercials, music videos, or equivalent experience in the screen industry).

**Mid-Career** applicants have between 2-3 years' experience in the sector and have between 2-4 professional credits (i.e., have previously produced, directed and/or written 2-4 short films, one or more web productions, commercials, music videos, television, or equivalent experience in the screen industry). If you have more than 4 years' experience or more than 2-4 professional credits, please refer to Creative BC's website for other applicable programs.

### **Creative Entrepreneurs / "Above the Line"**

**Above-the-line:** Writers, Directors, Producers, Creative Entrepreneurs and lead Performers who are generally paid a set negotiated fee, not an hourly rate. Also commonly referred to as Key Creative.

**Directors:** The person responsible for the interpretive aspects of a stage, film, or television production; the person who supervises the integration of all the elements, as acting, staging, and lighting, required to realize the writer's conception.

**Producers:** A person responsible for the financial and administrative aspects of a stage, film, television, or radio [production](#); the person who exercises general supervision of a [production](#) and is responsible chiefly for raising money, hiring technicians and artists, etc., required to stage a play, make a motion picture, or the like.

**Executive Producers:** One of the top positions in the making of a commercial entertainment product. Depending on the medium, the executive producer may be concerned with management accounting or associated with legal issues.

**Creative Directors:** A Creative Director is the lead of a creative team and responsible for keeping a project, film, or brand campaign aligned with a cohesive visual style.

**Screenwriters:** A screenplay writer, scriptwriter, or scenarist, is a writer who practices the craft of screenwriting, writing screenplays on which mass media, such as films, television programs and video games, are based.

**Story Writers:** a separate role from screenwriting in which the writer fleshes out the overarching narrative, tone and the three act structures before collaborating with the screenwriter to bring the narrative to life.

### **Artists, Craft People and Technicians / "Below the Line"**

**Below-the-line** – Below-the-line workers are Artists, Crafts People and Technicians who are responsible for the technical and physical aspects of the filmmaking craft. They transform the vision and script developed by above-the-line creators into material reality, creating and capturing a visual representation of that story as a digital asset.

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Director:** The Assistant Director (AD) team is in charge of the shooting schedule of the film and works together with multiple departments to ensure a safe and smooth-running production. On

set, the AD works closely with the Director and Director of Photography (DOP) while managing cast and crew. A lot of their duties goes hand in hand with the production office such as handling call sheets, daily production reports, and wrangling background.

**Camera Department:** The work in this department covers all aspects from creative, technical, and physical. Various techniques include setting up the shot, making sure the shot is in focus, handling and operating equipment, as well as coordinating with the Digital Imaging Technician (DIT) in preparing dailies.

**Cinematographer:** The cinematographer or director of photography (sometimes shortened to DP or DOP) is the person responsible for the recording of a film, television production, music video or other live action piece.

**Lighting & Electrics Department:** This department works with the Director of Photography (DOP) to design, set-up and control the lighting. This team also supports the camera department's electrical needs.

**Art Department:** This department works with a team of artists to determine which designs, colours, and textures will be used in props, set builds, and set dressing. The art department brings together elements to achieve the desired 'look' of the film or television – whether a period piece or set in outer space.

**Set Decoration Department:** The Set Decorating department is responsible for the background look of the action, dressing sets and locations for shooting, using furniture, drapery, artwork and decorative items.

**Construction:** This department of carpenters, metal fabricators, buyers, painters and sculptors to plan, manage and build all sets and constructed elements of a film.

**Costume Department:** The costume department designs, creates, buys and maintains all costumes worn by the performers, including fitting and dressing. From period costume design to thrifting, cutting, sewing and cataloguing all the costumes ready for camera, this department works closely with performers, hair, make-up and continuity.

**Editor:** The editor assembles shot footage into a rough assembly and using complex editing software in an office setting, brings the final story together in a coherent narrative that fulfills the director's vision. Editing roles can be found at a post-production facility, or can be freelance positions, either union or non-union.

**First Aid/ Craft Services:** This department provides drinks and snacks to sustain the crew through to the catered meal break and administers occupational first aid on set.

**Grip Department:** The grips provide scaffolding for hanging the lights, and flags and silks to soften lights and create shade. They also provide means for creating high angle, low angle or unusual shots, and dollies and cranes for camera movement.

**Hair Department:** The Hair department dresses the hair of all performers, appropriate to their character. They also provide and dress wigs and sideburns when required and aid the Costume

Department in the placement of hats.

**Make-up Department:** The Make-Up department works with the director(s) and performers to develop the desired look for each character. Special Make-Up effects includes prosthetics and other make-up effects such as airbrushing.

**Locations Department:** The Location department secures location permits and insurance while working together closely with the production team to ensure the location is safe and is suitable for filming requirements. With the help of Production Assistants (PAs), the department handles all logistical issues and other safety measures such as traffic control.

**Production Assistant (PA):** A DGC BC member PA performs similar duties as the PA Helper, with some additional responsibilities and expectation of more experience and knowledge.

**Production Assistant Helper:** A Production Assistant (PA) Helper can have many duties during a busy day of production. This entry level position is the starting point for many people who work in film and television today.

**Production Manager:** Working closely with the Production Office, a Production Manager handles productions decision, locations, budget schedules and personnel. They are also in charge of hiring production crew.

**Production Office:** The Production office responsibilities include logistics, scheduling, liaising with studios, organizing travel for the cast, and communication with all departments.

**Props Department:** The Props department makes, stores and prepares the props for each day's shoot. Works closely with the performers, the Director and the Set Decorating department on set.

**Script Supervisor:** The Script Supervisor and Assistant work with all departments on set to ensure that everything that is shot can be used by the Editor when cutting the film back into story continuity. They keep details of every shot, all action, camera details, length in time of shot, and any deviations from script.

**Sound Department:** The Sound department is responsible for capturing the performers' dialogue and location sounds during production.

**Special Effects Department:** The Special Effects department is responsible for real-time practical effects on set, such as pyrotechnics, explosions and atmospherics such as wind, snow and rain.

**Stunt Department:** Stunt work involves a performance which would be considered dangerous if not performed by a Performer with such special training. Coordinators hire and supervise the Performers to coordinate the stunt work, under the Producer's discretion.

**Transportation:** Stunt work involves a performance which would be considered dangerous if not performed by a Performer with such special training. Coordinators hire and supervise the Performers to coordinate the stunt work, under the Producer's discretion.

## Terms Related to Film Unions & Guilds

There are six unions and guilds representing the motion picture workforce in B.C. The majority of the workers they represent are below-the-line professional craftspeople and technicians, as well as performers and directors. Some roles are represented by multiple unions. Some workers belong to more than one union or guild and are referred to as “dual card” workers, meaning they are members of more than one union or guild.

Producers and their creative teams hire freelance workers who are mostly members of B.C.’s unions and guilds. Most negotiating producers’ representatives in B.C. are members either of the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) or the Canadian Media Producers Association BC Producers Branch (CMPA-BC), and therefore are required to hire unionized workers who fall within the of collective bargaining agreements that negotiate their rates and terms of employment. There are some smaller productions that do not fall in this category.

Unions and guilds each represent many departments and roles and play an active role in building B.C.’s motion picture workforce by providing education and training, as well as professional development.

**The BC Council of Film Unions (BCCFU)** is comprised of three member-unions representing workers in BC’s vibrant film and television industry: IATSE Local 891, Teamsters Local Union 155, and International Cinematographer’s Guild Local 669. The BCCFU Master Agreement provides terms and conditions for Employees represented by all three of the BCCFU’s member-unions.

**IATSE Local 891:** The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, Its Territories and Canada (IATSE) is a labour union that represents the tens of thousands of workers in film and television from fair wage to safe working conditions for their members. Local 891 represents both British Columbia and Yukon Territory.

**Teamsters Local Union 155:** Labour union representing the specific workers in the film & television industry: Drivers, Security, Catering, Animal Handlers & Trainers, Animal Wranglers, Automotive, Marine Personnel and Miscellaneous. Local 155 represents both British Columbia and Yukon Territory.

**International Cinematographer’s Guild Local 669:** The ICG 669 membership is involved in all aspects of film and television that pertain to the camera. Our membership consists of Directors of Photography, Camera Operators, Camera Assistants, Unit Publicists, Unit Still Photographers, Electronic Camerapeople, Video Assist, Digital Engineers and Technicians, Data Management Technicians and Camera Trainees in all phases of filmed or electronically recorded theatrical feature films, films for television release, internet and television series productions. Local 669 represents Western Canada: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut Territory

**The Association of Film Craftspeople (ACFC)** provides crew for smaller budget feature films and Movies of the Week (MOWs) supplying workers skilled in craft and technical, across 23 departments: Accounting, Animal Wranglers, Art, Catering, Construction, Costumes, Editing, First Aid/Craft Services, Greens, Grips, Hair, Lighting/Electrics, Make-up, Paint/Scenic, Production Office, Props, Publicity,

Script Supervisor/Continuity, Security, Set Decoration, Sound, Special Effects, Transportation.

**Directors Guild of Canada – BC Branch Council (DGC BC):** The DGC-BC covers directors, production managers, location managers, assistant directors and production assistants (PAs) within British Columbia.

**Union of BC Performers / Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (UBCP/ACTRA):** UBCP/ACTRA represents performers union in British Columbia, representing a wide range of performers including principal performers, stunt performers and background performers.

## Terms Related to Development and Production

**Treatment:** A treatment is a detailed summary of a movie's story, including each major scene. It is written in prose form (natural way you would tell a story verbally), and it is necessary when pitching a film to a studio or funder.

**Synopsis:** A film synopsis is ideally a one-page document that summarizes your film. It contains the film's title, genre, logline (a one-sentence summary), and is typically three to five (length will vary) paragraph explanation of the film's storyline, major plot points, and key characters.

**Pitch Deck:** A pitch deck is a presentation deck (PDF format) that is used to pitch your idea or project to any number of audiences, funders, investors and/or distributors. One of the single most important aspects of creating an effective pitch deck is to organize it based on certain aspects of the project (tone, feel, audience, plot, logline) that will eventually be pitched at a market and/or festival. Pitch decks can be presented in either a digital or physical booklet that is usually about 8-12 pages long. See the RIFF Grant Writing Handbook for some tips on how to create a Pitch Deck.

**Series Bible:** a series bible or TV bible is an outline of your show, or series. Show bibles are broken down into several parts including: a one-page pitch of your show and logline, story engine, character and episodic breakdowns, pilot, and future seasons.

**Outline:** a general framework of the project, also referred to as a 'one-sheet'. It expands on your synopsis, adding an explanation of the film's storyline, major plot points, and key characters.

**Research:** Research is important to gain a greater understanding of the project's subject matter and/or story. The act of gathering information that is relevant to the project so the applicant can properly tell the story in an accurate and tasteful manner (works for both factual and narrative). For instance, under RIFF, applicants may wish to carry out Indigenous language research for their project, or research a community's history.

**Re-write:** The process of receiving notes and feedback (usually from key stakeholders: funders, producers, mentors) to pursue rewrites in terms of the screenplay and/or necessary documents (i.e. pitch deck, treatment, series bible).

**Final Draft:** The last draft of script or relevant materials, this step is taken after additional notes, feedback have been put into consideration for the re-writes.

**Polish/Packaging:** The process of completing and finalizing your materials so they are ready to be presented to major stakeholders, producers, funders, and other relevant bodies.



**Demo-taping:** a short video 3–5-minutes in length used to promote a project, this component is important when pitching and seeking out funding. Sometimes called a “Sizzle Reel”, common format is a QuickTime (.mov) file.

**A-roll:** The primary footage for non-narrative or interview-based film, and usually refers to talking heads or footage that directly relates to the moment.

**B-roll:** Secondary footage, often used as cutaway footage, to provide context and visual interest to help tell your story.

**Project Budget:** A plan of financial operation embodying an estimate of proposed expenditures for a given period of time or purpose and the proposed means of financing them. The budget should encompass the following phases of a project's lifecycle: development, pre-production, production, post-production. See RIFF Grant Writing Handbook for examples and template.

**Project Financing Plan:** A project financing plan expands on your proposed project budget and can include a combination of grants, project loans, donations and/or other financial contributions.

## Other Resources:

[Government of British Columbia Terminology in Indigenous Content](#)

[Inuit Nunangat Map](#)

[First Nation Profiles](#)

[Creative BC Rogers Indigenous Filmmakers Fund](#)

[Creative Pathways™ Dictionary of Motion Picture Terms](#)

[Creative Pathways™ Unions and Guilds](#)