

Thanks Anita, this is very exciting and important. If I could talk to Minister Mélanie Joly I would say this: My focus is on the the big picture of equality. At times it feels like an overwhelming challenge to solve, where do you even start as it is totally out of control in Canada. I have lived it for 20 years as a cinematographer, and as a woman, working my way up through all genres of our film/tv/digital industry, all across Canada. I have seen and lived it all, and I have ideas for solutions. "A cultural ecosystem in which they thrive"... That is the dream, to thrive though only a select few are. Three suggestions I have for solutions are: #1- Fund diversity. Financially support diverse groups to develop and produce their stories, and they will hire diverse groups to make those stories. And Canada's library of content will become more diverse as a result. #2- Graduated quotas. Deliberate integration of women and men of diversity into main stream production is necessary, and an action step in creating equality and parity. #3- Proportional tax credits. Offer tax credits for hiring women. Though allow the credits to be proportional vs fixed, reward the production for meeting some quota goals, vs penalizing them for not reaching 100%. We also need to build on 3 pillars for women specifically, Access, Opportunity, Visibility. By creating mandatory action on my first 3 solution suggestions, those will feed directly into the 3 pillars that need strengthening to achieve a "cultural ecosystem in which they thrive". Right now, during one of Canada's busiest production years to date, women and men of diversity are still under employed in key creative rolls, such as Directors, Cinematographers, Writers, Art Directors, Gaffers, Key Grips, etc. The crews on which a story stands, are extremely under employing of women, and to move into and up both in Union and non-union productions is nearly impossible. Diverse groups are not thriving creatively, and certainly not financially. The worse side-effect of this is poor mental health, emotional instability, depression, and on and on and on. Yet our tax dollars are paying for contracts to be paid out to the same type of person repeatedly, and the majority of income is pooling in one pond. Women and men of diversity are not earning equal income, yet they do have equal ability and just want to work. The current "system" is un-monitored, it is oppressive and it does discriminate daily. If this continues, we will not be able to build a successful financial retirement for ourselves, and then become dependent on Canada for support during old age and death. Employ us now while we can work, so that we can build our financial futures, and avoid the massive expense of supporting the aged in 30, 40 and 50 years from now. Canada has not previously created a healthy environment for diverse content, creators, and crews to flourish. With the right financial allocations and integration practices we would absolutely thrive and create the new cultural eco-system we desperately need. I would put my challenging career down and work in your office Minister Mélanie Joly, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, to help you build this. I'd create a new position called the National Diversity Officer, and create a Provincial Diversity Officer in each province and territory to ensure the new practices are being carried out. It is that important to me, and to many, that action happens now. You can't fix part of the problem without addressing the whole creative environment, everything is connected. Thankyou for listening. #WomenInFilm #Diversity #Equality #OurTaxDollars #Canada #Action #Now #DigiCanCon