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**Building an Anti-Racism Strategy for Canadian Broadcasting: Conversation & Convergence
Vancouver Event Summary Report**

The May 14, 2022, Vancouver convergence was the second of a series of facilitated regional meetings on anti-racism and Canadian broadcasting. The first event took place in Montréal on April 30, 2022.¹ Subsequent events will be held in Halifax, Calgary, and Winnipeg, culminating in a national conference to be held at Carleton University in Ottawa. These important and timely events are organized by the Community Media Advocacy Centre (www.CMACentre.ca) and supported by Heritage Canada's Anti-Racism Action Program. The Vancouver meeting took place at the University of British Columbia (UBC) with support from the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning.

The meeting began with an opening statement² from the project steering committee read by Laith Marouf, senior policy consultant with CMAC, on behalf of the project steering committee. Marouf explained how media has been crucial to the self-determination of First Nation communities, including radio stations like Nuxalk Radio in Bella Coola and Secwepemc Radio originally broadcast on the Neskonlith Reserve in 2005. Marouf added that Vancouver is home to Co-op radio (also known as CFRO) established to serve low-income communities in the Downtown Eastside neighborhood, and which was among the first experimentally licensed community radio stations in Canada. Members from Co-op radio presented at the meeting and their contributions are summarized in this document.

After presenting the project steering committee's opening statement, Marouf noted the intersections of settler colonialism in the media from Turtle Island to Palestine and invited the audience to join in a moment of silence dedicated to Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. A renowned journalist reporting for over 30 years, Abu Akleh was assassinated by an Israeli military sniper while on assignment covering the Israeli military invasion of the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank on May 11, 2022.

¹ Read the summary report from Montreal:

<https://www.antiracism.media/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Montreal-Summary.pdf>

² From 00:00:00-00:09:46: <https://archive.org/download/antiracism-media/2022-05-14-Vancouver-Part-1.mp4>

The keynote address³ was given by Dr. Karim H. Karim, Chancellor's Professor at Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communication. Dr. Karim's presentation titled "Identifying the Principles for an Anti-Racism Strategy"⁴ provided an overview of the dominant colonial hegemonic discourses of media in Canada and proposed three main strategies for anti-racism in Canadian media. He has worked on media, diaspora, and inclusion and has conducted research studies for Canadian broadcasters on the representation of diversity. Dr. Karim led the administrative process to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation at the Department of Canadian Heritage, where he also served as the elected chair of an advocacy organization for racialized employees. Dr. Karim explained how the dominant societal discourses use a defined network of terminology, visual images, and symbols to uphold its colonial and white supremacist legacy and infrastructure. The dominant societal discourses use terms such as 'modernity' and 'democracy' as markers of its Eurocentric Christian civilization and frames living conditions in the third world as a marker of barbarism and lack of human development. Dr. Karim explained how states considered of the first world, including Canada and the United States, actively maintain poor infrastructures in areas where Indigenous, Black and racialized communities live--both domestically and through their foreign policies. For example, Canadian former prime minister Stephen Harper argued in the interest of what he called "old stock Canadian," referring to settlers of European descent who are also identified as "la pure laine" among white Francophones in Canada to refer to descendants of New France settlers. Dr. Karim explained how such categorizations presented in the discourse of the country's leaders and amplified by the mainstream media continuously shift, expand, and limit the definition about who is included and excluded from the Canadian public sphere, which emboldens racists in the society. Dr. Karim notes how the category of the "white self" is flexible and can be expanded or shrunk to suit the project of white supremacy. For example, unlike today, in the 19th century, Irish and Ukrainian people were not considered white. The recent coverage of Ukraine and the influx of journalists sent to Ukraine from Canadian media is blatantly contrasted by the lack of coverage and media visits to other sites of war such as Ethiopia, Yemen, and Mali. Dr. Karim noted that the mainstream media's lack of coverage of people with darker skin indicates that the media discourse in Canada does not see non-white people as worthy victims that deserve to be covered and rather, as inherently violent. He pointed to a media analysis⁵ of the Quebec mosque shooting committed by Alexandre Bissonnette in 2017 to show how journalists were

³ Read Dr. Karim's written remarks:

<https://www.antiracism.media/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Identifying-Principles-for-an-Anti-Racism-Strategy.pdf>

⁴ From 00:09:46 until end of part 1, then from 00:00:00 until end and then continues in part 2 from 00:00:00 until 00:59:30:

<https://archive.org/download/antiracism-media/2022-05-14-Vancouver-Part-1.mp4> &
<https://archive.org/download/antiracism-media/2022-05-14-Vancouver-Part-2.mp4>

⁵ Mahrouse, G. (2018). Minimizing and Denying Racial Violence: Insights from the Québec Mosque Shooting. *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law*, 30(3), 471-493. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cjwl.30.3.006>

reluctant to call the murder of 6 people in a mosque as terrorism and instead identified the murderer, who had clear ties to white nationalism, as someone who has ‘gone astray/poor moral conduct’. Dr. Karim concluded by identifying what he considers as the basic principles for building an effective anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting. He said:

1. Justice is the cornerstone of a well-functioning society and on its rests the obligations for the ultimate goal of democracy. White supremacy has created structures of injustice towards racialized peoples who are left out of key modes of participation and who face silencing and media distortions. The media must abide by professionalism proper to their sector which is incumbent on fostering social justice as a basic ethic and mandate.
2. Respect opens the door between people and helps shut the door to hate. It enables the self to enable the stranger. Respect keeps us vigilant against those relentless discourses that disparage people and requires one not to attach an individual to an entire group. Respect must be a primary requirement for media in society and serves as a model for good public behaviour.
3. Understanding and mutual understanding in which one has to understand the self in order to know the other. Being open to long term endeavors of mutual understanding between people is essential for a healthy and diverse society open to all cultures and religions. Dominant discourses can be re-examined if one is committed to principles of understanding. White supremacy and the role of the media, whose norms are shaped by Eurocentrism and hold deep cultural biases, need to be revealed for their destructive effects on society. Only when these are understood and there is an obligation in the media and the society to counter white supremacy can we move on and get along with each other.

The second presentation of the Vancouver meeting featured esteemed media practitioner and director of the Nat and Flora Bosa Centre for Film and Animation at Capilano University, Doreen Manuel. In her presentation titled “Decolonizing the Film, TV & Media Industry,”⁶ Manuel provided a historical account of the current state of Canadian media and shared from her expertise on the importance of political strategy in decolonizing the media sphere. The sixth child of Grand Chief Dr. George Manuel and Spiritual Leader Marceline Manuel, Doreen Manuel comes from a long line of oral historians and factual storytellers from her First Nations traditional background. Manuel has extensive experience working in First Nations education and community development in both rural and urban centers. She is currently the principal owner of Running Wolf Productions, on the Board of Directors for *The*

⁶ Doreen Manuel – Decolonizing the Film, TV & Media Industry [from 00:59:30 until end]: <https://archive.org/download/antiracism-media/2022-05-14-Vancouver-Part-2.mp4>

Knowledge Network and Moving Images Distribution. Manuel introduced her presentation by noting the importance of Indigenous education and explaining that Indigenous history is not included in the public school education system. In instances where indigenous history is included, for example in post-secondary institutions, it is common to see courses delivered by non-Indigenous educators who have learned from books rather than Indigenous educators who have personal experiences teaching about Indigenous history. Manuel explained how teaching Indigenous history through personal connections and lived experience is a powerful life-saving force because it explains and contextualizes current social and political conditions in Canada.

Manuel noted how, without fail, teaching Indigenous history to recovering heroin addicts in Vancouver's Eastside and to women escaping violent relationships saved their lives because it explained the structural reasons, upheld by colonialism, for why they are where they are in life. Manuel explained that Canadian media has its roots in the genocidal policies and practices such as the *Indian Act* and the residential school system in which Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their communities by the Canadian government. Noting from her experience as a survivor at the Port Alberni Indian Residential School, Manuel explained to the audience the deliberate torture and sexual abuse that the residential school teachers and administrators perpetrated against her and other Indigenous children, and how Indigenous education saved her after she got out. Manuel notes how after her release from residential school, her mother and her grandmother ensured that she received spiritual healing and learned everything she needed to "live her life as a strong powerful Ktunaxa woman." Manuel explained how her grandmother would not speak English to her and that she learned from different elders about Indigenous ways of living as an important practice of decolonization.

From television, books, to radio, Manuel noted that an important part of decolonization is to question everything, analyze, and dissect every aspect of mainstream society. She explained that this requires the collective effort of likeminded people who are trying to decolonize. Racist and genocidal policies, such as the pass system in which Indigenous people were not permitted to leave the reservation without approval, and the sixties scoop, a policy which removed Indigenous children en-masse from their homes and put into non-Indigenous homes, are a few examples of the genocidal conditions that barred Indigenous people's participation in the media sector. The history of media needs to also include Indigenous history and a history of Canada's genocide in order to correctly represent the state of media in Canada.⁷ An indigenous communication history of Canada is needed in order to understand why Indigenous people did not get involved initially. Manuel recounted how from the 1960s onward more Indigenous people pushed forward in media, and by the 1980s and 1990s there was and

⁷ See for example:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20141114044333/http://www.indigenoumedia.ca/indigenous-communications-in-canada-our-history>

continues to be a strong growth of Indigenous media leaders whose aim is to use media to serve Indigenous people. Manuel got involved in media starting in 2003 and today sits on multiple committees working to change and adapt policies to better serve decolonization in broadcasting. Manuel stressed the dire importance of unity and winning, calling for Indigenous and marginalized peoples to sit on committees and be there to advocate for equity in the media. Manuel presented the following seven action items for building an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting:

1. Every government agency and funding organization that serves media should be mandated to set goals of hiring 50% marginalized employees and to open seats on their boards for marginalized community representatives. Mandate industry unions to create pathway programs to fast-track achieving equity and inclusion. Manuel had worked with Disney and now Warner in order to facilitate more hiring of Indigenous and Black people in the sector. The Union proved to be a barrier to improving hiring practices, for example at Disney. The Unions, such as the Motion Picture Production Industry Association of BC (MPPIA), must be held accountable and must have mandated equity training and mandated practices for hiring Indigenous and marginalized people. It is a fact that film productions in Canada hire mostly only white people. This needs to change and the Unions must actively work to implement equity in the sector.
2. Equity and inclusion coordinators should be hired to monitor every production. Manuel has already developed a job description for this role and it is expected that it would be easy for unions and organizations to implement equity and inclusion coordinators, just as they implemented the role of intimacy officer.
3. All Canadian broadcasters and industry organizations who receive government funding should commit to an equity audit of their administration and staff. Organizations must set realistic goals, if they do not have them, to improve and meet equity standards.
4. An Equity Seeking Tax Credit should be implemented. Marginalized producers rely on the tax credit they receive after the production is finished as a large chunk of the budgeted funding for their projects. Manuel explained that a study by the Racial Equity Media Collective reveals that tax credits make up the largest of all funding going into the media industry.⁸ However, these tax credits are not subject to any equity related standards, which makes them the biggest equity omission in the system. Implementing an Equity Seeking Tax Credit which would be made accessible

⁸ <https://www.re-mc.org/research>

- to Black, Indigenous, and equity seeking groups during the production stage, as opposed to waiting till after production, must be implemented. Manuel has been advocating for this initiative for 4 years. A meeting with the Finance Minister is required to push this forward. The Finance Minister has not accepted a meeting to discuss this. Manuel urges the new minister to meet and implement the Equity Seeking Tax Credit.
5. Banking and funding institutions must change the way they evaluate Indigenous people for loans. Indigenous Peoples are often not given loans for their productions because of racism in banking and funding institutions. Manuel explained that the standards by which loans are approved are not equitably implemented, adding that this is unacceptable.
 6. Better statistics are needed on equity in the media sector. Currently, there are no accurate statistics that tell us how many Indigenous and marginalized people are in film productions. As a primary strategy in any recommendations, better statistics are needed that will help support better hiring practices.
 7. Mandates are needed to ensure that funders and the CRTC support the evolution of true Indigenous cinema. Funders and the CRTC must dedicate a majority of Indigenous hires for the largest salaried positions above the line (e.g. writer, director, lead actor, etc.) for Indigenous productions with a minimum of 40% Indigenous crew. Doreen Manuel's film *Unceded Chiefs* included an all Indigenous crew with the exception of four costumers and one animator. Similarly, Darlene Naponse's film *What Falls Around Her* also included an all-Indigenous crew. It is possible, so why are people not doing it more?

The third presentation titled "Inclusion vs. Exclusion" was a panel of four members of Vancouver's Co-op radio: Gunargie O'Sullivan, Hanna Kawwas, Abdel Saleem Moosa Naroth, and Dr. Alnoor Gova.⁹ The first speaker on the panel, Gunargie O'Sullivan, is a Kwakwaka'wakw who was born in Alert Bay, BC, and her people originate from Turnour Island and are from the Tlowitsis Nation. O'Sullivan is a radio host, media producer, actress, writer¹⁰ and an arts organizer who was chosen in 2018 as the Radio Legend by National Campus and Community Radio Association (NCRA). In 2015, O'Sullivan taught at the first Women's Media Camp in Denman Island and Comox BC, where she also hosted a two-hour live national broadcast from the Walking With Our Sisters exhibit presented by the K'omoks band. At Co-op radio, O'Sullivan

⁹ Programmers from Campus and Community Radio – Inclusion vs Exclusion [from 00:00:00 until 01:24:15]: <https://archive.org/download/antiracism-media/2022-05-14-Vancouver-Part-3.mp4>

¹⁰ O'Sullivan's poems have been anthologized in the annual series, *Gatherings*, published by Theytus Publishing.

hosts three weekly programs *Late Night with Savages*, *Kla How Ya FM*, and *When Spirit Whispers*.¹¹ O’Sullivan presented on the state of community radio in Vancouver based on her own experience as a media practitioner of over 30 years and called on the broadcasting industry to improve employment practices to actively employ Indigenous people. O’Sullivan began her presentation by bringing attention to Article 16: Right to Media in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹² and stressed on the importance of media, such as radio, as a powerful tool for Indigenous peoples to communicate, represent, connect with each other, and to learn about each other’s identities across boundaries. O’Sullivan explained that the effects of residential schools on her, her family, and Indigenous people has been structural in upholding inequalities including in the media. O’Sullivan was first introduced to radio through her brother who had his own show on Co-op radio. In the 1990s, during the Oka crisis, she witnessed how the media misrepresented what was going on in Kanesatake and how the media spun the story to negatively report on the Mohawk people and their struggle.¹³ Seeing the urgency of using media to counteract the racism, O’Sullivan decided to commit to working in broadcasting and has since produced and organized many projects such as the Heart of the City Festival.¹⁴ O’Sullivan explained how for many Indigenous and marginalized people in Vancouver, getting involved with radio and media work was a way to bring people together and be part of a collective. For example, the Spirit Song Theatre Company developed in the 1980s was an important gathering spot for many Indigenous people in Vancouver. O’Sullivan stressed on the importance of accessing resources such as radio stations and other media as powerful tools to be used in meaningful ways. For 30 years O’Sullivan has been producing shows, conducting trainings for broadcasters, traveling long trips for radio meetings, and often leaving the station late at night putting her life at risk without ever benefitting from employment or salary from Co-op radio. O’Sullivan asked, “How are Indigenous people going to participate in a system that does not pay them for their work?” O’Sullivan has been a leading program and mentor at Co-op radio for over 30 years and has dedicated countless hours to the growth of the community through radio. Co-op radio station management must employ long time volunteers, like O’Sullivan. O’Sullivan presented the two following urgent strategies for building an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting:

1. The radio sector needs to actively employ Indigenous people, many of whom are doing a bulk of the work without getting compensated by broadcasters who are reaping the benefits of their volunteer labour.

¹¹ *When Spirit Whispers* covered the Vancouver event and the archive is available here: <https://ia802501.us.archive.org/12/items/antiracism-media/2022-05-09%20-%20When%20Spririt%20whispers%20-%20full%20show.mp3>

¹² http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

¹³ See Alanis Obomsawin’s documentary: https://www.nfb.ca/film/kanehsatake_270_years_of_resistance/

¹⁴ <https://www.heartofthecityfestival.com/home-2021/>

2. Getting involved in media and to use it in meaningful ways is essential. This requires access to resources that should be made available to Indigenous and racialized peoples particularly in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

The second speaker on the panel from Co-op Radio Vancouver was Hanna Kawwas, the chair of the Canada Palestine Association, writer, and broadcaster as co-host on *Voice of Palestine*, the first Palestinian radio show in Canada, produced for over 30 years.¹⁵ In his presentation, Kawwas provided an overview of his experience as a broadcaster and contextualized media repression by apartheid Canada and Israel. Kawwas began his presentation by explaining the racist shared values between the settler-colonial states of Canada and Israel as exemplified in the clip from the House of Commons in which the government failed to denounce the assassination of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh¹⁶ just as they failed to denounce the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre. Kawwas noted that even though the human rights groups declared the state of Israel as an apartheid state for decades, including this past year by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and others, Canada's failure to denounce crimes under international law further reveals its biased and pro-Israeli agenda as a way to further uphold its own settler-colonialism in Turtle Island. Kawwas provided a brief history of his show on Co-op Radio, *Voice of Palestine* which he launched in 1987, to counteract what he argues is a pro-Israeli media bias in Canada. His opponents were outraged and publicly denounced the show citing false claims of antisemitism, including to the CRTC.¹⁷ Kawwas explained that CRTC, which is also part of the political establishment, asked Co-op radio to "balance" the *Voice of Palestine* program, but it did not ask of this of any other show. The producers of *Voice of Palestine* responded by creating a radio segment called "Balancing the Act" that featured quotes from racist leaders. After broadcasting at Co-op radio for 25 years, Hanna Kawwas explained that *Voice of Palestine* decided to leave the station because representatives of the Co-op board of directors failed to support the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions motion that passed at the NCRA¹⁸ and later Co-op radio board of directors single-handedly facilitated a \$1.437 million deal that sold the frequency of the station to the Jim Pattison Broadcast Group, a media conglomerate.¹⁹ *Voice of Palestine* continues today through an online format and remains one of the most important shows in Canada for the struggle of the Palestinian people. Kawwas notes that the influence of corporate media in community broadcasting is an issue that needs to be addressed at the CRTC level. In the context of the CBC, Kawwas also addressed the fact that the national broadcaster has instructed its workers to censor themselves and ban the word "Palestine" from their reporting.

¹⁵ <http://voiceofpalestine.ca>

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/CJPME/status/1524472715884781570>

¹⁷ <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/1988/DB88-694.htm> & <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2008/db2008-119.htm>

¹⁸ <https://bdsmovement.net/news/national-campus-and-community-radio-association-canada-joins-bds-movement>

¹⁹ <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2011/2011-580.htm>

In an instance where the word Palestine was used, even when citing a title of a book that has the word Palestine in it, journalists were censored.²⁰ Kawwas offered the following suggestions for building an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting:

1. Tokenism promotes racism and is not the solution; rather, the apartheid systems in Canada and Israel need to be dismantled. U.S. and Canadian media serve the interest of imperialist foreign policies promoting white supremacist ideology and genocide of indigenous peoples.
2. Canadian media need to stop anti-Palestinian racism²¹ and recognize Palestine. Education at every level, including at the CRTC, is required to stop the racism that is steeped into media organizations.

The third speaker on the panel was long-time artist, broadcaster, tour manager, and music media practitioner Abdel Saleem Moosa Naroht. Naroht was a broadcaster at Vancouver Co-op radio and was one of the founders of Smithers Community Radio, which he set up upon his move to Smithers, B.C. in Gitdumden Territory. Prior to this, Naroht was a prominent member of community media and activism as part of the anti-apartheid movement in his home-country of South Africa. Naroht offered from his experience in South Africa, U.S., and Canada and stressed the importance of anti-racism education and mobilization in the media sector. Naroht introduced his presentation by providing the audience with context around the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. Naroht spoke from his background as a Black South African who, under apartheid laws in South Africa, was considered “coloured.” Naroht explained that his use of the category “Black” comes from the legacy of activist and founder of the South African Student Organisation, Steve Biko,²² and the history and philosophy of the Black consciousness movement for liberation in the face of the white oppressors. He explained how, until independence under the presidency of Nelson Mandela in 1994, working in media and speaking to the public under apartheid was dangerous and he was heavily monitored and surveilled by the apartheid state. Naroht led programs at multiple radio stations (in South Africa, U.S., and Canada) and he spoke about the censorship and racism that he experienced at each station. He recounted how a white station manager in Cape Town asked him not to use common Islamic salutation and to tone down the revolutionary music. After Naroht moved to Smithers, B.C., he contacted the CRTC and got all the information he needed in order to set up a community radio station from scratch. Afterwards, he recruited, compiled the playlists, and trained staff. When the station started broadcasting more regularly, Naroht spoke on the radio about his son’s and his own experience with racism in Smithers, a town he called racist because the town council was also enabling racism. The white station manager of the station he founded

²⁰ <https://mondoweiss.net/2021/01/cbc-still-reviewing-why-it-deleted-the-word-palestine/>

²¹ <https://podur.org/2021/05/23/anti-palestinian-racism-a-resource/>

²² <https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/stephen-bantu-biko>

responded by asking him not to talk about racism. Naroth experienced something similar during his time at Vancouver's Co-op radio in which he was asked to do most of the grunt work without compensation. According to Naroth, such exploitation is taxing physically and mentally. The major difference between the oppressor and the oppressed, Naroth explained, is that the oppressors come in with a privileged mentality and always want to come in and control. Naroth stressed that when you are oppressed, you either submit or fight. Naroth explained that throughout his experience in radio, it is too common to see white folks steal the ideas and work of BIPOC people and claim it as their own, while at the same time tokenizing racialized people. Naroth presented the following five strategies for building an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting:

1. We need economic power. The government needs to fund, without reservation, broadcasting organizations that are run and controlled by BIPOC communities.
2. Stations must not be run by people with colonial mentalities. Station staff and boards must share power in a way that supports the needs of BIPOC communities. This is essential for the health of societies.
3. Media is an essential part of making the voices of BIPOC people heard. There needs to be a place where racialized communities can air their own voices.
4. Education. Naroth presented education as the most important part of any anti-racism strategy because without it we will not learn how to lead in the footsteps of those that came before us in order to change the course of our destinies. Naroth emphasized that women and girls' education is essential because most radio organizations are male top heavy.

Naroth concluded by adding, "We must demand that these things are instituted immediately; if not, we need to mobilize to get them instituted."

The fourth speaker on the panel "Inclusion vs. Exclusion" was Dr. Alnoor Gova, a member of Co-op radio for over 20 years. Dr. Gova curates two shows on Co-op, *Bulland Awaaz* and *The Rational*, covering local and national current affairs with a focus on systemic racism and inequality, and sharing responses and strategies in dealing with structural inequality. Dr. Gova provided an analysis of how the broadcasting sector excludes racialized members, sometimes through narratives of exclusion, citing his and his fellow panelists' experiences as broadcasters and board members at Co-op radio. Dr. Gova explained that it is an example of inclusion that he has access to the station to broadcast his radio shows, adding that he has benefitted from the mentorship of Gunargie O'Sullivan and from working with fellow panelists at the station. Dr. Gova gave a few examples of exclusion of Indigenous and racialized members at Co-op radio. This included the fact that, to his knowledge, the two public affairs programs he produces in the over 20 years they have been on-air have never been featured in the Co-op radio magazine. He also observed that Co-op radio receives much of its grant funding based on the quality of the

diverse programming, such as having the most Indigenous and people of colour programming that station members like Dr. Gova and O’Sullivan continue to host without benefit from the funds raised by the station. Dr. Gova explained that this is despite many attempts by racialized programmers who have been calling for better funding opportunities. For example, Dr. Gova recounted how station members have been calling for direct funding for Gunargie O’Sullivan’s programs since this includes over 6 hours of original Indigenous programming produced per week. He stated that where the station has not shown interest in offering any assistance to BIPOC programmers is an example of exclusion. Dr. Gova offered the following recommendations for building an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting:

1. There is an urgent need for direct pathways for radio programmers to secure their own funding for their shows that are independent from the radio station and the NCRA. Currently, there are no such avenues which leads to lack of solid support for BIPOC programmers. When community radio stations get funding for having diverse programming, Dr. Gova explained that BIPOC producers do not benefit from this funding. He observed that there needs to be direct access to funds for BIPOC producers, such as through the Community Radio Fund of Canada.
2. Station managers and radio stations must have a political will to support BIPOC programming. Station managers must stop appropriating the work of racialized members and, instead, actively work to improve and advocate for better resources and work conditions.

The concluding panel presentation featured expert media practitioners Barbara Lee, President & Founder of the Vancouver Asian Film Festival and Founder of the Racial Equity Screen Office (RESO), Nilesh Patel, Interim Executive Director of the Racial Equity Screen Office, and Sarah Spring, Executive Director Documentary Organization of Canada. They presented on “Why We Need Mandated Racial Equity: A Case Study on the Failures of The Knowledge Network,”²³ sharing from their over 25 years of experience working in the media sector and offering recommendations based on their equity advocacy work. The presenters spoke about the equity mandates that they proposed at the Knowledge Network, BC’s provincial public broadcaster. This advocacy reflects race-based data that RESO released in 2022²⁴ and called for better data collections to serve racialized people in the media. Lee shared the history of the Vancouver Asian Film Festival which is in its 26th year. During all of these years, the festival has only received a total of \$30,000 in grant funding. Lee explained that because there is another Asian film festival in Eastern Canada, funders deemed that there is no justification for funding two Asian film festivals in Canada. Lee explained how this experience motivated her to further

²³ From 01:24:15 until end: <https://archive.org/download/antiracism-media/2022-05-14-Vancouver-Part-3.mp4>

²⁴ <https://vaff.org/vaffs-diversity-on-screen-audit-report-2022/>

look into the racial diversity within these institutions as a way to understand the gaps, noting “you don’t know what you don’t know.” Despite ongoing struggles to access funding, VAFF continues going strong and has been central in advocating for equity and presenting Asian filmmakers to Canadian audiences. Lee and Patel have been working together for 20 years, Patel himself is an alumnus of VAFF. Together, along with Sarah Spring, they have committed to combating systemic racism in their sector. Patel explained how, more recently, the murder of George Floyd has sparked a movement and racial reckoning in society. This led to many organizations including government and national organizations to issue mission statements proclaiming support for BIPOC peoples. Patel explained how this was an important moment to assess what can be done nationally and advocate for more funding for marginalized media makers. One study the presenters’ organizations conducted was an equity audit to show the participation of racialized people at the Knowledge Network and to propose a diversity, equity and inclusion action plan.²⁵ The speakers expressed that bringing forward the data was crucial because it showed that the observations of inequity were backed up by evidence found in the numbers. Figures from their study revealed that 78% of production firms producing for the Knowledge Network are majority owned by white creators and 93.8% of the funds received by production firms from the Knowledge Network are majority owned by white creators who are receiving over \$11.4 million in production funding (see the report linked in FN 25 for more findings).

The speakers showed that the low number of Indigenous and racialized creators who get production support from the Knowledge Network or government funding for their projects is detrimental because it also limits access to international funding. When racialized creators approach international funders and the funders see that the media makers were not given a chance by their own local institutions, it positions them at a disadvantage for having no provincial or national funding. The panel observed that this is how relational power works, by positioning white media producers who have received support from local funders to have an advantage also on the international level thereby continuing the cycle of inequity and racism within the system. Moreover, the racism in funding opportunities creates a situation whereby racialized producers must compete with each other due to resource scarcity. The speakers iterated that this has created a condition in which racialized creators are forced to speak to whiteness rather than to each other because that is where the resources are. The speakers affirmed that the Knowledge Network must abide by the diversity, equity, and inclusion mandate actions and asked that the network’s board members agree to implement this action plan as soon as possible.²⁶

²⁵ <https://www.bipocvandfilm.com/blog/equity-audit-by-knowledge-network-reveals-depth-of-racial-inequities>

²⁶ <https://www.knowledge.ca/sites/default/files/PDFs/DEI-Action-Plan-Public-Release-February-2022.pdf>

Spring added that the equity audit is a step towards putting forward legislation in support of equity in the industry. Spring explained that Bill C-11²⁷ is set to bring online streamers within the control of the CRTC, which will drastically change what is considered Canadian broadcast content. Spring asked, will there be dedicated funding, collection, and oversight regarding equity as part of this effort? The speakers also spoke about the grant funding process and the gatekeeping that structures the application process, eligibility requirements, and outcomes. Lee, Patel, and Spring presented the following recommendations for building an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting:

1. Implementation of equity mandates at media institutions, such as the Knowledge Network.
2. Advocacy for better funding processes that support racialized creators. Specifically, a film fund is media for BIPOC producers that is also administered by BIPOC producers.
3. Racism in institutions attempts to exclude and split up racialized creators from each other; racialized creators must work in solidarity with one another.
4. Collect better data on equity-related demographics across all broadcasting. Where Canadian demographics are a result of racist immigration and colonial policies, Lee added that these realities should not be a benchmark to limit BIPOC representation in Canadian broadcasting.

After the presentations, CMAC facilitated a concluding open forum session where audience members and presenters gathered to reflect on the strategies put forward throughout the day and the questions presented in the event's Facilitation Guide. The open forum session proposed the following considerations for an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting:

- There must be equity data collection mandated for all broadcasters to ensure active investment in anti-racism at every level of media institutions.
- Tokenism is a prominent issue in the broadcasting sector which relies on appropriating the labour and resources of Indigenous, Black and racialized media workers. This must stop.
- Gatekeeping hinders many racialized media workers from participating and accessing work and resources. Board members, producers, scripters, writers and showrunners that have a colonial privilege are usually the gatekeepers.
- The funding system is a problem. Many racialized creators need support for understanding the funding mechanism in the Canadian system. The brilliance of the many talents is repressed by the lack of a clear pathway to success. Racialized creators have many barriers to overcome when writing grant applications, unlike white creators.
- News broadcasting organizations need to have more representation. For example, there is no Middle East specialist in most news media.

²⁷ <https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bill/44-1/c-11>

- Where is the accountability for government initiatives on equity, diversity, and inclusion? For example, the law says broadcasters are supposed to have equitable employment in the broadcasting sector. Over 36 years and the broadcasting sector has not delivered, broadcasters should be fined by the CRTC for breaking the law.
- Challenging white supremacy and racism is uncomfortable, but we must change the entire oppressive system. Justice will not be achieved without sacrifice. For broadcasters, this will be an uncomfortable process and institutions must lean into discomfort.

The third meeting on building an anti-racism strategy for Canadian broadcasting will take place in Halifax on June 11, 2022.

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