

MAMOWI

Meaning “Together” in Atikamekw

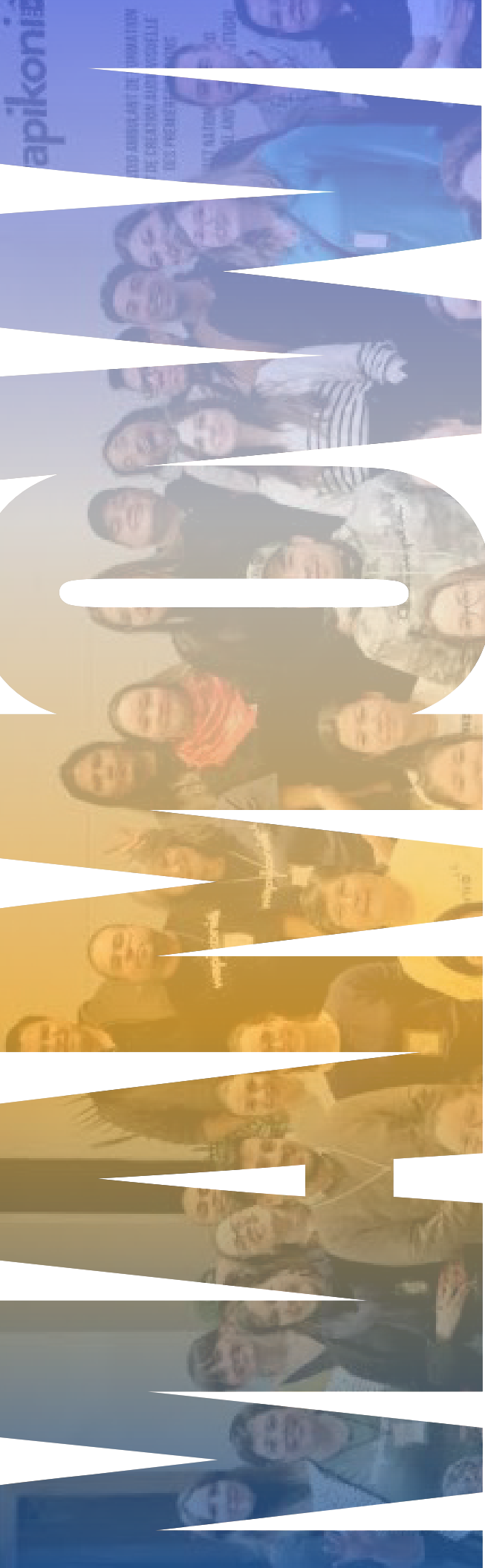
Developing the emerging Indigenous audiovisual workforce



CONSULTATION REPORT

Consultations with the audiovisual industry's next generation of Indigenous workers and established professionals





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THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF INDIGENOUS SCREEN
OFFICE AND CANADA MEDIA FUND.**



**INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE
BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE**



**CANADA
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DU CANADA**

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PREAMBLE

This report presents the results of a consultation process carried out by Wapikoni Mobile in 2022 with filmmakers, professionals in the audiovisual industry and people from the emerging workforce in this field. We would like to thank all the stakeholders who contributed in any way to the project and, more particularly, all those who agreed to share their vision of conducive learning environments and the development of the audiovisual industry. We hope we have faithfully translated their message here.

Mikwec to the Indigenous Screen Office and the Canada Media Fund (CMF) for their financial support, which demonstrates their support for developing the Indigenous workforce in the audiovisual industry.

Thank you to our training collaborators, Agence On est là, Neegan Trudel, Hot Docs, La Boîte Rouge VIF and the new Maison de Radio-Canada, who have enabled us to offer inspiring professional development experiences.

Wliwni to our collaborators, Julie O'Bomsawin of Kassiwî Media, as well as Camille Bertin and Laurentia Perrin of La Piscine, who supported us in the consultation process by sharing their expertise.

And finally, Nia:wen to the organizations that attended the Mamowî: Indigenous Audiovisual Industry Gathering.

Andicha Média

Aboriginal Peoples Television
Network (APTN)

Indigenous Screen Office

Canada Council for the Arts

Conseil des arts et
des lettres du Québec

Canada Media Fund

Kassiwî Média

La Boîte Rouge VIF

National Film Board (NFB)

Nish Média

SODEC



01

INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

About Wapikoni Mobile

Wapikoni Mobile is a non-profit, Indigenous organization whose mission is to promote the expression of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people through film and music creation and the dissemination of these works. The organization showcases the works of its artist collective's members across Canada and around the world, promoting both the transmission of knowledge and awareness of the realities of First Peoples. With its "learning by creating" methodology and mentoring activities, the organization provides its artist collective a culturally safe environment and contributes to the members' personal, professional and creative development, with a focus on respecting Indigenous narrative sovereignty.

Internationally recognized for its innovative approach, Wapikoni places as much importance on the path taken by members of its artist collective as the destination they reach. Wapikoni believes that learning that emerges from a creative process is at the heart of significant social transformation, including personal growth, community development, citizen involvement and the emergence of a unique artistic and cultural signature. It is also an invaluable contribution to Indigenous audiovisual production and visual heritage. Our mission is also to offer a space for personal, artistic and professional development, a meeting point where talents can be inspired, recognized and fulfilled.



The Mamowi pilot project

With the support of the Indigenous Screen Office and the Canada Media Fund, Wapikoni Mobile started the Mamowi ("Together" in Atikamekw) pilot project, to support those aspiring to become audiovisual professionals, facilitate their learning and help them enter the job market. The project was divided into four main actions:

01

Training sessions and workshops

- Create a stand-out résumé and portfolio, with Agence On est là
- Stages of film production and job positions in the animation industry, with producer and director Neegan Trudel
- Pitching your story with Elizabeth Radshaw of Hot Docs
- Masterclass on collaborative approaches in creation, with Carl Morasse from Boîte Rouge VIF



Masterclass on collaborative approaches in creation

02

Meetings between the emerging workforce and industry professionals

- Mamowi: Indigenous Audiovisual Industry Gathering.
- Visit of the new Maison de Radio-Canada: Guided tour of the studios and meeting with technicians in the control rooms.
- Meeting with members of the CBC North Cree unit and discussions on the need to decolonize institutions.
- Meeting with teams from Espaces Autochtones and Radio-Canada Info, and discussion of job opportunities.



Meetings with industry professionals



03

Creation of a career development toolkit

Designed for the members of its collective, Wapikoni has created a toolbox containing guides, references, documentation etc. It will soon be accessible to emerging Indigenous filmmakers and will be updated and improved on an ongoing basis.

04

Consultation: Documenting the needs and challenges of the Indigenous workforce and proposing solutions

Two consultations were held to expand the offering of professional development services. The first was with emerging Indigenous artists and craftspeople, and the second with both the new generation and established professionals in the field. This report presents the results of these consultations.



02

MAMOWI PILOT-PROJECT CONSULTATIONS



Why do a consultation?

Since 2004, the organization has been on the road with its mobile studios, providing training, intervention and audiovisual and musical creation opportunities. These mobile studios travel to meet Indigenous communities of Quebec and Canada.

From its founding to 2022:

- More than 6,000 participants from 28 nations and 89 communities around the world have expressed themselves through a creative project
- More than 2,000 audiovisual works have been produced
- More than 220 awards and mentions have gone to members of its artist collective
- Thousands of short films have been screened

Over time, many of the young people who participated in Wapikoni activities have developed a deep passion for audiovisual creation. Given the desire of many of them to pursue a career in the field, Wapikoni offers a range of professional development activities to support their creative impulse, their development as well as their integration into the job market. The audiovisual industry is also experiencing a labour shortage, and Indigenous productions in particular are looking for trained workers, so there is a need to teach the emerging workforce specific professional skills.

In fact, in November 2022, the audiovisual workers' union AQTIS 514 IATSE published a major study on workforce and qualification needs in this industry, conducted by the consulting firm Aviseo with the support of AQTIS, an association representing freelance audiovisual professionals in Quebec. The study highlighted the desperate need for labour in this economic sector.

More broadly, at the Canadian level, the CMF's "Pause and Rethink"¹ report highlighted several key facts about the current state of Indigenous representation issues, including forms of "micro-aggression" in the industry and the need to "provide necessary context and education internationally."² The issues in the world of Indigenous media content seemed to extend to other audiovisual content formats. This report showed that Indigenous people often face a number of risks when entering the industry and a need for recognition by the industry. In 2019, the guide³ developed by imagineNATIVE found an underrepresentation of Indigenous personalities in the film industry, in funding agencies, broadcast networks, distribution companies, festivals and other film organizations. The guide pointed to "a lack of cultural understanding of Indigenous content, process and stories as a barrier to working within the larger industry to develop and produce content."⁴

In addition, a 2021 report by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)⁵ on early engagement noted, among other things, the resilience of Indigenous production, the need for a shift in representation—with and by Indigenous people working in the sector—and the responsibility of funders to facilitate this shift. The initiatives launched in recent years are proof of this unprecedented political will. Our organization has witnessed it. However, there are still problems.

This is the context in which Wapikoni developed and implemented its pilot project, aimed at understanding the specific issues of the Indigenous workforce better, adapting its service offer accordingly, and documenting and sharing the results.

1. Canada Media Fund, "Pause and Rethink, annual trends report in the audiovisual industry", 2021

2. Fonds des médias du Canada, Canada Media Fund, "Pause and Rethink, annual trends report in the audiovisual industry", 2021, p. 73

3. Nickerson, Marcia for ImagineNATIVE, "ON-SCREEN PROTOCOLS & PATHWAYS: A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities, Cultures, Concepts and Stories", 2019

4. Nickerson, Marcia for ImagineNATIVE, "ON-SCREEN PROTOCOLS & PATHWAYS: A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities, Cultures, Concepts and Stories", 2019, p. 49

5. Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, "What You Said" Report: CRTC Early Engagement Sessions Phase One of the Co-development of a new Indigenous Broadcasting Policy, 2021

INFORMATION ON THE TWO CONSULTATIONS



Online consultations

The objective of the consultation was to provide a space to discuss and document the challenges encountered during internships, professional contracts, training and custom services, and also to share suggestions on what would facilitate learning and integration into the job market. Eighteen people attended (nine Francophones and nine Anglophones) from Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario, from the Anishinaabe, Atikamekw, Cree, Dene, Innu, Metis, Mi'kmaq, Odawa and Pottawatomi nations.

Mamowi: Indigenous Audiovisual Industry Gathering

The event brought together 12 audiovisual industry professionals, 26 filmmakers and emerging talent from Quebec, Alberta and Ontario. Various nations were represented (Anishinaabe, Atikamekw, Cree, Innu, Metis, Mi'kmaq, Ojibway, Stoney Nakoda and Waban-Aki). The industry professionals represented the following groups:

- Funders and public institutions: Indigenous Screen Office, Canada Media Fund, Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, National Film Board of Canada and SODEC;
- Indigenous production companies and organizations: Andicha Media, APTN, La Boîte Rouge VIF, Kassiwi Média and Nish Media.

The event's objectives were to:

- Develop a shared understanding of the typical paths of emerging Indigenous filmmakers and the obstacles they face;
- create a space for discussion between emerging Indigenous filmmakers and technicians and professionals in the field to
 - express the problems facing the incoming generation,
 - discuss the challenges of the Indigenous audiovisual industry, and
 - reflect together on possible actions and solutions;
- inspire each other and design actions to be implemented to foster professional development among emerging filmmakers and workers and to support their integration into the audiovisual community; and
- identify and prioritize levers.

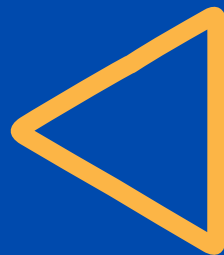
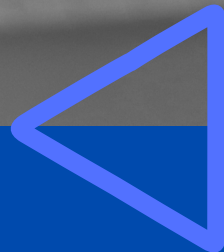
Led by three facilitators using the LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® method, the discussions led to the emergence of collective intelligence. Each group was asked to identify and present two priority levers. A vote was held to prioritize three of the twelve proposed levers.





03

CONSULTATION TOPICS



The typical journey of an emerging Indigenous filmmaker

Here are the main elements gathered during the discussion:

- The typical journey of an Indigenous filmmaker is dotted with successes and obstacles.
- The journey is not linear and there are different paths to acquiring skills and developing your network of contacts.
- Wapikoni, the school program, training sessions, networking and outreach at festivals are all very useful experiences.
- The most difficult part of the journey is going professional, because various barriers limit the possibilities of acquiring experience, financing and resources to live from one's art.
- It is easier to carry out a project with support from the community, allies and facilitators, who are involved at all levels (human, material, financial, etc.) and who open doors and put you in contact with production companies.
- Sharing your success with others, with a feeling of community, inspires others to follow the same path.

The main barriers and possible solutions

These are the challenges that were identified during the consultations. We have grouped them according to the main barriers that the emerging workforce face, i.e., accessibility barriers to professional development and to personal development, and cultural barriers.

The main barriers

Accessibility barriers to professional development

- Difficulty accessing certain training courses
- Lack of adaptability and flexibility in learning formats for emerging Indigenous filmmakers and workers
- Need for mentoring and coaching at all stages of a project
- Difficulty accessing financial resources and instability of income opportunities (fear of not having enough contracts)
- Lack of access to material and support resources
- High cost of equipment and infrastructure
- Lack of knowledge about organizations, industry institutions and their programs
- Lack of knowledge about the different roles and responsibilities, the workings of the trades and the different steps involved in creating a film

Barriers to individual/personal development

- Busy schedule due to family and work responsibilities
- Lack of confidence and self-esteem causing shyness, embarrassment to ask for help and fear of failure
- Limited network of contacts
- Lack of appreciation of artists and craftspeople and their work

Cultural barriers

- Excessive demand on the Indigenous workforce due to lack of succession
- Industry requirements not adapted to the realities of filmmakers
- Difference in the pace of the industry versus that of the communities
- Lack of adaptability of programs and projects to different nations and multidisciplinary artists
- Collaboration difficulties between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people
- Language barriers
- Few opportunities for French-speaking Indigenous people
- Respect for the artist's vision
- Prejudice against Indigenous filmmakers and workers

Possible solutions

Happily, there were more solutions identified by the participants than challenges. These suggestions were grouped into three categories: developing training opportunities and learning spaces, developing partnerships and networking activities, and developing greater cultural sensitivity in the industry.

Developing training opportunities and providing learning spaces

Diversified training formulas	Providing better support for training	Resources and tools
Masterclasses or training sessions on various themes	Offer hybrid training: online, in communities and in urban centres	Access to tools, training and activities to better understand the audiovisual ecosystem and environment. e.g.: tools for an artist's journey, artist rights, the roles and responsibilities of industry organizations and professionals, the steps in making a film, etc.
Training with a focus on practical aspects	Offer paid internships or jobs on film sets	
Mentorship and coaching programs for all stages of a project	Equip training sites in the communities	
Workshops and courses credited by educational institutions	Create an Indigenous artists' film centre	Support emerging filmmakers in applying for grants
Internships or postproduction jobs from the community	Foster the development of a lasting and trusting relationship with mentors	Facilitate access to film schools
Group projects	Offer the opportunity to work remotely and with flexible hours	Provide training to inform people about organizations and institutions: roles, programs and opportunities offered (production companies, funders, schools and educational institutions)
	Maximize opportunities for mentoring and resources in English in the activities offered by Wapikoni	Get better access to outreach workers and interpreters
	Increase initiatives such as Wapikoni and Indigenous production companies in communities and other parts of Canada	Create more employment opportunities in the audiovisual sector for French-speaking Indigenous people
	Adequately compensate filmmakers in apprenticeship or creation process: salary, bursaries, participations, per diem, and salary and travel subsidies	Revise program parameters to allow for more flexibility in timeframes
		Create a directory of Indigenous artists and technicians



Developing networking activities and partnerships

Offer pitch and matchmaking events

Offer Indigenous Talent Labs across Canada

Bring together emerging filmmakers

Develop partnerships with service organizations to reduce costs (air transportation or equipment)

Gain access to free or affordable (student rate) equipment and software in communities for extended periods of time

Create links between institutions and communities to publicize programs and to encourage members to submit projects and applications when opportunities arise

Provide more opportunities for emerging filmmakers to travel across Canada and internationally to present their films at festivals

Organize an Indigenous film festival / Indigenous film gala with an awards ceremony where it is possible to develop a network

Developing cultural awareness to build bridges

Educate stakeholders on the needs of emerging filmmakers and workers

Leverage diversity among decision-makers

Put in place elements to foster trusting relationships

Recognize experience and cross-disciplinary skills acquired outside the audiovisual industry

Promote awareness in the industry to reduce the use of "token Indians"

Raise awareness in the industry of the importance of respecting Indigenous narratives and creative sovereignty

Trust emerging filmmakers and workers to participate in projects and experiment

Implement cultural safety when recruiting Indigenous filmmakers and workers

Build on initiatives such as Wapikoni that promote the development of self-confidence and self-esteem through better self-awareness

Recognize the talent of emerging filmmakers and workers

The three main levers for professional development

Selected by vote, the three main levers for professional development, out of the twelve previously identified by the participants, are the following:

Artist remuneration

Outside of the training process, ensure that artists are fairly compensated when they contribute to a production, at every stage.

Organizing networking activities

In order to build bridges and create connections with stakeholders, activities must be organized to better understand the roles and responsibilities of institutions and industry professionals.

Developing partnerships

Build partnerships with production companies, Indigenous organizations and communities to permanently foster the development of artists across Canada, and with service organizations to reduce the cost of materials and transportation.



Suggestions specifically for Wapikoni Mobile

- Extend stopover times to make longer films
- Provide access to audio/video equipment outside of stopovers
- Distribute the works created in festivals close to the communities
- Offer professional training in various trades and connect the next generation with the film world so that they gain professional skills and experience
- Offer various types of creative spaces to develop links and mutual knowledge among participants
- Create a committee to ensure the follow-up and recurrence of activities such as Mamowi.

04

CONCLUSION



Wapikoni developed the Mamowi pilot project to better understand the needs of emerging filmmakers and technicians, to assist them in their career development and to contribute to the professional development of the Indigenous audiovisual workforce. While promoting the “learning by doing” approach and ensuring cultural security, this initiative takes the first step toward developing a new, better-adapted service offer that builds on what already exists in the community.

While taking into account the wishes expressed and the levers identified during the two consultation phases, Wapikoni will continue its reflection before specifying its position in the ecosystem. This project, taking place as Wapikoni begins a strategic and digital planning exercise, has provided an opportunity to define Wapikoni’s priority actions and continue to develop its links with the community. We also note that some of the levers identified already exist but are not well known. These should be better publicized. Collectively, we must find ways to communicate and share the existing and available resources and opportunities. We need to work together to build bridges between people, but also between people and resources.

Our objective in these consultations was also to convey the challenges and desires of emerging filmmakers and workers to the industry’s major players, so that everyone can contribute to successfully integrating and including the next generation in the audiovisual sector.

Since the beginning of the project, we have created new collaborations with industry representatives, notably with Netflix, which supported a special group on screenwriting during the winter of 2023. This training session offered virtual individual coaching and mentoring to six emerging screenwriters. The masterclasses were given by director Sonia Bonspille Boileau. Additional training for screenwriters is coming up, as are work sessions to learn to prepare presentations for producers. In addition, in fall 2023, a writing incubator for emerging filmmakers will be offered to develop skills in collective project development, with support from the Canada Media Fund.

We are also working with various partners to enhance the career development toolbox. Finally, to ensure that industry players understand the key concepts of narrative sovereignty and cultural security, the Wapikoni team is currently developing and adapting training content to address these issues. This training will be offered soon.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 **List of representatives** **by organization**

Andicha Media

Marie-Claude Fournier, Line Producer;

APTN

Sylvain Lévesque, Executive in Charge of French Language Content
and Documentary Series / Management;

Indigenous Screen Office

Isabelle Ruiz, Program Manager - Sector Development, and
Jean-François D. O'Bomsawin, Director of Marketing and Communications;

Canada Council for the Arts

Odile Joannette, Director of the Creating, Knowing
and Sharing Program, Arts Granting ;

Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec

Sara Thibault, Program Officer;

Canada Media Fund

Diego Briceño, Senior Manager of Diverse Community Content;

Kassiwî Média

Julie O'Bomsawin, Co-founder, President and Producer;

La Boîte Rouge VIF

Carl Morasse, Line Producer;

National Film Board (NFB)

Mélanie Brière, Producer, Quebec, Canadian Francophonie
and Acadian Documentary Studio;

Nish Média

Jason Brennan, Writer, Director and Producer;

SODEC

Alix Wagner-Bernier, Content analyst.

APPENDIX 2

Information on the training sessions, workshops and consultations that were part of Mamowi.

TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS :

- 1- Create a stand-out résumé and portfolio: offered online
 - a. French workshop: September 20, 2022
 - b. English workshop: September 22, 2022
- 2- Stages of film production and job positions in the animation industry: offered online on October 17, 2022, with simultaneous translation.
- 3- Pitching your story: offered in person, on November 24, 2022, with simultaneous translation.
- 4- Masterclass on collaborative approaches in creation with producer Carl Morasse of La Boîte Rouge VIF: offered in person on November 25, 2022, with simultaneous translation.

MEETINGS BETWEEN THE EMERGING WORKFORCE AND INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS.

- 1- Visit of the new Maison de Radio-Canada : November 24, 2022.
- 2- Mamowi: Indigenous Audiovisual Industry Gathering: November 25, 2022.

CONSULTATIONS TO DOCUMENT THE NEEDS AND CHALLENGES OF UP-AND-COMING INDIGENOUS AUDIOVISUAL WORKERS.

1- Online consultations :

In June 2022, the consultation involved 18 people (nine Francophones and nine Anglophones) living in Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario. The following nations were represented: Anishinaabe, Atikamekw, Cree, Dene, Innu, Metis, Mi'kmaq, Odawa and Pottawatomi. Divided into five groups, the individuals consulted expressed their challenges and desires in the context of internships, professional mandates, training and custom services, and discussed tools that would facilitate their learning and their integration into the job market in this sector of activity.

2- Consultation at the Mamowi event:

On November 25, 2022, Wapikoni organized the Mamowi event in Montréal, with 26 emerging filmmakers from Quebec, Alberta and Ontario and 12 professionals from the audiovisual industry. Filmmakers and emerging workers representing various nations (Anishinaabe, Atikamekw, Cree, Innu, Metis, Mi'kmaq, Ojibway, Stoney Nakoda and Waban-Aki) attended. Of the 26 emerging filmmakers who participated in Mamowi, six had also attended the online consultation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 3

Proposed contents of the toolbox

Guides and tutorials (text, illustrations, audio and videos)

- Tools addressing all stages of a production from A to Z and the production process
- How to find inspiration
- How to make a presentation document, with an example
- Which organizations should you meet (producers, broadcasters, etc.)?
- How to submit a project to a production company
- How to write a screenplay or a documentary proposal
- How to apply for grants, write a film synopsis, make a budget
- Camera angles
- Postproduction software
- Sound recording methods
- Write a résumé
- Know your rights

Resources:

- List of funders and grant programs
- List of distributors/broadcasters
- List of Indigenous film crews / production companies / freelancers
- Directory with a list of Indigenous professionals, artists and technicians
- Job bank
- Bank of images and sounds to use for free in films

Templates:

- Screenplay and documentary proposal
- Examples of different projects and examples of grant applications
- Budget
- Checklist
- Invoice template

APPENDIX 4

Training proposals

- Production stages, components and process;
- Film industry professions (through observation, work on film sets, training and videos);
- How the ecosystem works;
- Introduction to the cinematographic universe of other Indigenous filmmakers;
- Creating a résumé and portfolio;
- Career management for the self-employed: job search, résumé, taxes, time management, etc. ;
- Grant writing and process;
- Writing workshop: finding inspiration, writing a script, structuring it, etc.;
- Pitch workshop;
- Technical training :
 - Equipment and software used in the industry and how to handle them;
 - Exploration of new cameras and technologies such as XR;
 - Lighting;
 - Drone use;
 - Sound recording;
 - Editing and postproduction software, in communities.
- Legal (copyright, broadcasting licenses, sound and music licenses, contracts, etc.);
- Safety: workplace safety, gun safety, stunts, etc.;
- Distribution;
- Introspection and coaching for personal/artistic development.

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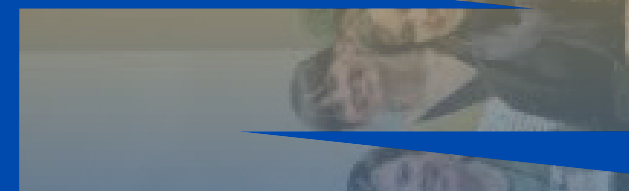

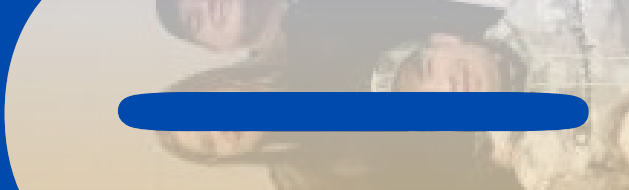
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apikonias

ESTO AGRUAMENTO DE FUNDACIONES
DE CREATIVIDAD ARTISTICA POSSIVELLE
TODOS PRESENTANDO

ANTHONY
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