

About the Black Screen Office (BSO)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



What is the mission of the BSO?

The Black Screen Office helps build a screen industry free of anti-Black racism by working with industry decision-makers to change practices and build systems for accountability, directly catalyzing the production of Black-led content and supporting the career advancement of Black professionals.

Who founded the BSO, and when was it established?

The Black Screen Office (BSO) was founded in 2020 by some of Canada's most prominent Black film and television creators. They recognized an opportunity to catalyze transformation within Canada's screen industries amidst a widespread racial reckoning. With financial support from Telefilm Canada, these founders established BSO to address and dismantle systemic anti-Black racism in Canadian film, television, and digital media. Since its inception, BSO has led groundbreaking initiatives and collaborations to improve representation and create a more inclusive and equitable industry for Black creators and communities.

What are the core values of the BSO?

Visionary: We have a healthy disregard for the impossible, refuse to accept the status quo, and believe there are no limits to what Black Canadians can accomplish in the screen industries.

Unapologetically Black, Empowering, Transparent.

How does the BSO support Black creatives in the Canadian screen industries?

The BSO supports Black filmmakers in Canada through targeted programs and initiatives designed to dismantle systemic barriers, improve representation, and create sustainable opportunities in the screen industries. Key programs include:

Career Accelerators:

BSO Black Creators Festival Initiative: Offers a platform for talented Black Canadian content creators to showcase their work at international film and TV festivals and markets. This includes accreditation, travel and accommodation support, pre-festival guidance to enhance their networking and business prospects, access to targeted events and opportunities to connect with buyers, producers, distributors, and financiers.

BSO-CMPA Black Producers Accelerator Program: This initiative pairs aspiring producers with CMPA member companies for hands-on experience in various production areas. The program seeks to pave the way for the next generation of Black producers in Canada through this combination of financial support, mentorship, and education.

BSO-DGC Black Women's Accelerator Program: Offers a pre-engagement on-set apprenticeship, professional development workshops, and ongoing support to help them secure episodic TV series opportunities. The BSO covers the program's costs, including a weekly stipend for the accelerator director's travel and accommodation expenses, where applicable.

BSO Mid-Career Accelerator: Helps mid-career Black professionals advance their careers with customized support. This 6-9 month program focuses on key corporate areas such as human resources, development, acquisitions, finance, and more. It involves working with the organization to develop the skills of these professionals through mentorship, coaching, and specialized training, ultimately enabling them to be promoted to influential decision-making roles.

BSO Office Hours Mentorship Program: A one-on-one mentorship program for Black Canadians in the screen industries seeking to enter or advance their careers with film, television, and digital media. The program connects mentees with experienced mentors from diverse roles within the industry. Mentors dedicate an initial hour to meet with mentees and an optional hour for follow-up or further guidance. The program's goal is simply to provide mentees with quick access to information, networking, and practical advice.

How can I apply for BSO programs or initiatives?

You can visit our [website](#) and apply for any available initiatives and programming. To stay on top of opportunities, you can subscribe to our newsletter and be a part of our online community on [Facebook](#).

Does the BSO provide funding?

Yes, most of the BSO programs and initiatives offer financial support. Specific funds include:

Rogers-BSO Script Development Fund: Support creators through the writing process, from outline to script, to create pitch-ready projects for networks, studios, cable, and streaming platforms.

Black Screen Office Fund: Will provide financial support to fund Black-led content and nurture the growth of skilled Black talent. Launch date to be announced soon.

How do I become a member of the BSO community?

Rather than membership, BSO has an Online Community. You can subscribe to our newsletter and be a part of our [Online Community](#) or become a part of our [Facebook](#) Group.

This online space is designed to connect and empower Black media professionals, providing a hub for sharing experiences, insights, and opportunities.

Does the BSO do research? What resources does BSO offer for organizations looking to improve their DEI practices?

The BSO has a Research and Action Centre that supports equity and anti-racism efforts in Canada's screen industries. It is a go-to resource that provides practical tools based on solid research to help you make meaningful changes.

The BSO has produced ground-breaking research projects designed to accelerate system change towards equity, inclusion, and authentic content creation across Canada's screen industries. They include:

- Being Seen: Directives for Creating Authentic and Inclusive Content
- Being Counted: Race-based Audience Survey
- Being Heard: Black Canadians Working Within the Screen Industries

Is there a fee to join the BSO community or participate in its programs?

There is no fee to join the BSO community or participate in its programs.

Is the BSO active in the community?

BSO participates in many panels throughout the year at various markets, festivals and other industry events. Subscribe to our website to stay up to date.

What upcoming events is BSO hosting or participating in?

National Tour, Fall 2024: The tour is a series of roundtables that coincide with the 2024 fall festivals.

- Halifax, Nova Scotia - September 17, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- Calgary, Alberta - September 23, 10:00 - 12:00 pm
- Vancouver, British Columbia - September 25, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- Edmonton, Alberta - September 27, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- Winnipeg, Manitoba - October 9, 3:00 - 5:00 pm
- St. John's, Newfoundland, October 23, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

BSO Symposium: A key must-attend event on April 1, 2025, dedicated to bringing authentic Black stories to life. It gathers industry leaders, creatives, and decision-makers to collaborate, share ideas, and explore global opportunities. The day includes keynote interviews, guest presentations, roundtable discussions, and networking, all aimed at driving actionable change in the screen industry.

Are BSO events open to the public, or must I register beforehand?

Check the website and subscribe to the newsletter. Generally, registration is required.

How can I contact the Black Screen Office?

Dennisha Rollins - Assistant, info@bso-ben.ca

Who can I reach out to for more information about a specific program?

Hoda Ali - Programming Manager, programming@bso-ben.ca

How can I request an interview or speak with a representative of the BSO?

Contact Dennisha Rollins - Assistant, assistant@bso-ben.ca.

Where can I find press releases or news about the BSO?

Check out [New and Views](#) on the BSO website or on our [Online Community](#) page.

How do I get permission to use BSO's logo or content?

Contact Dennisha Rollins - Assistant, info@bso-ben.ca

Are there job openings at the BSO?

There are no current job openings but check back periodically.

How can I volunteer with the BSO?

Volunteer opportunities are often needed for events and programming support.
Contact: Hoda Ali - Programming Manager, programming@bso-ben.ca

Does BSO offer internship opportunities?

From time to time: Contact Dennisha Rollins - Assistant, info@bso-ben.ca