



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### OVERVIEW

To complement efforts WIFTV's towards racial and gender equity, Liberation Collective conducted a focus group session on Monday, November 21, 2022 to gather input and feedback from QTBIPOC members of the community. Below, you will find QTBIPOC participants painting a picture of the key challenges and opportunities for WIFTV.

### INCLUSION AND BELONGING

Participants described inclusion and belonging as feeling seen, valued, and empowered. Consistently, participants shared feeling dissatisfied with their experiences in film and television. They expressed the need to provide people with real opportunities and chances. Participants reported a number of negative experiences in which they felt that their presence often was unaccounted for. "Make-up" was often used as a metaphor to describe their experiences with performative inclusion as something that does not go beyond the surface. All participants reported instances of being disempowered and not being given a real invitation to speak.

### ACCESS

The answers provided here indicated a number of barriers that signal exclusion. Participants reported the need to move away from performativity into genuine inclusion by having gender-affirming clothing and gear (i.e binders) available on set. Having undergarments available for cis-women on set communicates to trans and gender-nonconforming folks that they do not belong in those spaces. Throughout the focus group, participants elaborated on different forms of labour they provide to eliminate gaps in access as well as understanding around their identity. Some participants noted feeling erasure and having to overperform to be seen.

### BARRIERS IN EMPLOYMENT

Most participants offered fairly negative experiences in employment with notable levels of personal stress, frustration, and worry. In light of systemic barriers, participants shared their experiences with being underpaid, not being taken into consideration for promotions and/or being easily demoted, fear of disclosure out of fear of losing their employment, and obstacles in the way of taking time off for gender-affirming care and surgery.



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Participants also shared a lack of access to opportunities and expressed requests for additional ways to counteract these barriers by hiring those with less experience and those whose first language might not be English, support with application forms and submission, pitching, and networking outside of QTBIPOC spaces.

## INTERSECTIONALITY

Participants were asked about their positive and negative experiences with inclusion and belonging. Participants reported the need to get to know people and represent them accurately avoiding generalizations and general typecasts i.e. *“Their name is Ajax and they are 2SLGBTQIA+.”* These typecast often make simplistic assumptions about identity which proves to be a disservice to the QTBIPOC participants working in film and TV. Participants also named the importance of their intersecting identities being seen and respected. One participant shared, *“They might get it right for one but they leave out all the others.”* All participants communicated the urgency for an intersectional lens in industry work (including character work) and have that be made more visible.

## EQUITABLE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

Responses across the board surrounding issues of equity and access to opportunities were at a level of concern, pointing to a general perception of unfairness and inequity. Many participants said that advocacy and outreach to QTBIPOC community members would be critical in feeling more supported and represented in film and television.

## WIFTV + NEXT STEPS

When asked questions about areas of growth and opportunity for WIFTV, participants recommended consultation with equity and inclusion practitioners to amplify the experiences of marginalized identities and provide consistent training. Participants emphasized the importance of telling their own stories and trauma-informed training and education that includes representation data of QTBIPOC folks in film and television. They suggested training and education outside of occasions such as “Black History Month” and “International Women’s Day” to prevent superficial approaches to equity. One participant shared they hope WIFTV can establish 2SLGBTQIA+ as a “priority group” in equity-seeking groups to counteract erasure that in those communities.

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# LIBERATION COLLECTIVE

All participants expressed the need for nonbinary/gender non-conforming folks in conversations around gender equity and leadership. They also suggested a rotating spotlight series that highlights queer and trans folks in a variety of positions (not only leadership) and a space that promotes Q&A, engagement, collaboration, and community.

When brainstorming suggestions for WIFTV's name change, participants expressed a name change that communicates a purpose, as well as a sense of unity and solidarity. They suggested an acronym that is accompanied by an accessible definition that can be found on WIFTV's website. All participants emphasized intersectionality and the importance of board members and executive standing for the values reflected in the name change. Participants highlighted the need to center the experiences of women, trans men, and nonbinary and gender-nonconforming folks.

## CONCLUSION

The responses provided by our participants clearly point to issues of access and inequity where WIFTV can continue to direct resources, care, and attention. While these responses suggest that WIFTV still has a great deal of work to do, we also see many positives and strengths for opportunity here as well.

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