



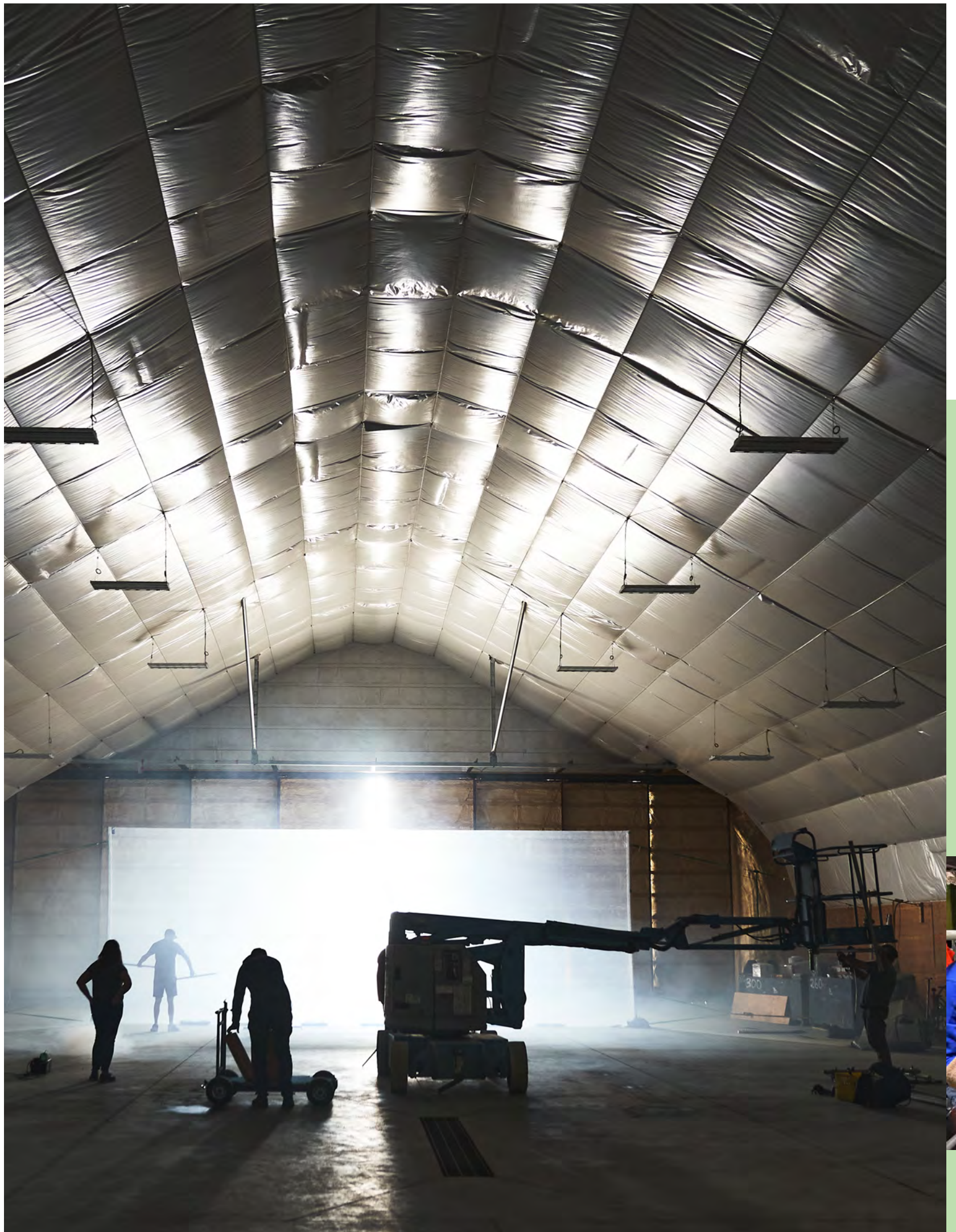
SCREEN PRODUCTION
YUKON ASSOCIATION



SPYA STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025





INTRODUCTION

At the annual board retreat in May 2022, the SPYA Board of Directors focused on creating a new strategic plan for the organization. During the pandemic it was difficult to forecast into the future, so the board created 1-year implementation plans based on the 2018-2021 plan. As of 2022 the new Yukon Media Development funding policies are in place, and Yukon government has commissioned an industry roadmap for the sector, so it was time for the SPYA team to look ahead and chart a course for the next 3 years.

This document establishes a **STRATEGIC VISION** for SPYA for **2022-2025**.

SPYA VISION

Yukoners produce diverse screen-based media content and contribute to a prosperous and sustainable economy. With a strong network of allies and champions, SPYA effectively advocates for the needs of its membership and the sector.



MISSION: SPYA supports, develops and celebrates Yukon's screen media industry

We do this by:

- ▶ Providing training programs that support the sector – both above and below the line – to be production-ready.
- ▶ Implementing impactful advocacy efforts at the territorial and national levels to grow the sector and support the needs of Yukon screen media professionals.
- ▶ Promoting Yukon talent and locations to Outside producers and decision-makers to increase the economic impact of the sector in Yukon.





CURRENT CONTEXT AND HISTORY

In 2018 the SPYA Board gathered for a retreat to get strategic about the organisation's future. Following many years of high turnover in the Executive Director position, the job was vacant and almost all of SPYA's activities were run by a volunteer board. That year the organisation turned its focus to hiring a staff member and creating administrative and financial stability for the organisation, to strengthening the membership and its programming, and to developing an advocacy approach that would see the screen media industry thrive in the Yukon.

Over the past four years, there have been many gains. The organisation has had a part-time staff member and a small office operating out of the NorthLight Innovation Centre. SPYA has continued to run a robust roster of industry training events and popular networking events, and most critically, the board has worked tirelessly on several key advocacy projects.

In 2020 the Covid 19 pandemic hit the industry and the organisation hard. Training became difficult to deliver, issues such as travel and insurance hindered productions, and many SPYA activities ground to a halt. During the pandemic the board continued to work with Yukon government on key initiatives which resulted in, most notably, the announcement of the

new Yukon Media Development funding policies. During this time the Yukon government also released the first-ever economic impact analysis of Yukon's screen media professionals which helps SPYA quantify the economic contributions of the sector.

Despite the pandemic, many members saw new opportunities over the past two years and the sector remains strong and growing. Many of the businesses and filmmakers that have been working hard over the last ten years have matured and are experiencing financial and critical success. The sector is poised – with strong and clear funding guidelines and a pending strategic roadmap from the Yukon government – to take the next leap. As the champion and voice of industry, SPYA itself must grow to keep pace with these developments and stay positioned to support the continued growth of the screen media sector in Yukon.

SPYA remains committed to training the next cohort of writers, producers, directors, creatives, and supporting industries to be ready for mid-sized productions. SPYA remains committed to lifting up and celebrating the work of its members, and to advocating to the government and others so that filmmakers have what they need to thrive.

Our dream for 2025 is that...

- ▶ SPYA is a well-staffed industry association and agency with strong training and networking programs that support and recognize local talent.
- ▶ SPYA maintains a centralised facility or community hub for its gear library, operating offices, filming studio, training and networking events.
- ▶ Yukon screen media professionals see themselves as part of a growing industry and have the proper infrastructure in place to run their businesses and support outside productions.
- ▶ The Yukon is well-marketed nationally and internationally, with two to three mid-sized productions coming to Yukon annually that are serviced and supported by local industry.
- ▶ SPYA hosts an annual industry forum and celebrates its members with a gala and awards ceremony.
- ▶ Permitting for locations and other production processes have been simplified and streamlined across the Yukon and in alignment with First Nation protocols.
- ▶ Community agencies and suppliers that have a role in production understand the sector and its needs and are supported to develop policies and procedures that simplify production while being respectful to communities and First Nations.
- ▶ There is a new cohort of emerging producers and filmmakers that is active within SPYA as volunteers, mentees, board members etc.
- ▶ People know who SPYA is and what we do, and they understand the impact the organization and the sector have in the Yukon.
- ▶ The SPYA board is diverse and represents the sector, Yukon's communities, and people from various backgrounds.
- ▶ An Industry Development Liaison is in place and making progress on key sector development and capacity issues.



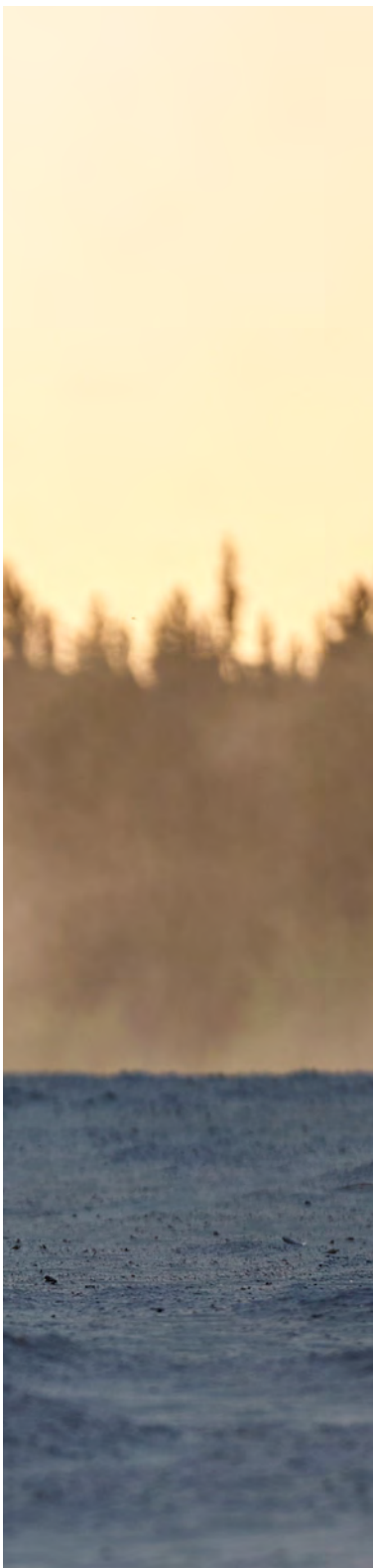
If we **ACHIEVE THESE TARGETS BY 2025**, we know we will have **SUCCEEDED** and are ready for the **NEXT PHASE OF GROWTH**.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

What Have We Achieved So Far?

- ▶ SPYA has been working with Yukon Media Development since 2014 to have the funding policies updated. The new Funding Program Policies were released in early 2022.
- ▶ SPYA recruited two new board members to represent commercial production. We are building relationships with Tourism Yukon to refine and improve local procurement processes.
- ▶ Following the release of the Economic Impact Analysis, SPYA created an industry primer to show the impact and contributions of Yukon's screen production industry.
- ▶ In fall 2021, SPYA worked with Yukon government to contract a consulting firm to develop a Yukon Screen Industry Roadmap. This document is nearly complete and will help guide the work of Yukon government, SPYA and industry for the next 5 years.
- ▶ SPYA has initiated conversations with Yukon Media Development to renew location marketing efforts and improve promotion of the Yukon to Outside productions.
- ▶ SPYA hired a contractor to develop a framework for a Yukon Film Awards. It is ready to be finalised and launched.
- ▶ SPYA's "Gear Library" continues to run well and serve increasing local demand as well as demand from Outside productions.
- ▶ SPYA launched a producer accelerator program this year to support local producers to build their skills, networks and talents.



STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

This Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities Analysis forms the basis of the strategic context. It helps the organisation to see the world it is operating in and what it needs to prioritise over the coming 3 years to achieve its goals.

STRENGTHS

- ▶ Gear library is important, with strong potential revenue, originally created for Outside productions, but small local producers are now using it frequently.
- ▶ We have an amazing part-time Executive Director.
- ▶ Strong, committed, motivated and active board.
- ▶ Strong relationship with Yukon Media Development, regular meetings and productive working relationships.
- ▶ Clear vision and priorities that have been consistent over time.
- ▶ Many advocacy “wins” over the last four years including: Release of Economic Impact Analysis, Release of YMD Funding Policies, Imminent Release of YMD Sector Roadmap.
- ▶ Currently have a funding request at the table with Yukon government.
- ▶ Communications has improved, social media is active and lifting up members. Networking events are popular.
- ▶ We have newly updated bylaws and re-launched membership structure that reflects the growth and professionalism in the sector.
- ▶ Current board represents across the sector (commercial, locations, documentary, fiction and sound).

WEAKNESSES

- ▶ Gear library needs updating, and the program could be expanded to better meet changes in demand.
- ▶ More staff capacity is needed. Current part-time staff has a full-time workload. Gear rental is mostly supported by volunteers. The executive performs organizational work as volunteers. Current workload is not sustainable.
- ▶ Current office is not sustainable. A larger office is needed, preferable with space for the Gear library and a studio.
- ▶ If ED capacity stays part-time need to identify ED tasks, scale back and see what the board can take on.
- ▶ Board capacity is wavering, the team has worked hard over the last years, and many of their businesses are also in a time of growth. Current level of board engagement is not sustainable without additional staff support. Need to transition to a governance board supported by staff.
- ▶ Membership involvement can be low – the same people volunteer all the time.
- ▶ We have a Whitehorse-focused board and membership.
- ▶ Where are the First Nation producers and creatives, how can we make our board more diverse?
- ▶ Communications could improve. Need to do a better job of showcasing the results of our advocacy, demonstrating the value of membership, and continuing to distinguish ourselves from other organizations.



OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ The YMD minister is also the Tourism & Culture minister right now.
- ▶ We could serve as an organisation that provides support to local and Outside productions on their First Nations relationships to ensure they work respectfully in communities and preserve relationships for us all.
- ▶ Connect with the Indigenous storytelling group to support development of First Nations producers.
- ▶ YMD Training Fund could allow us to support 1:1 mentorships for training instead of the current model.
- ▶ Gala celebration we had planned has lots of potential, let's get it back on the table.
- ▶ Finalise the development of a Yukon Film Awards for recognizing and uplifting local talent.
- ▶ Do more communications around Indigenous Screen Office, YFNCT protocol for locations, and working with First Nation communities.
- ▶ Provide a workshop on accessing permissions for commercial locations.
- ▶ Opportunities to partner with Northwestel TV on production-focused experiential training model for stunt live action shooting. Use it as a pilot to test a new training model.
- ▶ Need 5 min reel of advocacy support.
- ▶ Need a new economic impact report, a baseline before new policies fully come into play would be helpful.

THREATS

- ▶ Community partners that have a role to play in production do not know how to support and can become roadblocks to production (example: location permitting processes).
- ▶ Many jurisdictions are competing for productions, how do we stay relevant with incentives?
- ▶ People are still confused about Yukon Film Society and SPYA distinction.
- ▶ Covid affected productions, people are fatigued and this has impacted participation in training events.
- ▶ Challenging to sometimes fill training programs in the current model. Because we are a small jurisdiction it's hard to find large numbers of talent to develop, and we need to explore a training model to support individuals.
- ▶ Global issues affecting prices, staffing, employment and housing trickle down and impact productions.

CORE ISSUES:

- ▶ Sector is growing fast. To properly support the sector, SPYA needs full-time staff and the organization needs a better equipped office and headquarters for its gear library and rental studio. SPYA has hit its capacity with existing resources and funds, and the organization has been overproducing for the last five years on the backs of volunteers. To have a sustainable workload SPYA needs to grow or scale back significantly.



- ▶ Ongoing training is needed to ensure we are ready for the next mid to large-sized production. Current training models are not as effective as they once were. We need to explore new training models that support individuals who are ready to go to the next level with their skills.
- ▶ Communication continues to be a challenge for SPYA, as it is for most non-profit organisations. We must continue to show the impact of our work, the impact of the sector, and the work of our members.



PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

1. Increase SPYA's capacity to support and serve the industry as it scales up.

In order to effectively support a growing sector, SPYA must grow itself. We need a full-time staff member, with part-time administrative and technical staff and a centralized headquarters, to effectively support our work and our members. Without this we must scale back our vision and goals to a sustainable level.

- a) Secure funding for a full-time executive director and support staff as well as an expanded and consolidated SPYA office, gear warehouse and studio to create a community Hub for our membership.
- b) Develop a multiyear communications and marketing strategy to support branding of SPYA, promote the value of SPYA membership and efforts, and enhance advocacy efforts nationally and locally.
- c) Grow the gear library and expand benefits for memberships through discounts at local suppliers (hospitality, catering, car rental etc).

2. Continue to uplift and recognize local talent.

Yukon is full of amazing local talent at every level. SPYA works hard to encourage that talent and support it so that the industry is ready for bigger Outside productions and is capable of bringing local stories to the screen.

- a) Host annual Industry Forum and SPYA Gala and Awards.
- b) Host quarterly networking events.
- c) Promote members on SPYA website and social media.

3. Develop training models that build sustainable local capacity and invest in individuals and groups who are ready to scale.

Training is critical to meeting our potential as a sector. Group training models have limited success in bringing forth the next cohort of writers, directors, producers, and production and post-production specialists. We must work with partners to test and refine new training models that invest in individuals who are ready to take the next step. By doing this we will be poised to take on larger productions and increase our economic impact.

- a) Partner with Northwestel TV to pilot experiential training workshop with the stunt/live action workshop in 2022.
- b) Maintain standard annual training calendar (Producing 101, Set Etiquette, Yukon Film Funding Orientation etc).
- c) Develop industry-driven training by partnering with local productions and support 1:1 mentorship and experiential training opportunities.
- d) Work with Yukon government to ensure the development of a Training Strategy to support the Roadmap.
- e) Host Producer Accelerator Program in 2022.

4. Continue to advocate on behalf of Industry

We have come far in our advocacy work with Yukon government and to help our communities see the benefits of our industry. We must continue to provide a voice for our members to policy makers and others so that we can reduce barriers and help the sector thrive.

- a) Support implementation of Sector Roadmap and continue to provide feedback from sector and membership to Yukon government on implementation.
- b) Work closely with YMD Industry Liaison on key sector issues including streaming production processes across the Yukon.
- c) Support Yukon government to market Yukon as a location to Outside.
- d) Advocate to Bell to increase support to Northwestel TV.
- e) Advocate to CMF and Telefilm to increase funding opportunities for northern productions.

5. Increase First Nations partnerships and diversity of SPYA

Diversity in voices is important at all levels. We must ensure that our sector continues to foster positive relationships with the First Nations communities we live and work within as well as ensure that all of Yukon is represented at the Board level.

- a) Diversify representation on the Board (eg. rural, First Nation, BIPOC) by diversifying membership and building relationships with First Nations culture and storytelling organisations such as YFNCT.
- b) Work with Indigenous and First Nations film organisations to publish best practices for industry for working respectfully with First Nations governments and communities.
- c) Work with Indigenous and First Nations film organisations to increase the number of First Nation producers and creators locally.



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Thank you to SPYA's dedicated board for participating in this intensive planning retreat: Brianne Bremner, Mike Gravitis, Colin McKenzie, Max Fraser, Matthew Lien, Teresa Earle and Kelly Milner. Thank you also to facilitator Sofia Fortin for listening, synthesizing, and developing the strategic plan.



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