

ATTACHMENT B: COMMITTEE AND REGIONAL REPORTS

Committees

Programming

Due in part to WIFT-AT's staffing and governance changes, in addition to ongoing challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the volume of programming WIFT-AT has provided over the last year has remained much smaller than it has in previous years. Despite this reduction in scope, we've received mostly positive feedback from members on the programming we have been able to provide.

WIFT-AT Making Waves Conference

Our most well-attended piece of programming for 2021/2022 was the WIFT-AT Making Waves Conference, which was held from March 25-27th. Planning for this year's conference was done on an extremely condensed schedule, with everything coming together in about 5 weeks. To make planning more manageable and mitigate the potential for Zoom fatigue for attendees, the conference's scale was reduced from 19 sessions in 2021 to 11 sessions in 2022. In an effort to make up for the reduced scale, ticket prices were also reduced.

While total registration was down by 53% compared to 2021, the number of member tickets registered only saw a reduction of just under 20%. We greatly appreciate your continued attendance, even in light of the reduced number of sessions and shorter lead time ahead of the conference. Sales of non-member tickets, however, saw a reduction of nearly 71%, indicating we need to do more to encourage attendance from those outside our usual reach.

Regarding conference format, we've received feedback on the pros and cons of both in-person and virtual events. Many of our attendees miss the opportunities for discussion and connection that the in-person format provides. Despite networking opportunities being one of the main draws for many attendees, 38% of respondents to our post-conference survey said they did not make as many connections as they would've liked to. That being said, our membership base is spread out across Atlantic Canada, meaning not everyone is able to attend in-person events. Moving forward, staff will examine all options for the 2023 conference, including hybrid formats. The goal will be to maximize accessibility while preserving attendee experience and providing opportunities for meaningful connection.

Mentor Match

The 2021/2022 Mentor Match session concluded on March 31st with our final mixer. We had 15 pairings for this most recent iteration of the program, with members from a variety of backgrounds participating. Mentees have generally reported that their pairings have been helpful in honing their desired skills and developing their understanding of their current and desired career paths.

One area in which we hope to improve for the next session, set to begin next month, is the specificity of mentor/mentee matches. Some mentees reported that, while they were paired with the right type of mentor in a sense that their mentor was an established professional in the type of role the mentee is looking for mentorship in, the pairings may not all have been conducive to the specific type of mentorship sought by mentees. For example, an emerging actor may be paired with an established actor who is more than happy providing career guidance and industry insight, but who is not comfortable providing training on specific acting methods or skills. In the 2022/2023 application form, we requested more specific information from prospective mentees in order to pair them with the most appropriate mentor.

We are currently reviewing applicants for the 2022/2023 session and will be looking to pair those applicants shortly. We are in search of established actors, screenwriters, directors, and producers to participate as mentors. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact me at Rachel@wift-at.com.

Upcoming Programming in 2022

In addition to the Mentor Match program, we are looking to launch our Production Mentorship program, also funded by Telefilm. Production mentorships would provide funding to productions to subsidize roles for emerging filmmakers to gain experience working on sets. We are still working out the details, but we hope to launch this program in time to pair applicants with independent productions shooting over the winter. Keep an eye on your inboxes and our social media pages for more information as it becomes available.

Additionally, we are planning an in-person summer mixer later this season for members who would like to attend. This will provide an opportunity to connect in-person for the first time since 2019. We are still narrowing down a date and location, aiming for late July or early August. Further details will be released as they become available.

We are also working with the Directors Guild of Canada to develop a workshop related to sustainability in production. Staff have been attending sustainability webinars and researching green tools to develop an informative, accessible workshop that can be applied to different budgets and levels of experience. This session will likely take place sometime in the early fall. As is the case with other upcoming programming, details will be provided as soon as they are solidified.

If you have any questions about or suggestions for programming, please feel free to contact Rachel at Rachel@WIFT-AT.com.

Membership

Current Membership Updates

Reminder for members to check their WildApricot accounts for the members-only page, postings for promo-codes and industry events will be updated there exclusively for our membership to take advantage of.

Membership Value & Communication Project

The JCP contract of Communication Coordinator, Ellie, has been extended to work on this project. Over the next few weeks she will be researching other WIFT chapters, non-profits, etc. methods for membership value and communication. This information will be used to benchmark against WIFT-AT's current operations to find areas that can be improved upon. Once areas of improvement are identified, scoping of how to address those areas will begin. Following this, conceptualized solutions will be presented to the WIFT-AT membership for their input. Revisions will be made if necessary and then applied to WIFT-AT's membership and communication operations.

Communication Report Add-on

Tidings will now be released seasonally. Time sensitive announcements can be shared through our social media channels. We encourage our members to send any professional news that we can celebrate on our social media.

Development

The Development Committee has a key focus on fundraising to keep WIFT-AT going, but it's more than that—it's about ongoing donor relations.

First of all, a shout-out to our committee this year, which was small but mighty! Nadine was chair and Britt Kerr was a committee member. (Pamela Callow was on the committee earlier in the year.) We also had Tracy, Tara and Koumbie do some reach-outs to potential sponsors. Thank you very much.

Now, we are funded through both private sponsorship and government grants, so a big thank you to all those businesses and government departments that generously contributed to WIFT-AT.

A good chunk of our funding comes from a grant from the NS Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage. We receive other funding through contributions from Telefilm, the CBC, and DGC, all of whom have been long-term supporters of WIFT-AT.

But a lot of our funding comes from private companies in our communities that provide products and services to the film industry or just see value in what we are doing. Their contributions range from \$200 to thousands of dollars—and every dollar is most appreciated. We also have partnership agreements for in-kind services with local organizations.

You can see the names of all our sponsors and partners on our website.

The next couple of years will be interesting. Certainly Covid had an effect on donor funding being available, and it's hard to tell how this will play out over the next little while. Looking forward, we will need more Development Committee members. We normally do the bulk of our fundraising between November and February, and many hands make light work—so if you'd like to lend a hand contacting potential donors so that we can keep our great work going, feel free to get in touch.

Communications

Day-to-day Operations

Kelsey Power became Chair of this committee in 2021 after Co-Chairing this committee with Amy Grace Lai. Thankfully Bonnie Fraser, our former JCP and current part-time staffer has continually assisted in maintaining our social media platforms since JCP Brielle LeBlanc's contract ended in 2021. We have been pleased to have more attention in this regard from committee members as well until JCP Ellie Rideout joined us this March.

We are hopeful in her time with us that a communications strategy will be developed to alleviate pauses in communication and maintain consistency between sitting board members and contract transitions. We are sure that in gaining our excellent new executive director, Joanne Kerrigan that one of our ongoing goals, of having more consistency in communications throughout the year to and for our membership will be achieved.

Social Media

The goals for the social media accounts are to share WIFT-Atlantic events, opportunities and news. We share members' updates as well as national and international industry trends, news and offerings. We continue to use our social media pages to ensure that our community gets fast updates, and based on our ever increasing numbers, it looks like people are continuing to realize the resource that they are. Ellie has been doing an excellent job and we can reach out to her for any specifics.

The Website

The website was the continued Communications Committee's main project throughout 2021-2022. Due to the pandemic and the forced virtual switch that came with it in 2020, we realized the importance of an accessible, functional, and visually appealing website. We were also lucky enough to access funding from the CMF Digital Transformation Fund for this purpose at the time. In March 2021 the website committee, consisting of Bonnie Fraser, Brittany Kerr, Kelsey Power, Amy Grace, Pam Callow, Tara Taylor, Karlea Lewis and Erica Meus-Saunders started working with WIFT--AT's chosen web developers ThompsonStenning to create a new website to access all of the programs that we have to offer. After last year's AGM this work continued with Brittany Kerr, Bonnie Fraser, Kelsey Power, Nadine d'Entremont, Pam Callow, Tara Taylor and Karlea Lewis. This included working with developers to create the website, review their work, write the website's copy and insert content into it. After a soft launch and continuing to place content this past December, much of the website is now finished thanks to Bonnie Fraser, and Ellie Rideout's more recent work. We thank all those who had a hand in working on this important task this year and years previous as for many this will be their first introduction to our great organization. Your efforts are so appreciated.

Tidings

Cat LeBlanc edits the monthly email newsletter "Tidings," sent via email (not contingent on membership to receive, but contingent on membership to be showcased) to its hundreds of subscribers. It is a staple for WIFT-AT, and as the website has been restructured, so too has the newsletter in order to make it more effective and relevant for years to come. If you're interested in participating in Tidings as a writer or editor, please reach out to Ellie at info@wift-at.com. We

would love to see more member participation, as the newsletter aims to showcase our talented and hardworking Atlantic Canadian community.

Thank You

On behalf of the Communications Committee, we just want to thank our members for their ongoing support this year. We cannot wait to continue sharing news with our members in the future. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve our communications efforts, please feel free to email Ellie at info@wift-at.com.

Provinces

New Brunswick

The NB Film Co-op has its online Film Workshop Series in progress now. We've had our members and other creative people across Canada teach and take sessions.

WIFT-AT members Arianna Martinez and Tracey Lavigne have been short-listed for the 2022 Telefilm Talent to Watch Program for their separate projects through the NB Film Co-op (Arianna) and WIFT-AT (Tracey).

The 2022 Silver Wave Film Festival will happen mostly in person with some online elements this year. It runs November 3-10. Cat LeBlanc designed and built the new website for the festival with her amazing summer student: <https://www.swfilmfest.com>

The NB Film Co-op vintage website had a makeover this year! Cat LeBlanc designed and built the new website. You can view it at: <https://www.nbfilmcoop.com>.

The Jane LeBlanc Legacy Fund that Cat LeBlanc and her mom began in February 2021 has grown in leaps and bounds. The fund has 13 annual awards it gives out. In addition, there are 60 sponsors, 35 mentors, and a large stable of peer jury members. The most significant cash awards are \$2000.

Two long-term endowment funds have now been placed with the fund. The fund thanks WIFT-AT for its generous annual support for the JL Creative Scholarship. This award is open to all emerging Atlantic resident writer/directors.

Please google Jane LeBlanc Legacy Fund and email Cat LeBlanc at: catmaryleblanc@gmail.com if you have any questions. <https://www.janeleblanclegacyfund.com>

If any WIFT-AT members wish to be a sponsor, mentor, jury member, or all three, Cat would love to hear from you.

Prince Edward Island

Louise Lalonde has been with WIFT-AT since Day 1 and is completing her final term on the board. She is looking forward to helping recruit new members from PEI. Many people are too busy to take on a board role, but that's good news for the province—it means everyone is busy!

A new development for PEI is a screenwriter's conference/market that is being organized. Other events include the Writer's Edge retreat for women in October. See the PEI Screenwriter's Bootcamp website for more information.