

[Amy] Hello everyone and welcome to this very exciting information webinar. Thank you so much for your patience while we were working through some technical difficulties.

My name is Amy Reitsma and I am a Program Manager with the National Screen Institute, and I am the Program Manager for the Disabled Producers Lab, the first program of its kind in North America. I am based in Mi'kma'ki, what is now known as Nova Scotia, the traditional and unceded land of the Mi'kmaq people, and my pronouns are she and her. I am a white woman with blue eyes and blonde hair and I'm sitting in a home office with a blurred background and I may have small children interrupting me, so be warned. I will be hosting this event. And just to make sure everyone can access this, let's go through the webinar access notes. So we have live captions are available for this webinar.

To turn them on, please click the Closed Captions button at the bottom of your Zoom screen to show the subtitles. You can also change the size of captions in your settings. We will be spotlighting ASL interpreters throughout this event. We have the lovely Rogue right now. If you need assistance from the interpreters, please send a chat message to hosts and panelists. If you would like multi pinning permissions to change the configuration of where everyone is on the screen, please send us a direct message and we'll get you sorted. And if you need any tech support with this event, don't hesitate to let us know in the chat by sending a message to hosts and panelists. If you get disconnected, please reach out over e-mail to dpl@nsi-canada.ca and we'll do our best to figure out what happened. We also want to note that this webinar is intended to be relaxed. We're here to give a sense of the program and answer your questions, not to evaluate you. You are encouraged to engage in whatever way works best for you. We'll pause if we need to, and we may need to and figure things out together in real time. The webinar is also being recorded in case you have to leave early. It will be posted to the National Screen Institute website and a link will be emailed to everyone who is registered. So let's take a moment to reflect on the land we are on and the stories it holds.

Although we join this conversation from different parts of what is now known as Canada, the Office of the National Screen Institute is located on Treaty One territory near the meeting place of the Assiniboine and Red River. We honour the lands we occupy, its ancestors, and its traditional keepers, the Anishinaabe, Cree, Dakota, and the Red River Métis. As a settler organization, we strive to engage in our work with awareness of the ongoing colonial harms and oppressive systems faced daily by Indigenous communities on these lands and globally. We commit to the ongoing work of reconciliation. We also acknowledge that not all people came to these lands as settlers. Specifically, we honour those brought here against their will, particularly those affected by the transatlantic slave trade, and pay tribute to the ancestors of African origin and descent.

Understanding that all forms of oppression are interconnected. We encourage you to take the PACT course from the Shine Network Institute, a cultural awareness and competency course designed for non Indigenous professionals in the entertainment industry. The link will be shared in the chat and we strongly encourage you to explore it after this webinar. Thank you. Now the Disabled Producers Lab! Enhance your producing skills and career by exploring the key stages of film production and learn how to prioritize accessibility at every step. This is what you can expect from this webinar: We will give you a brief overview of the program and then we will open it up to questions. The Disabled Producers Lab is presented by the National Screen Institute, Women in View and the Disability Screen Office with program partners Canada Media Fund and Telefilm and strategic sponsor Warner Brothers Access Discovery Canada National Screen Institute core funders are Manitoba Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism and the City of Winnipeg through the Winnipeg Arts Council. And more sponsors are coming. They will be added as they are confirmed.

Please use the Q&A function at the bottom of your screen to submit and upvote questions, or use the raise hand function to let us know you'd like to unmute and ask a question directly. We'd love to collect questions throughout the webinar. You are welcome to ask at any point, and the chat will be used to share resources and for comments and conversation. And now all of my stuff is done. It is with great joy that I get to introduce you and pass things over to the two co-leads and masterminds behind the program, Ophira Calof and Michelle Asgarali- Oh my gosh. And Michelle Asgarali.

[Ophira] Hello! Oh my goodness, this is this is very exciting. Thank you all for being here. My name is Ophira. My pronouns. I use both they/them and she/her pronouns. And I'm one of the program co-leads for the Disabled Producers Lab. And to start off, I'll give a brief visual description of myself. I'm a white Ashkenazi fat disabled person with short dark hair and owl kind of shaped glasses and I always feel like it's worth mentioning- I use a lot of hand gestures and I will do my best not to like knock things over as we go. I also just want to really quickly shout out in terms of the brains behind the program, Jan Miller, who was a co-creator of this program. And I am currently calling in from lands covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaty. And I will pass things over to the wonderful Michelle.

[Michelle] Thanks, Ophira. I'm also beaming in from the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations. My name is Michelle Asgarali. My pronouns are she and her and for a visual description I like to say I'm a brown gal with long dark hair, gap

toothed smile and today large square glasses. Zoom has blurred out my power chair, which you know makes me happy and annoys me at the same time. But with all that said, I'm sure you want to know more about the program. So why this program, you know, in the world of disability representation, efforts have been made and have been really focused on on-screen. So whether it be who's writing it, who's directing it, who's starring, But really the power of IP leads into the, the producer level. All the key decisions are made at the producer level and we really need more producers who are innovating around access to be able to tell these stories. And I think I'm getting everything. What do you what do you say, Ophira?

[Ophira] Yeah, I, you know, the - plus one, bolded, underlined, italicized - of all of that. So in creating this program, we really wanted to make sure that we weren't taking a top down approach because if we just trained people how to be producers in the current industry and the way it currently exists, well, the current industry and the ways a lot of the common practices are fundamentally not accessible to so many of us. And so through this program, we're really looking at both learning about how the industry currently operates, what producers typically do, but also exploring what's possible, how we can shift those practices, bring in a lot of knowledge from the disability arts world and have this mutual learning. And that's something that we'll touch on as we go through the core aspects of this program. So there's sort of three main temples? Pillars, aspects to- Parts. Three main parts to this program. The first one is group sessions and the next one is developing a production plan and pitch for your short film. And the third one is a case study report. So I'll start off by talking about the group sessions. So those will be fairly typical sort of online Zoom sessions where the participants will all come together to explore the key elements to producing. And to break it down a bit, we plan to sort of have one to two sessions a week over the course of around 12 weeks.

The idea is that each session would be between one to two hours long, but all of these details and the curriculum itself would be finalized through a co-design phase with the selected participants. We want to make sure that we're not just saying, "This is what we think people want to know" and making sure that we're designing the program according to what makes the most sense for the individual participants. That said, in broad strokes, we're planning to tackle topics that include pitching and packaging, going from your scripts to making a schedule for it, a production schedule, hiring cast and crew, looking at funding possibilities in the business side of film, and also distribution and marketing.

[Michelle] And Michelle speaking. Part of this discussion is really understanding the different perspectives. We're not coming in, as you know, industry mentors are telling everything of what we have to do. We're really trying to break down what the access needs are and to do that we want to have three different ranges of perspectives. Yes, we will definitely have industry perspectives, guests and experts sharing what is currently happening in practices in the industry, but also community perspectives based on case studies and international disability forward productions and learning from each other about all the challenges and deconstruct what could make the process more accessible. And lastly, what we like to call the Solution Incubator, which is open to everyone involved and to try and actually bring it back to your project and understanding what kind of solutions can be used within the industry. So I think the main thing to be able to do that is you need to have a project. So we are asking you to bring in your short film. It is a 10 minute film and throughout the project in the program we will bring it outside the group sessions. The participants will develop their production plan and their pitch for their short film. The goal is by the end of the program you have something that is fundable and thought out. So you will have your pitch and you will have your structured pieces to get the funding needed to help build that accessible production plan and the pitch. You will have access to one-on-one sessions with external advisors, including an industry mentor, a pitching coach where Jan, our lovely Jan will come in for that and access coach sessions to help support you explore your own access needs and to know and ensure that you have met those needs are met through development and actual production process.

[Ophira] Amazing. This is Ophira speaking and I want to just briefly check in. I, we're figuring out some details with the chat and we're, we're working to - Dennie, who is the wonderful peer support coordinator on this team, just posted in the chat, that we're working to figure out why attendees are not able to share their messages with everyone. I just want to say in the meantime, if you have something that you want to put in the chat, we can read it out loud to the group because Michelle and I will both be able to see any messages in the chat. But we'll also keep you updated as we work through all of the all of the Zoom technology things. OK. Third key part - pillar, tentpole, elements of the program is the case study report. So throughout the program, as we learn together and we explore these access tangles and challenges and dream up new ways to approach film production, we'll also be taking notes so that we can document them in a report that will be shared with the broader industry after the program ends to make sure that the learnings and all of the the beautiful magic that happens doesn't end just with the program. So by sharing those insights, we really hope that the program will help spark more conversations about accessible production practices industry wide. And it's also worth noting that all

participants will be paid for their participation in the lab. They'll be paid a stipends of \$3250 and that's an acknowledgement of their time for the program as a whole and developing their concept, but also for their contributions to this case study report.

[Michelle] And we get to the nitty gritty! The application write down, which I'm sure is what people are actually here to understand. So first off, we do have four areas in which we have to hit these basic needs. One, unfortunately you do have to be - and fortunately, what am I saying? We want more Canadian film makers. A Canadian or a resident in Canada. Of course you need to be a part of the disability community, whether you identify as disabled, Deaf, chronically ill neurodivergent, Mad, sick, spoonie, or use any other language to capture your experience, whether it's visible or invisible disabilities, permanent or temporary or episodic. And also we want to try and amplify the marginalized voices and intersectionality that is connected to your gender. So we are including transgender women, cisgender women, transgender men, non-binary people, agender people, Two-Spirit people, and many other marginalized gender identities. And lastly, of course, the actual script in this application, we don't need to have it up front, but we do need to know that you'll have your short film script ready for September 30th before we start our program. This script can be written by you or can be written by someone else, but we need to know that by that time it will be written and done and you have the rights to that short film script. So it's something that you've agreed upon with that writer that you have the right to actually make the film.

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. So the actual application, I will say that we did our very best to to try to make this not too long because trust me, I've applied to so many things and spent so many hours filling out- Oh, I'm just gonna pause and say it looks like the chat is up and running and questions are coming in, which is amazing. We are going to get to those questions right when we're through this, probably in the next 5 to 7-ish minutes. And I'll say the questions in the chat are great. We'll try to keep our eye on those. And also there's the Q&A feature as well. Oh, I'm so excited about these questions. OK, that's for now. The application itself in it, in it, there's a couple, there's sort of three longer form questions. The first one is ask, basically asking about you, and we want to know why you'd like to be a part of the program. This is sort of getting at your goals and interests. And for each of the main application questions, we put a couple of prompts. There's no pressure to answer all of the prompts. They're there to help you in case anyone or two sort of resonates with you and helps give you a direction for the answer. But really in that question, we're just looking to get a sense of what your goals and interests are.

The second question is about any unique production elements or questions that you would be interested in exploring through this program. So the summary of that question again is what do you want to learn? What are things that you're curious about that this program might help you sort of take the time to explore, give you the chance to chat with people, whether it's a specific idea you have that you want to test out and workshop with people or whether it's a bit more of a question that you're not sure how to approach it, but you want to sort of bring it to the program and explore together. And the last question is about your experience. And for this program, we're looking for people who have a certain amount of experience with producing, but that doesn't mean that that experience is in the film and TV world. So maybe it is. And if so, let us know. We'd love to know. But maybe it's within a different kind of arts world. Maybe you have experience community organizing. Maybe you have experience putting together different types of events. We're looking to get a sense of your experience both within the media field, but also within organizing and sort of seeing a project through from start to finish and experience with access and access planning. Again, you don't have to have experience in this realm, but we'd like to know if you do. And so those are sort of the things we're getting at with those questions. Please don't feel any pressure that it has to be a certain length. We just want to know what's important to you. So you're welcome to submit sort of short, direct bullet points taking whichever ones of the prompts resonate with you. We really just want them to be there to help, not to box you in. And in terms of how to actually apply, we are going to bring on the person who's been popping up in the chats and sprinkling a fairy dust around the Zoom call, our wonderful peer support coordinator, Dennie Park, to chat through how to apply.

[Dennie] Yeah, thank you so much for the introduction, Ophira. Lovely to meet you all. As they mentioned, I am the peer support program- Ah, peer support coordinator for the program. My pronouns, are they and them. And just for a quick visual description, I am a Korean person with short black hair and brown eyes and I have large gold rimmed glasses on. And I'm also calling in from land covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaty.

And before I get into this list, just know that the same information can be found on our website and on the online form itself. We wanted to provide multiple ways to make sure this process serves you in a way that can help you thrive. So please submit your application in whatever way works best for you personally. So one method is the online form of our website and we can, oh, sorry, I'm just going to pause. I just see, my apologies. I thought there was something else in the chat, Sorry. The online form of our website. It should have keyboard navigation and also allows you to save your progress as you go so

you don't have to do it all at once. We also have a fillable PDF and plain text file versions of that same submission form which can be emailed to us when completed, which is dpl@nsi-canada.ca. And if you would like support with filling out the form or so- such as like arranging a time together with me to go through the questions and have a sort of conversation, maybe have me act as a note taker to get your answers down, we can do that. If you would like to use an alternative format such as video or audio, you can also e-mail us at that DPL e-mail to let us know. Please note though that the language has to be in English or ASL. So yeah, if you would like to submit using one of those alternative formats or to get some support with the application, do try to contact us by July 19th just to ensure that we can get to your request in time before the submissions are due. And that's about it. And I'm going to pass it back to Amy. See you.

[Amy] Hello. Hello everyone I just want to let people know if you are still having issues with Zoom and Zoom chat. What you need to do is select "Everyone" before you send a message and then it won't just send messages to the host and panelists. So if you want to send a message to the entire group, just select everyone at the top and it should send. My apologies for Zoom. [Laughs] Yes. OK, so let's get to the part that everyone is very excited about. We would now like to open up the conversation to questions. So good luck with chat. You can try to use chat if you want to, or we can use the Q&A function or the raise hand function and we will address them. Through the raise hand function, you can be unmuted to voice your question or if you need to ask it over video, please let us know and in the chat with your Zoom name so we'll know who to who to spotlight basically, and we'll get that set up for you. And I would just - another reminder that this webinar is being recorded and it will be posted publicly. So if you'd like to ask questions anonymously, feel free to use the anonymous feature in the Q&A function or you can send a direct message to me and I will ask it on your behalf. So I will now open up the floor to you to ask questions.

And I will start off actually, we have one from, we have one that has asked, are documentary shorts acceptable? Ophira or Michelle, would either of you like to field that one?

[Michelle] Michelle speaking. This was our big debate when designing the program. Unfortunately, not at this time. It's only going to be scripted. Hopefully we get a chance to do other iterations in the future, but just so that we can have an even discussion playing field for the five that are coming in this time will only be scripted.

[Amy] Amy speaking. Thank you Michelle. And another one, what if you are not a writer but want to learn how to have a right to the script? Michelle or Ophira?

[Michelle] You are- How do you learn to get the rights first? At this point for our program, we just need some sort of written- like an e-mail or a letter [coughs] excuse me, from the writer that actually wrote the script. We will be discussing the actual licenses during the program, but in the future, like for real rights, there are license agreements or options agreements that are done between a writer and a producer that gives you the right to do so. Ophira, anything I should add to that?

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. No, I think that was exactly it. Essentially for this program, we'll ask for you to have a relationship with a writer and as Michelle said, some sort of a, an e-mail or letter. But we will work with you if you're selected to the program to figure out how that process fully works down the line.

[Amy] And Amy speaking, we have another question from Rianna. Does the script have to be a short film or can it be a feature film?

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. I can take that one. So for the purposes of the program, it does have to be a short film. Again, just to make sure that everyone can sort of work together and that the sessions are helpful for everyone. But that said, if you have a feature film that you're really excited about, think about if there's a short, that sort of a short version, if there's maybe a scene or two in there, some sort of a teaser that we could work on in the program and then it could potentially support you as you work on your feature down the road.

[Michelle] It's a great way to have a - sorry, this is Michelle speaking, a great way to have a concept piece that you can use to get funding for a feature if you want to do that. End of thought.

[Amy] OK. And we have... These ones have been asked. Sorry, they're coming in. I've got questions coming at me from all over the place, which is great.

From Julia, how much production experience are you looking for ideally?

[Ophira] this is Ophira speaking. Oh, unless Michelle, did you want to take it? All right, I'll go first and then Michelle will fill in all my gaps. Which she always does. So in terms of production experience, it's a little bit unconventional in that we're looking for people who have experience in seeing a project through to completion, but recognizing that because of the existing barriers in the industry, that experience may not be in the film and TV world. So ideally we're looking for people who can have some experience thinking about sort of putting together a team on a project and managing that team and putting together a budget and some sort of a timeline or schedule and some sort of a presentation. And so those are elements of experience that we are looking for, for applicants to have. We just don't necessarily need those to have taken place in the film and TV industry. So they could have taken place in again, community organizing and visual arts exhibition spaces and theater and other forms of live performance. But we are looking for sort of that, from the beginning of a project, sort of "Avengers Assemble" style of bringing people together and then seeing it through to completion.

[Michelle] If you do, if you are coming from the film world or the TV world in a creative space as a director or a writer or an actor that has experienced film life but want to make that step up, that is also acceptable because you will you have experience in a different space that someone may not. The key is that you're looking to figure out how to do it just a little differently. You know, like you're ready to examine the accessible way of doing things, not just, you know, "I got to get it done" and that kind of balance of things.

[Amy] Amy Speaking. Ebony has written, "It is great to be trained in becoming a producer while challenging accessibility. I am curious if we will also be trained in how to navigate the industry dominated by abled, white, straight or/and male. That is something I struggle with." Something we all struggle with.

[Michelle] Yeah. I think that is definitely part of our discussion. Like we have discuss the many challenges even just within your own team of how you're building the team and how you're selling your project. I think that will be part of within our disability community perspective discussions and how to outline those pieces will be important for a report as well. Understanding those barriers, it's not always physical.

[Amy] OK. And Heather asked, "Do you need a film to apply or just the script?" Heather, you just need the script to apply. You don't need to come with a film.

[Michelle] Our job is to help you make it.

[Amy] Yeah. Make the film. And Veronika says, "Hi, it's nice to see you all." You too Veronika. "I'm just wondering if there is a specific length for the short that you are looking for or if it can be the standard under 40 minutes."

[Michelle] For this piece, we have narrowed it down to a 10 minute short just to try and put it into a manageable space that everyone is within for a kind of first depending on where you are in your career. Ophira?

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. Yep, that was exactly it. So 10 minutes or under. Please don't, don't feel the need to to lengthen it if, if it's a little bit shorter. And for context, that's probably around 10 pages long, 10 pages or less.

[Amy] Are there any other questions? I don't see any.

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. I see a few in the Q&A feature.

[Amy] Yes, there are. Thank you. Oh, here we go. OK. "And how-" this is a great one. "How will you be determining who-" I will answer this right now. "How will you be determining who will be selected and what are you looking for specifically? i.e., it is not based on the script because we don't have to have it until September 30th. Also, we all have disabilities, so I'm not sure what the selection process is based on." It's a great question.

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. I can start with this one and then I'll pass it to Michelle to see if I'm missing anything. This is, yeah, it's a really good question. The reason that we are

not looking to to see the script specifically is because this program is really focused on training people, training and exploring the idea of producing. And so your script is really important as a tool for you to work on, but we're not evaluating you based on writing. We're looking at you as a producer and so in terms of how we're determining who will be selected, we're going to have a jury brought in for members of both the disability arts community and the film and TV world to look through the applications and bring their perspectives and expertise. Some of the key things that we're looking for are alignment with the program. So someone who's really interested in both pursuing producing, who wants to explore this as their career and who's really interested in exploring that in a way that centers accessibility and is bringing some questions and some thoughts and is really thinking about how they want their producing practice to look. So I would say in your application, that's a really big thing to emphasize is who you are or who you want to be or what you want to explore as a producer. And then another big part of this, which I know is like a little bit harder in terms of a direct, you know, action item is that we're also looking at the cohort. So we really want to make sure that the people we're bringing together are both going to bring sort of a range of experiences and perspectives as part of generating these discussions and being able to learn from each other. And also are in a place where sort of what the program materials are will be helpful for everyone in that group. So some of it comes down to finding people who are on this path and really interested in, in exploring what a more disability centered production practice can look like. And some of it is going to be about the fit of the specific group. That's my answer for it. But Michelle, feel free to chime in.

[Michelle] That was very well said. I would, the only thing I would add is [clears throat] excuse me, is that we're looking to get and make more producers. In the - acting in the industry after the program is finished, so the different perspectives and the ability to look at problem solving and look at access needs and finding solutions and innovating is going to be key. So any ways that you can just, you know, think of your ideas that you may have that maybe you haven't put into practice or maybe you have in other forums is, is how we're going to be evaluating that balance that Ophira was talking about of different perspectives.

[Amy] Amy speaking. Thank you for that question. Moving on to another question, "I might have missed it, but how many participants in the program will be accepted?" You have not missed it. Thank you for asking that question. We didn't say it. There will be up to five participants selected and they will be selected from across Canada. And that is the, we'll

move on to the next question. "Thank you for the informative session." You're welcome, Sarah.

"What is the timeline of the program?" I am happy to answer this. Michelle and Ophira, would you like me to? OK, I will just bring up my handy document so I can not lie to you. So the timeline of the program, we will put in some key dates. Dennie, if you don't mind pasting some key dates into this chat towards the end of the webinar, that would be really helpful. But this is what it looks like. So the call for applications deadline will be on July 22nd. So you have until July 22nd to submit your application. And then we have the selection committee will be reviewing the applications until probably the end of August-ish. And then there will be some meetings that take place and acceptance notifications will go out to the selected participants by September 30th and all - EVERYONE will be notified. so if you have applied but you have not been selected, you will also be notified by September 30th. So everyone's on, everyone gets notified in that week.

And then we will be onboarding the participants probably in the in the first three weeks of October, so till around October 31st and then we will begin and - these dates are subject to change, I will say. But we will hopefully begin our program sessions starting around October 28th, which will carry on until February 12th. And there will be two sessions a week and they will, there'll be a two week break as well between December 23rd and - December 23rd and January 3rd for Christmas. But again, we will post the key dates in the chat. So you'll actually have that in writing. But the program, it starts the sessions begin October 28th and it goes until February 12th, then there will be a postmortem period afterwards for about 5 weeks, so March 20th roughly. Thank you, Dennie. And we have, "Are there accessible supports for participants and guests?" is the next question. Who would field this one?

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. I actually, looking at the Q&A, I might smush together two of these questions.

So there is a question of "Are there accessible supports for participants and guests?" And also "I'm curious about how the program will be flexible for those of us whose disability affects our ability to follow a strict schedule. Chronic illness/fatigue."

Yes, absolutely, absolutely, yes. So in terms of the specific access framework that will be developed once the participants are selected, we'll have a period of time where we can really get to know each other and create what our access framework and our access

baselines look like for the group as a whole. So I don't want to get too like, "It's going to be this, it's going to be that" because a lot of it is very personal and we'll come up with our individual ways of working together. But that said, some examples of things that are on our radar that we're fully prepared to, to sort of bring in depending on on the mix of the group are things like ASL interpretation, live captioning and having Dennie present as a peer support coordinator, note taking. We're looking to really, in terms of this question about being flexible for, for those of us whose disability effects our ability to follow a strict schedule, this is a huge part of this program.

And we're not looking to take people and make them fit into this like a box of how schedules and industry look. The whole point of this program is to think of ways we can expand the ways in which we work to allow each of us to individually thrive. So that might be looking at asynchronous ways of working together, having recordings, recording our sessions, having open documents that people can chime in on at different points in time, flexible deadlines, offering different forms of one-on-one support as well. Looking at the time of days we have our sessions and the kind of notice things like calendar invites and agendas and recaps and lots of possibilities that we'll explore together as we create those access baselines. And also understanding that things change, right, when we're in the course of the program. As different needs come up, we'll be checking in on what's working and not working and adjust accordingly. But I, I just want to emphasize that the most important part of this program is not the product at the end. The most important part of this program is making sure that each individual can engage with it in a way that allows them to bring their full selves. And so that ultimately is our commitment with this space. That's our priority and and we're excited to see what that looks like. And I also want to acknowledge I'm saying for both participants and guests and absolutely that holds true for guests as well.

[Amy] I love listening to you talk, Ophira.

We have another question from Ebony, who has asked, "Will we be creating the pitch locally? Budget? Limited number of crew? Can you give a rough vision of what the process will look like?"

[Michelle] Michelle speaking, I'll take this one. We are all working remotely, so there is that point, but we will be working as a group to discuss the different areas. So as you're saying, the budget and crewing up and what the process looks like, but then with your individual mentors, and with us to help you figure out what the actual, what that could actually look

like for your individual project. So you will always be responsible in the end for finalizing, creating it, but we are all here to help brainstorm and create the actual process that makes sense for what you want to do. I think that's the biggest thing within it. So each week, I say week, each pod I guess is the term that we are using when we are building up the different aspects of the production. We'll go through the big elements and how, you know, one choice may affect a budget where another may not. So that's why during that process we're making those plans during that time. So you have it done by the end of the project, I think. Is there anything else to add to that? Ophira?

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. No, I think you covered it. I, I'll say that our hope is by the end of this program, you sort of have a, whether it's like a physical binder or like a Google folder that has these elements for your short film. So that will have a budget that will have sort of a schedule that will have a pitch. And a lot of that is individual. We're, again, we're looking to support you and not make you tick certain boxes, but through that process that Michelle describes, that's our hope for, for what you'll have at the end.

[Michelle] A big part of that too is so that you're able to know how to use it again. So do you know, like we're able to figuring out how you want to work because in the future, you can know how to apply it all over again for any other project going forward.

[Amy] Thank you, Michelle. This is Amy speaking. Are there any more questions from anyone in our lovely audience? I don't think so. Oh, I just saw another one. This one is, "If I am on government support, how will I be paid?" Good question.

[Michelle] I don't know if, Amy, you want to talk, but we are all aware of the intricacies of balancing funds and government support. So they - we will be working with you to understand how you need to dispense your, your funds. It could be a one time payment if that's easier, or it can be spread out over the time so it fits within your allowed funding that you're allowed to make within the year or months.

[Amy] Amy speaking. Thank you, Michelle. And another one is, "Who will the mentors and experts be?"

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. So in terms of the specific mentors and experts, those will be selected in part once we have a sense of who exactly the participants are. But to give a sense, they're going to be a mix of people working within the Canadian industry specifically to really understand how things work within this ecosystem. And then we'll also be opening up to international guests and mentors who are doing some really cool work in disability forward productions and to be able to sort of get a sense of what's happening in different places and be able to share that knowledge.

[Amy] Thank you, Ophira, this is Amy speaking. And we have another question from Ebony. I love your questions. Ebony, never apologize. "Would you recommend us to apply for a grant to help create a pitch?"

[Michelle] Good question. There are not many grants. There are a couple accessible grants that you can add to when you're applying for funding or an actual film. But to actually develop a pitch, typically that is something you do on your own without funding, especially in short film world. If you get into television, there are some more funding options, but within the short filming film space, it's usually you're developing by yourself. That's where we have us and hopefully the program to help you with that. But then the funds itself, There are some access grants from the councils, the arts councils, but they're not many. Amy, you may have other suggestions on that.

[Amy] No, I, I do not unfortunately. But with that one, you could, you could reach out to the DPL e-mail and give me some time to look into it. And then I might be able to come up with something a bit more satisfying if I can do a bit of digging possibly. OK, we are at, we are 5 minutes away from being finished. So if there are any more questions, please ask them now. And in the meantime, while you're thinking about questions, Michelle, Ophira, do you have any final thoughts that you want to share?

[Ophira] This is Ophira speaking. I just, I want to thank everyone who's here so much for coming to, to learn about this, for being interested, for all of your questions. And for anyone who's watching this online afterwards too. We - schedules, we get it. I, I want to say that if you're on the fence about applying, please apply. As long as it doesn't, you know, take too many spoons and, and, and fits within your capacity. We're so excited to get to know you through your applications. And also, if you're looking at this and you're like, "I don't know

that this program specifically is like my deal." "Maybe I'm more of a director." "I'm not really interested in producing, but I'm curious and I want to be like part of these conversations and know more." Please reach out to us. We really would love to just connect with people who are interested in this kind of work and maybe there's a way to work together on this program or maybe it's something that can spark the idea for the next one. So please don't hesitate to reach out. We're going to put the links for the application into the chat and go over them, but also want to highlight the best way to reach out to us is through the e-mail address dpl@nsi-canada.ca. And yeah, I, I tend to ramble, so I'm going to stop rambling and just say thank you all so much. And we're really excited to connect.

[Michelle] Just saying, ditto.

[Amy] This is Amy again. So you'll see in the chat there are all of the links that we mentioned. So the PACT course, the web page for, with information about the program, the link to the application form and the e-mail for questions. All of this has been post, posted - pasted in the chat, so please, please use them. Please reach out to reach out to us, ask questions. We are here to try to raise as much awareness about this program as possible, but also to share as much knowledge and connect with as many people as we can. And finally, I want to thank you as well. Thank you so much for being patient with me while we sorted out our various Zoom challenges. And I want to reiterate how excited we are to be receiving applications. We have applications already and we are so excited to take a look at yours. So we encourage you to, to, if you, if you have the capacity, please, please do apply. And I will just quickly repeat the key dates. So I won't give you a monologue this time. Applications open on June 6th. If you have to ask for application support, please do so by July 19th. The application period will close July 22nd. Everyone will be notified by September 30th. The program dates are still being confirmed, but we think we'll begin on October 28th and will run until February 12th, 2025 and we will end the feedback gathering on March 20th, 2025. We would like to thank Rogue and Savannah, our wonderful ASL interpreters. We would like to thank Korbin, our live captioner. I would like to thank Michelle and Ophira and everyone at the NSI team who is supporting us today. And I would like to thank all of you for being here and for asking such excellent questions. It's really, really exciting. And thank you, Shanti. Shanti said thank you. So without further ado, we are one minute away from the end of this. So I'm going to say thank you all and hopefully we will get to see your or get to read your applications. So take care everybody. Have a wonderful day.

[Michelle] Thank you.