

Training Gaps Analysis of Documentary Filmmakers

March 1, 2005

Prepared for the Cultural Human Resources Council by



30 Pine Street, Hamilton, Ontario, L8P 2A1
905.528.8891, www.hillstrategies.com, kelly@hillstrategies.com

Hill Strategies Research Team:

Kelly Hill, Project Leader and Bilingual Senior Researcher

Denise Withers, Research Associate
(Documentary Filmmaker)

Lisa Fitzgibbons, Francophone Research Associate
(Documentary Filmmaker and Visual Artist)

Tiffany Harvey, Research Associate

Section 1: Introduction

*“It’s about telling a story... the job is using technology to tell a story”
–A documentary filmmaker interviewed for this project*

This report summarizes the results of our research into the needs, offerings and gaps related to documentary filmmaker training in Canada. Our research has been based on the skills competencies created by the Cultural Human Resource Council’s Expert Working Group. Our research activities included web research, interviews with documentary filmmakers, funders and broadcasters, participation in two forums on the issue, and a short online survey of training organizations. As noted in the Request for Proposals from the Cultural Human Resources Council, the purpose of this report is to “determine how prepared documentary filmmakers are in terms of the competencies, and if the education / training system is able to provide instruction in these competencies.”

For the purposes of this report, the phrase documentary filmmakers includes producers, directors and those who occupy both of these functions within the filmmaking process.

The term documentary is difficult to define because documentaries cover a range of genres (socio-political, historical, wildlife, etc.) and formats (short one-off, feature length, multi-part series). A definition of documentary found through the National Film Board is: “A production that takes a non-fictional approach to representing reality by providing an original audiovisual treatment, informing the audience and offering an analysis (perspective, context, interpretation) on a given subject.” The Documentary Network/Observatoire du documentaire has proposed a more point-of-view oriented definition: “the documentary project is based on an original narrative and cinematographic construction and a treatment of the subject that are strongly influenced by the personal vision of the director.”

This report follows a series of research reports released in 2002 by the Documentary Network and the Rencontres internationales du documentaire. These reports revealed that there is increasing demand for documentary work. The reports also documented a number of serious problems in Canadian documentary filmmaking, including smaller production budgets, increased competition for funding, eroding creative control by directors, and a fragmented broadcast universe. There is also significant evidence from filmmakers that their creative process is suffering from economic pressures that have sometimes led to one person acting as an entire ‘creative team’. The accumulation of roles (writer, producer, director, editor) by one person has been most strongly felt by English-speaking documentary filmmakers in Canada.

Kirwan Cox’s report *The Filmmakers’ POV on Documentary* lamented the loss of experiential learning opportunities for documentary filmmakers. Our research uncovered a real need for project-specific, hands-on learning. However, a serious lack of resources – time, money, and experienced filmmakers who can afford the time to mentor a new professional – are major obstacles.¹

Despite these obstacles, the current environment provides many opportunities for the development of Canadian documentary filmmaking. Low-cost digital camera and editing equipment have led to an increase in film activity, including documentaries. Numerous times during our research, we heard comments to the effect that “Canada has a strong history of documentary filmmaking, and we need to build on that.” Some general film production program representatives who responded to our online survey estimated that 25% or 30% of their graduates work in documentary filmmaking. Recent documentaries such as “Bacon, le film”, “Fahrenheit 9/11” and “The Corporation,” as well as successful television programs such as “Course destination monde,” have generated significant interest from mainstream audiences and potential filmmakers. This report attempts to gauge whether the training is in place to meet filmmakers’ needs.

¹ The current report most frequently speaks of mentorship (having an experienced, trusted advisor provide support, guidance and advice) and internship (usually a practical job placement in a “professional” occupation). Apprenticeship usually relates to the learning of a craft or trades occupation.

Section 2: Documentary Filmmaker Training Needs

Research Methodology

Hill Strategies Research interviewed 24 documentary filmmakers using an interview protocol based on the CHRC's October draft of the skills competency chart for documentary filmmakers. Our early research for this project indicated that many of the training and skills development gaps with regards to documentary filmmakers were qualitative gaps rather than issues of the absolute availability of training. For this reason, the interviews were qualitative in nature, attempting to delve into the important issues in the training of documentary filmmakers. Interviews were conducted in English and French. Interviewees were asked the following questions:

- How many documentary films have you directed and/or produced?
- Do you plan to make more in the next few years?
- Is there any training that you need to receive, or would like to receive, in order to make your next documentary?
- I now want to ask about your training needs in specific skills. Do you feel you have training needs in any of the following specific areas of documentary filmmaking?
 - Generating ideas/developing concepts
 - Preparing proposals (including researching, synopsis writing and preparing an initial schedule and budget)
 - “Pitching” and selling proposals
 - Administrative details of getting a film made, such as preparing contracts, detailed schedules and budgets
 - Preproduction
 - Production
 - Postproduction
 - Distributing and releasing the film (including publicity and media work)
 - General communication skills (including writing, presenting your ideas, interview skills, inter-cultural communication)

For each “yes” response, interviewees were asked:

- Do you think that you could best improve your skills in this area through experience, training or further education?
- What specific type of training or education would you like?
- Do you know if the training you need exists in your region? Elsewhere in Canada?

Additional questions included:

- In general, do you feel that many other documentary filmmakers in Canada require training in the areas that I've asked you about?
- Do you think that there are any obstacles or gaps in the training of documentary filmmakers in Canada? (If yes, what?)

- Do you have any other comments for us?

As shown above and as approved by the CHRC, the interview protocol focused on top-level skills only. Interviewers introduced some elements of the detailed skills in order to ensure clarity and understanding on the part of the interviewees. With the agreement of CHRC, we did not ask about training needs for “personal competencies”, as these competencies are very broad, sometimes contradictory, and may not be “trainable”. For clarity sake, the “delivering documentary” and “releasing documentary” skills were grouped together in our interviews. It was felt that these skills related to distribution of a film and would be closely linked in the minds of filmmaker interviewees.

In one interview, an interviewer asked about all of the detailed skills, resulting in an hour-and-a-half interview, something that was not possible with all interviewees due to the project budget and the length of time which interviewees could reasonably be expected to commit to an interview. This in-depth interview revealed some very specific skills development needs that might not have been captured in a summary-level interview.

Documentary filmmakers are a very independent, strong-willed group. Not all interviewees were willing to be “pigeon-holed” into the strict confines of the skills chart or our interview protocol. In a few cases, interviewees declined to participate in the detailed questions related to the skills chart, which is based on what they believe is an “industrial model” of documentary filmmaking. In these cases, interviewers deviated from the interview protocol in order to receive other feedback on the interviewee’s training needs and gaps. Overall, we believe that the qualitative interviews effectively addressed the distinct needs and issues in this unique cultural sector.

We carefully selected our sample group to ensure participation from a diverse range of documentary filmmakers. The 24 documentary filmmakers come from across the country (Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador). Input was sought from filmmakers of diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and culturally diverse Canadians. Appendix A provides a list of the filmmakers and other experts interviewed for this project.

The interviewees also have a wide range of experience in the field. We asked each documentary filmmaker how many documentaries they have produced or directed during their careers. Responses to this question ranged from 0 to over 100. Six of the filmmakers interviewed had produced or directed two documentaries or less in their careers. Not surprisingly, these newer documentary filmmakers expressed greater training needs than their more experienced counterparts. An analysis of these differences is provided in the section on training needs.

Most interviews were conducted via telephone, but a few filmmakers were interviewed in-person, particularly in Montreal during the *Rencontres internationales du documentaire* in November. Two filmmakers submitted their comments via email.

In addition to interviews with active documentary filmmakers, we also conducted interviews and solicited input from representatives of organizations involved in documentary, such as the Documentary Organisation of Canada (DOC), the Documentary Network/Observatoire du documentaire, the National Film Board and the Canadian Film and Television Producers' Association.

Kelly Hill also participated in two separate sessions on documentary filmmaker training held during the *Rencontres internationales du documentaire* in Montreal. On November 15th, Kelly listened to the comments of about 150 documentary filmmakers during a day-long session entitled *Filming Reality: What Training for What Skill?* Kelly also presented a summary of the training gaps project and distributed a preliminary chart of training offerings for documentary filmmakers (an updated version of which appears in an appendix to this report). On November 16th, there was a half-day group input session about the training needs of documentary *producers*. Approximately 25 documentary film producers were in attendance at this session. These were excellent opportunities to learn about the training of documentary producers and directors, particularly in Quebec. Findings from these sessions are integrated into this report.

The research team would like to thank all research participants for sharing their time and thoughts with us.

Training and Skills Development Needs

During our interviews of documentary filmmakers, a commonly-expressed need was for the time and money to undertake training opportunities. Many filmmakers' initial reaction to our interview questions was "I don't need training; I need support (i.e., time and money) to develop my films." One organization representative responding to our online survey summed up the view of many others: "Documentary filmmakers in general have little money to pay for skills development." This speaks to the need for low-cost training or significant training subsidies.

Regarding content of training, Table 1 shows the percentage of the filmmakers interviewed who expressed a training or skills development need in a certain area. The percentages in Table 1 show that, beyond generating ideas, there is a moderate need for training in all areas. The areas of highest need – although not overwhelmingly high – are related to delivering and releasing documentaries, post-production, and production administration. The clear area of lowest need is in generating ideas / developing concepts for documentaries.

The fact that there is not a single area of overwhelming need was reiterated by the fact that many documentary filmmakers expressed very limited training needs: nine of the 24 filmmakers expressed training needs in two or less of the nine top-level skills areas. Even then, many filmmakers indicated in their interviews that they had needs in one very specific element of the skills area, such as "rights to archival material" (production administration), "how to tap secondary markets of new media and internet" (delivery/release) and "synopsis writing" (preparing proposals).

In Table 1, a rating is applied to the percentage of filmmakers expressing a training need. The scale for this rating is as follows: low (0-19%), low-moderate (20-39%), moderate (40-59%), high (60-79%), very high (80-100%).

Table 1: Percentage of filmmakers expressing a training need in skills areas		
Top-level skills	%	Needs rating
Generate an idea	19%	Low
Prepare a proposal	48%	Moderate
Sell a proposal	52%	Moderate
Production administration (Set the conditions to make it happen)	59%	Moderate
Prepare production (pre-production)	41%	Moderate
Execute production	52%	Moderate
Execute postproduction	62%	High
Deliver and release documentary	64%	High
Demonstrate communication skills	44%	Moderate

Six of the filmmakers interviewed had produced or directed two documentaries or less in their careers. Table 2 shows the percentage of these newer filmmakers who expressed a training or skills development need in the various skills areas. The newer documentary filmmakers expressed greater training needs in almost all areas than their more experienced counterparts. The only area where newer filmmakers expressed a slightly lower training need than more experienced filmmakers is in delivering and releasing a documentary.

In Table 2, a rating is applied to the percentage of new filmmakers expressing a training need. The scale for this rating is as follows: low (0-19%), low-moderate (20-39%), moderate (40-59%), high (60-79%), very high (80-100%).

Five areas of very high training need for new filmmakers are: general communication skills; post-production; production administration (setting the conditions to make it happen); selling proposals; and production. Training needs regarding preparing proposals and pre-production are also quite high. Consistent with Table 1 above, Table 2 shows that the area of lowest need is in generating ideas / developing concepts for documentaries. Newer filmmakers also express only moderate needs with regards to distributing their films.

Table 2: Percentage of new filmmakers expressing a training need in skills areas (for filmmakers who directed or produced 2 films or less)

Top-level skills	%	Needs rating
Generate an idea	50%	Moderate
Prepare a proposal	75%	High
Sell a proposal	83%	Very high
Production administration (Set the conditions to make it happen)	83%	Very high
Pre-production	67%	High
Production	80%	Very high
Post-production	100%	Very high
Delivery/release	50%	Moderate
Communications	100%	Very high

Many young filmmakers expressed a desire for mentorship from senior filmmakers in a range of skills areas. One training organization representative noted in an online survey that “the commitment and passion of documentary filmmakers lends itself to ideal mentorship opportunities.” However, many senior filmmakers noted that they lack the time and money to take on a substantial mentorship role. Mentors experience costs in terms of computers, workspace and time away from other productive work.

On-the-job training was also thought to be an effective training method for documentary filmmakers. Many respondents indicated that much expertise in documentary filmmaking is developed simply by doing.

There was a clear focus on practical training programs that could be applied to real world problems. For example, at the proposal stage, respondents indicated that it would be nice to have someone review a real proposal and guide the filmmaker through possible changes. Similarly, budget templates and review of actual draft budgets were thought to be useful in helping filmmakers develop budgets for projects.

The qualitative interviews allowed us to note filmmakers’ comments on their detailed needs (and possible avenues of meeting these needs) within the broad skill areas. Some of the findings in this regard include:

- Preparing a proposal (including contracts and budgets)

This could be done via an on-line database offering different models of what is currently being done in the industry. Filmmakers would like to access budgeting templates or best practices and then be able to work with a mentor to validate their work. Another option is group discussion of actual proposals.

On softer competencies, such as writing for narration or story-editing, the preferred way of obtaining training was via mentors. In some cases, these competencies were seen as an art, and some respondents noted that it takes years to become competent in these skills.

- Selling proposals (“pitching”)

Some experienced filmmakers expressed interest in learning more about pitching projects, but wanted to do so with colleagues who have the same depth of experience as they do. In this case, they expressed interest in workshops targeted to the needs of experienced filmmakers.

- Production administration (Setting the conditions to make it happen)

Ongoing information sessions about the changing aspects of producing were thought to be helpful, including information about funders’ guidelines. Directors and producers generally expressed different needs, but many directors and producers expressed an interest in some basic training in the other areas of filmmaking. For example, many directors felt that they could benefit from a two-day workshop with experts on producing.

Many directors and producers stated a need for a business course that would help them develop a profitable business. Other general training needs include legal aspects of filmmaking, insurance, and sales techniques.

A number of directors and senior producers stated that there are too few young people interested in the business side of filmmaking. Most new graduates wish to be directors rather than producers.

There is also a perception of a disconnect between what is being taught in schools (where *making a film* dominates) and the real world (where *finding the money to make a film* is all-important).

Another area of need pertains to obtaining rights on archival material. Many filmmakers were not clear on how to obtain these rights, and short workshops were suggested to address this matter.

- Pre-production

For the most part, documentary filmmakers were comfortable in their knowledge of this competency. However, two filmmakers expressed an interest in keeping abreast of new technologies, in order to remain current with broadcasters and facilitate production planning. Workshops or information newsletters were suggested.

- Production and post-production technologies

On-going tech refresher courses were desired, specifically on new camera technologies, new editing technologies, and the impact of editing technologies on broadcast options.

- Distribution

Filmmakers want to know how to make the best of Canadian distribution avenues. Some online survey respondents mentioned the Canadian distribution system as a weakness.

Given fairly limited Canadian distribution avenues, filmmakers want to know what distribution opportunities exist abroad. A number of filmmakers noted a need for training on working with the U.S. and other countries, as “international co-productions are very complex.” One filmmaker stated, “As an industry, Canada needs to maintain its worldwide leadership in documentary, so we should be trying to get better and be internationally competitive.” Workshops are preferred, usually in an industry event setting (such as at HotDocs or the Rencontres internationales du documentaire).

- Communication skills

Many experienced filmmakers and documentary observers indicated that the most pressing skills need relates to the upcoming generation’s ability to communicate. Serious concerns were noted about the inability of young filmmakers to express ideas clearly, succinctly and with correct usage of grammar and spelling. This inability to clearly express ideas is seen as a critical gap and appears to be a broad gap in the education system. Newer filmmakers themselves noted fairly high needs in communications skills development.

Many filmmakers desired greater networking opportunities. Some wanted more opportunities to create a support network among their colleagues. As one filmmaker said, “People need to talk more about their journeys.” Many filmmakers want greater opportunities (and financial support) to travel to Toronto, Montreal, and other centres for festivals and workshop opportunities.

- Historical and cultural knowledge: An erosion of quality?

A number of speakers at the November 15th Forum indicated the need for the new generation of documentary filmmakers to familiarize themselves with classic Canadian and international documentaries. This points to a possible lack of understanding on the part of young filmmakers about the curiosity and quality storytelling that are central to documentary filmmaking.

Some respondents expressed their belief that the craftsmanship of documentary filmmaking may have eroded. There was a feeling among some experienced filmmakers that younger filmmakers may lack depth in their knowledge of the world around them. These concerns speak to a level of historical knowledge and cultural literacy that is felt to be lacking generally in today’s society.

Difficulties in the documentary marketplace have also led to a reduced focus on quality of the work. As a training organization representative noted in our online survey:

“Atomization of production, reduced TV budgets and slots, and too much of an emphasis on money, deals and pitching have gotten us away from the possible poetry of documentary. All the same, wonderful films get made every year.”

Section 3: Training Offerings

Research Methodology

Regarding documentary training and skills development offerings, we conducted an in-depth web search to identify training programs offered to documentary filmmakers. We attempted to ensure that a large number of training organizations were covered, including universities, community colleges, film schools and institutes, festivals, associations and artist-run centres. Although the resulting list of training opportunities (see Appendix B) is very extensive, there undoubtedly remain some gaps in the list. The preliminary results of this search were presented at the November 15th Forum of the Documentary Network/Observatoire du documentaire. After November 15th, the list was updated through further web research, email contact, and information from our online survey.

We invited 66 training organizations to participate in an online survey that was available in English or French. Representatives from three organizations indicated that they do not offer training programs to documentary filmmakers. Representatives from three other organizations provided feedback by email and/or telephone. Of the remaining 60 organizations, representatives from 30 organizations completed the brief online survey of their training offerings. The high response rate (50%) was achieved through an initial email, a follow-up email, and phone calls to organizations considered key to the success of the survey. This high response rate ensures a representative national sample.

Despite the high response rate, there were not enough responses to the online survey to provide regional or linguistic breakdowns of the responses. However, significant information about training offerings in different parts of the country is provided in Appendix B.

One of the responding organizations offers drama-based film training only, and their response was therefore excluded from the data in this section.

Survey Questions

The online survey asked representatives of training organizations the following questions:

- What training and skills development program(s) do you offer that are commonly undertaken by documentary filmmakers? (If more than 3 programs were offered, respondents were asked to contact Hill Strategies Research with a list of the programs that they provide.)

- For each program you offer, is the training targeted specifically to documentary filmmakers?
 - Exclusively documentary-focussed
 - Strong documentary focus, but includes drama, experimental, new media and/or other film types
 - Geared to filmmaking in general
 - Other (please specify)

- For each program you offer, is the training delivered in ...
 - A single lecture or roundtable discussion
 - A single workshop
 - An experiential learning situation (such as internships, mentorship, apprenticeship)
 - Less than 10 workshops or classes
 - 10 classes or more
 - Other (please specify)

- Do you provide training opportunities for documentary filmmakers in the following areas...
 - Generating ideas / Concept development
 - Preparing proposals (including researching, synopsis writing and preparing an initial schedule and budget)
 - Pitching and selling proposals
 - Administration of the production process (such as preparing budgets and contracts, negotiating with funding agencies and pursuing international co-productions)
 - Preproduction (including securing financing, hiring cast and crew, writing scripts, creating schedules)
 - Production (including managing locations, equipment, crew, schedules, special effects, travel and all aspects of recording)
 - Post-production (including writing final script, picture and sound editing, ADR, special effects, mixing and obtaining approvals)
 - Distributing and marketing the film (including publicity and media relations)
 - General communication skills (including writing, presenting ideas, interview skills, inter-cultural communication)

For each “yes” response to the various areas of training, interviewees were asked:

- If you provide training in this area, do you consider it to be...
 - very well covered by your program (i.e., a strength)
 - adequately covered in your program
 - in need of improvement
 - other

Additional questions asked:

- What are the major challenges you face in meeting the training needs of documentary filmmakers? (Please respond briefly or by using bullet points.)
- Do you have any additional comments regarding the documentary training offered by your organization?
- Looking at the overall situation in Canada, do you think that there are particular strengths in the training of documentary filmmakers? (If yes, what?)
- Overall, do you think that there are particular gaps or weaknesses in the training of documentary filmmakers in Canada? (If yes, what?)
- Do you have any suggestions for the improvement of documentary filmmaker training in Canada? (If yes, what?)
- Do you have any other comments?

Survey Results

As a result of our efforts to ensure broad participation, web surveys were filled out by organizations located in eight provinces and one territory (NWT, BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, NS and NB). The 29 documentary training organizations that responded to the online survey include:

- 11 film coops (artist-run centres);
- 10 universities or colleges;
- 6 festivals, associations or other organizations; and
- 2 film schools or institutes.

The diversity of organizations offering training to documentary filmmakers is both a strength and a weakness: a weakness in that there is a very complex, piecemeal training structure with limited (if any) coordination. As one survey respondent noted, there are “too many disparate/competing groups.” However, this can also be a strength in that, as another respondent indicated, “one policy or opportunity is not as good as a wide variety.” A third respondent summed up the situation: documentary filmmakers “are required to hunt for programs and put together their training in a variety of ways. This is a strength, to some extent, as it means there are a variety of approaches to doc filmmaking. This diversity is important.”

At first glance, there do not appear to be major gaps in the offerings of training organizations responding to the survey. Almost all of the 29 training organizations offering a documentary program indicated that they cover the full range of skills in the CHRC skills chart. At the lowest end, 25 of the 29 respondents indicated that they cover

the skills areas dealing with “selling a proposal” and “pre-production”. At the high end, all 29 respondents indicated that they cover “generating ideas”.

The 29 survey respondents indicated that they offer a total of 61 training programs to documentary filmmakers:

- 17 of these programs are exclusively focussed on documentary filmmaking;
- 11 have a strong documentary focus, but includes drama, experimental, new media and/or other film types;
- 23 are geared toward filmmaking in general; and
- For 10 programs, survey participants wrote in other responses.

In terms of training delivery methods of the 61 documentary training programs:

- 16 are single lectures, workshops or roundtable sessions;
- 9 are shorter series of workshops (less than 10 workshops);
- 21 are longer series of workshops or classes (10 workshops or more);
- 7 are experiential learning programs (i.e., internship, mentorship, apprenticeship);
- 6 are a mix of different methods; and
- 2 have other delivery methods.

The 17 programs that are exclusively focussed on documentary filmmaking are provided by organizations in Edmonton, Regina, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. The 11 programs with a strong documentary focus are provided by organizations in Yellowknife, Vancouver and area, Regina, Toronto and Halifax. These strong or exclusive documentary programs appear to be offered in a fairly broad geographic portion of the country, although there is not full coverage of all skills in all regions. (It is important to reiterate that there were not enough responses to the online survey to provide a fuller regional or linguistic analysis of the responses. Significant information about documentary training offerings in different parts of the country is provided in Appendix B.)

Of the 17 programs that are exclusively focussed on documentary filmmaking:

- 6 are single lectures, workshops or roundtable sessions;
- 1 is a shorter series of workshops;
- 6 are longer series of workshops or classes (3 series provided by FAVA in Edmonton, 2 courses at the University of Regina, and 1 course at Concordia University);
- 1 is an experiential learning program;
- 2 are a mix of different methods; and
- 1 has another delivery method.

Our online survey asked representatives of training organizations to assess the coverage of their documentary training offerings (as a whole, not individual programs) using four possible responses:

- very well covered by your program (i.e., a strength);
- adequately covered in your program;
- in need of improvement; or
- other (please specify).

The organizations' self-assessments provide some insights into skills areas with potential training gaps.

The skills areas receiving fairly positive self-assessments from training organizations are:

- Preparing proposals: 13 respondents indicated "very well covered", while only 4 indicated "in need of improvement";
- Post-production: 10 respondents indicated "very well covered", while only 2 indicated "in need of improvement";
- Generating ideas: 10 respondents indicated "very well covered", while 4 indicated "in need of improvement"; and
- Production: 9 respondents indicated "very well covered", while 4 indicated "in need of improvement".

Skills areas receiving a moderate self-assessment from training organizations include:

- Selling proposals ("pitching"): 7 respondents indicated "very well covered", while 4 indicated "in need of improvement";
- Pre-production: 7 respondents indicated "very well covered", while 5 indicated "in need of improvement"; and
- General communication skills: 8 respondents indicated "very well covered", while 6 indicated "in need of improvement".

Two skills areas received a relatively poor self-assessment from training organizations:

- Production administration: 8 respondents indicated "very well covered", while 8 indicated "in need of improvement"; and
- Delivery/release (distribution): 6 respondents indicated "very well covered", while 10 indicated "in need of improvement."

Challenges Faced by Training Providers

The following are some key challenges noted in our online survey by training organization (quoted verbatim from their responses):

Resources

- “Lack of resources” (mentioned by many organizations)
- “The demand exceeds our resources”
- “Funding advanced workshops or bringing in outside instructors or those with specialized knowledge of topics like distribution is nearly impossible for us”
- “Small community, so it's hard to cover the costs of putting an extensive documentary program together for such a small group without it being overly expensive. There isn't much funding to subsidize such a program.”
- “Documentary filmmakers in general have little money to pay for skills development”
- “Organizing, promotion, financial cost of running a workshop or seminar”
- “The ability to deliver training in new technologies and equipment due to the cost of resources and the lack of funding”
- “The continually changing nature of the funding of documentary films”
- “The students don't foresee making lots of money in the future and, therefore, are hesitant to invest in education”

Support for filmmakers

- “There is not enough support to filmmakers who want to make independent doc productions.”

Instructors

- “Lack of teachers in documentary film milieu”
- “Trained professionals to teach”
- “We use local instructors as our courses are break even and we want to make them accessible to as many people as possible as we are a co-op”

Inability to meet all needs

- “Lack of training partners specifically interested in docs”
- “Although we're the largest film program in western Canada, we are unable to specialize in one genre. With more resources we could create streams and probably would.”
- “Comprehensive training is not possible in a general degree program at the moment”
- “2 year duration of our program: broad introductory nature of program”

- “At this time the genre of documentary is now composed of documentary, lifestyle and factual entertainment. This makes delivering specifics for each time consuming.”
- “Due to the range of experience the participants bring to the workshops, it is very difficult to satisfy everyone's need.”
- “Ensuring that each participant gets the sort of coverage they are looking for. Each participant has a very different idea of what documentary filmmaking is.”
- “Difficult to find an appropriate method for such a multidisciplinary activity”
- “Trying to be as diverse as possible; need to know their skills set and go from there; try to target a group, and hope that it is correct.”

Other challenges

- “finding mentorship opportunities”
- “students lacking research skills”
- “story development (always a need for improvement)”
- “equipment access and accessing case studies”
- “getting people to follow through on doing projects once they receive the appropriate funding”
- “having spoken to many documentarians about their needs, finding pre-sales is invariably the most important issue for them.”

Table 3 presents a list of the 30 training organizations responding to the online survey. One of these organizations indicated that it does not provide any documentary film training, so their input was not included in the analysis of documentary training offerings.

Table 3: Training organizations responding to the online survey (by location) – 30 organizations		
Organization	City	Province
Western Arctic Moving Pictures (WAMP)	Yellowknife	NT
CineVic Society of Independent Filmmakers	Victoria	BC
Langara Film Arts	Vancouver	BC
Vancouver International Film Festival	Vancouver	BC
Simon Fraser University, School for the Contemporary Arts	Burnaby	BC
Capilano College	North Vancouver	BC
The Film and Video Arts Society - Alberta	Edmonton	AB
Red Deer College	Red Deer	AB
University of Regina	Regina	SK
National Screen Institute - Canada	Winnipeg	MB
Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning	Oakville	ON
Confederation College	Thunder Bay	ON
Charles Street Video	Toronto	ON
Documentary Organisation of Canada/Documentaristes du Canada	Toronto	ON
Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning	Toronto	ON
Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto	Toronto	ON
Toronto Film College	Toronto	ON
Toronto International Film Festival Group	Toronto	ON
Women in Film and Television - Toronto	Toronto	ON
Canadian Screen Training Centre	Ottawa	ON
CFTPA	Ottawa	ON
SAW Video Association	Ottawa	ON
Concordia University	Montreal	QC
Institut national de l'image et du son	Montréal	QC
main film	Montréal	QC
UQÀM	Montréal	QC
New Brunswick Filmmakers' Co-op	Fredericton	NB
Atlantic Film Festival	Halifax	NS
Moving Images Group	Halifax	NS
NSCAD University, Film Department	Halifax	NS

Section 4: Funding agencies and broadcasters

Research Methodology

After interviewing documentary filmmakers and surveying training organizations, Hill Strategies Research was asked to contact a sample of documentary film funding agencies and broadcasters in order to understand, from their point of view, the skills needs of documentary filmmakers as outlined by the CHRC competency chart, and to hear any suggestions they might offer to improve documentary film training in Canada.

Hill Strategies Research interviewed representatives of six broadcasters and four funding agencies, selected from a list of recommended contacts provided by the Project Steering Committee. Of the ten respondents, two provided general comments but did not respond to specific questions regarding competency skills. One of these is a representative of a new media organization and provided comments related to documentary film and new media. The second respondent felt that each documentary film has differing needs and it would be impossible to apply an industry standard.

The interview protocol was based on the CHRC's October draft of the competency chart for documentary filmmakers and was similar to the protocol used to interview documentary filmmakers. Interviews were conducted in English and French.

It should be noted that most funding agencies and broadcasters do not participate in the entire documentary film production process. Those not involved in specific competency areas were asked to tell the interviewer so, and their responses were coded as a non-response (rather than 'no training needed'). Non-responses are excluded from our analysis of documentary filmmaker competencies.

Interviewees were asked the following questions:

- How is your organization involved in documentary film funding (broadcasting)?
- At what phases of a documentary film project do you interact the most with directors or producers?
- Is training and skills development a part of your organization's mandate?
- Based on your experience, do you feel that documentary filmmakers have training needs in any of the following specific areas of documentary filmmaking?
 - Generating ideas
 - Preparing proposals (including researching, synopsis writing and preparing an initial schedule and budget)
 - "Pitching" and selling proposals
 - Administrative details of getting a film made, such as preparing contracts, detailed schedules and budgets ("Set The Conditions To Make It Happen")
 - Preproduction
 - Production
 - Postproduction

- Distributing and releasing the film (including publicity and media work)
- General communication skills (including writing, presenting ideas, interview skills, inter-cultural communication)

For each “yes” response, interviewees were asked:

- Do you think that filmmakers could best improve their skills in through experience, training or further education?
- Do you have any suggestions for the improvement of documentary filmmaker training in Canada? (If yes, what?)
- Do you see a role for your organization in future training and development of documentary filmmakers? (If yes, what?)

The ten respondents represent a wide spectrum of the documentary film industry: private and public funding agencies as well as specialty, public and private broadcasters. Hill Strategies Research interviewed four organizations located in Toronto, three in Montreal, and one each in Ottawa, Vancouver and Winnipeg.

Training and Skills Development Needs of Documentary Filmmakers

Many funding agencies and broadcasters felt that training is a necessary and vital part of being a filmmaker. Many suggested that training should be undertaken throughout the course of filmmakers’ careers. As one respondent noted, “the environment gets noisier, stakes get higher, and competition stronger” the longer one is involved in the documentary film industry. Another general comment voiced by some respondents is the desire to see more mid and senior level training offered to documentary filmmakers. One respondent suggested that Canada is at a “competitive disadvantage” as mid and senior level filmmakers are not given the opportunity to develop the high level management skills needed for projects such as international co-productions.

Eight funding agencies and broadcasters responded to the majority of questions regarding the competency chart. Results from their responses to skills training needs are listed in Table 4 below. A rating is applied to the percentage of funding agencies and broadcasters expressing a training need. The scale for this rating is as follows: low (0-19%), low-moderate (20-39%), moderate (40-59%), high (60-79%), very high (80-100%).

Table 4: Percentage of funders and broadcasters who believe documentary producers or directors have training needs in skills areas		
Top-level skills	%	Needs rating
Generate an idea	50%	Moderate
Prepare a proposal	75%	High
Sell a proposal	33%	Low-moderate
Production administration (Set the conditions to make it happen)	100%	Very high
Prepare production (preproduction)	n/a	See note below*
Execute production		
Execute post production		
Deliver and release documentary	100%	Very high
Demonstrate communication skills	86%	Very high
*Note: Because many funders and broadcasters are not directly involved in pre-production / production / post-production, many respondents declined to comment on these skills areas. These three areas did not receive enough responses for the data to be reliable.		

Many respondents qualified their responses by stating that not all filmmakers need training in each skills area identified as having high training needs. In addition, many funding agencies and broadcasters realize that not all filmmakers in Canada have access to the same training institutions or film industry networking opportunities due to their geographic location.

In regards to the competencies listed in the interview protocol, funders' and broadcasters' responses generally reinforce the findings of filmmaker interviews and the training organization survey. Specifically, the highest training needs exist in the areas of production administration and delivery/release. Funders and broadcasters felt that very high training needs also exist for general communication skills. An analysis of these areas is presented below.

- Production administration

All of the eight respondents felt that more training is necessary in production administration. One respondent called the lack of business skills in budgeting and administration “woeful,” and another suggested that more training was necessary to get filmmakers from the pitch stage to engaging and executing partnerships.

- Distribution (Delivery and release)

All of the funders and broadcasters responding to the question regarding distribution suggested that more skills development is needed in this area. One respondent suggested that filmmakers need a better understanding of the distribution process in order to make the most of opportunities at festivals and to put their films in front of the right broadcasters. Three respondents suggested that filmmakers themselves need to be the most vocal advocate and marketer of their film because a film “isn’t finished until it is launched.”

However, two broadcasters suggested that, although filmmakers need to understand this facet of the industry in a general sense, distribution is “a hard road” and should be left to professionals. One respondent noted that it is difficult for independent filmmakers to establish the national or international contacts necessary to maximize revenues from a film: “there’s a market for documentary films in at least 100 territories, with 4 or 5 different media in each...[Distribution] is a full time job.”

- General communication skills

Six out of seven funders and broadcasters responding to a question regarding general communication skills suggested that they would like to see more skills development occur in this area. Many respondents suggested that documentary filmmakers need to develop the ability to clearly discuss their project and vision with the production team and those aiding in the development of the production (such as funding agencies).

Concerns were expressed by one respondent in regards to the professionalism shown by filmmakers when interacting with other parts of the industry (such as funding agencies, media, and other audiences). Although respondents understood that documentary filmmakers are often passionate about their cause, three respondents suggested that training in basic business etiquette would be helpful, as would the cultivation of a dispassionate understanding of the position of others in the industry. As one funding agency representative put it, “governments see [documentary filmmakers] as a sad group of malcontents,” making it hard to get support for additional funding. The respondent suggested that greater professionalism would promote a positive image of documentary filmmakers in the wider cultural community.

One broadcaster indicated that language can be an obstacle within the Aboriginal community. Statistics Canada reports that there are more than 35 Aboriginal languages in Canada, many of them endangered. The challenge of finding and using an interpreter to explore a story requires patience and skill on the part of the documentary filmmaker.

Funding agencies and broadcasters suggested that documentary filmmakers have high training needs related to preparing proposals. Of the eight respondents, six said that more skills development is needed in this area. Some suggestions for proposal improvement include: clarification in direction and point of view of documentary; more research into rights, royalties and other technicalities; and the clear articulation of the story. One respondent also noted that, while it is important to prepare a proposal based on what is appealing to the market, documentary filmmakers must also tell a compelling story. Another respondent stated that better communication between documentary filmmakers, broadcasters and funders can lead to a more streamlined proposal. This can also allow broadcasters and funding agencies to know “what’s coming up,” and to anticipate the project in their budgets and schedules.

Funders and broadcasters felt the remaining skills areas have moderate or low-moderate training needs.

- Generating ideas

Four of the eight funding agencies and broadcasters felt that there is a need for more skills development in generating ideas. Generally, these respondents felt that filmmakers need to learn how to communicate their ideas clearly in a documentary format. The remaining four respondents felt that ideas are plentiful and that documentary filmmakers do not need training in this area.

- Pitching and selling a proposal

Most respondents suggested that filmmakers have adequate skills in pitching and selling a proposal. One respondent suggested that any training in pitching should be about the process of refining an idea to the essence of what it is and why it is important, rather than how best to ‘ambush’ a broadcaster or be an instant marketer.

Many funding agencies and broadcasters are not directly involved in the areas of pre-production, production or post-production. Response rates to these skills questions were very low as only two or three respondents felt that they could discuss the training in these areas. Those that responded reported particular needs for skills development related to new technology, such as honing editing skills (as digital media allows for much more film to be shot), embracing new technology such as HDTV, and developing complementary interactive media sites for documentary films. As one respondent noted, new media “is the future. [Documentary filmmakers] can’t do what they do without a new media component.”

Suggestions for improving documentary film training

Two common themes became apparent when respondents were asked for suggestions to improve documentary filmmaker training in Canada. These are:

- Broad based learning and an understanding of the industry – its people, their roles, and the history of film in Canada. Two respondents also noted the need for documentary filmmakers to better identify and research their market as broadcasters and funding agencies have different foci.
- Training in small business management skills such as accounting, budgeting and reading contracts. As one respondent noted, business skills are skills that “no one really wants to learn, because [documentary filmmakers] want to make the film. But independent documentary filmmakers are small business people.”

Best methods for skills training

Respondents were divided on whether filmmakers could best improve their skills in the competency chart areas through higher education programs, workshops, mentorship or experiential learning opportunities such as apprenticeships or internships. In general, it was suggested that formal educational institutions are ideal for a well-rounded education in film studies and basic filmmaking skills, but that workshops could be used to teach timely subjects, such as new technologies. Most funding agencies and broadcasters felt that the best ways to learn skills in documentary filmmaking are through hands-on training opportunities and mentorship with experienced documentary filmmakers. Differences arose in how these experiential learning opportunities would be combined with other learning methods such as formal education programs and workshops.

Future training and development

Funders and broadcasters see themselves as a part of the training process, although training is not a formal part of the mandate of most funding and broadcast agencies. For broadcasters, their contribution is seen as hands-on, which includes employing interns or apprentices and taking part in outreach panels to educate new documentary filmmakers. They take risks in commissioning untried talent to develop documentary films for broadcast. But, as one respondent put it, “these things are opportunistic not systemic.” For documentary filmmakers, finding these opportunities would be based on research, networking, timing and luck.

Funding agencies try to guide documentary filmmakers through the grant application process as best they can, but have limited professional development funds available. Some expressed the desire for more money to support documentary filmmakers’ professional development. As one respondent stated, “I don’t think funders could do the training, but they could send [documentary filmmakers] places where they could learn.”

Section 5: Training gaps analysis

The fact that many documentary filmmakers expressed the need for time and funding to pursue their projects and undertake training, usually in response to an open question about their training needs, demonstrates that this is of greater concern than any particular content area.

In addition, many filmmakers are not aware of what training is available. There are a number of small companies, with limited interlinkages, producing documentary films. At the same time, there is no centralized location where filmmakers can get information about training. Some expressed the opinion that a national body could play a role in bridging this gap by providing a single information portal for documentary filmmaking information.

A respondent to our online survey spoke of a gap in informal networking and mentorship relationships: “We find ourselves being sorry that there is no longer a long hallway of editing rooms in each city where an emerging filmmaker can hang out with more experienced filmmakers in [a mentorship] relationship. This is crucial.”

Some filmmakers expressed a desire for more networking, such as a common viewing and discussion area for documentaries in development. Some spoke of the need for discussion of editing practices, from viewing a first edit and seeing the changes through to the final edit.

Outside of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, documentary training availability appears to be somewhat hit-and-miss, with documentary training being provided by a range of organizations. In some locations, documentary-specific training does not appear to be available. As one respondent to our online survey noted: “In the regions, I can see gaps in the availability of advanced training that would allow filmmakers to move to the next level in their development. In New Brunswick, there are no university or community college courses dedicated to this genre.”

In addition, the absence of university-level documentary-specific training in Quebec was pointed out to us at the early stages of our research. Our research discovered one documentary-specific university-level course at Concordia University in Montreal. We found another program currently in development.

Some interviewees and online survey respondents noted that there is a lack of trained professionals to teach documentary filmmaking.

Because of financial constraints, many filmmakers cannot afford to travel to Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver for festivals and workshops. There may be opportunities to provide some training opportunities online, such as HotDocs’ online pitch observation session that one filmmaker spoke of during her interview. Other options include web conferences, online communities and e-learning.

Other qualitative gaps in documentary filmmaker training include the fact that many training programs are geared to filmmaking in general, often with a focus on fiction filmmaking, rather than targeted specifically to the needs of documentary filmmakers. During our interviews, documentary filmmakers expressed a strong desire for training programs to be project-specific, hands-on, and practical for their documentary needs.

Aboriginal filmmakers suggested that the Aboriginal community was not well represented in the documentary film industry, and that there was “a real shortage of qualified Aboriginal filmmakers” in all of the competency areas. As one respondent explained, the Aboriginal filmmaking industry is growing rapidly to keep pace with the rest of Canada’s much older filmmaking industry. This growth may be leaving those in the industry feeling overstretched, or as one Aboriginal filmmaker put it, “burnt out” from acting as a role model and leader to aspiring filmmakers in the community. This suggests that there may be a shortage of qualified Aboriginal filmmakers and film craftspeople willing to act as mentors to a new generation.

Overall, a number of respondents noted that there are relatively few experiential learning opportunities for documentary filmmakers.

Table 5 provides an analysis of the gaps that appear to arise when comparing the results of the training needs interviews and the training offerings survey.

Table 5: Training gaps analysis based on interviews and surveys					
Skills area	Needs rating (all filmmakers)	Needs rating (new filmmakers)	Training offerings rating	Funders/ Broadcasters	Gaps analysis
Generating ideas	Very low	Low-moderate	Well covered	Moderate	No gap
Preparing proposals	Low-moderate	High	Well covered	High	Possible gap
Selling proposals	Moderate	Fairly high	Moderate	Low-moderate	Possible gap
Production administration	Moderate-high	High	Relatively poor	Very high	Clear gap
Pre-production	Low-moderate	Fairly high	Moderate	n/a (see note)	Possible gap
Production	Moderate	High	Well covered	n/a (see note)	Possible gap
Post-production	Relatively high	High	Well covered	n/a (see note)	Possible gap
Delivery/release	Relatively high	Low-moderate	Relatively poor	Very high	Clear gap
Communications	Low-moderate	Very high	Moderate	Very high	Possible gap

Note: Because many funders and broadcasters are not directly involved in pre-production / production / post-production, many respondents declined to comment on these skills areas. These three areas did not receive enough responses for the data to be reliable.

Areas with a clear gap are:

Production administration: Newer filmmakers, funders and broadcasters reported very high training needs, while training organizations rated their offerings fairly poorly in production administration. Among all filmmakers, production administration was a moderate to high need area. This indicates a clear gap in training for documentary filmmakers in this skills area.

Delivery/release (distribution): There are many difficulties involved in distributing a documentary film. In our filmmaker interviews, delivery and release of films was cited as a high overall need. Funders and broadcasters also rated this area as having very high needs for skills development. Training organizations rated their offerings fairly poorly in delivery/release of films. This speaks to a second clear gap in training.

Areas with a possible gap include:

Communications skills: Newer filmmakers reported very high training needs, and many experienced filmmakers noted that communication skills are lacking among younger filmmakers. According to funders and broadcasters, there is a very high need for skills development in this area. Training organizations rated their offerings in communications skills at a middling level. This speaks to a possible gap in training offerings.

Pre-production: New filmmakers rated this competency an area of fairly high need, and all filmmakers rated this area a low-moderate training need. Training organizations rated their offerings in pre-production as moderate. The discrepancy between the opinions of new filmmakers and the training offerings suggest there may be a possible training gap. (As many funders and broadcasters are not involved in this stage of documentary film production, a reliable assessment of their views of filmmakers' training needs in this skills area is not available.)

Production and post-production: Many filmmakers spoke of the constant need to keep up with production and post-production technological advances. Some wanted training in camera techniques in documentary filmmaking. Training organizations gave their production and post-production offerings a high rating. There may not necessarily be a wide gap in training offerings in production and post-production, as filmmakers concerns may simply be about the constant *need* to upgrade skills rather than any lack of training availability. However, this area should be investigated further as a possible gap in training. (As many funders and broadcasters are not involved in these stages of documentary film production, a reliable assessment of their views of filmmakers' training needs in these skills areas is not available.)

An area of need for newer filmmakers only:

Selling proposals: This skills area is rated as a fairly high need by newer filmmakers and a moderate need for all filmmakers interviewed. Training organizations rated their offerings in these areas at a moderate level. However, feedback from funders and broadcasters suggests that training in this skills area is sufficient. As one respondent stated, pitching “is a grossly overrated skill.” The respondent suggested that broadcasters want to make the best films from the best stories, not necessarily fund the best pitch.

An area of disagreement:

Preparing proposals: This area is rated as a high need for newer filmmakers, possibly related to general communication skills. All filmmakers surveyed rated this skills area as a low-moderate need. A training organization online survey respondent noted that documentary filmmakers need “better training for writing and research skills development.” However, training organizations rated their offerings in this area quite highly. Funders and broadcasters felt that proposal writing could be clearer and more concise. These varied responses to the need for skills development in preparing proposals indicate that no consensus exists over documentary filmmakers’ skills needs in this area.

Section 6: Recommendations

1. Work to ensure that appropriate funding is in place for documentary training

In our online survey, many organizations noted that they are in the process of developing new documentary programs (or have recently done so). Of particular note is a new “Independent Documentary Production Program” at Humber College in Toronto, the first post-secondary program dedicated specifically to documentary filmmaking. Ryerson University (also of Toronto) is currently developing a Master’s program in documentary filmmaking.

It was clear that many more organizations could be encouraged to increase their documentary offerings with increased funding. Many organizations expressed challenges relating to demands exceeding resources, the difficulty of putting together a specialized program without it being overly expensive, and the lack of resources that documentary filmmakers have to pay for training.

Specific recommendations in this area include:

- 1.1 Work to ensure that funding for training organizations is increased.
- 1.2 Encourage film cooperatives to offer documentary-focussed training programs. There are film coops in many cities across the country. Appropriate funding could certainly entice many of these organizations to provide documentary production-focussed training programs. Along with e-learning options, this may be an effective way of ensuring regional coverage to training opportunities.
- 1.3 Ensure that more training programs are available to Aboriginal filmmakers, either specifically for Aboriginal filmmakers or as an Aboriginal stream within a larger institutional program. Necessary to these programs would be an element of cultural awareness. For example, one Aboriginal filmmaker stated in response to training needs for selling a proposal that “some kind of workshop or discussion [was needed] on how Aboriginals can manage the cultural conflict of self-promotion. [It] goes against the culture to ‘brag’.”
- 1.4 Examine the possibility with documentary funding agencies of incorporating experiential learning opportunities within their funding of documentary production.
- 1.5 Work to ensure that significant training subsidies are available for low-income documentary filmmakers.
- 1.6 Ensure that travel funds are made available to filmmakers for travel to festivals (HotDocs, RIDM) and other networking and training opportunities.
- 1.7 Increase funding and incentives for professional associations to monitor and share information regarding the training needs and opportunities for documentary

filmmakers. This could include publishing and publicizing the training opportunities identified by our research as well as ensuring continued updates, possibly through a web publication.

2. Using this report as a basis, develop a national training strategy for documentary filmmakers.

A national strategy for documentary film training could address many issues raised in this report as well as many others that were noted by research participants but could not be addressed within the scope of this project, such as:

- Developing a balance between the need for a single body to spearhead national training and the need to have a variety of groups offering documentary training opportunities
- Ensuring effective collaboration between unions, guilds, training institutions, funding agencies and documentary producers

However, many challenges in documentary filmmaking lie outside of the scope of "training" per se (including funding and distribution difficulties). The national training strategy for documentary filmmaking would be most effective as part of a larger effort to research, evaluate and improve the state of the industry as a whole.

3. Ensure that the content of existing (and new) training programs meets the needs identified by documentary filmmakers.

Specific recommendations pertaining to experiential learning opportunities include:

3.1 Expand experiential learning opportunities. Ensure that mentors are provided appropriate compensation. Ensure that mentorship programs are of practical, real-world relevance to filmmakers.

3.2 Encourage universities, NFB, CFTPA, CBC, DOC and other training organizations to institute or expand mentorship programs

3.3 Ensure that a greater number of internship positions are available.

3.4 Expand internships to include pre-production and production administration activities (Most companies must be in production to be allocated an internship. As a result, a lot of the upfront work is missed.)

Recommendations concerning the content of training programs include:

3.5 Encourage universities, colleges, film coops and other training providers to improve their coverage and pertinence of the production and business aspects of filmmaking.

3.6 Encourage training providers to teach filmmakers to produce their projects in a sound financial and profitable manner.

3.7 Encourage universities, colleges, film coops and other training providers to improve their training related to the distribution of documentary films. Work to ensure increased awareness of and exposure to the international marketplace for documentary films, especially feature length films.

3.8 Encourage documentary funders and training organizations to make available budget templates and “best practice” examples.

3.9 Encourage training providers to develop workshops related to rights-holder identification and rights clearances.

3.10 Ensure that workshops using current production and post-production technologies are widely available.

3.11 Work to improve the general and cultural knowledge of new documentary filmmakers throughout the education system.

3.12 Work to ensure that new documentary filmmakers have the communication skills that are needed to clearly and effectively convey their ideas.

3.13 Encourage post-secondary institutions with film production programs to institute documentary production and direction courses.

4. Ensure that access to documentary-focussed training is available across the country

4.1 Encourage film cooperatives to offer documentary-focussed training programs. There are film coops in many cities across the country. This may be an effective way of ensuring regional coverage.

4.2 Encourage training providers to expand their online training offerings, where applicable. Options such as web conferences, online communities and e-learning may not fill all needs, but for many filmmakers outside of major centres, web-based training was seen to be much better than no training opportunities at all. Some experiential learning options (internships, mentorships and apprenticeships) could be offered both on an in-person and virtual basis.

5. Ensure the establishment of a documentary knowledge exchange space

Encourage a lead documentary organization (or consortium of organizations) to provide a documentary knowledge exchange space, where documentary filmmakers can gather to informally discuss and develop their projects and learn from each other. This networking centre could include viewing and discussing current and historical documentary films as well as discussing actual proposals and budgets. An online version of this knowledge exchange should also be considered in order to improve regional access.

Appendix A: List of Interviewees

Filmmakers and other experts interviewed			
First name	Last name	City	Province
Deb	Andrews	Ottawa	ON
Philippe	Baylaucq	Montréal	QC
Gilles	Bélanger	Montréal	QC
Sally	Blake	Toronto	ON
Marie	Cadieux	Gatineau	QC
Gil	Cardinal	Edmonton	AB
Brenda	Chambers	Kelowna	BC
Marie-France	Côté	Montréal	QC
Sandy	Crawley	Toronto	ON
Barabara	Doran	St. John's	NL
Catherine	Drolet	Montréal	QC
Pepita	Ferrari	Montréal	QC
Carol	Geddes	Teslin	YT
John	Haslett-Cuff	Toronto	ON
Maia	Iotzova	Hamilton	ON
Ava	Karvonen	Edmonton	AB
Lucette	Lupien	Montréal	QC
Moze	Mossanen	Toronto	ON
Erin Mussolum	& Michelle Welygan	Vancouver	BC
Anne	Pick	Toronto	ON
Nisa	Remigio	Montréal	QC
Monique	Simard	Montréal	QC
Bart	Simpson	Vancouver	BC
John	Walker	Halifax	NS
Marian Frances	White	St. John's	NL

Funding agencies and broadcasters interviewed				
First name	Last Name	Organization	City	Province
Michael	Burns	The Documentary Channel	Toronto	ON
Rudy	Buttignol	TV Ontario	Toronto	ON
Lauren	Davis	Telefilm (Vancouver)	Vancouver	BC
Louise	Gendron	Télé-Québec	Montreal	QC
Robin	Jackson	Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund	Ottawa	ON
Laurie	Jones	National Film Board of Canada	Montreal	QC
Joëlle	Lévie	Société de développement des entreprises culturelles (SODEC)	Montreal	QC
Joanne	Levy	Aboriginal Peoples Television Network	Winnipeg	MB
Jerry	McIntosh	CBC TV/Newsworld	Toronto	ON
Andra	Sheffer	Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund	Toronto	ON

Appendix B: Training offerings list

Breakdown of the 80 organizations included in the training offerings list					
	University or college	Film school or institute	Festival, association, etc	Film coops	Total
BC	3	3	5	3	14
AB	1	1	1	1	4
SK	1			1	2
MB		1		1	2
ON	8	2	15	3	28
QC	5	6	8	2	21
Atlantic	1		2	2	5
Territories				1	1
Subtotals	19	13	31	14	77
Multiple locations	1	0	1	1	3
Totals	20	13	32	15	80
<u>Not included in above totals</u>					
Cégeps	<i>various locations in QC</i>				
Telefilm Canada	<i>Quebec, Ontario, Western, Atlantic</i>				