



**Corus Entertainment to Work towards Gender
Parity in Key Creative Roles by 2025**

September 30, 2019

Introduction

On December 13, 2018, Corus was pleased to participate in the CRTC's Women in Production Summit, alongside Canada's largest public and private-sector broadcasters.

During the Summit, all participants agreed that, although there has been some progress in recent years, current data shows that women continue to face barriers to career advancement in the Canadian film and television production industry. Gender under-representation in key creative positions must be addressed. Progress on this front is not only good for women and society in general, but it also makes good business sense. Corus is committed to finding lasting solutions to ensure more women play leading roles in our industry.

Diversity Matters and Corus is Closing the Gap

Corus has been promoting diversity for many years as an important part of our content strategy. We have made it our mission to purposefully seek out projects led by women and have made important progress on expanding roles for women in our commissioned productions. Our series are populated with strong female voices, both behind and in front of the camera. We are actively developing and giving opportunities to women on our shows.

In fact, of the big budget dramas commissioned by Corus for the 2020 broadcast year, on average 51% of producers are female, 49% of writers are female, and 30% of directors are female. Additionally, Corus always aims for gender parity in the writing rooms for all of our projects. We are actively involved in training the next generation of producers, directors and writers. Finally, we have been encouraged to see an increase in the number of female crew members in traditionally male roles in recent years.

In the past few years, we have worked to build a path for hiring more women in the director's chair, which has traditionally been a male-dominated role. Along with our production partners, we have created shadowing opportunities that have led upcoming female directors to direct episodes of established series. Some recent examples have included:

- **Private Eyes Season 4:** Cindy Sampson shadowed Shawn Piller, producer/director on episode 401 and directed episode 403; Katrina Seville shadowed Shawn Piller on episode 406 and is directing episode 408; and, Samantha Wan shadowed Shawn Piller Season 4, with the intent to have her direct in Season 5.

- **Nurses 1:** Winnie Jong shadowed Kelly Makin on Episode 104 and directed episode 106.

We are confident the experience these talented young directors have gained on successful Corus series will accelerate their development, and deepen the talent pool of directors in Canada.

Corus is also extremely proud to count talented women among our internal team in charge of our commissioning strategy led by Lisa Godfrey. This team supports efforts to bring gender balance to all of our commissioned properties and encourages our production partners to hire women in all key creative roles. Additionally, Corus recently announced that Pam Westman would take on the role of President of Nelvana, Canada's premier animation company and a world-leading producer and distributor of children's content distributed in more than 169 countries worldwide.

On the Nelvana Studio side, measures have already been put in place, which include: gender balance and cultural diversity on every writing team, gender balance and cultural diversity with every program/series produced and on-screen non-human characters to have gender balance with particular attention to assumptions and stereotypes (i.e. robots always perceived as male).

Corus' ongoing initiatives to address the gender gap have included:

- **Women in Communications and Technology (WCT)** - Corus continues to support WCT, specifically by sponsoring the Corus mentorship program which is designed to help women advance to senior roles within the communications industries. The Company also sponsors The Protégé Project which partners up-and-coming women with C-level "sponsors" who mentor and network to help them advance into executive positions.
- **Corus Chair in "Women in Management"** - Corus' commitment to the career progression of women of all cultures and backgrounds is recognized through its support of the Corus Entertainment Chair in "Women in Management" at the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario. The Chair was established by Corus to develop innovative research, teaching materials and outreach programs on Women in Management and to broaden the impact of the school's unique teaching and research programs. This research explores culturally related themes such as the impact of race on perceptions of fairness in promotions and methods of evaluating the effectiveness of organizational diversity issues.

- **Women in Film and Television – Toronto Chapter (WIFT-T)** – Corus continues to be an active member of WIFT-T as sponsor of the Corus Media Management Accelerator program, which is designed for screen-based professionals and entrepreneurs with less than five years of management experience. Developed in conjunction with the Raymond C. Chang School of Business at Ryerson University, this program focuses on essential management principals required for future leaders.
- **Banff World Media Festival** - Every year at the Banff World Media Festival, Corus continues to co-host the Global Women in Power Lunch with A+E Networks which brings together a panel of women in the industry to discuss the challenges and triumphs they have faced in their careers. With very candid conversations, the lunch is geared to women in the screen-based industry. Corus also sponsors the Corus Writer’s Apprentice Program, which provides five up-and-coming writers an opportunity to attend Banff along with a two-week placement in the writer’s room of a current Canadian series in production. Corus supports female writers through this program.
- **Forward Together** – Corus participated in Forward Together, which is a movement forged out of a vision to bring companies and professional women together to share best practices and resources internal to one organization with all women, to enable best in class learning across industries. Whether it is world-class training, top-notch speakers, or excellent facilities, companies leverage their internal resources that, when shared broadly, are used to benefits and impact significantly more women in our greater community.
- **Support for Canadian Content** – Corus continues to be committed to fostering a strong, vibrant and sustainable media industry that is both domestically successful and globally competitive. Corus Original Production Drama team includes four strong female executives who are advocates for the advancement and inclusion of women and diversity in our industry and in our shows. We work with producers to ensure we continue to train, hire, and promote women and diverse people. We work to ensure that our scripts reflect the world around us, and do not exploit or condone violence, racism, or sexism.

Further, in 2018, Corus sponsored a panel at C21’s inaugural Content Canada Conference entitled, “Focus on Scripted: Women in Power Tell All” which featured a stellar panel of women behind the camera who are creating world-renowned content that is solidifying Canada’s place in the global market.

In addition, we sponsor many diversity initiatives, including:

- **The Corus Mentorship Program through Women in Communications & Technology** – Designed to help women advance to senior roles within the Communications industries.
- **Global Television Presents Women Killin’ It in the TV Industry** – Hosted by ET Canada’s Sangtia Patel, this panel even featured female forces in front and behind the camera of Global’s Mary Kills People. The panel included a thought provoking discussion about women in the Canadian entertainment industry and was live-streamed on Twitter. The audience was comprised of media, influencers, stakeholders, and industry contact. In light of the current climate of the entertainment industry, this event was an opportunity to showcase this female-led production and get their insights on the industry.

Corus’ Voluntary Goal to Work towards Gender Parity in Key Creative Roles by 2025

Our company is extremely proud of the work it has done to close the gap for women in our industry and we know we have made tangible progress. However, we recognize there is more work to be done. Progress on this front is not only good for women and society, it also makes good business sense.

Therefore, today, we are excited to announce our commitment to continue to work towards achieving gender parity in key creative roles for all big budget drama series by 2025, across our portfolio of services.

Key creative roles will include Director, Writer and Executive Producer/Showrunner. We will exert our decision-making powers to affect change in Nelvana programming, continue to support the development of new creative talent through a range of initiatives like our director-shadowing program, and use our power to approve key creative talent in commissioned properties as a means to affect change in Canadian independent productions.

To demonstrate progress towards this voluntary goal, we plan to include information on gender parity in our annual CRTC “Diversity Report.” This will include details on our various initiatives, outreach and information on the ratio and percentage of women in production in the key creative roles on high budget projects.

A Whole-of-Industry Approach to Gender Parity is Needed

Corus remains committed to closing the gap for women in our industry, but we cannot do it alone.

While we will continue to do our part to drive the decisions we can control, we must not forget that CRTC regulations require us to purchase the vast majority of our high budget programming from independent Canadian producers, over whom we have limited control. We also cannot forget that large, unregulated Internet-based broadcasters now commission a significant and growing percentage of film and television productions in Canada.

We hope these other parties will join us in this important effort. Only together, with a whole-of-industry approach, which includes Canadian independent producers and digital media broadcasters, can we achieve lasting change for women in our industry.