

2018 – 2020



Strategic
Plan

**Inside
Out**

Executive Summary



In 2020, Inside Out, Canada's largest presenter of LGBTQ film, will turn 30 years old. The following document outlines our roadmap to 2020, and envisions Inside Out's future position as a home for LGBTQ filmmakers and a haven for LGBTQ audiences.

Today, Inside Out is a 28-year old registered charity and socially conscious arts non-profit dedicated to challenging attitudes and changing lives through the development, presentation and promotion of LGBTQ film. Inside Out isn't just about presenting the best in LGBTQ cinema – our film program is a jumping off point for creating connections between audiences and artists. Inside Out is dedicated to supporting filmmakers at all levels of development and acting as an advocate for their work around the world. Our initiatives include our 11-day Toronto Film Festival, our 4-day Ottawa Film Festival, the year-round More Play Screening Series, the New Visions Intergenerational short film mentorship, the Inside Out for Youth programs for audiences under 25, and the world's first LGBTQ Film Financing Forum. More than 35,000 people attend Inside Out's events annually. Inside Out proudly gives cash awards to filmmakers in recognition of their achievements, and supports innovation through film and professional development programming.

Inside Out's last strategic plan, designed to shepherd the organization from 2014-16 and extended through 2017 following my appointment as Executive Director, was fully realized by the end of the 2017 festivals. The organization was able to meet and exceed all objectives under the strategic priority areas, which included Artistic Quality and Program Delivery, Audience Development and Engagement, Organizational Capacity, and Revenue Generation. In these years, the organization experienced a time of unprecedented growth and capacity building.

In developing the plan for the path to 2020, Inside Out engaged a Strategic Planning Committee to provide research and a review of input from the Inside Out stakeholder community to its Board of Directors. Through 25 key informant interviews, and with over 200 respondents to an online survey, the committee received robust feedback on Inside Out and its initiatives. The committee prepared a comprehensive report, which was shared with staff and board members and used as the basis of planning for a series of facilitated working sessions undertaken to further develop the plan. The sessions allowed the management, staff and board to bring their experiences, expertise and insight to critically analyze the organization's past, present, and proposed future initiatives. Following the sessions, the Committee continued their work in mining the feedback and working with the staff team to refine the areas of focus into the plan outlined in this document.

This plan is about innovation, sustainability, and accessibility. It captures Inside Out's vision for a future that supports and sustains LGBTQ film and filmmakers, and creates meaningful connections between those artists and our diverse LGBTQ communities. It is a plan towards making Inside Out a safer space: a space to dream, to create, and to connect. It is a plan to build a space for LGBTQ filmmakers and audiences to be their most authentic selves, together.

It is my honour and pleasure to share this plan with you. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our dedicated staff, past and present, our wonderfully supportive Board of Directors, and to the Strategic Planning Committee and facilitator Tanya Gerber for their guidance. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the vision to 2020 and to collaborating with you to guide Inside Out to a bright and inclusive future.

Andria Wilson
Executive Director

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Inside Out's Mandate, Vision and Values

Mandate

Inside Out is a not-for-profit registered charity that exists to challenge attitudes and change lives through the promotion, production and exhibition of film by and about LGBTQ persons of all sexual and gender identities, ages, races and abilities.

Vision

Founded in 1991 as an LGBTQ film festival in Toronto, Inside Out is now the largest event of its kind in Canada, spanning multiple cities with year-round programming.

Inside Out seeks to be:

- an innovative leader in the production, exhibition and promotion of LGBTQ film;
- an incubator and support for LGBTQ filmmakers both emerging and established;
- a leading advocate for LGBTQ issues using the medium of film; and
- an inclusive cultural gathering place for Canadian LGBTQ communities.

Values

Inside Out strives to reflect the following values in our operations and programming:

- **Innovation:** We give our audience new opportunities to engage with LGBTQ stories through the medium of film. We are constantly improving our programming and efficiency of operations by adopting new technologies and systems.
- **Excellence:** We are committed to seeking out the best LGBTQ stories from around the world and providing audiences with unique film-based experiences.
- **Community:** We play a vital role in the social, educational, and cultural health of our communities by connecting them with their stories. We are dedicated to reflecting and expanding the dialogue within the LGBTQ communities in collaboration with other organizations.
- **Inclusion:** Inside Out is accessible and inclusive: a safe and welcoming space for filmmakers and film fans from around the world. We respect, reflect and celebrate our communities' diversity and strive for inclusion of all persons at Inside Out.

A note on language.

Throughout this document, we primarily use the acronym LGBTQ to refer to those of diverse sexualities, gender identities and expressions. Inside Out operates under the name 'Inside Out LGBT Film Festival' but recognizes and acknowledges all identities and expressions within the larger spectrum. It is never our intention to be less than inclusive with shortening of the acronym to LGBT or LGBTQ, and we are open to feedback from our constituents regarding best future use of the spectrum acronym both in our operating name and our public promotions.

If you'd like to share feedback on this or any other part of this document, please contact our offices at inside@insideout.ca or by phone at 416-977-6847.



Current Initiatives



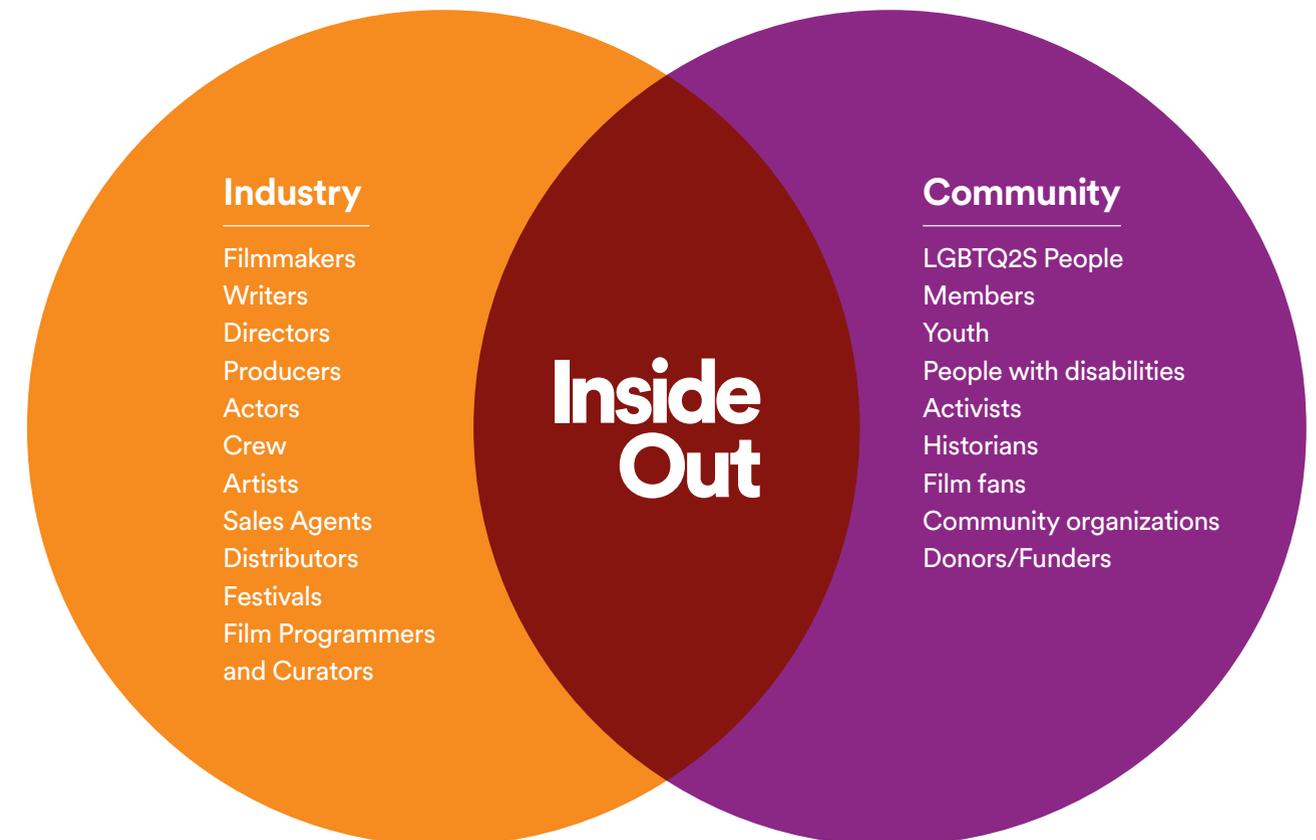
Who we are

We are the film industry, AND we are the LGBTQ communities.

We serve the film industry AND we serve LGBTQ communities.

Our industry includes LGBTQ artists, storytellers, and industry professionals.

Our community includes people of all ages, races, gender identities and expressions, seeking connection through the power of LGBTQ cinema and storytelling.



Above: Andrew Gurza and director Jari Osborne, *Picture This*

What we do

By 2020, we'll make Inside Out a home for LGBTQ filmmakers and a haven for LGBTQ audiences. Here's where Inside Out is headed in 2020:

- Inside Out is an industry leader in the development, production and exhibition of LGBTQ media both at home and abroad. Inside Out will create systems of support not currently provided by other festivals.
- Inside Out is accessible and inclusive: a safe and welcoming space for filmmakers and film fans from around the world. Inside Out is a leader in festival accessibility standards.

- Inside Out's programming and initiatives are innovative and remain responsive to a changing world and a changing industry.
- With a brand recognized locally, nationally and internationally, Inside Out delivers programming through public events and digital resources that reach audiences of all ages and identities.

With these four goal statements related to **Industry Development**, **Accessibility**, **Innovation**, and **Program Delivery**, Inside Out is headed towards a future that supports and connects LGBTQ industry and communities.



Kyisha Williams, Alicia De Four and Lindsey Addawoo, winners of the 2017 BravoFACT Pitch Competition

Why we're doing it



Industry Development

Inside Out provides critical support to filmmakers that are unique in the international marketplace. Supporting LGBTQ filmmakers at the emerging to mid-career stage of their careers contributes directly to the sustainability of the sector, and the sustainability of Inside Out as a film festival. Shortening the gap between projects for filmmakers – connecting them with resources and financing to complete works in progress and bring them to market more quickly – will result in an improved pipeline to production for LGBTQ films.

Innovation

Over our 28-year history, Inside Out has set goals for program size, attendance, revenue generation, improvements to organizational infrastructure, and establishment of partnerships. Working from a strong foundation built from the achievement of those goals, we are now in a position where we can strategize, imagine, and innovate. In order to expand our audience and provide greater support to our communities and industry, we must strive for innovation in all aspects of our programming and planning. By staying informed, active, and engaged in conversations and advocacy within our industry and communities, we will be able to turn innovation into successful program delivery.

Accessibility

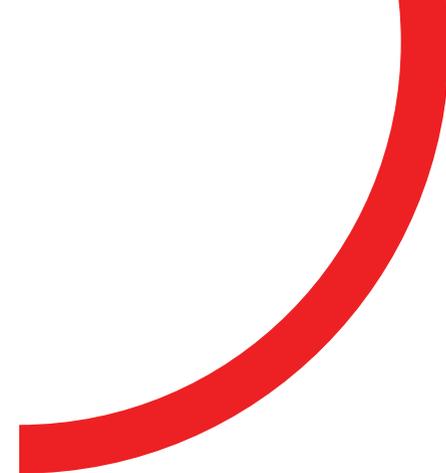
We believe the experience of cinema should be accessible to everyone, regardless of ability, identity, location, or economic status. We believe that LGBTQ people should face no barriers in accessing the content created by and for them. Inside Out will take an active role reducing those barriers for our audiences and artists, because we see this as our responsibility as a presenter of the arts and an advocate for LGBTQ people. We want everyone to feel safe, welcomed, and included at Inside Out.

Program Delivery

As our digital landscape grows, and technology connects our communities in new ways, physical spaces for LGBTQ people are falling off the map. With fewer LGBTQ spaces dedicated to social connection, and increased access to LGBTQ content online, we face both new challenges and opportunities as an organization dedicated to connecting industry and communities. By embracing developing technology and methods of communication and presentation, we will expand far beyond our existing reach and create new opportunities for showcasing LGBT work. Our goal is not to replace theatrical presentation, but to utilize technology to create new geographic networks for theatrical presentation. Our digital community and educational catalogue will give schools and community groups across Canada the opportunity to host their own screenings of LGBT content, and will increase Inside Out's audience in a way never before possible.

Above: Launch Party, 2017 Toronto Festival

How we'll do it



Industry Development

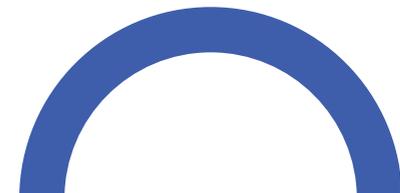
Growth and development of the Film Financing Forum

Introduction of new professional development programs and initiatives

Enhancement of awards, grants and bursary programs, providing more direct support to LGBT filmmakers and projects

Developing partnerships with international festivals and events to facilitate collaborative initiatives

Growing Industry and Programming infrastructure and funding to support new initiatives



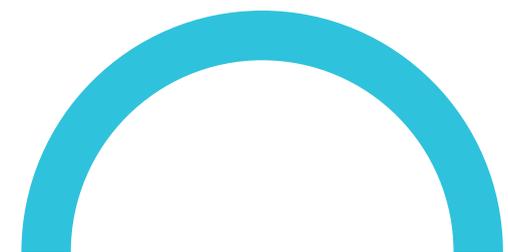
Innovation

Increasing accessible programming for youth audiences, in youth-focused events and throughout the festival

Expanding programming streams to include In-Conversation-With series and other non-traditional theatrical events

Developing experiential programming to support and enhance festival and year-round public events

Exploring opportunities to connect industry and community programs and partners



Accessibility

Completing industry audit of accessibility services and implementing improvements across all initiatives and processes

Commitment to increase in film captioning, described sound, and ASL interpretation

Growth of Inside Out for All initiative to provide more festival and year-round events access to underserved communities

Upholding programming mandate of diversity, inclusion and representation in program content

Commitment to physical accessibility of all venues

Program Delivery

Developing Digital Community Catalogue of content

Creating new community and industry stakeholder committees that bring specific expertise to program development

Developing partnerships with regional and national organizations to facilitate new opportunities for presentation

Implementing communications and brand strategy to support local, national, and international recognition

Maintaining a high level of professionalism, accountability and leadership in the execution of all public events



Where it will happen



Since 1991, Inside Out has brought the best in LGBTQ cinema to audiences in Toronto, utilizing venues around the city to provide a high-quality viewing and engagement experience.

In 2011, the Toronto festival moved into the TIFF Bell Lightbox, a state-of-the-art venue where Inside Out shows films in three cinemas, as well as housing all festival operations and a number of special events. The Toronto festival also connects with audiences 'outside the box,' hosting special events at spaces in the Church-Wellesley Village (Glad Day Bookshop, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre), the Entertainment District (Art Gallery of Ontario, Thompson Hotel, Artscape Sandbox), and West Queen West (The Gladstone Hotel). Outside

of the annual festival, Inside Out also presents the year-round More Play Screening Series at the TIFF Bell Lightbox, hosting six screenings between September and March each year.

Since 2006, Inside Out has also presented an annual festival in Ottawa, which is centred at the National Gallery of Canada for four days each November. Additionally, Inside Out has partnered with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board to participate in their annual Rainbow Youth Forum since 2015, an event at the Confederation Education Centre that brings together hundreds of LGBTQ youth and allies for workshops, presentations and connection with community resources.

Outside of the annual festivals, Inside Out has been steadily building a program of community and educational outreach since 2014 which brings



Previous page: Inside Out 2017 at TIFF Bell Lightbox

Above: Inside Out at Arscape Sandbox, 2017

Opposite, top: Director of Programming and Fawzia Mirza, Screenwriter and Star of *Signature Move*, 2017 Ottawa Festival

Opposite, bottom: *Tom of Finland* screening at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 2017

screenings and content to underserved communities and schools. Through this program, thousands of audience members in Ontario communities outside of Toronto and Ottawa have gained access to LGBTQ cinema and resources.

As we move towards 2020, we will see steps forward in Inside Out's geographic and organizational reach through the development of digital resources and outreach beyond the annual festivals. We will continue to serve our core audience at Inside Out Toronto and Inside Out Ottawa, and we will also build a brand that includes a national strategy for LGBTQ film access, beginning with the creation of our online film catalogue.

Inside Out's Digital Community Catalogue will be a unique resource that will give educational and community groups access to a library of short and feature films licensed by Inside Out for educational screenings. Expertly selected by Inside Out's programmers, the films will be available for pre-screening by educators and facilitators online, who will then have the ability to book a screening free of charge for their group. The catalogue will also include companion resources for the content, including curriculum connections, suggested follow-up questions, and access to feedback from other educators.

As Inside Out grows our presence and resources outside of Ontario, we will also seek out opportunities to partner with other presenters of LGBTQ film content and expand on existing programs to create greater access. By 2020, Inside Out will serve its audience year-round, in person and online, creating safer spaces for connection in person and in the digital world.

Inside Out's Industry development initiatives will also grow the organization's geographic impact. The festival's International Financing Forum welcomes participants from around the globe, and the growth of awards and grants initiatives will support travel and development for both Canadian and International LGBTQ filmmakers. This will allow for Inside Out to play an active role in the development of international LGBTQ content in the future, and to create connections between Canadian filmmakers and those working internationally.



When it will happen

Inside Out's journey to 2020 is already well underway. With a 28-year history of connecting artists and audiences, and challenging attitudes and changing lives through LGBTQ media, we are well-positioned, resourced and ready to take our place as one of the world's leading LGBTQ film festivals.

2018

In 2018, you'll see the 2nd year of the LGBTQ Film Financing Forum, expanded to a two-day event, as well as an increase in industry and professional development programs for our visiting and local LGBTQ filmmakers. You'll see a full day of youth-focused programming, and more films rated for youth throughout the Toronto and Ottawa festivals. You'll meet some new staff, and get to know staff in new roles as we restructure our organizational chart to better suit the needs of Inside Out today and in the future. You'll see the year's best in LGBTQ cinema, and you'll get to know our filmmakers and industry guests through new programming and special events that bring you together.

2019

In 2019, you'll see the release of Inside Out's Digital Community Catalogue and an improved online presence for Inside Out overall. We'll be working with our partners to create new opportunities for presentation of the content you'll see at our Toronto and Ottawa festivals, year-round. You'll hear more about Inside Out in the national and international press, as our Financing Forum and industry initiatives grow to support more filmmakers and projects around the world and at home in Toronto. You'll notice more ASL interpreters at events and programs and an increase in captioned content and films with described sound available. Thanks to an increase in filmmaker grants, bursaries, and awards, you'll see more filmmakers at the festival and get to know more about their upcoming projects in development.

2020

In 2020, Inside Out will turn 30 and present anniversary programming that celebrates our history and heralds our future. With our partners, we'll be sharing our archive and the stories, images and content of the organization's past through a public and digital exhibition. We'll be celebrating the 4th year of the Financing Forum, which will include a mentorship component with past participants. We'll have the opportunity to see finished content that has been created with the support of Inside Out's industry initiatives. With festival film programs that are diverse, inclusive, and representative of our communities, we'll be creating a space for conversation as we feature the voices behind the work in new ways. We'll be Canada's pre-eminent presenter of LGBTQ media, and our Digital Community Catalogue will be a hub of information and content for community groups and educators across the country, creating connections and new opportunities for film presentation. Our festival will be the home of LGBTQ filmmakers: offering them unmatched support, resources, and hospitality. Our festival will be a haven for LGBTQ audiences: offering them exceptional content in an environment that is accessible, a format that is innovative, and a community where they are celebrated.





Inside Out



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