

# Women Filmmakers Initiative



DEFINING A MOVEMENT

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If there's specific resistance to women making movies, I just choose to ignore that as an obstacle for two reasons: I can't change my gender, and I refuse to stop making movies. It's irrelevant who or what directed a movie, the important thing is that you either respond to it or you don't. There should be more women directing; I think there's just not the awareness that it's really possible. It is. – *Kathryn Bigelow*

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## What is the **Mission** of the **Women Filmmakers Initiative**?

In 2012, Sundance Institute and Women in Film Los Angeles (WIF) began an active collaboration to assess and address the role of women within the film industry. They commissioned a study at the USC Annenberg School conducted by Professor Stacy Smith, Ph.D, analyzing data from 820 feature films screened at Sundance from 2002 to 2012 around the following five key positions: director, producer, screenwriter, editor and cinematographer (defined as “content creators” in the study).

The initial results of the study were released in January, 2013, and revealed great gender disparity within the film industry in all five categories. The study honed in on a few key opportunities for advancing women in the industry, which are mentorship, raising awareness, and education, training and access to finance. In 2012, Sundance also launched the Women Filmmakers Initiative (WFI), using these key opportunities as its guide in building the program.

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### NOTE

Given that gender parity in documentary film is significantly better than for narrative, the following proposal focuses primarily on ideas to improve the situation in the narrative space. Further examination of programs and initiatives to support the documentary field should be explored further.

With the results of the study now readily available and understood, the two key questions to explore are:

What exactly do Sundance and WIF want to do with these findings?

And how might this systemic problem best be attacked?

While the “key opportunities” listed above provide a meaningful start, they are not enough to bring the industry to gender parity. In order to truly break down systemic barriers, a large-scale strategic campaign needs to be mounted to propel women more equally into positions of content creator.

The problem of inequity is complex and deep-rooted. It needs an approach and dedicated team that matches the challenge. The following is intended to be the beginning of a conversation about where the initiative can go from here, including a suggested three-year plan.

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When women hold so much economic power, why do we not use it more fully to drive positive change for our own sex?

– Jackie Zehner

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P U R C H A S I N G  
P O W E R

Women's Share of  
Ticket Sales



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## A Moral Argument, Yes, But Even More So, an **Economic** One

It would be foolish to believe that the studios will buy into this effort because of a moral argument. Let's be clear about that. As much as a compelling moral argument can be made, and made quite well, this fight cannot be won on moral grounds.

In order to get corporate buy-in, one has to speak to them in their language. The business of having more women in film needs to be presented exactly as that – as good business - that this will be good for their bottom line.

Women hold tremendous consumer power in the film industry. In 2009, women purchased 55% of ticket sales, and in 2010, they purchased 50%. As John Fithian suggests, “[Women] buy half or more of the tickets *despite* the fact that male strategies and themes dominate...just think about how many more tickets they might buy if a few more women were making movies for them to watch?”

Take the BRIDESMAIDS phenomenon – a film written by two women, starring an all female cast. After its success, every production company and executive in town wanted to have “the next Bridesmaids.” Did they want it because it was funny and starred an all female cast? No. They wanted it because it grossed \$169M domestically. The case needs to be built that the proverbial house of women is one that is commercial, and more importantly, profitable.

In thinking about how consumer power can affect the overall state of women in film, the following question should be asked - will the WFI focus just on female content creators, or will it expand to include pushing for stories with female protagonists? While many executives would argue that they will greenlight projects based on whether they think something will be profitable – how many films in the past 10 years in fact had female leads? While everyone wants the next Bridesmaids, how many female driven movies are actually in the pipeline?

In Martha Lauzen's Women @ the Box Office study, it is revealed that the financial output of a film is mostly based on the budget of the movie. Thus large movie budgets are more likely to rake in large box office grosses. She writes, “When women and men have similar budgets the resulting box office grosses are also similar”, proving that the gender of the creators does not determine the success of a film.

In other words, if female performance is on par with men's at higher budget levels, then there is no economic upside to having men direct, just as there is no economic downside to having women do so. And because there is no economic justification for the fact that women directed less than 5% of the top-grossing films from 2002-2012, it's clear the barriers prohibiting women from landing bigger budget jobs need to be broken down. Companies can employ better business practices when it comes to gender equality and suffer no additional risk.

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## Holding the **Industry Accountable**

The industry needs help. While there is no active agenda against allowing women to rise in rank in the film industry, the gatekeepers need concrete guidelines, programs and mandates in order for the statistics to change.

**The Rooney Rule.** Adopted in 2003, it made it a must for each NFL team when hiring a new coach or general manager to interview at least one minority candidate. Since implemented, 17 teams hired either an African-American or Latino head coach or general manager – when in the 80 years prior, there had only been seven.

The entertainment industry needs something analogous and Sundance/WFI could lead the charge. Might they want to align with another key industry organization, for example, AMPAS? Very possibly. An endeavor such as this might also entail working with an association such as the AMPTP.

Understanding who the outspoken advocates and quiet supporters on this issue are, is paramount. If the initiative can get one or two studios, and one or two agencies to comply with specific mandates, the rest will feel pressured to follow.

**So what is the ask?** Tailored asks need to be developed for each major player. Here are some initial ideas:

### **Agencies and Management Companies**

Must commit to pitching at least 20% women for any available writer or director job.

### **Studios and Networks**

Will agree to meet with and consider a proposal/pitch from at least one woman for every open writing and directing assignment. Please note that this bar could easily be set higher, but as a start, is mimicking the Rooney Rule.

### **Guilds**

Work with them to create incentives for films that employ more women, and perhaps penalties if goals are not met. This would likely entail working with AMPTP to implement.

For instance, with SAG, if you are looking to make a modified low budget level film, your budget can be up to \$625k. But if you employ their diversity standards (an incentive they created to foster diversity), your budget can go up \$937k and still pay your actors the modified low rates. On *Afternoon Delight* we employed the diversity incentive. We did so *only* for economic reasons – not for social ones whatsoever. Incentives such as this could be created for the WGA, DGA, SAG, etc. that encourage stronger hiring practices for women (please note research on what incentives exist, if any, has not been conducted yet).

To take this one step further, the WFI should try to get these industry players to contribute to the WFI financially. What is \$50k a year for the studios or agencies to show their buy-in? Even if they only do it as a political PR move, getting them to provide financial support could be endeavored.

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Social gains  
are never  
handed out.  
They must be  
seized.

– Sheryl  
Sandberg

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## Strategic Partnerships, Coalitions, and Alliances

Marginalized groups are inherently the disempowered and cannot be the only ones to fight their own fight. In studying any successful social movement, it is imperative to understand the expansiveness and diversity of alliances and coalitions those movements built.

The official list of Allied Organizations who are partners to the Initiative represent an essential and logical start. The next phase of the WFI could broaden the type of partners sought and secured. Such partnerships might include:

- All the guilds, unions, and the Academy
- The prominent national non-profit film organizations
- Film management companies and agencies (particularly the big ones)
- Colleges and universities with film programs (particularly the prominent ones)
- The studios and networks
- Powerful corporations from other industries that have embraced female employment initiatives that could put pressure on the film industry
- Social advocacy groups and political organizations that are already doing work in the field of gender parity in the workplace
- High profile celebrities

The studios and networks are always referred to as just that – the studios and networks. Perhaps a useful reframing would be to think of them as corporations. There are many examples of corporations in other industries with programs to further women already in effect and the WFI should look to other industries for best practices and inspiration.

The WFI needs to evaluate and understand what programs the studios and networks have formally adopted, or not. This of course largely speaks to jobs at the studios, as opposed to the hiring of content creators (ie, independent contractors). The effort has to address both internal and external hires.

It could also be meaningful to find corporations with progressive female employment programs that do business with the studios and networks – to help force their hand into adopting such programs.

One example might be Deloitte, one of the largest national accounting firms. Deloitte created a program called *Leading to WIN Women's Initiative* to serve female employees who still remained underrepresented at the highest levels of the company. When that program was not producing



1/86

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### AWARD WINNER DISPARITY

Out of 86 years of Oscar history, only four women have ever been nominated for Best Director. The first and only time a woman ever won this award was in 2010.

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W O M E N  
L E A D E R S

Female helmers increase the percentage of females on set



strong enough results, they further expanded it to have the women sponsored, receive executive coaching, to shadow members of the executive committee, and to take on global assignments. Of the twenty-one members of the inaugural group, eighteen have since been promoted. Perhaps one of the studios uses Deloitte as their accounting firm? Even if this is not the case, having a company like Deloitte as a partner speaks how the WFI can broaden the base of partnerships.

Another example of a potential strategic partner (that might already be one), is the ACLU of Southern California. They are currently calling out for gender disparity stories within the film industry. On their site, it asks, "Are you a woman director? Have you faced gender discrimination in the industry? Tell us your story." Having partners such as this who are already doing work in the field of fighting against gender inequality in the workplace is key.

In the past year alone, such high profile celebrities and industry icons as: Cate Blanchett, Will Ferrell, Lupita Nyong'o, Meryl Streep, Lena Dunham, Joss Whedon and many more, have spoken out publicly about this issue. It would be fantastic to court those already engaged and have them join the effort in a more formal way.

Lastly, it must be said that women in the film industry need the help of men, as they constitute the majority of the gatekeeping force. Finding male allies in this effort cannot be a secondary consideration, as they are crucial to making change – crucial. At each and every juncture and initiative considered, the question of how they can be involved needs be asked.

I believe that most men today want women to succeed; they want them in their firms and in their legislatures and even, generally, on their golf courses. They just don't know how quite to make it work.

– *Debora Spar*

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## Creating an **Advisory Board**

One of the first key steps to building this campaign would be to create an advisory board of geographically, ethnically, gender and industry diverse members. The goals of the initiative cannot be developed in a bubble. While this proposal suggests that Sundance lead the charge, what is being contemplated is how to define the goals and movement for the field at large. Hence, the goals need to be created with the input of those who will ultimately become ambassadors to the initiative. Their input and buy-in are vital.

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## Possible Programs

### FILM FUND

Film funds are vital in today's independent film landscape.

Upon initial research, there does not seem to be a funding program that provides grant money (as opposed to investment) to female filmmakers for narrative film. The closest are the Adrienne Shelley and Tangerine grants, but neither are ones you can apply for, nor are they in support of a specific project.

Sundance could have the first granting program that is for female directors and producers, and support should be available for various stages of the process, such as development, production or post-production.

To engage with the 50% of the population who might be fired up about this issue, perhaps it could partly be done as a crowd-funded project with the goal of raising \$1M for ten \$100k grants?

### PINK LIST

Create a list of the best unproduced screenplays by women or about women.

The idea is a hybrid of the Rooney Rule's Advisory Panel and the Blacklist (the industry's annual list of the "best unproduced screenplays"). One of the top excuses team owners in the NFL used to combat the Rooney Rule was that they weren't aware of solid minority candidates. To change this, the NFL created a panel to create a shortlist of minority talent ready for head coaching/general management. Similarly, if current studio and network heads were more informed about talented female content creators, more hiring might follow.

### SHORT FILM PROGRAMS / NEW MEDIA STORYTELLING

Studios like HBO and Fox fund short film programs in search for new diverse filmmakers. Sundance could get funding for women to make short films to showcase and develop their craft.

One angle for a short film program could be for alumnae Sundance female filmmakers to experiment working in a different genre than they might have with their first film to have a different sample to show. One of the roadblocks often discussed is that it's hard for the studios to see that directors of one genre can successfully make the leap into other ones, and as the study suggests "[women] face a real restriction in the range of properties they are hired to helm."

Yet another possibility could be finding a company that wants to work with film directors for a special film series. One example is something akin to what BMW did with well-known (all male) directors. If the WFI could find that right partner, this could be another great opportunity for female directors (and other content creators as well).

There are also many opportunities arising in the field of new media and technology. One example is what's happening with the Oculus Rift technology and development of content. The WFI could explore ways to bring female filmmakers deeper into this mix.

And similar to the above suggestion under Film Fund - money could be raised from crowd-funding for a short film program for women.



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Assessing 250 of the top-grossing U.S. movies of 2011, one study found that only 5% of directors, 14% of writers, and 25% of producers were female. These statistics have fluctuated very little since 1998.

### ANCILLARY PROVIDERS

Get Netflix, Amazon, Vudu, Comcast and all other major SVOD/VOD/Ancillary providers to provide the option of being able to select movies by a category titled "Female Directors".

When you search under iTunes, you have a wide range options to search by, such as Russia, Urban, and Turkish. Why not Female (for female driven narratives)? Netflix has Cult, Gay & Lesbian, again, why not add Female?

### GENDER PARITY AT THE TALENT AGENCIES

Listed below in "future research to be done", is to evaluate what percentage of clients at the agencies are women. Presuming it's unequal, the WFI should explore ways to work with the agencies to works towards gender parity (beyond a mandate of what percentage of female clients they're pitching).

### BECHDEL TEST

The Bechdel Test is simply this: it asks whether a work of fiction features at least two women who talk to each other about something other than a man.

It's conceivable that this could become a true rating standard. For instance, in Sweden, some cinemas have officially adopted it as such. You don't get an A unless you pass. The Swedish Film Institute supports the initiative – and now one of the cable TV channels is adopting it as well.

The "test" and its definition may be too simplistic, and perhaps it could be redefined and re-branded. But it's an interesting practice to consider when contemplating how to highlight the work of women and make it more broadly known to consumers.

### EMPOWERMENT, FUNDRAISING, AND NEGOTIATING WORKSHOPS

An internal report at Hewlett Packard revealed that women only apply for open jobs if they think they meet 100% of the criteria listed. Men apply if they think they meet 60% of the requirements.

Another study that looked at the starting salaries of students graduating with a master's degree from Carnegie Mellon University found that 57% of the male students, but only 7% of the female students, tried to negotiate for a higher offer.

And the USC study suggests the same - that women are not comfortable asking for money.

While serving as board member of the SFFS, I participated in a development workshop about "doing the ask" for money. It dramatically changed the way I felt about fundraising, my comfort level in doing so, and consequently, my success with it. And in attending the Women's Conference held at the Paley Center, one of the clear takeaways was the desire for more hands-on, practical workshops and this is one such example.

The WFI could consider creating specific gatherings for women to participate in hands-on workshops. Or perhaps these types of workshops can be folded into the already existing Sundance/WIF Los Angeles and New York annual conferences in some way.

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When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't adjust the goals, adjust the action steps.

– Confucius

### STOCKHOLM-LIKE LABS

The Stockholm Film Institute supports the Stockholm Film Lab, a “Master Class Programme” initiative for female Swedish directors. The Lab plays an active part in how the festival presents new female talent. If proving successful, it would be interesting to explore how it might be emulated at Sundance.

The WFI could also conduct an analysis of analogous programs here in the U.S., such as Film Independent’s Project Involve. The focus there is on diversity, but it would be informative to learn what sort of success they’ve had with that program and what their measures of success are.

### LABS, CONFERENCES, SUMMITS AND THINK TANKS

As the initiative becomes more clearly defined, so too will the shape of these various ways to convene, share and brainstorm.

### SHADOWING PROGRAMS

There’s a shadowing program with the Alliance of Women Directors that is mostly for TV, and one that Warner Bros. is doing as of June, 2013, again, specifically for TV. What formal shadowing programs exist in the film world?

Beyond the need to expand into the world of film, the WFI could work to create shadowing programs for all five key content creator categories.

For instance, something to note from the USC study, is that cinematographers suffer the poorest percentage of female participation. In looking at the program holistically (ie, mentorship, shadowing, etc.), all groups within the content creator category need to be addressed, not just directors.

### MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

From year one to year two of the program, Sundance pared down its mentorship program from 18 to six. It would be meaningful to understand how the program is working, as well as how it is being evaluated. Some of the questions and ideas to explore are:

What are the measures of success for the program and what are the long-term goals?

What formal guidelines are given to the mentees and mentors?

How will alumnae mentees be supported over time, beyond the year they are officially in the program? There’s a real opportunity to support them in their careers in an ongoing way and I’m keen to learn what you have considered in regards to support beyond their mentee year.

The process of paring mentees with mentors is that the mentees hone in on one person they’d like to be their mentor, and if that person is interested, the paring is set. Have you considered allowing the mentees to pick three choices, meet with all three, and then choose? A process such as this might help to avoid the possibility of mentees and mentors finding themselves in dynamic that is not a fit and improve the chances of a fruitful relationship.

Beyond a direct mentorship program in-house at Sundance, have you considered working with companies that specialize in fostering programs to promote women such as the one Deloitte

has, to be able to take that to the studios and networks? Or working with an outside company that specializes in mentorship programs to evaluate and develop the current program?

### LIFE COACHING

Life coaching has already been implemented into the mentorship program this year and it will be interesting to hear the feedback of this year's mentees on this aspect of the program.

### SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS FOR FEMALE FILM SCHOOL STUDENTS

As a longer term goal, with the goal of feeding the pipeline as early in the process as possible, it would be meaningful to have scholarship funds to offer women wanting to enter into film programs and/or who are already in them.

We need to reclaim the word 'feminism'. We need the word 'feminism' back real bad. When statistics come in saying that only 29% of American women would describe themselves as feminist... What do you think feminism IS, ladies? What part of 'liberation for women' is not for you? Is it freedom to vote? ... The campaign for equal pay? 'Vogue' by Madonna? Jeans? Did all that good shit GET ON YOUR NERVES? – *Caitlin Moran*

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## Branding, Marketing, Social Media and the **Spirit** of the **Campaign**

A team dedicated to the branding, marketing and social outreach of this initiative is needed. The WFI needs to build a network of networks, and create a following of people committed and engaged in this issue.

The branding of this effort warrants further exploration. One example that comes to mind is Good Pitch. The name is catchy, bright, and it doesn't feel overly earnest or inherently political. It could easily be called "The Conference for Issue-Driven Films and Creating Social Impact", yet they came up with something far more accessible.

Has the branding of this initiative been discussed? As the goals of the campaign take shape, it will be important to evaluate whether the branding is in line.

Expanding the social media effort for the WFI is an area with enormous potential. A great example of partnerships that can massively broaden the reach of the initiative is something akin to what we're

doing with INEQUALITY FOR ALL in partnering with Organizing for Action (OFA). OFA was created to get behind Obama's presidential campaign. After he won, they realized they had an enormous network of engaged citizens, and turned this list into a new organization to help implement and effect change on issues the President is focusing on. They've cultivated 4 million followers online and on the ground as organizers, and have a reach of 40 million through social media. In May, they will be using INEQUALITY FOR ALL as the key piece of media to inform their followers about the issue of economic inequality.

The WFI needs to find allies such as this to broaden the base of support for gender parity in the film industry and brainstorm ways to work with them beyond just being mentioned in newsletters and eblasts. What reach does Sundance currently have via various social media applications and tools?

Once a campaign is created, assets will need to be created to disseminate online and in media. Great infographics are just one example of meaningful assets. The campaign would require other media too, such as short films, animated pieces – in other words, compelling, informative, artistic, entertaining and funny pieces that can go viral.

To kick off the campaign in the media and virally, it would be fantastic to have 3-5 great short films that riff on gender imparity in the film industry. These pieces could be created by women in the mentorship program or who are alumnae of Sundance programs.

A large part of the branding and marketing of this initiative is about controlling the message. All aspects of the branding, marketing, messaging and viral capacity of this campaign need to be looked in concert with one another.

Women who seek to be equal with men lack ambition. – *Timothy Leary*

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## Goodbye Old Boys, Hello Stilettos

The film industry relies hugely on social circles and networking. To borrow a term from author Pamela Ryckman, we need to strengthen our "Stiletto Network", and we need to do so in ways that are just good plain old fun and don't feel like obligations.

Men often bond over a golf game. What might the female equivalents be? Regular walks through the canyons? A monthly movie night with drinks after? Dancing? Casual monthly dinners in one another's homes?

To steal names from existing women's groups – whether it's "Harpies", "85 Broads", "Power Bitches", "The Vault", or "Babes in Boyland", the film industry needs to foster ways for women to get together in more informal ways, to bond and open doors and really create a good old gals network.

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## Future Research to be Done

It is my understanding that Sundance and WIF are continuing to fund additional phases of research with Stacey Smith, but I am unaware of what the focus of the next phases is.

Perhaps future rounds of studies could look at the some of the following:

- Has research been done about pay scales for women as compared to men in similar positions?
- What's the percentage of women content creators at the agencies and management companies? What are the statistics on how many women have been signed proportionally over the past 10 years?
- How many women agents and managers are there? What is the ratio of female partners to male?
- What is the make-up of the boards of these various corporations, unions, guilds, and agencies? According to one recent article, there are no female board members at the MPAA for instance. It would be informative to better understand the gender divide of these boards.
- According to one article, of the top 12 executives at the six major studios, only two are women. Of the six major studio domestic presidents of distribution, only one. In other words, less than 17% of the key people on the production and distribution side of the equation are women. How have these statistics changed or not changed in the past 10 years? What further evaluation can be done in the executive realm? What's the breakdown at the independent distribution companies?
- What's the percentage of women entering into film programs as compared with men? Statistics for those who have graduated? What percentage of the faculty are women? When some of university heads of departments spoke at the Women's Conference, it was clear guidelines were put into place years ago that have improved the numbers – it would be good to gather that information more formally.
- How many studio films in the past 10 years had a female lead?
- It is my understanding that Sundance is expanding and focusing deeply on diversity as well. To better understand how diversity can marry and intertwine with the WFI, it would be helpful to get the statistics of what the diversity make-up of all the content creators captured in the first phase of the study is. This would be quite a massive undertaking, but maybe Sundance has some statistics on diversity already? If not, formal research on diversity would need to be conducted in order to understand how the two efforts can best work in relation to one another.

Lastly, a thorough evaluation of what efforts, programs and initiatives to further women in film have been conducted in the past 10 years should be compiled. What has worked and produced tangible results? What has not?

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## Fundraising

It would be naive to present all these bold, grand ideas and think that a significant amount of fundraising isn't necessary. I am very comfortable with fundraising, and strongly believe that in further defining the initiative, that the funding will come.

Fundraising is never fast. It takes courtship and relationship building – but serious funds can be raised for this initiative, without a doubt.

I am interested in learning more about what kind of fundraising has been done for this thus far, what prospects you think might already exist, and avenues that have not yet been explored.

Funding should come from public and private foundations, high net worth individuals, as well as those whose capacity to give might not be high, but are engaged in this issue through something like a Kickstarter Campaign (already a partner with Sundance). A Kickstarter Campaign would serve to raise much needed money, build awareness, and create fans and supporters of the initiative.

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## Questions to Consider

What is the ultimate goal of the Women Filmmakers Initiative? Is it parity with men? Or is to build a new framework/paradigm? Or a combination of both?

What change would you like to see happen in 3 years time? In 7 years? 10 years?

If anything were possible, what would you create and actualize under this program?

How do you think men can be engaged in this effort?

What successes have you had thus far? Where have you hit roadblocks?

What do you think the potential is for securing high power allies? Have you tried to put together a high profile group focused on this issue? Who is outspoken about this? Who is resistant to it?

Are there any practices internally at Sundance that can be adopted to be leading by example? For instance, the percentage of female artists supported at Sundance labs, conferences or summits is 43% (a great starting point). To lead by example, should mandates be put into effect to create true parity?

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## Framework for a Three-Year Plan

### YEAR ONE

- Create a budget for the three-year plan to be able to start fundraising
- Determine staffing needs
- Create an advisory board and hold a key summit mtg. to define the goals of the WFI (that includes other industry leaders). An annual summit should be held as well as second virtual mtg. of just the board at the 6-8 month mark
- Hold 2-4 social mixers and 4 intimate power dinners
- Help to foster informal dinner groups that women can take ownership of
- Continue with the two conferences in LA and NY and perhaps turn them into 2-day gatherings that include hands-on workshops
- Lay the groundwork for creating a film fund
- Bring on a social impact team in a consultation capacity (unless Sundance has this capacity in-house)
- Bringing on a marketing firm to set the tone of the campaign (unless Sundance has this capacity in-house). The branding and messaging of the campaign needs to be established in year one
- Create at least 2 videos to kick off the campaign
- Go on a listening/meeting tour with all current partners
- Create an expanded list of film industry partners and set meetings like crazy
- Create a list of non-film industry partners to broaden the base
- Do the compilation of research on what has been tried already
- Launch a Kickstarter campaign
- Evaluate and continue the mentorship program
- Meet with ancillary providers to push on female director categories
- Assess the landscape of shadowing programs and lay the groundwork for future ones
- Lay the groundwork for the mandates to be created. Understanding the history of conversations had thus far is imperative. Begin the process of finding the right organizational and individual partners for this endeavor

### YEAR TWO

In addition to continuing with programs that are ongoing and working...

- Continue with fundraising
- Launch the film fund and complete round one of granting
- Launch some of the shadowing programs
- Create the Pink List
- Lay the groundwork for the short film program
- Endeavor to have some of the mandates adopted
- Hold the second summit of the advisory board and industry leaders.
- Expand on partnerships that further social media and networking efforts
- Begin to secure strategic partnerships and coalitions outside of the industry
- Continue with asset and media creation by women in the initiative
- Continue with additional phases of research

### YEAR THREE

In addition to continuing with programs that are ongoing, working and always undergoing evaluation...

- Continue with fundraising
- Complete round two of the feature film fund
- Continue with securing mandates
- Launch a short film program
- Perhaps start a lab program
- Continue with additional phases of research

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## Why I Want to Do This

For 20 years I have bridged the worlds of both documentary and narrative filmmaking, working with many female (and male) content creators along the way. I believe deeply that if women are more equally represented in film, that the medium at large will benefit in ways yet unforeseen. Without diversity of voice, both the art and commerce of film are destined to suffer.

I understand and have a passion for the power of storytelling, the business of film and the industry, as well as political and social engagement. I would like to marry all these aspects of my background and dedicate my energies to playing my part in making real change for women in the film industry.

The need for change bulldozed a road down the center of my mind.

– *Maya Angelou*

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## To Conclude – Measures of Success

The vast effect that bringing parity to the entertainment industry can have is monumental and inspiring. Everyone absorbs and enjoys some form of media entertainment – to effect change in this particular industry of all industries could have massive positive ramifications not only on our industry itself, but for gender equality and parity at large.

The most critical question to ask is, what does success look like?

Tangible measures of success and clearly defined goals need to be created. Without them, understanding what success looks like will be impossible to ascertain.

I hope that we can continue the conversation about what this campaign and initiative might look like and how we might be able to work together on furthering the state of women in film.



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## Bio for Jen Chaiken

Chaiken most recently produced *AFTERNOON DELIGHT*, written and directed by Jill Soloway, and the feature documentary *INEQUALITY FOR ALL*, starring former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich. Both films premiered in competition at Sundance in 2013. *AFTERNOON DELIGHT* won the U.S. Dramatic Directing Award and was distributed theatrically by The Film Arcade/Cine-digm and *INEQUALITY FOR ALL* received a Special Jury Award for Achievement in Filmmaking and was released by The Weinstein Company/RADiUS.

In 2012, she was selected for *Variety's* prestigious "10 Producers to Watch" list.

As a key part of the release of *INEQUALITY FOR ALL*, Chaiken spearheaded a year-long social action campaign, working with impact producers to implement a 50 State Capitol Tour, nation-wide house parties with partner organizations, a Capitol Hill screening with legislatures and political leaders, and collaborations with organizations such as Upworthy and MoveOn. She worked closely with political organizers, learning to employ both top down and bottom up strategies, and was instrumental in raising funds to underwrite this campaign.

In 2009, Chaiken joined the board of the San Francisco Film Society and from 2011-2013, served as co-Vice President. Chaiken is also Advisory Board Member to the IDA, as well as a Vice President of a private family foundation that grants in the areas of arts and culture, civil and reproductive rights, education and youth programs, and the Jewish community.

Prior, Chaiken won an Emmy for Best Documentary for her work on *MY FLESH AND BLOOD*, following Sundance wins for the Audience and Best Director Awards. Strand released the film theatrically. It was later broadcast as an HBO special and short-listed for Academy consideration.

Other credits include *BIG EDEN*, the first feature for Tom Bezucha (*THE FAMILY STONE*); the HBO documentary feature *NAKED STATES*, directed by Arlene Donnelly; the HBO documentary short *POSITIVELY NAKED* (short-listed for Academy consideration); *RESTAURANT; I LOVE YOU, DON'T TOUCH ME!* a Sundance premiere distributed by MGM; and the documentary *FAMILY NAME*, winner of the Freedom of Expression Award at Sundance and nominated for an Emmy.

Chaiken is a graduate of Yale University.