



Reelworld Launches the Inaugural Ally Award Luncheon Honouring Canada Media Fund's Valerie Creighton

A Landmark Celebration of 25 Years of Championing Diversity in Canada's Screen Industry

Toronto, ON – February 19, 2025

Reelworld is proud to introduce the inaugural *Reelworld Ally Award*, a prestigious new annual honour recognizing leaders in Canada's screen industry who have dismantled barriers, created meaningful opportunities, and championed inclusion for underrepresented talent. This award was established by the [Reelworld Foundation](#), the charitable arm of Reelworld, and recognizes those who have helped expand the reach of Canadian content by ensuring all talented voices have the opportunity to be heard.

The first-ever award will be presented to **Valerie Creighton, President and CEO of the Canada Media Fund**, at an exclusive luncheon on **April 11, 2025**, from **11:30 AM to 3:00 PM** at the **Park Hyatt Hotel (4 Avenue Rd)** in Toronto. This event marks a defining moment in Reelworld's 25-year legacy of advancing racial equity in film and television.

For nearly four decades, **Valerie Creighton** has transformed Canada's media landscape, playing a vital role in funding groundbreaking content that reflects the country's true diversity. She has led major industry-wide reforms, established new opportunities for Indigenous and racialized creators, and ensured that Canadian storytelling is inclusive of all voices. Her unparalleled contributions have earned her both the **Order of Canada** and the **Saskatchewan Order of Merit**, along with widespread recognition for her advocacy and the creation of the **Indigenous Screen Office (ISO)** and support for Indigenous creators.

"Over the past 40 years, Valerie's leadership has left an undeniable mark on the Canadian screen industry," says Tonya Williams, Founder and Executive Director of Reelworld Screen Institute and Reelworld Foundation. "Whether through her advocacy for gender equity, support for Indigenous and diverse creators, or commitment to strengthening Canadian content, her work has consistently driven meaningful change. She has approached every challenge with clarity and purpose, ensuring that inclusion is not just a conversation but a concrete outcome. Valerie once said, 'It really is about what I can do to advocate, lobby for, and elevate the creators in this country. That's what I feel my job is.' We applaud Valerie for living by these words, and truly embodying them."



"Being named the recipient of the first ever Reelworld Ally Award is an unexpected honour that is both profoundly joyful and profoundly humbling," says Valerie. "It means the world to me to be recognized by Tonya and the Reelworld team, who do such important work every single day. Throughout my career, I've been inspired by the resilience and creativity of Canada's diverse storytellers. To me, this recognition is a testament to their voices and the collective strides we've made toward representation, inclusion, and solidarity in our industry. I share this honour with all who champion the richness of Canadian narratives."

Guests at this special luncheon event will be treated to an intimate conversation between Valerie and a well-known host, offering a rare, behind-the-scenes look at her journey, impact, and vision for the future of Canadian storytelling. This is more than an awards luncheon—it's a call to action for the industry to continue building a more inclusive and representative media landscape.

Tickets for the luncheon are **\$500** per person, and **sponsored tables** of 10 are available for **\$5000**, with one seat at each table reserved for an emerging Indigenous or racialized filmmaker selected by the Reelworld board and staff.

All proceeds from the event will go toward the **Reelworld Foundation Endowment**, securing long-term funding for programs that empower diverse creators and drive systemic change.

Reelworld invites the Canadian screen industry to be a part of this landmark moment. Celebrate Valerie's legacy, connect with industry changemakers, and invest in a future where every Canadian voice has a place on screen. Tickets are available for purchase on the Reelworld website [here](#).

About Reelworld

Reelworld was founded in 2000 by award-winning actress and producer **Tonya Williams** to advance opportunities for Canadians who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, and People of Colour in the screen industries by providing professional development and advocating for racial equity in Canadian content and production.

Reelworld Screen Institute, a non-profit, provides training programs and presents the acclaimed **Reelworld Film Festival**, which celebrates stories by racialized Canadians. The festival has expanded to include a two-day Summit to shine a spotlight on issues around diversity, equity and inclusion in the Canadian screen landscape. Providing access to opportunities is core to **Reelworld**, and **Access Reelworld** is Canada's leading hiring platform for racialized crews and



talent. **Reelworld Foundation**, a registered charity, is transforming the industry by creating mechanisms that hold systems accountable for greater equity.

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