

# being

# seen



**PEOPLE OF COLOUR  
COMMUNITY  
REPORT**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Being Seen People of Colour report** looks at the perspectives of people who identify as being from the South Asian, East Asian and Southeast Asian, West Asian and Latinx and Brazilian communities. After examining the demographic context of People of Colour communities in Canada and how it differs from the U.S. context, the report provides the perspective of these communities on:

- Stereotypes
- Better Portrayal of the People of Colour Communities
- Consequences of Poor Representation
- What They Want to See More of
- Topics That Are Off Limits

Each community had specific stereotypes that upset them and those are explored. There was a general demand for a better portrayal of their communities and a description of consequences felt by the participants individually and as a community as a result of poor or missing representation. It is important to understand that even the so-called “model minorities” can be negatively impacted emotionally and physically due to poor and missing representation. Like other communities, those consulted want to see more complexity of storylines and representation of their communities and more portrayals of everyday life. There is a short list of topics that should be off limits to those from outside the community but most importantly, they reiterated the need for respectful and thorough research and engagement for anyone from outside the community choosing to tell their stories.

The perspectives of those consulted were aggregated into Directives to help guide Content Creators, Producers, Broadcasters, Funders, Streaming Services, Digital Platforms and Distributors.

# INTRODUCTION

“ The question is not whether we see ourselves, the question is does the storyline serve the characters. I find that sometimes the characters reflect you, they look like you but the storyline never services the character. ”

The **Being Seen** research project was initiated in response to the growing demand for a restructuring of the Canadian screen-based media sector to provide equitable access for Canadians of all backgrounds and identities to create content, and to allow all Canadians to see themselves authentically reflected on our screens. In the **People of Colour Community Report**, the research digs into the responses from consultations and interviews that were unique to those who identify as People of Colour, with a focus on South Asians, East and Southeast Asians, West Asians and Latinx and Brazilians, namely regarding:

- Stereotypes
- Better Portrayal of the People of Colour Communities
- Consequences of Poor Representation
- What They Want to See More of
- Topics That Are Off Limits

## RESEARCH BACKGROUND

This guide, together with the **Core Themes Report** and its other companion reports (Black Community, 2SLGBTQIA+ Community, People with Disabilities and Children’s Media), will help content creators, funders, broadcasters, streaming services, digital platforms and distributors to create authentic and representative film, television and interactive digital media. It is intended that the **People of Colour Community Report** will be read together with the other reports, but that those with a specific interest in authentic representation of the People of Colour community will be able to dive deeper into these issues.

The Research Team (see Appendix A of the **Core Themes Report**) conducted focus groups in English and in French that targeted People of Colour industry professionals and members of the public. Those who identified as People of Colour also participated in focus groups that targeted 2SLGBTQIA+ and People with Disabilities. Focus groups were organized targeting both People of Colour in general and smaller communities of South Asians, East and Southeast Asians, West Asians and Latinx and Brazilians. The Research Team also conducted one-on-one interviews with select industry professionals from a range of communities within the People of Colour community.

Please note that the Research Team chose to use the umbrella term People of Colour to emphasize solidarity and highlight commonality between communities but wherever possible, given the size of registrations, broke



“ In TV, every time something comes up that’s about Asians, everybody feels that it has to speak for all Asians. Criticism of *Crazy Rich Asians* was that we’re not all rich. Stop thinking that every single thing that has you in it has to represent every single person in it. ”

“ *Never Have I Ever* reflected the multicultural friendship groups that reflected how I grew up. ”

“ Shows like *Never Have I Ever* and *The Mindy Project*, need to move away from this plotline of the desire to have proximity to whiteness. Everything about her culture that is shown in the show is counteractive to whiteness. We need to move away from this idea that we need to be white, and this idea that we need to compete against one another. One of the plot lines for the season was that there’s another brown character and she is competition. This idea that there can’t be more than one of us, we’re tokenizing ourselves in this storyline on top of feeding into the tokenization of others. We need to move away from the white gaze and start to write for South Asians. ”

Other shows are included above not because the stories are representative but because there were characters within the shows that offered representation, such as the Filipino characters in *Superstore* and *Blues Clues*, Hong Kong character in *jPod* and multiracial character in *Shadow and Bone*.

“ Matteo in *Superstore*. He was a Filipino actor playing a Filipino role. He spoke Tagalog and spoke on a lot of issues that reflect many Filipino Americans, not particularly Filipino Canadians but definitely Filipino Americans. ”

A significant number of participants could not think of any shows that represented them, particularly if they were West Asian or multiracial. Note that most of the shows are American with a handful of Canadian shows. *Kim’s Convenience*, about a Korean-Canadian family and web series *Amours d’occasion*, which takes place in a culturally diverse community in Montreal, were the most cited Canadian shows.

## Better Portrayal of the Community(ies)

As mentioned in the **Core Themes Report**, a frequent comment was that Canadian screen media did not reflect the complexity of communities. There was a general feeling that even when People of Colour are being included, Canadian creators had not done their homework and did not understand the demographics of the communities enough to create authentic representation.

In the 2016 Census 7,674,580 Canadians identified as Visible Minorities<sup>1</sup>. Statistics Canada identifies some Visible Minorities by ethnicity and some by geography, which makes analysis sometimes challenging. Note that those who identify as white and Black, South Asian, Chinese, Southeast Asian, Filipino, Korean or Japanese are counted in the Visible Minority category. However, those who identify as white and Latin American, Arab or West Asian are counted as white. There is also a category for those who identify as multiple Visible Minorities, such as both Black and South Asian (though not consistently, as apparently Black and a write-in category of Malaysian is counted as Black<sup>2</sup>). In that context, the statistics for populations that are the target demographics for this report may not be completely accurate.

According to Statistics Canada, as a percentage of the Canadian population they are:

East and Southeast Asian	8.56%
South Asian	5.58%
West Asian and Arab	2.29%
Latin American <sup>3</sup>	1.29%

The distribution of People of Colour populations across Canada can differ. The top three communities for the top three urban centres are as follows:

**Toronto:**

South Asian	(16.59%),
Chinese	(10.76%)
Filipino	(4.34%)

**Vancouver:**

Chinese	(19.56%),
South Asian	(11.99%)
Filipino	(5.07%)

**Montreal:**

Arab	(4.76%),
Latin American	(2.75%)
Chinese	(2.22%)

However, there are Visible Minorities across Canada and not just in those urban centres:

30.3% of British Columbia
29.3% of Ontario
23.5% of Alberta
17.5% of Manitoba
13.0% of Quebec
10.8% of Saskatchewan
9.6% of Northwest Territories
8.5% of Yukon
6.5% of Nova Scotia
4.7% of PEI
2.5% of Nunavut
2.3% of Newfoundland and Labrador

<sup>1</sup> [Data Tables 2016 Census, Visible Minorities](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Visible Minority and Population Group Reference Guide, Census of Population, 2016](#)

<sup>3</sup> There is no definition for Latin American within Statistics Canada but it is assumed to include Brazilian as there is no other category that could also include it. However, note that Black Latin Americans may have ticked off Black and Latin American and would therefore be categorized as multiple Visible Minorities.

While immigration levels have fluctuated between 200,000 and 300,000 per year for the past 30 years, there has been consistent immigration to Canada from People of Colour communities over the years<sup>4</sup>. As a result, 27.67% of Visible Minorities in Canada are second generation, having been born here with at least one foreign born parent.

“ A lot of people are under the impression that visible minorities just came to Canada but my ancestors were here from the 1950s onwards. It’s a really common misconception that we can’t be second or third generation Canadian or not come from war-torn countries.”

Given that most of the screen media that participants referred to is American, it is useful to compare the above demographics to that in the U.S<sup>5</sup>:

Hispanic or Latino	18.5%
Asians (all East, Southeast and South Asians)	5.9%

Note that in the US Census Bureau’s Quick Facts there are no categories for West Asian or Arab. As can be seen from the above comparison, casting or developing a story for a U.S. audience could overrepresent certain populations or erase others and would not reflect the ethno-cultural mix of Canadian cities.

## Stereotypes

As mentioned in the **Core Themes Report**, people from underrepresented identities are frustrated by simplistic and tokenistic portrayals. They want to see full, rich, complex characters but too often see tokens and stereotypes. Keep in mind that representation for many of these communities is so low that they often are happy with any representation, even if it is inauthentic.

“ When I was younger and would see any movies or content where there was an East Indian character being presented, at first there was just this genuine sense of excitement: oh wow, there’s somebody in this film or TV show that looks and sounds kind of like me. So even though that character was being presented as a total stereotype and it was actually rather disrespectful, and condescending and patronizing, there was just an excitement at seeing something that you just wouldn’t normally see.”

There are a handful of recurring stereotypes that appear in all screen media that upset members of the People of Colour communities. These are reflected by specific communities:

<sup>4</sup> [150 Years of Immigration in Canada](#)

<sup>5</sup> [US Census Bureau, Quick Facts, July 1, 2021](#)

## South Asian:

- Not understanding the diversity of the makeup of South Asians, from ethnicity (e.g., Tamils), to religion (e.g., Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, Christians) to languages (e.g., Urdu, Hindi, Bengali) and how those communities are reflected in appearance, behaviour, dress, accent and cultural practices.
- There is a feeling that Indians are represented more often than Pakistanis, Bangladeshi, Nepalis, Tamils, etc.
- The stereotype of the mystical Indian who offers enlightenment to Westerners
- Overbearing parents

“ I come from India, which is already very diverse. I speak, I think, nine or ten languages and that probably covers maybe 10% of India.”

“ With *Funny Boy*, Deepa Mehta should have known that not all South Asians are the same, but this is the consequence of lumping all South Asians together. I wouldn't want to speak for how to be Bengali or if something is authentically Gujarati because I can't speak to that. I think that comes back to the burden of being the token person in the room who is now an authority on all South Asians everywhere. ”

“ The predominant narrative that is told about South Asians is an Indian Hindu narrative. We're not all Indian and we're not all Hindu. Movies like *Eat, Pray, Love* - this idea of white people going to India to find themselves and romanticizing every aspect of Indian culture but for their own white benefit, really bothers me. ”

“ Even *Mindy Kaling*, I can't help but cringe every time some of those characters who obviously do not have Indian accents are forced to play people with Indian accents because that is what the mainstream accepts. So even when we try to actually show our complexity and show our humanity, we are still trying to please the white mainstream masters. It's a kind of self-censorship.”

“ There's the model minority thing, so if you are South Asian you're good at science, you're going to be a doctor and yes, my parents legitimately wanted me to be a doctor and lawyer and I ended up in TV, but we don't want to see it again and again and again. There needs to be new stories in how we're represented and not the same tropes with the overbearing parents, helicopter parents who make you get good grades. We can be more than just good at school. ”

## East Asian and Southeast Asian

- Hypersexualization of women and desexualization of men. While this issue came up in other communities it was a dominant topic of conversation with many emotional responses in the East Asian and Southeast Asian consultations
- Women being treated as servants and men as geeks
- Model minority
- Having cold, unloving, 'tiger' parents

“ Portrayals of the model minority myth directly leads to people erasing and negating our experiences of racism. ”

“ There isn't much representation of Filipinos in the media and most are focused on pain and trauma related to migration and labour injustice. That's very valid but it is not the experience of myself and other first generation or second generation Filipinos. It's challenging pitching to broadcasters in Canada because there is no education around the lack of representation. ”

“ How is there a show about nurses<sup>6</sup>, without a Filipino lead in that? But I also don't want to perpetuate stereotypes of certain communities. There's such a lack of representation that I still so desperately want to see certain people and communities represented. ”

“ There's still a prominent stereotype of Asian women being fetishized and sexualized. With Asian males it's gotten a lot better, they aren't being as emasculated to the extent that we were five years ago. But it still happens. We still play the nerd, the studious type, the quiet type, the submissive type. Just not as frequently. ”

“ There's so little Asian representation that people will just eat up whatever's there. Authenticity of the representation is always a question because nine times out of ten it's not with Asian writers or Asian creators. So we get mean, hot, Asian girl and loser desexualized Asian man. ”

“ That model minority stereotype still exists in real life and in my opinion the reason is because there's just not enough Asian content to really shatter that stereotype. Having one or two shows isn't going to break those stereotypes and have meaningful societal impact. That's why it's so important to have a lot of shows, a lot of movies, where those stereotypes are being shattered. That's the only way that the general public will see that shift. ”

<sup>6</sup>Nurses

### West Asian and Arab

- Not understanding that the two terms are not synonymous. Many West Asians are not Arab (e.g., most Iranians are Persian) or not Muslim (e.g., Christian, Jewish, Druze)
- Only seeing West Asians/Arabs/Muslims in media as terrorists
- The hijab as a symbol of oppression. Submissive women who have to be saved by (often white) men
- Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and other countries as only a war story

“ It’s just a shame that every time I see my country (Afghanistan) on screen, it’s associated with war and the U.S. occupying it. ”

“ There are movies like *American Sniper* where Arab and Muslim characters are almost exclusively viewed through a sniper rifle. That’s very corrosive to human discourse and why there’s a surge in hate crimes against Muslims. ”

“ The problem is this oversimplification of the enormous geographical space that comes up often in the representations. When Americans would represent people from America, they would be extremely careful not to represent someone from California in the same way as someone from Nebraska. In the Middle East there are Iranians, there are Turks, there are Nubians, there are Berbers, there are Kurds ... so many other peoples and cultures. We tend to oversimplify it and essentialize cultures. And always with this theme of terrorism, violence and patriarchy. ”

“ Bombers, billionaires and belly dancers is the Arab empty stereotype. ”

“ Characters who wear hijab are oppressed and they need to be saved. Usually it’s through a romance with a white guy. ”

### Latinx and Brazilian

- Not understanding that there are many shades of Latinx and Brazilians from white to Black and everything in between. There are also many other ethnicities within those countries (e.g., Brazil has the largest population of Japanese outside of Japan after farmers started migrating to Brazil in 1907) and each country in the region differs in accent and culture
- Brazilians speak Portuguese and not Spanish
- Latinx are too often portrayed as singing and flamboyant
- Shows like *Narcos* suggest that all of Latin America is involved in the drug trade
- The stereotype of the Latin lover, which was created by Hollywood with Rudolph Valentino and has been perpetuated ever since

“ Often on screen in Quebec, for people from Latin America or people who speak Spanish, it is often about the rhythm, the dance, the extremely expansive personalities, extravagant behaviour, etc. ”

“ Both women and men from all of Latin America have been fetishized through media and throughout time. There’s the classic Hollywood stereotype of the Latin lover. The attitude is that we are all bubbly and shiny and happy all the time but some of us are gloomy. ”

“ I don’t identify as Latinx; I identify as Mexican. There are so many Latin countries in Latin America and South America and Mexico and different dialects of Spanish. You can’t just have your token Hispanic character. ”

## Consequences

The **Being Seen** research highlights the industry and the public’s demand for authentic representation but what are the consequences of poor or missing representation? Why does it matter so much? In the **Core Themes Report** there was discussion about the importance of accurately reflecting our society but poor representation can have personal and direct consequences for members of the People of Colour communities. Some, similar to other communities, relate to the ability of the audience to individually meet their potential but other consequences are more serious and even deadly.

“ Asian people being seen as submissive makes them more susceptible to be exploited or bullied or dehumanized and seen as inferior to the majority represented in media. It also prevents Asians from pursuing careers that they could want. There’s a stereotype that if you’re Asian you have to be a doctor or a nurse or lawyer. You can’t be what you can’t see. ”

“ The danger of stereotyping minority groups is that you’re putting them in danger. Because you’re putting them in these little boxes, you’re calling them terrorists or refugees who are here to take your jobs, you’re putting them in danger. ”

“ There’s a lot of reinforcement of white supremacy with all of this that we perpetuate with things like shadism, why we think lighter skin is better. ”



“ There’s also colourism on screen. If you see doctors and lawyers and teachers and none of them are People of Colour, it can perpetuate skin bleaching as the only way forward for you. ”

“ You never saw the Latina woman as an entrepreneur, you saw her as a maid. You’re a kid and you don’t think about it, you just know that Latinos are janitors, they’re maids, they are drug dealers. It gets ingrained in your mind. ”

“ It concretely manifests into real violence and real abuse. The kinds of media that these perpetrators are consuming is exactly the stuff we’re talking about. Representations of women and femme people as submissive, as hyper sexualized. There’s evidence that East Asian women and Japanese women are over represented in western pornography and that has a huge effect on men here and what they grew up to expect, whether it’s conscious or not. We have white men constantly coming into our community spaces looking to target women in those spaces. ”

“ The flip side of that too is the whole obsession with “sexy” East Asian men now—like do we all have to look like Simu Liu to be seen? ”

“ I’m newly single and it terrifies me to identify as an Asian in online dating. There is an expectation that if you are an Asian female you’re going to be a certain way. These stereotype images can be very damaging and can really feed into racism and discrimination. ”

“ The hypersexualization of Asian women, with current events<sup>7</sup>, it really made me reflect on how it plays in my life or how I’m treated and how unsafe you can feel because of how you’re represented. It would be nice to reclaim how Asian women can portray themselves in media. ”

“ The desexualization of Asian men created a distaste by Asian men in the dating scene for their own kind. They’ll do anything except for themselves, because that’s what the media portrays. We’re never portrayed in lights where we’re deemed attractive. You have to take the mental time to unpack the dating scene and ok, there are reasons why I don’t like people who look like me and a lot of that falls into media representation. ”

“ There is a portrayal of South Asian women as toxic or undesirable in ways that are super misogynistic and also racist but by South Asian men. The way that Aziz Ansari writes about South Asian women that he does not want to be in a relationship with. Kumail Nanjani is another one in *The Big Sick* where anything having to do with having an Indian bride is repugnant and undesirable. That level of toxicity towards Desi<sup>8</sup> women is something that I have seen played out more and it’s also something that I think plays out a lot in real life. I’ve had guys say I’m only dating you or somebody else brown because I can’t get a white girl. What we’re seeing on screen is actually influencing the way men behave towards women in our communities. ”

“ Like the character of Apu in *The Simpsons*, people watch it and make their own assumptions about Indian folks and then perpetuate that in real life. It becomes super harmful. Then the Indian person who is experiencing so much harm from these negative stereotypes starts to feel distant from their culture and ashamed and wanting to cater to white culture as a survival mechanism. ”

“ I grew up in rural Ottawa and didn’t have any Arab friends. The only connection that I had to my culture was through my family. It was always so isolating that I feel sometimes I don’t have ownership over my culture or a right to identify with it. I think if I had these sources when I was younger it wouldn’t have caused me so much identity strife, being raised around mostly white people. ”

“ Three blocks from my mom’s house in London, a white kid in a truck ran over a Muslim family. White kids are growing up with these stereotypes of Muslims; they are terrorists, bad, let’s do away with Muslims. What we see on TV does inform us as a society. If we’re representing Muslims as positive, people will get that image in their mind when we see so few of them. ”

<sup>7</sup> [Mass shooting of eight people in Atlanta, where six of the eight were Asian women.](#)

<sup>8</sup> Desi is a Hindustani word that means a person of South Asian descent.

## See More Complexity in the Content

As described in the **Core Themes Report**, all underrepresented Canadians want to see more complexity in characters and story lines. That complexity includes intersectionality, a better understanding of communities and a more authentic representation of the diversity of Canadian society.

“ There needs to be more representation of Queer Asians. LGBTQ shows are always white people. ”

“ So many people now have mixed faith and mixed race families. But the representation is always sort of very conservative, even religious, approach. Whatever that intersection is, it does not have to be explicit, the faith is part and parcel of the family’s every day narrative. ”

“ There needs to be more intersectionality. I don’t see a lot of Asians with disabilities, either visible or invisible. There is very little body diversity. If you see an East Asian woman on screen they’re probably a size 2 or a size 4. ”

“ It would be great too for Asians to be represented in racially mixed settings; for Asianness to be represented in the absence of whiteness; and for Asians to not be background props, which is 99% of our representation. ”

“ I want to see more stories of Asians who are already here, where their belonging is not a relevant part of the storyline. There are so many films and tv shows still about exploring our identities and why we’re here and how we came here and how our parents brought us here and I’m very tired of that story. I would just love to see a story with just our generation living, without having to explore our identities. Universal things that we all can relate to but that are specific to our community. ”

“ The stories I like to tell are more in the genre side of things — sci fi, fantasy, horror. I’m worried that especially with a lot of support and funding coming through for diverse filmmakers, people from racialized backgrounds, that the stories that they’re greenlighting are always stories that are really investigating what it is to be a member of a diverse community. I still want to be able to be considered a diverse voice without having to portray a particular type of story that is only about cultural representation. I want to be able to tell the wide spectrum of stories with a diverse cast. ”

“ I would love to see more Afro Brazilians because we are actually more than 60% of the population [in Brazil]. In Canada, people look at me weird because they don't even know we have Black people in Brazil. We are the largest community outside of Africa but no one knows. ”

“ I want to have representation that is not focused on my struggles. You never see a main character where the race is not the focus of the story. Can I just see people of colour as main characters and not secondary evil characters. Not always a struggle movie or a slavery movie or a terrorist movie. White folks need to get used to seeing us everywhere because we are everywhere. ”

“ Also having different cultures intermingling. It tends to be one race against another, but to show it as normal to have longtime friends of all different backgrounds. ”

While participants objected to so many People of Colour being portrayed as recent immigrants with accents, the use of accents to villainize characters was also identified as a problem.

“ The only time you ever hear accents is if they're bad guys. You only hear Arabic accents if it's terrorism, you only ever hear Latin American accents if they are drug lords. You never just hear the average person on the street with an accent. In Canada, and especially Toronto, accents are everywhere. ”

Participants frequently asked for a sitcom like *Kim's Convenience*, but for their community and, unlike *Kim's Convenience*, created by creative talent from their community.

“ I would like to see a *Kim's Convenience* for Muslims kind of thing, but with actual writers who are from this background. ”

“ I think we do need a show like *Kim's Convenience* with South Asian actors and made by South Asians and only then will it be properly representative. ”



## Muslim

**Being Seen** did not have focus groups based on religious minorities, but the discussion of authentic representation of Muslims came up during both Black and People of Colour focus groups. The biggest frustration from Muslims within the People of Colour communities was the feeling that mainstream culture had a very limited understanding of the complexity of Muslim culture, including the many different ethnicities within the religion.

“ I don’t think people realize how many countries are Muslim. They think of Saudi Arabia and Lebanon but they don’t realize there are Muslim countries in Africa and in Asia. A Malaysian Muslim is going to have a completely different experience than a Pakistani Muslim. ”

Every Muslim asked for Muslim characters who were not terrorists.

## Off Limits

In the **Core Themes Report** there was a discussion about whether people not from a community could tell a story from that community. While some thought no, not under any circumstances, many felt that it was possible as long as the right amount of research and community engagement was undertaken. However, there was a list of a few stories that were considered ‘off limits’ for storytellers from outside the People of Colour communities.

“ Intergenerational trauma and history. How colonialism impacts our communities. To have a white creator try to explain that narrative or try to depict that narrative without having felt it first hand is really taboo. ”

“ Things that are off limits are things that are topics that we haven’t really even gotten through ourselves in our communities. One example is mental health and Asian culture. I don’t think that is something that any of our Asian communities have really dug down into so for another community to try and represent our experience, when we don’t even know what it is, I think that’s something that would be off limits. ”

“ Topics that are rooted in history and political tension. As a Vietnamese refugee there are limited representations and accurate representations of myself and my community. The Vietnam War should be represented by a Vietnamese person. ”

“ Some cultural practices should be off limits, like sati, where widows are burnt after their husbands die. It’s important to understand the historical significance or political significance, and religious standpoint of the people at the time. ”

“ If the character happens to be wearing hijab but the story isn’t about this experience of wearing hijab, that’s ok. But if their story is strictly about life as a hijabi and they’ve never worn it, that’s a different story. ”

“ I don’t think there’s anything that’s off limits for any human being on our planet. I think it’s how the person, how the production goes about doing it. It’s vital for everybody to do their due diligence in getting the information as correct as they can. ”

<sup>9</sup> Hijabi means woman who wears a hijab

# DIRECTIVES

Based on the thoughts shared by participants, the following Directives were developed to provide guidance on creating and commissioning more authentic and representative screen-based content that engages with People of Colour communities.

1. Pause before creating or greenlighting stereotypical characters and consider the potential damage that those characters can cause. Can those stereotypes be subverted or do they need to be thrown out?
2. Understand that the historical and geographic immigration patterns in Canada are not the same as in the U.S. and as a result Canadian society does not have the same demographic mix as in the U.S. Not only do Canadian populations look different (i.e, the visible representation of a random group) from American populations, they also look different depending on where they are in Canada.
3. Understand who your characters are and research the community that they belong to. Do they have to be recent immigrants? Have you taken into consideration the racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious diversity of the community and how those differences impact the appearance, dress and cultural practices of the community?
4. Understand the physical appearance of different communities and ensure that casting reflects those differences. Ensure that you are not supporting colourism in casting unless it is to subvert colourism.
5. Recognize that there are People of Colour across the country and that should be reflected in stories and casting and not limited to major urban centres.
6. Centre more stories on People of Colour and do not limit them to 'best friend', villain or other secondary roles.
7. Understand the business case for more stories that centre People of Colour and their experiences as underrepresented audiences look to the U.S. when they cannot find stories that reflect them on Canadian screens.
8. If you come from outside the community — and, depending on the community, this could mean not being South Asian or not being from a specific South Asian community such as Indian or Tamil — consider whether your story could be 'off limits' by that community and, if so, don't do it. Ask yourself why you are the right person to tell this story.
9. While stories of colonialism, history and specific cultural practices are off-limits to creators and producers not from the specific community, other stories were considered more subjective and would depend on the research and engagement done and the perspective taken. Review the Directives contained in the **Core Themes Report** for guidance on research and engagement when telling a story from outside your community.

# CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Stereotypes about People of Colour individuals and communities abound in the screen media that we produce in Canada. The “model minority” myth can at times discount these stereotypes and the harm that they can create. It is everyone’s responsibility, from Creators and Producers, to Broadcasters, Funders, Streamers and Distributors, to subvert the stereotypes and reverse the damage that has been done to date by screen media representation. Authentic stories and characters can contribute to People of Colour communities feeling included in Canadian society and feeling safe.

Next steps could include further research to dig deeper into each community within the wider People of Colour community to provide greater insight into stereotypes and the work that needs to be done to break them.

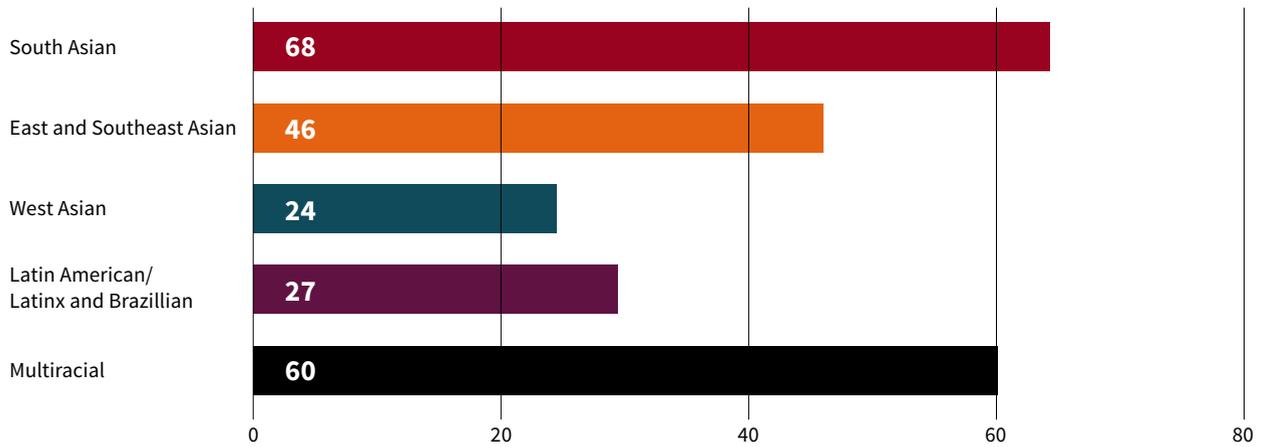
It is recommended that Broadcasters, Digital Platforms, Streaming Services, Funders and Distributors collaborate together with the BSO and other equity-seeking industry organizations to develop strategies to meet the Directives and provide a common response to Creators and Producers. This will ensure decisions are made and strategies devised for early, thoughtful incorporation of the Directives, rather than trying to incorporate them prior to a project hitting the market. Consensus will reduce delays during development or production and ensure that the impact on budgets are consistent across stakeholders.

It is expected that these next steps will go a long way to supporting the structural change that the Directives are intended to initiate. The BSO intends to work with stakeholders to form a Collaborative Network to implement these Directives.

# APPENDIX A - DEMOGRAPHICS

## Target Demographics:

To account for intersectionality, the total is more than the number of self-identifying participants.



# thank

# you



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