

**Action Plan 2002-2005**

**Implementation of Sections 41 and 42  
of the Official Languages Act**

**National Film Board of Canada**



# NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

## SUMMARY

### ACTION PLAN 2002-2005

**Minister :** The Honourable Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage  
**President:** Jacques Bensimon, Government Commissioner of Cinematography and President of the NFB

**Key measure/objective :**

The action plan of the National Film Board Canada for the implementation of sections 41 and 42 of the *Official Languages Act* covers the period of 2002-2005.

**The planned activities are :**

- Give linguistic minorities better access to films from the NFB in the language of their choice in creation new partnerships with the libraries of Sudbury, Nunavut, Calgary and Edmonton.
- Train the people who will produce tomorrow's films in the minority languages regions by creating a production program enabling them to work with producers and professional technicians. Export the Kinö experience in Acadia.
- To reach new audiences, the tours of Canadian regions with the NFB's latest productions will be held in Caraquet, Edmunston, Baie Sainte-Marie, Winnipeg, Vancouver etc.
- In order to promote films from French-speaking minority regions, the NFB is currently developing relationships with international festivals that may be interested in programming French language production from outside Quebec.

**NOTA:** This action plan refers to other measures.

---

**National Film Board of Canada**

**NFB Action Plan  
for the implementation of Sections 41 and 42  
of the *Official Languages Act***

---

**Preamble**

For over 60 years, the mandate of the National Film Board has been to produce and distribute distinctive, culturally diverse, challenging and relevant audiovisual works that provide Canada and the world with a unique Canadian perspective. The NFB's footprint must be strengthened throughout Canada, and to do this, we must become more connected to local communities. To fulfill this mandate, it is essential for the various communities within Canada to have access to the means of expression they need to bear witness to their realities. It was with this end in mind that the NFB established its production centres in French-speaking regions of Canada outside Quebec.

The NFB's 2002-2006 Strategic Plan, presented in January 2002, reaffirms its commitment to cultural diversity and strengthens its regional structure. The goals that the NFB has set for itself in this plan include connecting Canadians with the NFB of today and with their audiovisual legacy, making the NFB a better and more relevant reflection of Canadian society, and confirming the NFB's role as an incubator of creative excellence and innovation.

<b>SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION</b>
---------------------------------------

**1. Identification of Institution**

National Film Board of Canada  
Constitution Square  
360 Albert Street, Suite 1560  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0M9

Web site: <http://www.nfb.ca>

**2. Description of institution's mandate**

The mandate of the National Film Board of Canada is to produce and distribute distinctive, culturally diverse, challenging and relevant audiovisual works.

**3. Responsible officers**

Responsible officer:  
Laurie Jones  
Director-General, Communications and Outreach Development  
Box 6100, Centre-ville Station  
Montreal, Quebec  
H3H 3H5

National Co-ordinator:  
Isabelle Tessier  
Analyst – Government Relations  
360 Albert Street, Suite 1560  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M9

#### **4. Period covered by the Action Plan**

The present action plan covers the period April 1, 2002 to March 31, 2005.

## **SECTION II. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY NEEDS**

#### **5. Means used to identify community needs:**

The NFB has recently commissioned two studies<sup>1</sup> by independent research firms to determine how Canadians perceive the NFB and how satisfied its clients are. Over 600 Canadians outside the province of Québec were interviewed for this survey. In addition to revealing that Canadians have a distinctly positive assessment of the NFB, these studies confirm the public's interest in and appetite for documentary films. This interest is seen just as much among youth age 18 to 24 as among older people, which shows the NFB's ability to adapt itself to a changing world and to offer films that people find relevant. These results confirm that the NFB should "continue to emphasize the way that it serves and communicates with its clients".

After taking office in June 2001, the new Government Film Commissioner travelled throughout the regions of Canada, using various film festivals as opportunities to conduct intensive consultations and engage in discussions and dialogue. These consultations enabled the Commissioner to meet with various stakeholders and discuss their communities' needs with them.

All of the producers at NFB's regional studios maintain continuous contact with directors and other film professionals, as well as with broadcasters, artists' centres, and various educational institutions and provincial agencies involved in film development.

In addition, apart from the continuing involvement of management, three of these producers (the French Program producers in our Acadia and Ontario/Western Canada regions, and the producer for the English Program studio serving English-speaking Quebec) work with various regional organizations and engage in various activities that let them identify the needs of the minority language communities that they serve. These organizations and activities include boards of directors of regional film festivals, forums on film production and distribution, discussions with professional associations (such as the Alliance des producteurs francophones hors-Québec), and meetings with young filmmakers' groups and cultural

---

<sup>1</sup> *Canadian Attitudes Toward Documentary Films and Videos; Pollara Report, September 2001.*

centres. Through these activities, these producers keep their finger on the pulse of the creative community and the public and obtain a vibrant, living portrait of a society in change. At the same time, the community and the public get the chance not only to say what they expect of the NFB, but also to express their concerns and debate the issues that drive them, culturally, socially, economically, and politically.

## **6. Principal needs identified at the national level**

### Needs of language minorities

- **Training:** The surveys that we conduct in regions far from Canada's major urban centres regularly confirm the handicap imposed by the limited number, and in some cases the total absence, of schools and programs that offer training in film. This limitation makes it hard to train the people who will produce tomorrow's films in the minority languages of these regions.
- **Production:** The funding that has been made available to private producers in the regions of Canada by Telefilm Canada, the Canadian Television Fund and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, as well as the assistance programs offered to filmmakers by provincial institutions, have all helped to improve conditions for private production. Because these funds are earmarked chiefly for productions for television, the need for assistance for the production of feature-length documentary and fiction films is now being felt.
- **Distribution:** The French-speaking minorities of Canada have very few if any theatres that show films in French. They have partial access to NFB French-language films through NFB agreements with partner libraries. These minorities therefore have very little exposure to films produced in their own language. Thus students and filmmakers have difficulty in accessing such films to do research and to keep abreast of experiments with the film medium and major national and international trends in filmmaking in their language. In art as in science, it is important for practitioners to know what their colleagues elsewhere are doing and to make their own work known to these colleagues. If filmmakers are forced to work in a vacuum, how can they make any significant contribution to national and international film culture?

## **SECTION III. ACTION PLAN CONTENTS AND TIMETABLE**

### **7. a-b) Measures and timetables proposed by the institution to respond to community needs**

- The primary goals of the NFB's response to community needs is to give linguistic minorities better access to films from the NFB collection in the language of their choice. The NFB also plans to promote access to its heritage expertise as well as to its knowledge base, which is growing every day in pace with technical developments

and filmmaking practices in order to support and develop both the production and the distribution of films in minority language regions. To do so, the NFB will emphasize on training the people who will produce tomorrow's films in the minority languages' regions; create a production program, enabling them to work with producers and professional technicians.

### **Means by which the measures will be implemented in the coming three years**

To participate more actively in the cultural life of French-speaking communities throughout Canada, the NFB has signed a multipartite agreement with the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Fédération culturelle canadienne française and several federal cultural agencies. The objectives of this agreement include:

- encouraging the creation, production, promotion and distribution of the cultural and artistic works and products of the French-speaking communities of Canada;
- demonstrating the value of a co-ordinated approach by the various stakeholders and soliciting the participation of other partners.

These objectives are highly consistent with the mandate and activities of the NFB as set out in its 2002-2006 Strategic Plan.

### **In the areas of training and production:**

7a) Strengthening the NFB's regional structure: In conjunction with the opening of the new NFB Mediatheque in Toronto, the Ontario/West Studio returned to this city. On December 9, 2002, the NFB announced the appointment of Claudette Jaiko as the new producer for this studio. Since the start of 2003, Ms. Jaiko has been travelling throughout Canada, meeting with both established and emerging Francophone filmmakers and producers in the regions where they work, with the goal of solidifying and strengthening the NFB's ties with them. She has visited Ottawa, Sudbury, Toronto, all the Western provinces and all the territories. She also plans to meet with representatives of provincial agencies and other key stakeholders to establish partnerships and work co-operatively with French-speaking minority communities to produce and create French-language films. The NFB is keeping an office open in Ottawa, however, to facilitate relations with filmmakers in that region.

7a) Training: (basic and continuing education) for filmmakers in the regions. In this regard, the NFB has developed a program of master classes for Francophones in Moncton, Winnipeg and Vancouver. In the first phase of this program, documentary filmmakers and directors of photography with expertise in documentary and fiction films will give lectures to students in university courses and to beginning and experienced filmmakers in workshops that follow the "master class" format. In addition to these master classes, the NFB is planning a mentoring program that will give emerging filmmakers the chance to work with seasoned directors, producers, screenwriters, cinematographers, and other masters of the craft. We believe that both the emerging filmmakers and their mentors will benefit from these creative encounters.

7a) Support for emerging filmmakers will be provided by increasing the number of productions by emerging filmmakers to 35 per cent of the NFB's total production slate. Establishing Kinō groups under a three-year plan that has been submitted to the IPOLC program, is a good example of supporting emerging filmmakers. Kinō is an experiment in low-budget production, designed to foster innovative film making and emerging filmmakers. It was established in Quebec City, where once each month, filmmakers get together to screen, criticize and comment on one another's work. With great success in Québec, the Kinō experience will be exported in Acadia.

7a) Support for independent production will be ensured by a 25 per cent increase in the budget for the ACIC (Aide au cinéma indépendant canadien) program in French-speaking regions outside Quebec. This program assists many young talents by providing them with the services and equipment they need to create works for which they have difficulty in obtaining funding through traditional channels.

**In the area of distribution:**

7a) Expanding access to the films in the NFB collection through the development of the CineRoute high-speed network. This network lets users consult and view more than 1400 NFB titles on-line at 55 different schools, universities and research centres across Canada. Access to the CineRoute network is provided through a partnership between the NFB and CANARIE Inc.

**Over the next three years**, as deployment of the high-speed network proceeds, we will increase the number of titles available, thus providing even wider access to this rich storehouse of Canada's national film heritage. In 2003, the NFB will deploy a commercial version of CineRoute on the Internet, thus providing access to 2000 IP addresses that already subscribe to a high-speed service.

In addition, the NFB works with a network of 55 partner libraries that provide access to its productions in cities throughout Canada. The NFB continues to offer bilingual collections in partner libraries that serve minority-language communities like the Bibliothèque of Saint-Boniface, the Bibliothèque St-Jean which serves francophones of the University of Alberta, le centre culturel francophone de Vancouver etc. To build on our existing collection, Nunavut, Sudbury, Edmonton and Calgary will be added to the list. Lastly, the NFB catalogue, listing all 8000 titles in the NFB collection, is also available via our Web site at [www.nfb.ca](http://www.nfb.ca)

7a) Opening of the NFB Mediatheque in Toronto: This new centre opened its doors on November 22, 2002. It is equipped with the very latest technology. In addition to its completely renovated screening room, it offers a system that lets individuals view a vast collection of films from the NFB's collection, either via CA\*Net 4 network or from hard disk. Through the Mediatheque, the NFB provides unprecedented access not only to the English-language and French-language films in its own collection, but also to those in other collections, such as that of the National Archives.

The NFB would like to have more mediatheques in urban centers to ensure access to our French collections from Acadia, Ontario and the Western regions.

7a) An alternative distribution plan will involve equipping community centres, museums and movie theatres with digital projectors. This initiative will enable these venues to offer high-quality screenings of French-language documentary, animated and fiction films in regions where the screens are otherwise devoted almost exclusively to English-language films.

7b) As in the past, the NFB will use Canadian film festivals as a showcase where the Canadian public can view films by minority-language filmmakers.

The NFB also plans to increase its presence at Canadian festivals while demonstrating the NFB's core values of support for diversity and for emerging filmmakers.

7b) Promoting films from French-speaking minority regions. The NFB is currently developing relationships with international festivals that may be interested in programming French-language Canadian productions from outside Quebec. These programs will help to raise awareness of this body of films and the cultures and viewpoints that they reflect, among international audiences that are currently unfamiliar with them.

To establish such partnerships, the NFB is currently in discussions with the Visions du Réel international documentary film festival in Nyon, Switzerland; the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA); and the Mois du Film Documentaire de Paris.

7b) The tours of Canadian regions with the NFB's latest productions have proven a success and will be continued. In addition to the cities of Moncton, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Sherbrooke that we have visited previously on these tours, we will be visiting the following other cities and areas to reach new French-speaking audiences: Nanaimo, Caraquet, Edmundston, Baie Sainte-Marie, Chéticamp, the Evangeline Region of Prince Edward Island and Sudbury.

7b) We will begin distributing English-language films in parts of Quebec where there are English-speaking minority-language communities. We will start this experiment in the Eastern Townships and Quebec City, by holding screenings of English-language films and adding such films to libraries' collections.

7b) By establishing Kinō groups in Acadia, the NFB would like to reunite them with existing Kinō group in Quebec City and with Film zone of Moncton who organizes the Acadie Underground on the occasion of the Festival international du cinéma francophone en Acadie (FICFA).

The proposed IPOLC project will allow the production not only of films by members of the Quebec City Kinō group, but also of three short subjects by emerging filmmakers from French-speaking communities outside Quebec.

Other provinces which will be reached are: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.



7b) Lastly, we plan to hold professional development sessions for film professionals in the regions, on subjects such as Avid editing, lighting, and sound editing and mixing, as well as professional development sessions on the trades of production manager and assistant director, which will be given in partnership with the Parlimage film training centre.

The plans for this IPOLC project also include holding master classes on subjects such as interactive production of films for the Internet and 2D and 3D animation methods. These classes will meet a pressing need in the areas far from major urban centres where experiments in these leading-edge genres are concentrated.

### **7c) Proposed means by which the institution will publicize its measures, programs, and services**

Interpersonal contacts developed through many years of efforts to familiarize ourselves with Canada's official language minority communities remain the NFB's preferred means of publicizing our initiatives and programs to these various target groups. In addition to the ongoing efforts by management, the consultations being conducted by the new Ontario/West Studio are a good example of the means we propose to use to publicize the NFB's measures, programs and services.

## **8. Measures proposed to evaluate the success of expected results**

- The NFB will evaluate the success of these initiatives through its regional representatives and through the meetings that it holds over the course of the year with various organizations, during festivals;
- The number of members of official-language minority communities who participate in the NFB's various training initiatives;
- The unit and dollar volume of sales of French-language videocassettes outside Quebec and English-language videocassettes in Quebec.

## **9. Financial and other resources dedicated to the completion of the Action Plan**

Between now and 2005, over and above its regular program, the NFB plans to invest over \$365,000 to carry out this action plan and Heritage Canada will also invest \$365,000 to implement the Interdepartmental Partnership with Official-Language Communities. In that budgetary period, more than 3 million dollars will be spent on productions outside Quebec.

## **SECTION IV. COMMUNICATION PLAN**

### **10. Proposed means of distributing the action plan**

Internally: Senior management will receive a copy of the action plan.

Externally: The action plan will be posted on our Web site at our institutional address, [www.nfb.ca](http://www.nfb.ca), under the link "Institutional Publications".

<b>SECTION V. SIGNATURES</b>
------------------------------

Jacques Bensimon  
Government Film Commissioner and  
Chairperson

Date

Laurie Jones  
Director-General, Communications and  
Outreach Development

Date

Events to report at the Studio documentaire Acadie in 2003-2004

- Launch of the film *Kacho Komplo*, by Paul Bossé, winter 2003, Montreal;
- Screening of the film *Ceux qui attendent* by Herménégilde Chiasson at the Rencontres internationales du Documentaire de Montréal;
- Filming of *Yvon Durelle, l'homme fort de Baie Sainte-Anne*, by Ginette Pellerin;
- Production of *Je vous cherche Marie*, by Monique LeBlanc (co-production).

Events to report at the Ontario/West Studio

- Launch of *L'envers de la pilule*, by Isabelle Barsive
- Launch of *Anne, ma sœur Anne*, by Marie Cadieux