

OVERVIEW AND GOALS

The Cohort is an annual Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) initiative for six (6) emerging to mid-level WGC members from diverse backgrounds.

Eligible applicants are encouraged to submit a script to apply for the program. Each participant will be paired with an experienced WGC member for a mentorship focused on re-writing/polishing the script.

In addition to script mentorship with a seasoned screenwriter who will be matched based on each writer's project, the WGC IDEA Committee will organize workshops and group sessions with showrunners, screenwriters, and other industry professionals, designed to provide career mentorship to participants.

At the end of the program, the Cohort will have the opportunity to participate in a stakeholder-centered event(s) to promote themselves and their scripts.

The WGC defines diverse writers as belonging to any of the following groups: Indigenous peoples, Black, people of colour, LGBTQ2S, and people with disabilities.

The goals of The Cohort program are:

1. To provide mentorship to writers from diverse backgrounds.
2. To support writers from underrepresented communities in their immediate and long-term career goals.
3. To connect experienced Canadian media professionals with diverse screenwriting talent.

Accessibility information

The Cohort program will require writers to participate in Zoom meetings. In-person gatherings may be arranged. We encourage writers to share their access needs at the time of application to ensure we are able to make the necessary arrangements. Accessibility requests will only be used by the WGC staff to plan accordingly and will not be disclosed to the IDEA Committee in the selection process. For questions about accessibility, please contact WGC Director of Membership and Research, Natalia Escobar Bohorquez (n.escobarb@wgc.ca).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible applicants must meet all the requirements below:

- **Be a WGC member in good standing.**
- Own all underlying rights to their original script.
- Be a resident of Canada and hold valid legal status to work in Canada for the entire six-month duration of the program. Eligible statuses include Canadian Citizens, Permanent Residents, Protected Persons, or temporary residents holding a valid open work permit.
- Have no more than 420 produced minutes of written work (excluding credits for webisodes and ineligible formats).
- Have had a contract under the WGC's jurisdiction on or after 2015. Alternatively, members that joined the WGC with non-signatory contracts on or after 2015 but have not attained a contract under the WGC's jurisdiction since, will also be deemed eligible to apply.
- Identify as diverse, according to the Guild's definition in the "APPLICATION FORM". Members must be identified as such with the WGC. To self-identify as diverse with the Guild, please e-mail Natalia Escobar Bohorquez (n.escobarb@wgc.ca) prior to submitting your application.

Please refer to the "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS" section for additional information, including examples to further illustrate eligibility requirements. If you have additional questions regarding the eligibility criteria, contact WGC Director of Membership and Research, Natalia Escobar Bohorquez (n.escobarb@wgc.ca).

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

FILLABLE FORMS:

1. *Application Form, Submission Release, and Declaration of Ownership.* See the explanation in the “TO APPLY” section.

SUPPORT MATERIAL:

2. *Script:* Screenwriters must apply to the program with an original, English-language script based on an original concept. Specs of existing shows or bibles will not be considered.

Drama, comedy, and children’s and youth programming scripts are eligible. Projects may be feature films, half-hour series, one-hour series, miniseries, or movies of the week. They may be live action or animation.

While the program welcomes and encourages stories that include diverse perspectives, themes, and characters, this is not a requirement.

The following are ineligible: Talk shows, game shows, reality-based series, documentary series, news, stand-up, and sketch comedies.

3. *Letter of Intent:* Applicants are asked to submit a letter of intent (no longer than one single-space page).

We ask that you self-identify in your letter and tell us about your particular background, your path, and the career goals you hope to advance through the program (e.g., getting an agent, having a stronger sample, learning how to promote your script).

The program was specifically developed to lift the voices of our underrepresented diverse screenwriters. This letter is our way to better understand the experiences, challenges, and best ways the WGC can support writers who identify as Indigenous, Black, people of colour, LGBTQ2S, and people with disabilities.

The content of your letter will be confidential within the WGC IDEA Committee. If your script is selected, we may extend an invitation to share your experience as a diverse writer with our membership.

Please refer to the “FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS” section for additional information.

TO APPLY

1. We encourage you to take your time and submit the best version of your script. The application **deadline is July 27, 2026, at 5:00 pm**. No exceptions.
2. Download these guidelines with Adobe Reader and complete the three forms (Application Form, Submission Release, and Declaration of Ownership, pp. 5-8 of this document).
3. Fill out the forms and save all three as one PDF: **FormsYourLastnameTC.pdf**
4. Save your script as **ScriptYourLastnameTC.pdf**.
5. Save your letter of intent as **LetterYourLastnameTC.pdf**.
6. **E-MAIL the three pdfs – Forms, Script and Letter to: n.escobarb@wgc.ca** with the subject line: **Application TC2026**. Access requests can be included in this e-mail. We encourage writers to share their access needs at the time of application to ensure we are able to make the necessary arrangements. Accessibility requests will only be used by the WGC staff to plan accordingly and will not be disclosed to the IDEA Committee during the selection process.
7. We will send you a confirmation of receipt shortly after we receive your completed application.

APPLICATION FORM

1. Personal Information

Name: _____ Pronouns: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

WGC member #: _____

Do you have an agent? No Yes

Agent's name (if applicable): _____

2. Title, Genre and Logline

Please be aware that section 2. of the APPLICATION FORM will be shared by the WGC if you are selected.

Title: _____

Genre and format: _____

Logline for Original Script (450 characters maximum)

Logline of Original Concept (if different from script) (450 characters maximum)

3. Are you currently working in the television industry and, if so, in what capacity:

No Yes Writer Producer Director Other: _____

4. Citizenship Canadian Citizen Landed Immigrant Other _____

5. Canadian Resident: Yes No

Applicants must be a resident of Canada and hold valid legal status to work in Canada for the entire six-month duration of the program. Eligible statuses include Canadian Citizens, Permanent Residents, Protected Persons, or temporary residents holding a valid open work permit.

6. Diversity Identification

Applicants must identify their diversity to ensure that the program’s mandate is met. Federal privacy legislation protects the personal information you voluntarily provide on this application form.

For the purposes of The Cohort program, the WGC defines diversity as writers who belong to any of the following groups: Indigenous peoples, people of colour, Black, LGBTQ2S, and people with disabilities. Further information may be requested by the WGC.

Diversity Identification _____

Applicant Signature

Date

SUBMISSION RELEASE

Title of Script: _____

Length and Genre of Script (e.g., 1/2-hr Sitcom): _____

I understand that the Writers Guild of Canada (“WGC”) will be evaluating the Script as a basis for my possible selection for The Cohort program. I am signing this Submission Release (the “Release”) in the express understanding that the WGC is relying on this Release and my agreement herein. I acknowledge that the WGC will not review the Script without my execution of this Release.

I acknowledge that no fiduciary, agency, employment or confidential relationship now exists between the WGC and me, and I further acknowledge that no such relationship is established by execution of this Release and submission of the Script.

I warrant and represent that I am the sole author of the Script. I further warrant and represent that to the best of my knowledge the Script and all elements thereof are my original creations and do not violate any copyright, proprietary rights, rights of confidentiality or other rights of any person or entity and that no third party has any rights, title or interest therein or thereto, and have not been generated in whole or in part by the use of generative artificial intelligence technology. I agree to indemnify the WGC from and against any and all claims, expenses, losses or liabilities that may be asserted against the WGC or incurred by the WGC in connection with the Script arising from any breach or alleged breach of these warranties.

I understand that the WGC will not intentionally use the Script or any part thereof for any purpose other than provided herein.

I have retained at least one copy of the Script, and I hereby release the WGC of all liability for loss or destruction of, or damage to, said Script.

This Release shall inure to the benefit of, and be binding upon, each of us and our respective heirs, successors, representatives, assigns, and licensees. Should any provision or part of any provision of this Release be void or unenforceable, such provision or part thereof shall be deemed omitted, and replaced by a legal provision which most closely reflects the parties’ intent as expressed herein. As so modified this Release shall remain in full force and effect. This Release shall be construed according to the laws of the province of Ontario without reference to conflicts of law provisions. This Release may not be changed, modified, terminated or discharged except by a document signed by both parties.

The WGC shall be under no obligation to retain the Script or to return the Script or any copies thereof.

I hereby state that I have read and understand this Release, that no representations of any kind have been made to me other than as contained in this Release, that there are no prior or contemporaneous agreements, either oral or written, in effect between us pertaining to the Script, and that this Release states our entire understanding and agreement.

Signature: _____ Name: _____

Date: _____

DECLARATION OF OWNERSHIP

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I am the sole author of the original script titled

“ _____ ”

and own all rights to it, including copyright.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I have to be a member of the WGC to apply to The Cohort program?

Yes. You must be a WGC member in good standing.

Can you provide examples of writers who may be eligible to apply, based on the credit and contract requirements?

The credit requirement is based on produced minutes of written work, and it sets a limit of 420 minutes total.

Examples of meeting this requirement include:

- Having 500 minutes of written work produced total, but 400 of those minutes are in webisodes and talk shows (ineligible formats). The other 100 minutes are in an eligible format such as animation.
- Having a total of four writing credits in one-hour drama (or 240 minutes).

The contract requirement is based on having contracts under the WGC's jurisdiction. Writers are eligible if:

- They have at least one contract under the WGC's jurisdiction, signed on or after 2015, or
- They joined the WGC with a non-signatory contract on or after 2015 and have not had a contract under the WGC's jurisdiction since.

Please contact the WGC if you have questions about the eligibility criteria.

What should I expect once I send in my application?

Once you apply, we will send you an e-mail confirming receipt and let you know when to expect news. If you are selected, the WGC will contact you to provide more information about your participation in the program.

Participants that are not selected will also be notified by the WGC. Due to the foreseeable number of applications, the WGC will be unable to provide individualized feedback to those who are not selected.

If I am selected, what should I expect once the program starts?

The Cohort program will run for six months. Once it starts, you will be contacted by the WGC IDEA Committee to discuss your career goals and how the Committee can tailor its programming during the six-month program to assist you in advancing those goals.

You will also be paired with an experienced WGC member who will read your script, give you notes, answer questions, and maintain regular communication during a four-month mentorship period focused on rewriting/polishing your script. The WGC's priority is to pair you with an experienced working writer; please be aware this person will have limited time. However, mentors are expected to give two sets of notes and be available for at least two meetings (remote or in-person) during the mentorship period.

Will I be expected to attend all workshops and programming offered during the six months?

The WGC will strive to schedule all workshops considering the time restrictions of all participants and expect them to make best efforts to assist all the workshops and events arranged through the Cohort program.

What happens at the end of the six-month program?

The WGC IDEA Committee will organize an industry stakeholder event(s) to promote The Cohort participants and their scripts. Details of the event(s) will be determined at a later date.

How will I know if my script has been selected for the Cohort program?

You will be notified by e-mail.

How is diversity determined?

The WGC considers diverse writers those who belong to any of the following groups: Indigenous peoples, Black, people of colour, LGBTQ2S, and people with disabilities.

Do I have to identify my diversity in my *Letter of Intent*?

The program was specifically developed to bring more diverse screenwriters into the industry. If you do not identify, we will have no way of knowing if you are eligible for the program. The WGC may ask for additional information in cases in which further clarification is needed. Additional information will only be asked to ensure the applicant is eligible for the program.

Will my diversity affect the evaluation of my application?

Eligible applicants will only be evaluated on the strength of the script and letter of intent submitted with their application.

May I apply if I am a non-diverse screenwriter but have a project that features diversity?

No. The program is aimed specifically at supporting diverse screenwriters.

Can I submit a script if I have an agent?

Yes.

Can I submit a script for which I have received public or private funding?

Yes.

May I apply if a producer has already optioned my script?

No. Projects that have already been optioned are not eligible. You may, however, apply with a different project. If your script gets optioned or you sell it after submitting it to the WGC, you are required to inform the WGC.

What are the acceptable program genres?

You may submit any genre of drama, comedy or children's and youth projects – live action or animated. Formats include feature films, hour-long dramatic series, half-hour series, movies-of-the-week, and miniseries. Ineligible formats include talk shows, game shows, reality-based series, including home improvement and food shows, documentaries, documentary series, news shows, stand-up and sketch comedies.

Why can't I submit a spec script for an existing television series?

Spec scripts will show us that you can write within an existing framework, but they will not reveal your abilities to create original projects.

May I apply with more than one project?

We will accept only one project per applicant.

Can I apply with a project that was previously promoted through the Script of the Month program?

No. If you applied to the WGC's Script of the Month before, you may re-apply with a different script based on a different original concept.

Can I apply with a co-screenwriter?

You and your co-screenwriter may apply to the program. At this time, it is required for both you and your co-screenwriter to meet the eligibility criteria.

For further questions, please contact WGC Director of Membership and Research, Natalia Escobar Bohorquez (n.escobarb@wgc.ca).