

*For immediate release*

**WIFT TORONTO SETS NEW PRIORITIES, LAUNCHES NEW LOGO,**

**AND EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR CRYSTAL AWARDS**

**TORONTO, ON September 1, 2020 –** Karen Bruce, WIFT Toronto’s Executive Director, today announced key strategic priorities for the organization, an extension of the Crystal Awards submission deadline, and revealed its new logo.

Born from planning sessions that began in the spring of 2019, WIFT Toronto is working toward a more inclusive and diverse membership; increased professional development and mentorship programming; and increased networking opportunities for its members. The organization is now committed to ensuring that a minimum 50% of the mentees in its **Connect Mentorship** programme will be BIPOC women. Further, WIFT Toronto continues to build relationships with like-minded organizations that prioritize equity, inclusion, and diversity including: Black Women Film!, Breakthroughs Film Festival, Female Eye Film Festival, imagineNATIVE, Inside Out, Reelworld, Regent Park Film Festival, and Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival, among others.

WIFT Toronto’s new logo reflects the organization’s commitment to inclusion. The plus symbol signifies that all genders are welcome and represented and that the organization is rooted in all screen-based media – no longer just film and television. Lastly, the plus symbol reflects energy and forward movement.

“The new logo is an extension of the work we have been doing behind the scenes over the last year and a bit,” said Karen Bruce, Executive Director of WIFT Toronto. “Our strategic priorities have shifted toward developing programming that meets the needs of *all* women and those who identify as women or non-binary, throughout the industry. We have so much amazing programming – from Walk & Talks with industry leaders to intensive management credit courses – but we haven’t done a good enough job in linking that programming to underrepresented communities. We’re going to change that.”

“We’re thrilled to be able to support more BIPOC women through our Connect Mentorship programme,” said Linda Stregger, Chair, WIFT Toronto. “And I’m really hoping to hear from women who want to mentor – the more mentors we have, the more young women we can empower. I know there are a lot of women in our industry looking for ways to give back. This is their chance to really make a lasting difference in someone’s career.”

More information and applications for **Connect Mentorship** can be found [here.](https://www.wift.com/programmingposts/wift-connect)

The deadline for the Crystal Award submissions has been extended to **September 11, 2020**. The Crystal Awards takes place on December 1, 2020, and is a virtual event this year. Members are encouraged to submit in the following categories: Creative Excellence, Digital Trailblazer, Mentorship, and Outstanding Achievement in Business. Candidates do not need to be members of WIFT. For more information on how to submit, please click [here](https://www.wift.com/programmingposts/wift-t-crystal-awards).

Hear from [WIFT Toronto](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FWFpuFZ46-vLOlOirHGUx5jwjFE3qVRv/view)

**KAREN BRUCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Karen Bruce joined Women in Film and Television Toronto in 2014 and became its Executive Director in 2019. Prior to joining WIFT Toronto, Bruce was the Director of Membership & Fan Engagement at the Canadian Academy, where she was responsible for membership, year-round programming, and developing the national Apprenticeship for Women Directors. Bruce also served as director of Canadian Initiatives at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), where she was instrumental in supporting the Canadian film industry and nurturing emerging talent through programs like Talent Lab and TIFF Rising Stars.

**LINDA STREGGER**, **CHAIR**

Linda Stregger has been a member of WIFT Toronto since 2012 and became its Chair in May, 2020. Stregger is a Vice President of Finance responsible for the financial leadership of Spin Master’s Entertainment Division. Prior to joining Spin Master, Stregger was a co-owner of an independent production company and an award-winning producer specializing in lifestyle and documentary programming. She is also an instructor at the TV Arts Program at Humber College in Toronto and serves on the boards of three not-for-profit organizations. Stregger received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from York University and is a CPA, CMA.

More programming announcements will be made at a later date.

For information on membership and programming visit [www.wift.com](http://www.wift.com)

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**About WIFT Toronto**

**Women in Film and Television Toronto** is a non-profit, inclusive, member-based organization dedicated to the development and advancement of women and those who identify as women, in the screen-based industry. WIFT Toronto engages, empowers, and educates its 900 members through professional development, mentoring, networking opportunities, and celebrations that underscore the successes of members and non-members alike.  In the last three years alone, WIFT Toronto has generated more than 150 mentorships, bestowed 21 bursaries and 62 awards, and produced nearly 700 hours of programming including 65+ networking opportunities.

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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