



HOME \ ABOUT \ CONTACT

July 19, 2018



Vision Maker Media Announces 12 Films Awarded Public Media Content Funding

Lincoln, Nebraska:

[Vision Maker Media](#) (VMM) announces support for 12 new Native American and Alaska Native documentaries. The projects, which include production and completion, post-production, research and development, and virtual reality, were selected as part of VMM's mission to increase documentaries by and about Native Americans in Public Broadcasting.

With funding from the [Corporation for Public Broadcasting \(CPB\)](#), Vision Maker Media's [Public Media Content Fund](#) awards support to projects with a Native American theme and significant Native involvement that ultimately benefits the entire Public Media community. Since 1990, filmmakers have been invited to submit proposals in various stages of their film--from research and development, to production, post-production/completion and new media. All proposals are reviewed by a group of Public Television professionals, station programmers, independent filmmakers, educators and executives from Indigenous organizations.

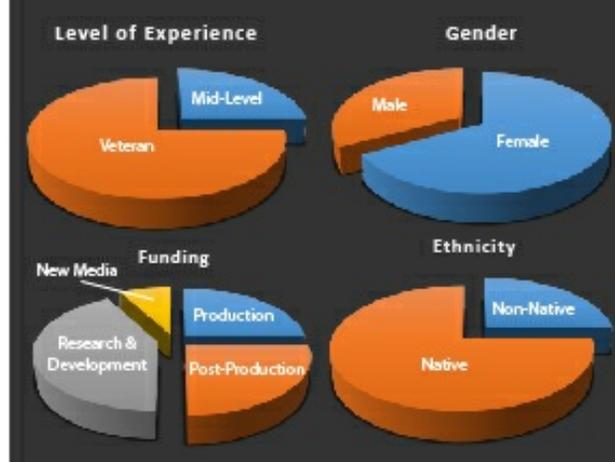
"The goal of the Public Media Content Fund is to increase the diversity of voices available to [PBS](#) viewers," said Shirley K. Sneve (Rosebud Sioux), executive director of Vision Maker Media.



Rez Metal: Kyle Felter .

The final slate of documentaries represents Native voices and stories from across the United States including Alaska, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, New Mexico, New York and Wyoming. Among the selected projects, 25 percent are mid-level filmmakers, and 75 percent are veteran filmmakers. Women filmmakers make up 67 percent of awardees, and the majority, 75 percent, are enrolled in a federally recognized tribe.

Funding was awarded as 25 percent production, 25 percent post-production and completion, 42 percent research and development, and 8 percent new media. Production provides funding for producers to film, record and produce their documentaries. Post-production funding allows for completion of documentaries already in progress. Research and Development provides funding for developing story lines and identifying engaging characters. New Media provides for programs with primary distribution over the Internet such as vignettes and webisodes, as well as creation of community engagement materials.



Violence Against Women Act: Nations of Sisters Documentary*

Ryan Red Corn - Producer/Director
 Ginny Underwood - Writer, Producer
 Joseph Brown Thunder - Producer

Violence against Native women has reached epidemic proportions in the United States; more than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence, and more than 1 in 2 have experienced sexual violence. Native women are murdered at a rate more than 10 times the national average. Many crimes occur on reservations which leads to jurisdictional challenges for local, state and federal authorities. The result: no justice for Native women.

Research & Development | \$25,000

Loreal Tsingine case (Working Title)*

Tonantzin "Toni" DeAztlan Smith - Producer
 Aaron Benally - Co-Producer/Cinematographer
 Andrew Hongo - Story Consultant

This film is about the Loreal Tsingine case: a young Navajo woman shot and killed by a white police officer in Winslow, Ariz., for shoplifting - inciting outrage. But her story is not unique; Native Americans are being killed by cops at a rate higher than any other group. It is an invisible epidemic plaguing towns that border reservations, where racial tensions are running high. This is a film about the Native Lives Matter movement through the lens of Loreal's story.

Research & Development | \$18,300

Without a Whisper*

Katsitsionni Melissa Fox - Writer/Director/Producer
 Katja Esson - Writer/Director/Producer

"Without a Whisper" is an untold story of how Native American women helped to fire the struggle of American Women for freedom and equality in the suffrage movement. This story is shared by Dr. Sally Roesch Wagner and Mohawk Clanmother Louise Wakerakatste Herne with the backdrop of today's women's movement.

Production | \$73,325

Arming Sisters*

Tantoo Cardinal - Executive Producer
 Jaida Grey Eagle - Associate Producer
 Willow O'Feral - Director/Producer/Cinematographer
 Brad Heck - Director/Producer/Cinematographer

Native American survivors of sexual assault fight for tribal sovereignty in order to end the rape of Indigenous women against the backdrop of an ongoing legacy of violent colonization.

Post-Production | \$100,000

Zuni Eagles*

Patty Loew, Ph.D. - Producer
 Nelson Luna - Director of Cultural Content
 Amy Smekar - Co-Director
 Basma Amer - Co-Director
 Natalya Carrico - Co-Director

Zuni Eagles is the story of the special relationship that Native people-and the Zuni in particular-have with Bald and Golden Eagles and the extraordinary efforts Zuni has made at the first tribal aviary to protect and nurture this symbol of America. It explores the generosity of spirit that's led a determined community to care for non-releasable Eagles who would otherwise be euthanized and the environmental challenge th

at currently threatens Zuni's ability to serve as their caretakers.

Research & Development | \$25,000

Fairbanks Four*

Kat Patterson - Director/Producer

Christa Cassano - Co-Producer & Graphics Artist

Dena Mermelstein - Editor

The Fairbanks Four unpacks the 1997 wrongful conviction of four Koyukon Athabascan teens convicted of the sexual assault and brutal murder of a local white teenager. After 18 years in prison, the miscarriage of justice continues with cover-ups and an unfair deal for their release. Struggling to find peace outside of prison the men wage a civil rights lawsuit against the city and the police officers that put them behind bars.

Post-Production | \$100,000

Native Music VR Trilogy*

Tracy Rector - Director/Writer

Nahaan - Writer

Mischa Jakupcak - Producer

Laura James - Videographer/Editor

Our virtual reality trilogy begins with Eagle Bone, a poetic story that incorporated Lushootseed and spoken word verse as a welcoming and as a reflection on Urban Native identity. Our second chapter will be a step into history on a platform of 3D virtual reality as experienced inside of a 1930's jazz club featuring the melodic sounds of Mildred Bailey. We wrap with an Indigenous Futuristic immersive piece utilizing augmented reality to achieve a fantastical journey with visions of youthful hope.

Recommended VR (new media) | \$50,000

K'eh*Sarah Del Seronde - Writer/Director

Jeff Barnaby - Story Consultant/Editor

Damien Jones - Cultural Consultant

K'eh (Clans) explores important issues of identity and relationships lost in epistemicide of the Athabascan speaking populations of Canada and the United States to answer what it means to belong to an ancient culture that spans North America.

Research & Development | \$20,000

Rez Metal

Ashkan Soltani - Director/Producer

Priscilla Gonzalez Sainz - Producer

REZ METAL follows the Navajo heavy metal band I Don't Konform's fairy tale journey from performing on poverty-stricken reservations to recording their debut album with Grammy-award winner producer of Metallica and tells the compelling story of thriving heavy metal scene on reservations where metal has been one of the most popular types of music among under-represented Navajo youths.

Post-Production | \$72,374

Home from School: The Children of Carlisle*

Wyoming PBS

Geoff O'Gara - Executive Producer; Writer

Jordan Dresser - Associate Producer

Sophie Barksdale - Associate Producer

Virginia Moore - Production Manager

"Kill the Indian to save the man" was the catchphrase of The Carlisle Indian Industrial School, a boarding school opened in Pennsylvania in 1879. It became a grim epitaph for numerous native children who died there. In 2017, a delegation from the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming attempts to retrieve the remains of three Northern Arapaho children buried far from home in the school cemetery, on a journey to recast the troubled legacy of Indian boarding schools, and heal historic wounds.

Production | \$98,617

Drowned Land*

Colleen Thurston - Producer and Director

Allison Herrera - Co-Producer FireThief Productions - Production Company

Oklahoma has the largest number of man-made lakes in the country. "Going to the lake" has become as ingrained in Oklahomans' identities as chicken fried steak and Sooner football. But there is a darker side to the Okie summer oasis. When communities were flooded to create the lakes, more than land was lost. Cultural knowledge and indigenous identities were swept away with the water. Drowned Land unearths the forgotten stories long submerged beneath the symbol of our summers - the lakes.

Research & Development | \$16,626

Almost an Island

Jonathan Vanballenberghe - Director/Cinematographer/Co-Editor
Victoria Westover - Producer
Sharon Wahl - Producer/Writer

The Goodwin family lives in the Inupiat village of Kotzebue, Alaska. Elmer Goodwin, 78, grew up in a sod house wearing animal skins. Now, his dog sled has transformed into a snow machine. His children are half white. But Elmer wants to teach his family everything he knows about being Inupiat. ALMOST AN ISLAND is an intimate portrait of this multi-generational family, revealing their memories, dreams, and goals, and challenging common stereotypes to show them as complex, dignified individuals.

Post-Production| \$100,000

***Native-led productions**

About Vision Maker Media

[Vision Maker Media](#) (VMM) empowers and engages Native People to tell stories. We envision a world changed and healed by understanding Native stories and the public conversations they generate. We work with Native producers to develop, produce and distribute programs for all media. VMM supports training to increase the number of American Indians and Alaska Natives producing quality public broadcasting programs. A key strategy for this work is the development of strong partnerships with tribal nations, Indian organizations and Native communities. Reaching the general public and the global market is the ultimate goal for the dissemination of Native produced media that shares Native perspectives with the world.

With funding from the [Corporation for Public Broadcasting](#) (CPB), Vision Maker Media, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) empowers and engages Native People to tell stories. For more information, www.visionmakermedia.org.

Contact: Dawn Amory * (402) 472-3113, damory@netad.unl.edu

© 2018. All Rights Reserved.

