

ScreenSask Qualitative Interviews & Surveying

February / March 2025

adeptus

A Note

- As this work was done before the **fantastic launch** of the ScreenSask brand, SMPIA is used to describe the organization throughout the findings



Qualitative Interview Process

Process

- We conducted seven 30-minute interviews with a diverse group of industry stakeholders
- This analysis highlights key themes and issues that emerged across multiple conversations
- Each stakeholder brought unique insights, but all shared a **strong passion** for the **growth** and **success** of Saskatchewan's film industry
- Our findings reflect what's working, what's not, and where SMPFA has opportunities to improve and evolve based on these interviews



Key Takeaways

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- Training is great, but it needs to expand beyond Regina and have specific benefits
- There needs to be a focus on bringing productions to Saskatchewan or empowering Saskatchewan producers to do more here
- SMPIA needs a rebrand to break from past baggage (*CHECK* ✓!)
- Everyone LOVES the new Executive Director and the new direction
 - There is a ton of excitement around the new leadership and this has created momentum that can be capitalized on



What's Working

What's Working

New Leadership & Direction **Strong support for the new** **Executive Director**

- Stakeholders are excited about the changes and feel more connected to SMPPIA than in the past
- The shift towards education, advocacy, and industry networking is seen as positive
- SMPPIA is building strong relationships with funders (CSK) and industry partners

What's Working

Training Initiatives

Highly valued and seen as essential for industry growth.

- Programs have had a tangible impact
- Training money has helped productions bring in new crew



What's NOT Working

What's Not Working

Training Accessibility & Timing Issues

- Training opportunities aren't announced early enough, making it hard for people to plan
- Too Regina-centric – people outside Regina feel left out
- Some introductory training has limited value – needs to be more targeted

What's Not Working

Governance & Organizational Structure

- The board was too large and ineffective in the past
- A rebrand is needed – the old name carries baggage from past government-industry tensions
- More transparency needed – people question about how money has been spent in the past

What's Not Working

Capacity & Resource Limitations

- SMPIA is operating with a very small team – concerns about whether they can execute all initiatives effectively
- Funding constraints – SMPIA needs more money to reach objectives
- Website and communication tools need improvement – website is outdated, event notifications are last-minute

What's Not Working

Advocacy Gaps & Industry Development

- Need to focus on attracting productions to Saskatchewan, not just training
- Better promotion of Saskatchewan-made projects – stakeholders want screening events and broader marketing
- Stronger industry-government connections – advocacy could be more targeted at business and government stakeholders



**Moving
Forward**

Moving Forward

Expand & Improve Training Initiatives

- Better planning & communication – announce training sessions earlier
- Expand beyond Regina – offer training in Northern Saskatchewan and other regions
- More advanced, targeted training (e.g., producer training, financing, post-production management)
- Balance training with actual production opportunities – don't train for roles that have no jobs

Moving Forward

Strengthen Governance & Brand

- Rebrand SMPIA – change the name and refresh the public image
- Revamp governance structure – ensure the board is the right size and has diverse expertise
- Increase transparency – communicate more clearly about where funds are going

Moving Forward

Boost Industry Growth & Advocacy

- Focus on bringing more productions to Saskatchewan, not just training people
- Encourage national and international industry partnerships
- Strengthen government relations to ensure continued funding and policy support
- Promote local productions to general audiences, not just industry insiders

Moving Forward

Improve Communication & Digital Presence

- Fix the website – make it easier to navigate, improve the member directory
- Enhance communication tools – event calendar, newsletter improvements, better outreach
- More proactive promotion of training opportunities



Surveying Methodology

Process

- We created a survey to gather industry statistics and garner feedback on numerous strategies & tactics put together by the SMPIA team
- The survey was distributed for collection through SMPIA, Creative Saskatchewan, and Saskatchewan's unions and guilds.
- The completion rate was 84% and typical time spent to complete 18 minutes.
- 80 industry stakeholders responded

Process

- The survey was broken into 2 sections:
 - Part 1 was focused on respondent data and were all required questions
 - Part 2 was focused on gathering feedback on the strategic work proposed by SMPiA in seven key areas as defined by the Association of Film Commissioners International Best Practices In Screen Sector Development (May, 2024).
- In part 2, respondents ranked strategies & tactics on a scale of 1-5
 - 1 - Don't do this.
 - 2 - Not worth the effort.
 - 3 - Maybe in the future.
 - 4 - This should be done soon.
 - 5 - Do this now!



Key Takeaways



Top Priorities

Top Priorities

Score of >4.15

- Create the On Set Apprenticeship & Mentorship Grant Program, which lets producers claim a grant on the labour of a qualified non-Saskatchewan resident (“The Mentor”) in a key position who is training qualified Saskatchewan individuals in their department.
- Create the Saskatchewan Key Bonus Program, which gives medium and large-scale productions an additional bonus for each key position held by a Saskatchewan resident.

Top Priorities

Score of >4.15

- Implementing a mentorship program pairing experienced professionals with newcomers across all departments including production, creative and crew.
- Workshops and masterclasses led by industry experts.



Top Priorities Score of >4.15

- Continue to require that recipients of Creative Saskatchewan Production Grants adhere to Worksafe Saskatchewan rules and regulations.
- Encourage private investment/venture capital investments in production companies & support service companies, as well as investments in development & production slates.

Top Priorities

Score of >4.15

- Encourage public participation in film festivals, screenings, filmmaking contests and other initiatives featuring Saskatchewan-made productions.
- Encourage inter-provincial collaboration and partnership with counterparts in Manitoba and Alberta to leverage workforce development strategies & programs.



High Priorities

High Priorities

Score of 4 - 4.15

- Create the Screen Sector Production Services Grant, which would offer a 25% grant for work done in Saskatchewan by Saskatchewan-resident production services companies and individuals on productions shot outside of Saskatchewan. This work could include items like pre-viz, post-production, business & legal, accounting, set & prop design & construction.
- Establish partnerships with Government, educational institutions (such as the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology, Sask Poly & Universities), unions & guilds, First Nations and industry organizations (such as ISO, BSO, DSO, NSI & Telefilm) to create comprehensive training programs and a series of funnels which provide a pathway for high school students, post-secondary students and immigrants to find jobs and careers in Saskatchewan's film and television industry.

High Priorities

Score of 4 - 4.15

- Holding networking events in Regina and Saskatoon which builds relationships between emerging and established producers, creatives and crew.
- Leverage participation in film & television festivals and markets to build a profile for the Saskatchewan screen industry.
- Specialized courses, workshops and training initiatives for producers, writers, editors, directors, and crew members in collaboration with industry partners.
- Launch a "Saskatchewan Showcase" public awareness campaign demonstrating the economic, social and community benefits of the screen industry. Organize quarterly screening events showcasing productions made in the province as the centrepiece. Target key influencers, journalists and government officials.

High Priorities


Score of 4 - 4.15

- Host set visits and tours for government, key influencers & the public.
- Explore opportunities to leverage existing infrastructure for film production use. i.e., the use of strip malls, schools and other buildings as film sets, or the creation of backlots or storage facilities specialized to the industry's needs.
- Create a "Film Industry Impact Report" detailing economic and cultural benefits.
- Supporting the growth of community-led film festivals in Saskatoon and Regina by: Sponsoring the screening of Saskatchewan-made productions at select festivals. Encouraging the development of Content Summits which provides pitching and development opportunities for Saskatchewan writers, producers and directors.

High Priorities

Score of 4 - 4.15

- A continuous professional development program for existing workers.
- Support the development of an annual “Saskatchewan Summit” as part of the Yorkton Film Festival which brings together producers, creatives and crew from Regina, Saskatchewan and other areas for shared learning, networking and development.
- Develop an annual "State of the Saskatchewan Screen Industry" report for stakeholders which tracks our progress in reaching the Measurable Goals defined by this strategy, using 2024 baselines. Align the release of this with the release of the annual Canadian production Profile.



Survey Statistics

Survey Statistics

How long have you been in the industry?

0-2 years	18%
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2-5 years	8%
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5-10 years	10%
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10+ years	65%
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Survey Statistics

What percentage of your industry work was done in Saskatchewan last year?

100%	47.5%
80-99%	13.8%
60-79%	5.0%
40-59%	1.3%
20-39%	2.5%
1-20%	6.3%
0%	23.8%

Survey Statistics

Do you have a stable well-paying job in the industry?

- Yes - 31%
- No - 69%

Survey Statistics

Of those that responded they have a **stable well-paying job in the industry**, **ALL** reported doing **100% of their work in Saskatchewan**.

Survey Statistics

Percentage of each represented group that responded yes to having a stable well-paying job in the industry:

- Producer of scripted shows - 40%
- Producer of unscripted shows - 90%
- Writer of scripted shows - 30%
- Writer of unscripted shows - 30%
- Director of scripted shows - 10%
- Director of unscripted shows - 40%
- Crew (camera, electric, etc.) for scripted - 0%
- Crew (camera, electric, etc.) for unscript - 20%
- Actor/Performer - 0%
- Buyer of screen content - 0%
- Infrastructure (accounting, legal, etc.) - 10%

Survey Statistics

If you're comfortable sharing, could you please share approximately how much money you earned in the industry last year?

46 out of 80 responded

>\$200k	4%
\$100k - \$200k	9%
\$50k - 100k	13%
\$5k - \$50k	26%
<\$5000	48%

Survey Statistics

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you trust SMPPIA to do what they say they're going to do?

- 7.3

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you trust SMPPIA to make real change in the industry?

- 6.8

On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to recommend SMPPIA to a friend or colleague?

- 7.4

On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to read something that comes from SMPPIA?

- 8.2

Survey Statistics

What would you like to see more of from SMPIA?

- On-set Training - 60%
- Lobbying Government - 59%
- Workshops - 58%
- Screening/Promotion of Saskatchewan Productions - 46%
- Networking Events - 41%
- Supporting Marketing, Trade & Export of Saskatchewan Productions - 41%