

DGC GCR

DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA
GUILDE CANADIENNE DES RÉALISATEURS

DIRECTOR OBSERVER INITIATIVE PRODUCER CHECKLIST

Questions or concerns please reach out to:

Hans Engel (he/him)

Director, National Directors Division

Directors Guild of Canada

416-925-8200

hengel@dgc.ca

What is the DGC Director Observer Initiative?

The DGC Observer initiative is a finely tuned framework to easily enable producers to discover new talent and invest in the future of their production through an on-set placement of a Director Observer (sometimes called a ‘Shadow’).

What are the expectations on the DGC?

The DGC is here to help ensure that this placement is a success for you. Our goal is to provide an easy and high-quality placement that can painlessly plug into your existing production. The DGC will help facilitate finding great candidates for your show, and provide frameworks to ensure the experience is smooth and fruitful for all involved.

To find candidates, the DGC will inform our membership of the opportunity and facilitating finding Directors who desire to accumulate experience in the format and genre of your show. We provide a list of Directors who are trained, experienced and ready to potentially direct on your production should the opportunity arise after the observing experience. In some cases, upon request, we can also provide the Director Observer’s self-identified traits to allow the choice be as well informed as possible.

In addition to monitoring established daily and weekly goals, the DGC will send out a post-placement survey to the Director Observer and Director Mentor and will also schedule a debrief meeting with the Producer, Director Mentor and Director Observer after the placement is complete, to provide valuable feedback to the Director Observer, the Producer and the DGC in order to continue to improve the Initiative.

What are the expectations on the Producer?

For the success of this initiative, it is important that the Producer and the Mentor Director are deeply involved in the selection process of the Director Observer. The Producer must involve the Director Mentor in the selection process to ensure that the overall experience will be of benefit to all parties involved.

As part of the placement, you will provide the Director Observer with meaningful access and engagement in all aspects of pre-production, production, and post-production, creating an invaluable experience for the Director Observer, preparing them to potentially work on your show.

You will also ensure the Director Observer is introduced to all key players on the Production, including the Showrunner, Network or Broadcaster Executives and other Directors on their first day in the office, and then on set to the cast and crew at crew call, so everyone knows who the new team member is.

To ensure the Director Observer is recognized as a valued member of the crew the Director Observer's name is to be added to the call sheet, and if the Director Observer is provided an office, that office will have their name on the door.

The Director Observer is to be included in the Production's distribution list and have access to all prep and production paperwork congruent to the Shooting Director Mentor – this includes the shooting script(s), one-liner, shooting schedules and breakdowns and the Shooting Director Mentor's shot lists and/or storyboards (if applicable). On set, the Observer is to be provide access to a comtec or similar device and a place at "video village".

Below is a suggested list of items for the Producer to complete:

Before the first day:

You have included the Shooting Director Mentor in the selection process to choose the Director Observer and will hold an introduction meeting facilitated by the DGC to discuss the goals and expectations of all involved when in production.

Notify the Director Observer of the dates and logistics on your show.

Ensure the details of any travel and accommodation have been discussed with and/or confirmed with the Director Observer (if applicable).

Confirm the Director Observer has all they need to satisfy all COVID-19 protocols, if any

Obtain all necessary insurance needed for the Director Observer to participate on set and during prep, production, and post (as applicable) including WCB and related production insurance.

Ensure that the Director Observer will be recognized as a member of the episodic production team during their time on the Production, and provided with access to and inclusion in distribution of invitations for all meetings during prep and production, casting sessions if the Shooting Director Mentor is present (if possible), and HOD meetings with Production Designer, DOP, Art, Costume, VFX, location scouts and tech surveys, etc.

Ensure that the members of the cast and crew (especially HODs) are notified of the Director Observer's involvement in the Production and properly prepared for their time on the Production.

Ensure the Director Observer is set up to get paid their fee and has all the information they need to submit their invoices (if applicable).

First day of Prep:

Introduce the Director Observer to pre-production crew and at all meetings (virtual and in person).

When in person, ensure that the Director Observer is assigned a work space in reasonable proximity to the Shooting Director Mentor - and put their name on their door or office station (if applicable).

Include the Director Observer on the Production's distribution list and ensure they have access to and copies of all prep and production paperwork congruent to the Shooting Director Mentor (including digitally) – this includes the shooting script(s), one-liner, shooting schedules and breakdowns and the Shooting Director Mentor's shot lists and/or storyboards (if applicable).

First day on set:

Introduce the Director Observer to everyone (cast, crew, decision makers).

Ensure the Director Observer's name appears on the call sheet and crew list every day.

Provide access for the Director Observer to a comtec or similar device and a place at "video village" when applicable, while observing all COVID-19 protocols if any.

Every day:

Check in with the Director Observer: Are they OK? Do they need anything from you?

Check in with the Shooting Director Mentor: Are they OK? Do they need anything from you? Being a mentor is challenging when you are also working.

After the placement ends:

Attend a post-placement meeting which will be scheduled by the DGC with the Director Mentor and Director Observer after the placement is complete.