



# OFELAŠ

## - THE PATHFINDER

### Guidelines for Responsible Filmmaking with Sámi Culture and People

## THE PRESENT DOCUMENT

The present document is meant to serve multiple purposes. On the one hand it is meant as a practical guide for filmmakers who want to include Sámi themes, topics, and persons in their movies concerning how to approach this work in a respectful manner. On the other hand, this document also wants to point out what values we Sámi treasure and provide guidance for avoiding misrepresentation and appropriation. The document emphasizes the benefit of sharing and learning from each other in reciprocity and respect for the freedom of art.

The Sámi have a long history of practicing the freedom of art in all its richness of expressions. The traditional Sámi vocal genre, juoigan, was early on used as an oppositional art form resisting attempts at assimilation through the use of coded messages which only the Sámi themselves understood. Our myths and stories represent a treasure trove of inspiration for young and aspiring filmmakers and innovative storytellers in all genres. We are ready to share our stories – and to create new ones – in meaningful participation and partnership in which everyone involved can respect and honor the views and values that are intrinsic and essential for the Sámi people..

The Sámi Film & Culture Advisory Board

## WE ARE ORIGINAL STORYTELLERS

When you arrive to Sápmi, the traditional areas of our people, you arrive to another culture, another language and another people – the Sámi. We are the Indigenous peoples of this land, meaning that our people have been here for centuries. We own our culture, our languages, our stories and artefacts. With your film idea or your film team you are visitors in our homelands.

**“We want to tell our own stories.”**

Your response might be: “but everyone has the freedom of speech to tell any story.” In a privileged position – and from a non-Indigenous point of view – yes, that might be true. But most Indigenous people have not been and are still not in the same privileged position, meaning the resources you have available for your film productions is a matter of course to you. That is not the case for our filmmakers. We are in a time where diversity is a rising focus in the International Film Industry, and the expectation for change is strong, and representativity and inclusion are core values.

The Sámi film world is a very young industry and started with Sámi director Nils Gaup's *Pathfinder* which was nominated for an Oscar in 1987. I remember the premiere, I was 14 years old and for the first time we saw a film about ourselves on a big cinema screen, in our own language. *Pathfinder* changed our lives.

Twenty years later, in 2009, we established the International Sámi film Institute, to support Sámi language films, because nobody else did, despite the success of *Pathfinder*. In the past 10 years, we have built a new generation of successful and internationally award-winning Sámi filmmakers.

So entering the Sámi film world with a film idea or a production that is inspired either by our people, our culture or landscapes, we ask you to understand that our people have not yet had the opportunity to bring out the full potential of our own storytelling in film. There is a long tradition of outsiders telling stories about our people on the backdrop of a colonial history. We don't have thousands of Sámi films today, we only have a handful. We don't even have a feature film for children, no drama series, no animations, but we have the untold and exiting stories and we want to build our future with a groundbreaking and sustainable film industry for generations to come. So if you want to tell a Sámi inspired story, you need to remember your privileged position as a filmmaker from a majority society and the responsibility that follows with this. And most importantly - we are not cultural assistants, we are original storytellers and we do acknowledge the value of good collaborations.

Guovdageaidnu January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Anne Lajla Utsi

Managing director International Sámi Film Institute

## THE LEAD WORD IS RESPECT

We, the grassroots of the Sámi film industry, are observing a rising interest in Sámi culture and stories, in particular in the film and TV industry. Overall this should be a positive thing for us, making the Sámi film industry thrive from all the demand for Sámi content. Unfortunately, this is not the development we see. On the contrary we witness how our culture is continuously being exploited by others and used to make “their” productions more “sellable”, “mystic”, “true”, “exotic” or whatever.

When non-Sámi producers include Sámi content in films and TV productions, there are few, and often no, Sámi representation or revenue. At worst we also see misrepresentations that raise serious concerns within the Sámi communities. This undermines the Sámi society and causes real harm to real people.

Indigenous people all over the world have been made invisible by the major (and usually colonial) societies and the knowledge about our cultures and societies are shallow, often based on prejudices. To include Indigenous stories you need to have Indigenous knowledge, and that can not be researched.

Hence, we see an urgent need to implement this protocol to make non- Sámi film producers aware of Indigenous immaterial, intellectual property and cultural rights and to identify possible challenges whenever professionally engaged with Sámi content material, in particular in feature film and TV-series.

The lead word for non-Sámi producers should be: “respect”. Us claiming the right to tell our own stories does not exclude artistic freedom for others. We just want to address the importance of thinking twice and respecting us, our concerns and rights. In doing so, if anything, the production will become a better piece of art.

With love,  
The Sámi Filmworkers Association

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## INTRODUCTION: NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

Film productions involving Indigenous stories, communities and lands must be carried out with sensitivity and understanding for the particular history and contemporary reality of Indigenous people. To address questions of who can and should be telling Indigenous stories, the Indigenous community's experience with colonisation, the current political situation, and the imbalance in power structures surrounding the control of Indigenous narratives must be taken into account. This is as true in Sápmi and with Sámi stories as it is with other Indigenous nations.

It is important to honour the right of Indigenous peoples to hold the power of definition about ourselves and our culture. This right is affirmed by UNDRIP – the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, article 31; and we claim this right to control our own narratives and self-expression through film production and other media.

Indigenous peoples experience less freedom of speech, because we do not have influence over financing, production and distribution - even though our stories and lives are frequent subject matter for productions of all sizes. Our stories as told by our people have rarely taken centre stage, in a world where narratives about us can have very real impacts on our lives. The mainstream film and media industry have a responsibility to respect the rights of Indigenous peoples to control our own narratives and cultural heritage. It is imperative that Indigenous stories are told by Indigenous people themselves.

Filmmakers who enter Sámi and other Indigenous communities with the aim to be inspired by our people and culture, need to be aware of the power and privileges they hold; and the sensitivity and responsibility this entails when working with our stories. Non- Sámi filmmakers must also ask themselves what are they taking away from Sámi people when they seek inspiration or content without permission. These are questions that content creators should ask themselves, individually and collectively:

***“When the Sámi people may not have the same opportunity/resources as I do to tell their stories, Why am I the right person to tell this story?”***

***“How will my film production benefit the Sámi community and what am I giving back?”***

***“Is it right for me to take up this space; and is my project in any way silencing Sámi voices?”***

***“Why do I include Sámi content in my story?”***

“Nothing about us without us” is a significant phrase that many Indigenous people identify with. It means that we assert our right to maintain, control, protect and develop our cultural heritage and intellectual property, and that this right must be respected by every filmmaker who wants to work with Sámi and other Indigenous stories, cultures and traditions.

Sámi stories and legends have been the foundation of our knowledge and survival for thousands of years, and they will carry us for many years to come. Our stories are the essence of our culture.

The Sámi Film Protocol is a tool for filmmakers who are interested in engaging with Sámi and other Indigenous stories and it is a guide to how this can be done in a sensitive and respectful way, resulting in the best possible film productions. We are open to any kind of positive collaboration undertaken with a commitment to reciprocity and mutual respect. What we will not tolerate any longer is the theft, appropriation or misuse of our birth right and property.

Examples of ethical and respectful to Sámi people collaborations:

- *Frozen 2*/Sámi collaboration where an agreement on the use of Sámi culture and story elements were done between Disney and the Sámi people and the International Sámi Film Institute. This partnership also benefited knowledge sharing through cross-cultural learning opportunities.
- *Sámi Blood* feature film where the production company Nordisk Film hired 20 Sámi filmmakers to join the production team in collaboration with ISFI providing direct experience for these Sámi people to be on a feature film set.

Examples of non-respectful productions:

- Outside production companies who want to tell Sámi stories but only hire positions such as a script consultant, location scout or translator, but no other Sámi team members in key roles.
- Outside filmmakers who want to tell stereotypical and exotic stories about the Sámi people (reindeer herding, tradition/modern, etc.).
- Productions about Sámi topics, but the characters speak Nordic languages even though Sámi is their mother language.
- Making commercial films/series about sensitive Sámi issues with no Sámi in key roles

## WHY A PROTOCOL

The Sámi film industry is at its very beginning, and even though many of our filmmakers are international award winners, the funding situation for Sámi films is still in its early days. There are currently no specific funding systems that can assure bigger Sámi productions and we don't yet have a big selection of Sámi films. All productions entering the Sámi film world should therefore have in mind that you are no longer in a privileged majority film society, with endless opportunities to build your film career. When coming to our territory, you are entering our land – our country Sápmi – and there are rules you must follow as you would with any international co-production. When filming in Sápmi or use Sámi culture as an inspiration for your film, we expect meaningful collaboration and clear reciprocity; that with your production you support the positive development of the Sámi film industry and that you seek guidance and expertise from Sámi filmmakers and other cultural resources. This protocols document is meant to be the guide that will help you get there. Think of it as a tool to help you with your “Sámi co-production.”

Since our film industry is young, there is also a long tradition of outside filmmakers telling stories about the Sámi people and it is the most common story that has been told. These stories are almost entirely fiction at best, and extremely harmful at their worst. The aim of this protocol is also to avoid the reinforcement of stereotypical narratives about the Sámi people and to avoid new stereotypes from being created. This is your responsibility as a filmmaker to ensure these are accomplished.

### The Sámi Values

To Sámi people, we state that our collective and individual culture, aesthetic elements, music, language, stories, histories and other traditional cultural expressions are property that belong to our people, not to one person. These are fundamental rights that must to be respected.

We respect our cultures and languages and this creates the foundation and basis for our cultural and creative expressions.

We seek wisdom and guidance from our elders and traditional knowledges and this is an important foundation for our work.

As Indigenous peoples we are connected to the land and waters through our stories, livelihoods and traditions. We acknowledge that we are a part of nature and we value sustainable solutions and environmentally friendly behaviour.

Storytelling is the very core of our cultures and the reason why we have survived the harsh Arctic for centuries. To us stories are an important creative source for developing our societies and strengthening our languages and cultures.

We will always seek to share our knowledge, resources, network and expertise with our communities in the Sámi society.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document is inspired by, and builds on:

“Pathways and Protocols, a filmmaker’s guide to working with Indigenous Peoples”, by Terri Janke, for Screen Australia and the Australian Government.

“Pathways to the International Market for Indigenous Screen Content”, by Maria DeRosa and Marilyn Burgess, for imagineNATIVE and On-Screen Protocols & Pathways by ImagineNativeFilm institute.

*Sámi Filbma Ofelaččat: the Work of the Pathfinder* was initiated and guided by a group of Sámi filmmakers, the International Sámi Film Institute (ISFI), and Sámi Filbmabargiid Searvi (The Sámi Filmworkers' Association).

*The Pathfinder* content was gathered from interviews conducted with Sámi film professionals. This information was joined to previous work conducted by The International Sámi Film Institute (ISFI), The Sámi Filbmabargiid Searvi, and Protocols produced by Indigenous Peoples in Australia and Canada. A draft *Pathfinder* was shared among the Sámi Filbma Ofelaččat and Sámi film industry with provisions for feedback.

*The Pathfinder* could not have been created without the many hours provided by the Sámi filmmaking community - their experiences, practices, observations and lessons learned are the core foundation of *The Pathfinder*.

*The Pathfinder* is named after the 1987 film of the same name - the celebrated and historic first-ever feature-length film in the Sámi language, directed by Nils Gaup.

The International Sami Film Institute has an advisory group of Sámi cultural and storytelling experts. The advisory group will have a central role in the implementation of the *Pathfinder* principles.

## WHAT IS A CULTURAL PROTOCOL?

A cultural protocol is a way of navigating relationships within Sámi or other Indigenous communities in culturally appropriate, respectful and ethical ways, to create connections built on trust and understanding. On a daily basis and in very practical ways, cultural protocols guide Sámi and other Indigenous people's relationships with other people, animals, the land and waters, and spiritual beliefs.

Within a specific community, a cultural protocol is the normal way to interact; however, for those who are unfamiliar with the customs and traditional knowledge of a community, extra guidance is needed. Understanding and following cultural protocols helps both Indigenous community members and those from outside the community who seek to work with Indigenous collaborators.

This "Pathfinder" document is meant to be a cultural protocol guide for filmmaking in the Sámi context.

### [The Pathfinder's vision:](#)

Our vision is to have a sustainable and authentic Sámi film industry, where the Sámi people are in lead of the development and production of our stories on screen.

We value respectful collaborations with the professional film industry in the Nordic countries and around the world.

### [The Pathfinder's goal:](#)

This *Pathfinder* is the starting point of the Sámi film industry's intention to establish a common practice and framework for film/content production, with particular attention for important funding agencies, such as: producers, funders, filmmakers.

### **This guide is intended for productions that include:**

- Sámi content: for example Sámi stories, characters, culture, cultural elements and/or traditions in any form.
- Focus on Sámi individuals in a Sámi context, or on general Sámi content.
- Productions held in Sápmi or in Sámi communities.

It should be noted that *The Pathfinder* does not propose to provide all possible answers to issues or conflicts that may arise; but can help to build the foundation for collaboration and for possible issues to be recognized early on; and can provide forums within the process for conflict to be resolved with

respect, ensuring productions run smoothly. Once again, think of this document as a tool to help guide you through a process similar to that of any international co-production.

Legal advice: We recommend to contact a qualified lawyer on the matter to obtain legal guidance on how to proceed if issues of legal nature occur.

The lead word should be “respect”. Sámi people claiming the right to tell our stories does not exclude others or someone’s artistic freedom. *The Pathfinder* protocol wants to address the importance of thinking twice and respecting us and our concerns. If anything, “your” film will be a better art piece.

### WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

The “Pathfinder” has been developed as a tool for:

- Script writers
- Film directors
- Producers
- Production teams
- Film productions from outside the Sámi regions
- Funders of film projects that include Sámi themes and/or characters
- Sámi people who want to participate in film productions with Sámi content

### HOW TO USE THE PATHFINDER PROTOCOL

Best practice is to use *The Pathfinder* as early as possible in a production. In any case, prior to completion of the script.

#### **Implementation of *The Pathfinder* protocol:**

1. The production company is encouraged to contact the International Sámi Film Institute. If the production is taken into consideration, the project will be sent to evaluation by the Sámi storytelling and cultural expert group.
2. The expert group will evaluate the project on the basis of *The Pathfinder* protocol and will report back on its advice and recommendations.

3. On the basis of the advice and recommendations from the Sámi storytelling and cultural expert group, the International Sámi Film Institute can issue a confirmation, stating that the production is **culturally sensitive and respectful to the Sámi people.**

## CHECKLIST

Any depictions of Sámi people and culture should be based on the principles of honesty, truthfulness and decency. This mandates respect for Sámi cultures and heritages, including recognition of Sámi cultural and intellectual property rights, maintenance of cultural integrity, and respect for cultural beliefs and for individuals and their communities.

### Does respect and cultural sensitivity take place in your production?

1. Does the project recognize and acknowledge the Sámi culture as the origin?
2. Do you have a Sámi co-producer or producer in the project to assure Sámi ownership of the film?
3. Is the script culturally sensitive?
4. Do you have Sámi writers in the project?
5. Have you meaningfully consulted the local Sámi community about your film?
6. Do Sámi play a decisive role in the production?
7. Does the Sámi community benefit from the project?
8. If a film depicts a Sámi, the actor in the film must be a Sámi
9. If the character is Sámi, do they speak Sámi in the film?
10. Has any Sámi person or organisation said 'No' to anything in your production?

Please check if you are repeating any of the following misrepresentations:

## MISREPRESENTATIONS OF NARRATIVES ABOUT THE SAMI

Examples of repeated misrepresented/stereotypical narratives:

### **The Mystic Sámi**

Very often includes one or many shamans, and use of the Sámi drum. There is a historical backdrop that needs to be carefully studied and considered before entering the topic of Sámi spirituality.

### **The Angry/Activist Sámi**

### **The Alcoholic/Victimised Sámi**

### **The Last Sámi**

### **The Exotic Sámi**

The story of the last of his/her kind, before this activity or tradition, or even the person vanishes. All of these stereotypes have been far too often and have done very real harm to real people. These stereotypes in your film will make your production dated, disrespectful, and damaging.

### **The Wild Sámi (Who is not civilized)**

This repetition of the Sámi who wears traditional outfits and has reindeer is narrowing the Sámi into a certain category, and will impeach any contemporary or future manifestation of Sámi culture, or even just endorse a Sámi whenever he/she is perceived as exotic enough.

If you are making a documentary it is the same principles as for fiction. But with these principles in addition.

### Principles

Indigenous narratives are rich subject matter for creative work, and it is no surprise that productions - small and large - are looking to Indigenous communities for new ideas.

As Sámi people, we want to see our people and cultural heritage represented in ways that are authentic: ways that include our voices.

In order to achieve this, Sámi voices need to be brought to the fore in telling our stories. This means more Sámi people in all stages of production - including in meaningful leadership positions; and the building of sustained relationships with film and other media producers and funders of all sizes.

Here are some important principles for building these relationships:

### Respect for Sámi Heritage and Culture

Historically, many researchers and authors came to Sápmi and met with Sámi people. Stories were shared about Sámi ancestors, holy places, graves, important events that took place, and where to find specific gifts. Those stories were then recorded, written down and widely distributed through books. Whether these stories were published with or without permission, it is clear that the original Sámi storytellers had very little influence over what happened with their stories; and they could not have anticipated what effect the use of their stories would have.

Our stories are the fabric of our society. They are not simply goods to take and trade, but central parts of our heritage and culture; and they must be treated with the respect that reflects this importance. To take our stories without our permission is in contravention of international policies and is unethical.

### Areas/themes where we advise caution:

- Any references or use of Sámi spiritual elements, symbols such as the noaidi shaman, drums, offering sites and sacred landscapes that can be connected to nature spirits/traditional beliefs.
- Offering sites should never be entered without local guidance and specific ceremonies apply to entering these sacred sites still today.
- Any references or use of Sámi traditional clothing and artefacts
- Any references or use of Sámi duodji and handicraft
- Any reference or use of the traditional Sámi YOIK – singing. These traditions is very culturally specific and many yoiks are personal and can not be used without permission and agreement with the owner of the joik (not necessarily only the composer).
- Be cautious when entering reindeer herding areas and always consult with reindeer herders before doing so.
- Do not disturb wildlife and always leave nature as you found it
- Fishing and hunting in Sámi areas demands local expertise to acknowledge traditional rightsholders
- For Sámi people the land is sacred and we communicate with the land in our interaction with it, by showing respect and gratitude to the land and wildlife.
- Any references to social issues such as alcoholism, violence, domestic violence, suicide are specifically sensitive issues for Indigenous peoples and should always be handled with the greatest caution and never without local guidance.
- Be aware of stereotypical images and depictions of Sámi people and avoid using these.
- We are standing on the foundation built by our ancestors and their stories should therefore always be respected and handled with sensitivity and caution.
- Family is a central value in the Sámi society, ancient Sámi family structures are still important values in our societies. Understand that Sámi individuals are always tightly connected to the whole family. Always show respect and learn more about Sámi family traditions.

### Cultural Appropriation vs. Cultural Exchange

Cultural exchange is the sharing of cultural elements in a situation where everyone involved has the power to choose and that it is a collaboration that benefits both parties. Cultural exchange is built and sustained on respect, trust, and reciprocity.

Cultural appropriation occurs when people in mainstream/dominant cultures appropriate cultural elements of minority or marginalized cultures. This often occurs without an understanding of the reality of the minority or marginalized culture; and it has been a very common occurrence in the history of film and other media.

Cultural exchange also differs from assimilation, where marginalized people are forced into (or adopt) elements of the majority culture to survive the conditions that make life difficult if they do not conform.

Examples of this can be: how Sámi were forced to leave their children at boarding schools; how they were forced to speak Norwegian; how they were forced to become “Swedes” if they wished to live in houses, etc.

These are important distinctions that relate to Indigenous peoples' rights in the use and development of their cultural heritage.

### Intellectual Property Rights

There has been a remarkable increase in economic value in the use of Indigenous cultures, names, images, symbols and patterns on widespread commercial products, events and marketing. The product simply becomes mystified, attracts attention, and the selling numbers increase. Indigenous peoples' rights are poorly protected in this commodification – and usually theft – of their cultures. Much of this is due to the nature of intellectual property rights that are structured to serve individuals; in contrast with the collective ownership of cultural elements that defines many Indigenous societies.

The conventional Intellectual property right is designed to foster commercial and industrial growth. This definition does not recognize Indigenous peoples' intellectual property rights since they are collectively owned and based on balance, not profit. This is an issue that lawmakers on the national and international levels struggle with. Indigenous leaders from many nations have been involved in ongoing discussions on this issue for more than twenty years.

Indigenous Peoples' definitions of intellectual property rights are explained and protected in UNDRIP, in many different articles. In short, they consist not only of copyright, trademarks, designs and patents. They go beyond these, and are closely connected to land and biological resources; cultural heritage and expressions; innovations and property; as well as historical sites; sacred and secret material; artefacts; designs; language; ceremonies and performing arts; artwork; stories and narratives; and documents of indigenous peoples' heritage and literature. Sámi language for example is an important communal intellectual property. Our languages encode specific traditional knowledge that has no equivalent in another language. In Sámi society, rights and responsibilities – as well as intellectual property – are all collectively owned and do not belong to any specific individual. This is the root of the disparity in how Sámi and other Indigenous people approach filmmaking versus how the Western/European cultures view it.

### Free, Prior and Informed Consent, with the right to say “No”.

FPIC means that the consent must be obtained free from threats, coercion, a divide and conquer strategy, and retaliation. All information necessary to make a decision is provided prior to any project, proceeding and/or plan, and shared accordingly to a process jointly defined. *Informed* includes transparency, and receiving all the information in due time for being able to respond accordingly to the Indigenous peoples' structure of taking decisions. *Informed* also includes being able to obtain the information provided in the correct language of the receiver.

Consent is most often obtained through consultation processes, during face-to-face meetings.

### Meaningful Participation

Meaningful participation of the Sámi community in productions means involvement in key decision-making and planning, and the ability to see that our cultural heritage and intellectual property rights are respected. Sámi people must define who can participate on behalf of the community, and what is meaningful participation in any given project. This means that film and other media professionals must follow the Sámi lead in defining the working relationship.

### Benefit Sharing

It is the position of the Sámi people that our collective and individual culture, including aesthetic elements, music, language, stories, histories, and other traditional cultural expressions are property that belong to the Sámi. To acknowledge this fact it is important that film production share benefits with the Sámi people, when productions are connected to the Sámi people and culture.

#### **Proposals of possible benefit sharing:**

- Ensure Sámi ownership to the film (Producer or co-producer)
- Ensure to give screening rights of the film to [www.sapmifilm.com](http://www.sapmifilm.com)
- Cross cultural learning opportunities for Sámi filmmakers
- Trainee positions for Sámi film talents in film productions
- Offering mentoring/film network to Sámi filmmakers
- Sharing royalties from production to Sámi communities
- Dubbing and subtitles of the film to Sámi languages, supporting language retention
- Donations to the Arctic Indigenous Film Fund
- Include as many local workers as possible in your production
- Donations to Sámi children film productions/workshops

### THE SÁMI PEOPLE

The Sámi people are the Indigenous people of Sápmi - the Sámi homelands. Our traditional lands are divided by the borders of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Northwest of the Russian Federation. Sámi people speak many different Sámi languages (some dialects are no longer spoken). Similar to all Indigenous people, we are deeply rooted in the land of our ancestors. Traditionally the majority of Sámi people lived from what nature in the arctic provided: hunting and gathering, fishing, reindeer herding, and handcrafted tools and art from available materials. Now a minority of Sámi live off these livelihoods; however, these are the foundation of the Sámi way of life, beliefs and society.



The historical narrative about Sámi people has more often than not been told through the perspective of the majority, colonial society. Other societies' portrayals have created long-lived stereotypes about Sámi people. These stereotypes have been, and still are destructive for the Sámi community; and continuous communication of these stereotypes reinforces discrimination and racism.

Sámi people also share experiences of colonisation similar to the experiences of other Indigenous peoples. These include forced assimilation, intergenerational trauma from colonial violence, a history of land-dispossession, boarding schools, and suppression of language, culture, and spiritual beliefs. While these experiences do not make up the entirety of Sámi society; it is important to recognize that they have taken place and their impacts are still experienced today

To find out more about the Sámi history and society today, contact a Sámi expert, and visit: [www.samer.se](http://www.samer.se) [www.saamicouncil.net](http://www.saamicouncil.net) [www.sametinget.no](http://www.sametinget.no) [www.sametinget.se](http://www.sametinget.se) [www.samediggi.fi](http://www.samediggi.fi)

## ACRONYMS

UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples' Rights
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent - a specific right of Indigenous peoples addressed in UNDRIP
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

## UNDRIP and the SÁMI RIGHT TO DEFINE THE NARRATIVE:

The Arctic is the focus of increasing global development at the same time as the world has turned its attention to the region in relation to climate change. Interest in Indigenous narratives is also on the rise, and film and other media producers are looking to meet this interest. It is now more important than ever to tell stories grounded in the reality of the Arctic and Arctic Indigenous peoples. These stories can and should be told with Indigenous knowledge and perspectives; and in ways that respect the cultures, agency and humanity of Indigenous people. Film, television, and other narrative works about Sámi people should be created with meaningful participation and leadership of Sámi collaborators at all stages of production.

“Indigenous Peoples’ cinema represents freedom of expression, and strengthens the rights of Indigenous Peoples living in the Arctic”  
- Arctic Indigenous Film Fund. <sup>[3]</sup>

The most comprehensive international instrument for Indigenous peoples' rights is the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)<sup>[2]</sup>. UNDRIP clearly states that:

*Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as [...] oral traditions, literatures, designs, [...] and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions. (Article 31.1)*

This right to "maintain control, protect and develop" includes the narratives of film content. It applies to influence over what is to be told about the Sámi culture and oral traditions.

During the last decade, there has been a steady increase in film and series productions that include various elements of Sámi culture. These elements range from general reference to Sámi people and homelands as one part of a story, to content that has Sámi people and culture as its main subject.

To respect and maintain the rights of Sámi as Indigenous people, productions need to have meaningful Sámi involvement in all the production steps, including respect for the right to say "no" to content that could cause harm to Sámi communities.

Your goal is to make the best production as possible. If you choose to include any Sámi component, then our shared goal must be to do the best job possible by ensuring our protocols are followed.

The Sámi Film Pathfinder protocol working group:

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