



# The production questionnaire for unscripted content

# Introduction

You're a producer developing unscripted content for broadcasters or streaming platforms and you want to tell stories that reflect a more inclusive and sustainable world. This guide is designed to support that ambition, offering key questions based on three fundamental elements to unscripted content: 1) casting, 2) participant representation, and 3) editing (of actions, interactions and context).

Its clear, easy-to-use format invites thoughtful reflection on the substance and form of your content without altering its core concept or entertainment value and without prescribing right or wrong answers. It also encourages you to explore more inclusive and sustainable choices at every stage of production.

This questionnaire is not exhaustive. You're encouraged to adapt and expand it to fit your goals and production context.

Terms underlined throughout the guide are explained in the glossary at the end.

## ABOUT THE SCREENS OF TOMORROW MOVEMENT

*Screens of tomorrow* is a movement initiated in 2022 by a hundred French audiovisual and film professionals who want to tell stories that highlight a more inclusive and sustainable society. These works of fiction, whatever their form, are not necessarily militant or dogmatic in nature. They take inspiration from current concerns to normalise sustainable and inclusive behaviour on-screen and contribute to raising general public awareness.

To support that goal, they created a guide that serves as a means for reflecting upon writing and storyline development routines to create new reference points for viewers. Its format was adapted in 2023 by video game professionals.

In 2025, Banijays Entertainment commissioned and supported the launch of a new guide to help producers of unscripted contents tell stories that reflect a more inclusive and sustainable world.

This non-profit programme was initiated by Sparknews (environmental and social storytelling expert) and funded by industry stakeholders and several foundations.

# 1. Who are you casting and how?

Representation matters. While our societies are shaped by diverse social identities, many groups remain underrepresented in the media due to factors such as ethnicity, gender or disability. By showcasing a wider range of voices and experiences, entertainment can both enrich storytelling and strengthen our social fabric.

This section invites you to examine your casting choices and methods. The guiding questions are not about imposing quotas, but rather about helping you consider inclusivity, participant wellbeing, and diverse profiles. Thoughtful casting calls can evolve your processes to better reflect today's society.

## A FEW KEY FIGURES

**52%** of the U.S. population are women, yet they only appear in 38% of unscripted content screen time.

Source: [Nielsen, 2020](#)

Only **1/3** of the Hispanic's population in the U.S is represented on unscripted content.

Source: [Nielsen, 2020](#)

**0.7%** of screen time on French unscripted content includes people with disabilities, though they represent about 17% of the French population.

Source: [Arcom, 2024](#)

**75%** of on-screen professions are portrayed by individuals from upper socio-professional groups, twice their presence in the French population.

Source: [Arcom, 2024](#)

## 1. WHO ARE YOU CASTING AND HOW?

### PROFILE CRITERIA

What criteria guide your casting choices? Could any of them be perceived as biased, exclusionary or offensive? Can they be revised?

Do your criteria allow for a wide range of people, cultures, and backgrounds? If not, can you broaden them to include factors like gender, ethnicity, geography, occupation, sexual orientation, physical traits or spirituality?

Could any of these identity traits form the basis of a different content, helping elevate a group and challenge public perceptions?

Do you include participants with visible or invisible impairments, illnesses or disabilities (motor, sensory, cognitive, mental or psychosocial)? Could their inclusion enrich the cast without shifting the content's core focus?

Could a disability become a defining element of a production, helping to spotlight and normalise diverse identities?

*For example: In the Australian series "Headliners", musicians with disabilities form bands and prepare for a festival under the guidance of mentors Tim Rogers and Ella Hooper.*

Are LGBTQIA+ participants included in the cast? If not, could their inclusion enrich the cast without shifting the content's core focus?

Could gender or sexual orientation form the core of a production to explore and challenge societal perceptions?

*For example: "Drag Race" celebrates queer and drag identities, helping bring drag culture into the mainstream.*

## 1. WHO ARE YOU CASTING AND HOW?

### METHODS

Is your casting team diverse?

Are your casting calls inclusive and accessible to a broad demographic?

For example:

- Do you reach a mix of cities, suburbs, and rural areas?
- Is the language inclusive, or could it alienate some groups?
- Are the platforms accessible to different communities?
- Are in-person auditions held in locations accessible for people with disabilities and are you mindful of economic limitations?
- Are online auditions accessible to people with limited digital access or skills?
- Can your process accommodate neurodivergent, visually or hearing-impaired individuals?

Are your casting methods (interviews, evaluations, selection) designed to respect candidates' wellbeing, including those not selected?

Are you transparent about participation conditions, including intellectual, emotional, physical, and psychological demands, as well the public exposure involved?

Are you aware of any vulnerabilities in your candidates' profiles or motivations? How might these affect filming, and what support systems can you put in place before, during, and after the unscripted content's production?

## 2. How are the participants represented on screen?

Stereotypes have long-influenced how we perceive and portray one another. While they can simplify complex realities, they can also cause harm. It's not only about who appears on screen, but also about how they're portrayed and how different audiences might respond.

This section helps you analyse how filming and editing decisions like camera angles, voiceovers and cuts shape participant portrayals.

These questions are designed to help you identify potential stereotypical representations and offer guidance to avoid them when relevant, while still capturing engaging narratives.

### A FEW KEY FIGURES

Only **28%** of appearances in science-related content in French unscripted productions feature women, while they are overrepresented in segments on education and daily life.

Source: [Arcom, 2023](#)

**35%** of individuals content engaging in marginal or illegal activities in French unscripted productions are perceived as non-white, compared to 13% of executives.

Source: [Arcom, 2024](#)

Just **4.1%** of U.S. unscripted content programmes address disability-related themes.

Source: [Nielsen, 2020](#)

## 2. HOW ARE THE PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTED ON SCREEN?

How do camera angles, editing and voiceovers shape your participants' portrayal on screen?

Are participants portrayed fairly and authentically, as individuals and in relation to others?

Do any portrayals reinforce harmful stereotypes? Could these depictions be reframed around different traits or behaviours?

Are you accounting for unconscious bias in your creative decisions? Could you consult relevant experts or directly engage with those portrayed?

If participants express environmental or social awareness during the production, could highlighting these actions add value? How are such moments framed (positively, neutrally, negatively)?

Have you considered conducting an ethical review of the content before final editing to limit bias or stereotyping?

Do you engage with clients to reflect on how creative choices may support diversity, equity, and inclusion?

# 3. How is the content edited?

In 2024, humanity consumed the planet's yearly natural resource "budget" by August 1st, meaning we used the equivalent of 1.75 Earths in just one year (Earth Overshoot Day, 2024).

While human societies need to adapt to the fixed planetary boundaries it depends on (climate change, ocean acidification and biodiversity loss among others), this section invites you to reflect on how your content frames participants' actions, interactions and context.

Use the following questions to reflect on your content's portrayal of competition and whether it supports sustainable and socially responsible societal models. Additionally, consider how your content's backdrop and challenges could promote eco-friendly behaviours and inclusive, respectful values.

## A FEW KEY FACTS

*Love is Blind* introduced climate-conscious participants, sparking eco-themed conversations during the show. For example: Paul Peden (a marine conservationist) and Taylor Krause (an energy policy expert) used their environmental values to connect with others, later leveraging their TV visibility to raise awareness online.

Source: [Forbes, 2024](#)

*Love Island* partnered with eBay to dress all contestants in second-hand clothing. This collaboration led to a 600% spike in searches for "Love Island pre-loved" during its All Stars season.

Source: [eBay, 2024](#)

*Big Brother Finland* featured a house built from recycled materials and included eco-practices like composting and gardening on screen, demonstrating how environmental choices can be integrated into mainstream reality formats.

Source: [Big Brother Finland, S10](#)



### 3. HOW IS THE CONTENT EDITED?

#### ACTION & INTERACTION

Is competition central to your content? If so, how is it framed in the edit? How do voiceovers, camera angles and jurors' comments portray the competitive spirit? How are wins and losses – along with winning and losing participants – depicted?

Could the content's format encourage empathy, support, or connection, even within a competitive structure?  
*For example: In "The Voice", contestants support one another, and jurors offer constructive feedback regardless of team.*

Can collaboration be integrated into competitive elements?  
*For example: "LEGO Masters Out of the Box" had teams contribute sections to a shared build, resulting in a single, cohesive display.*

Are social hierarchies visible? If so, could they be challenged or reframed?

Could cultural heritage or community identity be highlighted through an episode, segment or spin-off to enrich storytelling and promote diverse representation?

How is consumption portrayed? Is the consumption of goods portrayed as excessive or mindful? Are they healthy/unhealthy, eco-friendly/polluting, first/second-hand, handmade/mass-produced?

How are consumption choices edited and contextualised?

### 3. HOW IS THE CONTENT EDITED?

Could you include a special episode or challenge promoting an eco-friendly behaviour in connection with your content's theme?

*For example: "MasterChef Quebec" featured a vegan cooking challenge in one of its episodes.*

Could nature or environmental issues be highlighted through an episode, segment or spin-off to enrich storytelling and promote eco-friendly representation?

#### CONTEXT

What lifestyles does your content project through participants' accessories, jobs, hobbies, diets, travel, housing, and more? What kind of societal model (organisation, consumption, values) does it promote?

Is your content mindful of the social, cultural, economic, and environmental realities of its audience?

Could visible on-screen elements reflect your own sustainable production practices?

*For example:*

- *eating local, seasonal, vegan or vegetarian food,*
- *reducing food waste recycling, composting, avoiding single-use items,*
- *using green energy or public transport,*
- *showcasing eco-friendly materials and housing.*

How is flora represented? Is it simply a backdrop, or do participants interact with it? What emotions are conveyed in these scenes? Is flora domestic or wild?

### 3. HOW IS THE CONTENT EDITED?

Are animals featured? What role do they play? Are they wild, domestic, or captive? How are they treated on screen? How are they perceived by participants and viewers?

Are animals and plants portrayed in ways that reinforce harmful stereotypes or could their representation foster appreciation and protection?  
*For example: How could sharks' portrayal as predators be misunderstood?*

Could changing the portrayal of flora and fauna add interest to the content while encouraging environmental awareness?

Do you engage with clients to reflect on how creative choices may help promote sustainability?

## 4. How can sustainability and social inclusion be promoted in content production?

Unscripted content production leaves a significant ecological footprint – but also offers a chance to innovate, cut costs and engage audiences in more responsible practices.

This section explores how to reduce your production's environmental impact and foster diversity, equity, inclusion and wellbeing on set.

### A FEW KEY FIGURES

**130.6** tCO<sub>2</sub>e is the average carbon footprint of a French studio-based TV production – 14 times a citizen's annual footprint.  
Source: [Ecoprod, 2024](#)

**1.7M** of metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e are emitted by the French audiovisual sector annually.  
Source: [Ecoprod, 2020](#)

**58.4%** of producers, and content creators in Reality TV worldwide are men; women, just 41.5%.  
Source: [Banijay Entertainment & Geena Davis Institute, 2024](#)

**3 in 4** Reality TV creators globally are men (73.7%). In the U.S, this rises to 80.6%.  
Source: [Banijay Entertainment & Geena Davis Institute, 2024](#)

## 4. HOW CAN SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION BE PROMOTED IN UNSCRIPTED CONTENT PRODUCTION?

### SUSTAINABILITY

#### Responsible sourcing:

- Are the products and services you use on-screen (accessories, sets, costumes, etc.) and off-screen (control room, wardrobe, makeup, prosthetics, hair, travel, hotels, meals, and more.) necessary?
- Are your suppliers aligned with eco-friendly values?

#### Food:

- Does catering provide local, seasonal, balanced (including vegetarian) meals and have a low carbon footprint?
- Could you minimise food waste through portion control or surplus food donations?

#### Waste:

- How do you manage waste during production?
- Can you eliminate or reduce single-use items?
- Do you re-use, rent, buy second-hand or donate props?
- Is your set designed with recycling in mind?
- Are printed materials minimised and printed sustainably?

#### Mobility:

- Have you optimised travel to limit emissions by choosing local shooting locations, using trains, carpooling, or public transport?
- Can you source materials locally to reduce transport impact?

#### Energy:

- Are you working with suppliers who provide green energy?

## 4. HOW CAN SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION BE PROMOTED IN UNSCRIPTED CONTENT PRODUCTION?

### Carbon tracking:

- Do you collect data (transportation, accommodation, food, set design, energy consumption, and more) to calculate the carbon footprint of your production?

### Natural ecosystems:

- Have you assessed and reduced your impact on the local environments and wildlife?
- Are you taking the necessary measures to leave the local environment as it was before the shooting?
- Are animals treated ethically before, during and after filming?

### Local integration:

- Are you engaging with local communities and authorities?
- Are there ways to give back or involve the local community?
- Have you considered hiring local crew members?

### Team awareness:

- Have you trained your team on sustainable practices?
- Do you have a sustainability lead or coordinator on-set?
- Have you considered qualifying for a green production certification?

### Product placement and sponsors:

- Are your sponsors aligned with environmental and social responsibility?
- Have you considered avoiding partnerships with high-impact industries?
- Could you prioritise eco-conscious or inclusive brands instead?

## 4. HOW CAN SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION BE PROMOTED IN UNSCRIPTED CONTENT PRODUCTION?

### SOCIAL DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & WELLBEING

Is your team diverse across all levels - creative, technical and production?

Do you ensure the presence of the right material for the participants both on-screen and off-screen (sanitary products, specific medical products, and more)?

Are suppliers aligned with your values on diversity and inclusion?

Have you trained staff on implementing DEI on and off-screen?

Do you have clear, accessible ways for crew and participants to voice concerns?  
*For example: anonymous whistleblowing reporting systems*

Have you assessed potential psychological or physical impacts of the experience of your production on participants? How are these risks mitigated?

If needed, is there access to a psychologist or HR representative on-set?

Are your sets and challenges accessible and inclusive?  
*For example: wheelchair access, gender-neutral toilets*

Do you support participants after filming ends?  
*For example: adjustment to fame, mental health, finances*

Do you have a strategy to address or prevent social media harassment?

# 5. How can your unscripted content be connected to real-world impact?

An impact campaign bridges what audiences see on-screen with real-world action. These campaigns, created with NGOs, experts and institutions, can spark conversations, change behaviours and even influence policy.

This section helps you build an effective strategy that aligns your content's message with meaningful engagement.

## A FEW KEY FACTS

*Red Nose Day (U.K.):*  
Combines entertainment with fundraising to combat poverty.

*Fort Boyard (France):*  
Celebrity contestants compete for charitable causes.

*Telethon (France):*  
Fundraises millions for rare disease research while educating the public.



## 5. HOW CAN YOUR UNSCRIPTED CONTENT BE CONNECTED TO REAL-WORLD IMPACT?

Does your content touch on topics of public interest or societal debate (e.g. climate, identity, inclusion)?

What kind of impact could these themes have – raising awareness, driving discussion, or influencing policy?

Could you partner with your broadcaster or platform to launch an impact campaign around key topics of public interest?

What change would you like to see as a result – individual action, community engagement, political response?

How would you implement the campaign? (e.g. partnering with NGOs, creating a microsite, hosting events, producing educational content, etc.)

Have you identified stakeholders – experts, non-profits, or institutions – who can help shape and promote the campaign?

Can the campaign extend internationally (especially for global formats)?

Have you discussed with clients how to track and evaluate the campaign's reach and effectiveness (KPIs)?

# Glossary

## Captive species

Animals that have adapted to human presence but retain their wild instincts and behaviours. For example, a wolf raised by humans may be tamed, but is not domesticated.

## Carbon footprint

The total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O) caused directly or indirectly by an individual, organisation, event or product, expressed in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e).

## Disability

Long-term impairments (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental or psychosocial disabilities as well as disabling health conditions) that, when interacting with barriers, may hinder equal participation in society. Includes both visible and invisible disabilities or neurodivergence.

## DEI

Acronym for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – principles guiding fair treatment, representation, and opportunities for all individuals.

## Diversity

The presence and recognition of varied identities, backgrounds and experiences within a group or society, including differences in ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, and more.

## Equity

Fairness achieved by acknowledging different needs and circumstances. Unlike equality, equity often involves redistributing resources or support to achieve balanced outcomes.

## Ethnicity

A shared cultural identity based on language, history, traditions and often geographic origin. It is self-defined and may include multiple affiliations.

## Gender

Social and cultural roles, behaviours, and identities associated with being male, female, or non-binary. Gender identity may or may not align with sex assigned at birth.

## Inclusion

The practice of ensuring all individuals can participate fully and equally, regardless of their background or identity. It involves adapting systems to be accessible for everyone.

## Impact campaign

A strategic initiative tied to a content or film that encourages audiences to take real-world action related to on-screen themes, often involving partnerships with experts and advocacy groups.

## LGBTQIA+

An inclusive acronym referring to:

L – Lesbian

G – Gay

B – Bisexual

T – Transgender

Q – Queer

I – Intersex

A – Asexual or Aromantic

+ other marginalised gender identities or sexual orientations not covered by the acronym.

## Planetary boundaries

Nine ecological limits identified by scientists to ensure Earth's long-term stability and resilience. Crossing these boundaries leads to irreversible environmental damage. In 2023, it was evaluated that six of the nine boundaries had been transgressed globally.

**Stereotypes**

An oversimplified and often biased belief about a group of people. Stereotypes can reinforce discrimination and limit opportunities for individuals and communities.

**Sustainable production**

An environmentally responsible approach to producing film and content that minimises waste, reduces emissions, protects biodiversity and promotes inclusion and equity throughout the production process.