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# SCREENWRITING COMPETITIONS DIVERSITY REPORT

2021-2022

PRESENTED BY

DiverseCinemadb.com

[www.diversecinemadb.com](http://www.diversecinemadb.com)

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# INTRODUCTION

Every year, thousands of **BIPOC writers** around the world enter screenwriting competitions with dreams of being discovered and elevating their careers. For many hopefuls, winning or placing as a finalist is almost a sure path to finding representation and being hired to work on Open Writing Assignments (OWAs) or being staffed on a network or streamer. Additionally, many competitions offer prize money and other valuable perks.

Based on publicly provided data, it is estimated that each individual competition receives, on average, between 1,000 and 2,000 submissions, generating millions of dollars in collective revenue for the entire screenwriting competition industry.

Yet, for many BIPOC writers, the investment in some of the top contests has not paid off. While there were many diverse writers who placed high in various screenwriting competitions in 2021 and 2022, the top spots were still elusive for many.

This report contains analysis of **824** writers that were named as winners or finalists in **21 popular screenwriting and awards competitions** in the U.S. The following data captured in this report was derived from screenwriting platforms such as Coverfly, Moviebytes and individual competition websites. *Statistics from screenwriting labs, programs, fellowships or competitions with a focus on diverse writers were not included.*



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# RESEARCH DATA

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It is to be noted that the majority of screenwriting competitions mentioned in this report accept "blind submissions" or screenplays that contain no author information such as a name, email, etc. as a way to minimize potential bias of readers and judges.

For this study, screenwriters were identified by sourcing publicly available information found on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, IMDB, personal websites as well as on Coverfly. Writers whose identity could not be verified were not included in this report.

Additionally, when a script was created by a writing team, those writers were counted as individual placements.



# INDUSTRY STATISTICS

WGAW Inclusion and Equity Report 2022 ([Link](#))

Members of Women Of Color Unite Create The “Screenwriting Contest Transparency” Whitepaper To Address Gender and Race Bias In Hollywood Writing Competitions, June 2022 ([Link](#))

Study on Inclusion & Equity in TV Writing Reveals Disparities For Historically Excluded Scribes, *Deadline*, May 24, 2022 ([Link](#))

Here's Where Hollywood's Efforts to Improve Diversity Really Stands in 2022, CNBC, March 24, 2022 ([Link](#))

Study Finds Women, People of Color Still Underrepresented as Movie Leads, *Hollywood Reporter*, March 14, 2022 ([Link](#))

How to Fix Hollywood's Diversity Problem, *Forbes*, August 19, 2021 ([Link](#))

Hollywood Loses \$10B a Year Due to Lack of Diversity, Study Finds, *New York Times*, March 11, 2021 ([Link](#))

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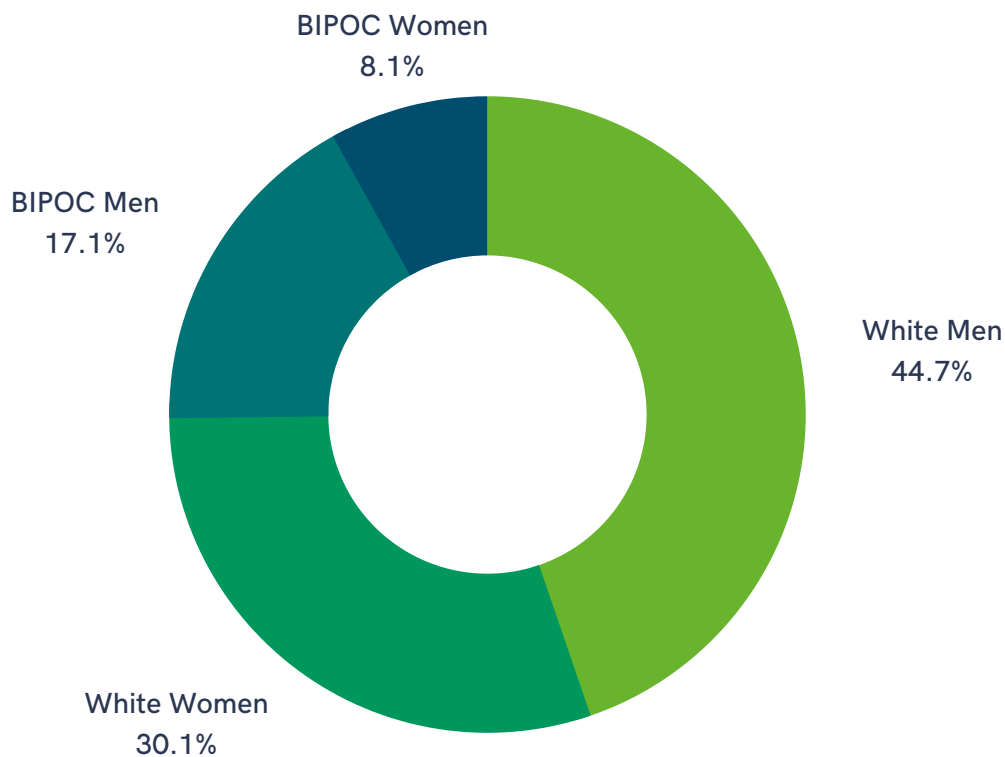
# BIPOC REPRESENTATION

*Black, Indigenous and People of Color*

## BIPOC Screenwriters

(Overall Representation)

Figure 1



**BIPOC WRITERS REPRESENTED 25% OF THE TOP-PERFORMING SCRIPTS IN MAJOR U.S. SCREENWRITING & AWARDS COMPETITIONS IN 2021-2022.**

# BIPOC REPRESENTATION

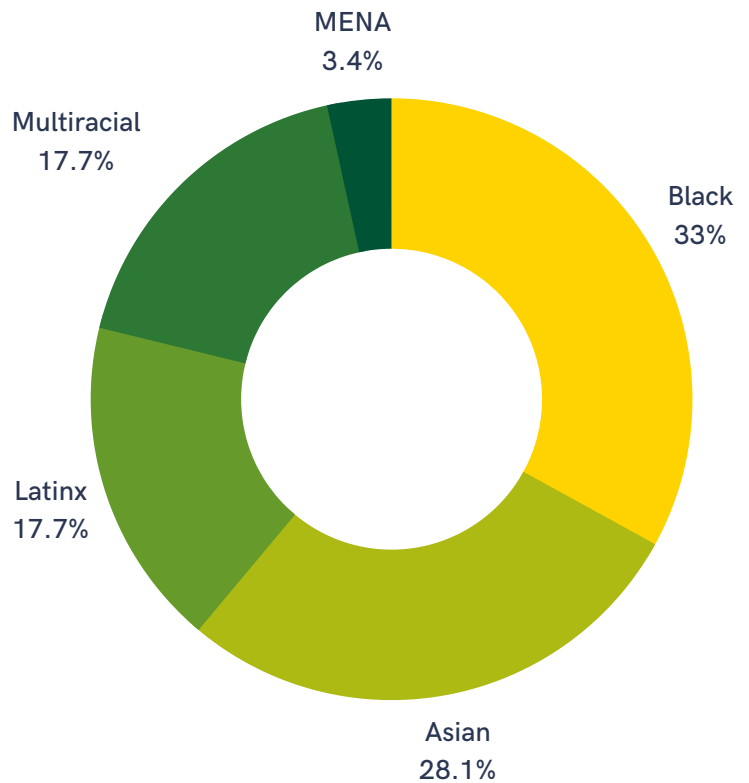
*Black, Indigenous and People of Color*

## BIPOC Screenwriters

(By Race & Ethnic Background)

Figure 2

The racial and ethnic background of male and female writers who placed as finalists and winners in screenwriting competitions demonstrates that Black writers share the majority of representation (33 percent), followed closely by Asians (28.1 percent), Latinx and multiracial writers (tied at 17.7 percent) and Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) writers. Only two Native American writers were identified for this report.



# BIPOC REPRESENTATION

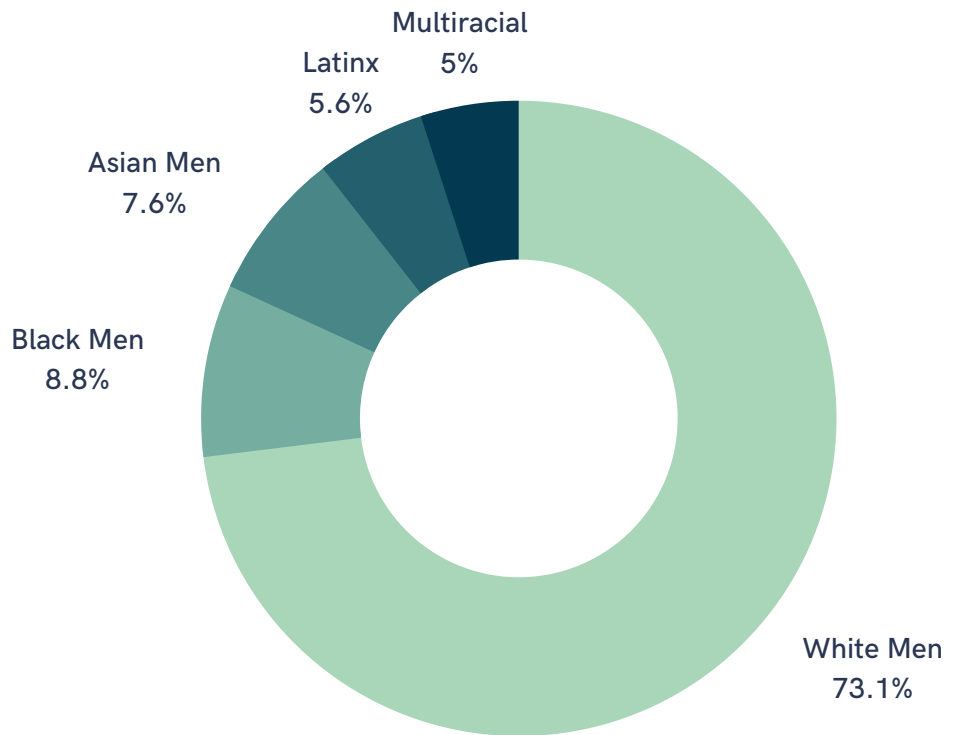
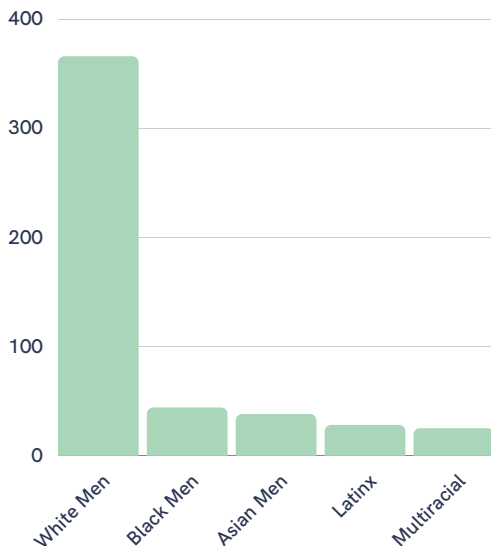
*Black, Indigenous and People of Color*

## BIPOC Screenwriters

(By Gender- Male)

Figure 3

The percentage of male writers who placed in the finalist or winning rounds skewed heavily towards white men at 73.1 percent with BIPOC males representing 27 percent of the total. Only 4 percent of MENA male writers and and 1 Native American male writer were identified for this report.





# BIPOC REPRESENTATION

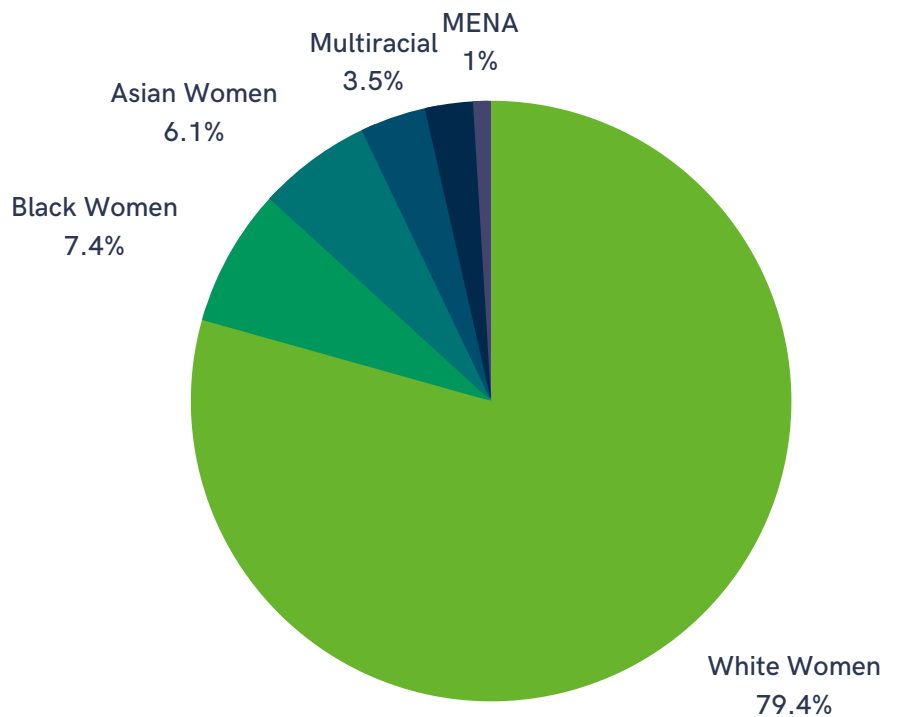
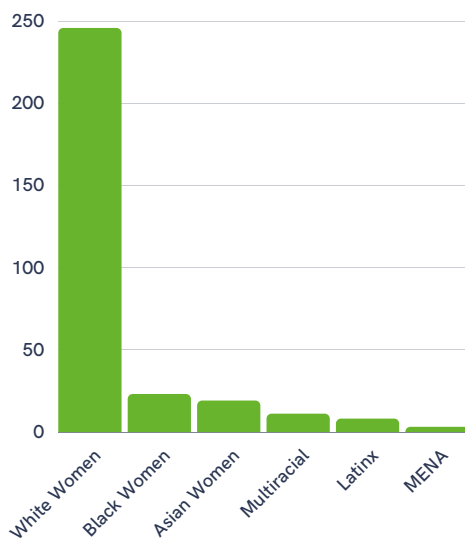
*Black, Indigenous and People of Color*

## BIPOC Screenwriters

(By Gender - Female)

Figure 4

The percentage of female writers who placed in the finalist or winning rounds skewed heavily towards white women at 79.4 percent (or 246) with BIPOC females representing 18 percent of the total (or 66). Only 1 Native American female writer was identified for this report.



# SCREENWRITING COMPETITIONS

2021 - 2022

Below is an alphabetical list of popular and well-known screenwriting competitions. The **random sampling** is in no way representative of all contests nor is it meant to diminish the ongoing diversity efforts individual organizations may have in place. This report is merely an objective analysis to examine current competitive placements for BIPOC writers.

1. Atlanta Film Festival Screenplay Competition, 2022
2. Cinequest Screenwriting Competition, 2022
3. Emerging Screenwriters Genre Competition, 2022
4. Final Draft Big Break Screenwriting Contest, 2021
5. The Finish Line Script Competition, 2021
6. Golden Script Competition, 2021
7. Hollyshorts Screenwriting Competition, 2021
8. JumpStart Writing Competition, 2021
9. Launch Pad Feature Competition, 2021
10. Los Angeles International Screenplay Awards, 2022
11. Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition, 2021
12. Screencraft Drama Competition, 2021
13. Screencraft TV Pilot Screenplay Competition, 2022
14. The Script Lab (TSL) Free Screenplay Contest, 2022
15. The Script Lab (TSL) Free Screenplay Contest, 2021
16. Script Pipeline TV Contest, 2021
17. Scriptalooza Screenwriting Competition, 2021
18. Shore Scripts Feature and TV Pilot Contests, 2021
19. Slamdance, 2021
20. WeScreenplay TV Contest, 2022
21. WeScreenplay Feature Screenwriting Competition, 2022

# TOP 10 RANKINGS

For competition announcements made through June 30, 2022

SCREENWRITING COMPETITION	% OF BIPOC WINNERS & FINALISTS
1 Screencraft Drama Competition, 2021	53.6%
2 Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition, 2021	45.3%
3 The Script Lab Free Screenplay Contest, 2021	33.3%
4 WeScreenplay TV Contest, 2022	33.3%
5 WeScreenplay Feature Screenwriting Competition, 2022	32.0%
6 Atlanta Film Festival Screenplay Competition, 2022	28.6%
7 Los Angeles International Screenplay Awards, 2022	27.5%
8 Hollyshorts Screenwriting Competition, 2021	26.9%
9 Shore Scripts Feature and TV Pilot Contests, 2021	26.3%
10 Script Pipeline TV Contest, 2021	26.1%



# TOP 5 RANKINGS - BIPOC MEN

For competition announcements made through June 30, 2022

SCREENWRITING COMPETITION	% OF WINNERS & FINALISTS
1 Screencraft Drama Competition, 2021	39.3%
2 Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition, 2021	30.2%
3 Script Pipeline TV Contest, 2021	26.1%
4 The Script Lab Free Screenplay Contest, 2022	23.5%
5 WeScreenplay TV Contest, 2022	22.2%



# TOP 5 RANKINGS - BIPOC WOMEN

For competition announcements made through June 30, 2022

SCREENWRITING COMPETITION	% OF WINNERS & FINALISTS
1 WeScreenplay Feature Screenwriting Competition, 2022	16.0%
2 Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition, 2021	15.1%
3 WeScreenplay TV Contest, 2022	14.8%
4 Screencraft Drama Competition, 2021	14.3%
5 Shore Scripts Feature and TV Contests, 2021	12.3%



# TOP 5 RANKINGS - WHITE WOMEN

For competition announcements made through June 30, 2022

SCREENWRITING COMPETITION	% OF WINNERS & FINALISTS
1 The Finish Line Script Competition, 2021	45.2%
2 Atlanta Film Festival Screenplay Competition, 2022	42.9%
2 Script Pipeline TV Contest, 2021	39.1%
3 Scriptalooza Screenwriting Competition, 2021	37.5%
4 Jumpstart Writing Competition, 2021	37.2%



# TOP 5 RANKINGS - WHITE MEN

For competition announcements made through June 30, 2022

SCREENWRITING COMPETITION	% OF WINNERS & FINALISTS
1 Final Draft Big Break Screenwriting Contest, 2021	81.8%
2 *The Script Lab (TSL) Free Screenplay Contest 2021	60.0%
3 Slamdance, 2021	56.7%
4 Scriptalooza Screenwriting Competition, 2021	54.2%
5 Golden Script Competition, 2021	51.7%

\* Some screenwriting competitions outlined in this report included rankings for both 2021 and 2022. It is to be noted that white men were 49 percent of the winners and finalists in the Script Lab's (TSL) Free Screenplay Contest 2022, indicating a broader spectrum of diverse representation compared to the results of 2021.



# CONCLUSIONS

According to the 2021 [UCLA Hollywood Diversity Report](#), on-screen diversity in television and film is increasing. So, too, is the diversity of the U.S. population. Within the next two decades, the U.S. Census estimates that people from multicultural backgrounds of all ages will constitute the majority.

Therefore, it is imperative that screenwriting competitions prepare for that reality by increasing their marketing efforts to attract more diverse writers as their perspectives and stories will be even more relevant to multicultural audiences, especially on streaming platforms.

Additionally, it is to be noted that not all screenwriting competitions are for all writers. For instance, niche competitions in the genres of Comedy, Sci-fi or Animation, may not be an inappropriate fit for a dramatic writer. However, as more producers, agents and managers turn to screenwriting competitions as a resource when looking for new, diverse talent, it is essential that efforts are made to attract the type voices that audiences are searching for. Simply put, it is a smart business strategy that is sure to benefit everyone.





# ABOUT DIVERSECINEMADB.COM

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Founded in 2016 by writer/director La'Chris Jordan, DiverseCinemadb.com's mission is to promote and elevate the work of diverse directors, writers, actors, producers and technical crew. As an online movie database of films from the Black and African Diaspora, users can view hundreds of big-budget and independent films, TV movies, documentaries, classics, and notable foreign films from the 1920s and beyond.

## ABOUT LA'CHRIS JORDAN

La'Chris Jordan is a Los Angeles-based playwright, writer/director and story analyst. After graduating from the University of Washington, La'Chris began her career in journalism and public relations, working for advertising powerhouse F97 McCann Worldgroup and *The Gulf News* in Dubai, UAE. Upon her return to the U.S., La'Chris began working in theatre, TV and film which led to her being named 'One of the 50 Playwrights to Watch' by the Dramatists Guild as well as a Top 20 Semifinalist for the Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program at Juilliard.

An alum of the 2021 BIPOC Writers Fellowship and the Stowe Story Labs, La'Chris is known for writing female-led historicals, gritty dramas and gun-sling westerns such as *PINEY RIDGE*, *ROSES IN THE WATER*, *THE SOFTWALKERS* and *POE'S DISCIPLE*. Her pilots, shorts and features have placed in over 30 screenwriting competitions and labs including the Academy Nicholl Fellowships for Screenwriting (Top 10%), Sundance Episodic Lab, MACRO Episodic Lab, and the Austin Film Festival. Recently, La'Chris wrote, directed and produced her debut short, *JANUARY 14TH*, which was the Official Selection of 75+ film festivals and 50+ award wins and nominations.

**QUESTIONS OR  
COMMENTS?**

**CONTACT US.**

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