>> Lesley Hennen: Hello! I see people are joining, we'll give things a few moments here before we officially get started, but thank you for joining us. My name is Lesley Hennen. I'm the Senior Associate of Entertainment Pipeline Programming here at Disability Belongs™. My pronouns are she/hers. My visual description -- I'm a white woman with kind of just shoulder length just past my shoulder length brown hair wearing a kind of gray shirt, and my background is our Disability Belongs™ logo and blue and green with kind of a tan neutral background. And I'm here with my colleague Lawon.

>> Lawon Exum: Hello, my name is Lawon Exum, and I am the Entertainment and Media Director for Disability Belongs™. I help assist with the programs in the Lab with Lesley. My description is a black male with green and silver glasses with a gold shirt and my hair is low.

>> Lesley Hennen: Great, thanks Lawon. So I think we'll get started here, and people can kind of join as they as they have a moment to. So yeah, we're here today to kind of hopefully answer some questions about our Entertainment Lab programs. We have our Virtual Lab and also our two in-person intensives which are invite only this year. And first of all, we just want to acknowledge the ongoing fires in L.A. and we hope everybody is safe and your loved ones are safe. Our L.A.-based team members here are all safe. We're kind of monitoring things hour by hour, day by day as we go. But yeah, so first of all, we wanted to acknowledge applications for the Lab are open. Anybody that has been affected by the L.A. wildfires automatically gets a one week extension. If you need more time, we can absolutely talk about that as well. You just have to send us an email letting us know and we'll kind of go from there. So if you have been affected by the fires you can email us at Lab@DisabilityBelongs.org and just let us know. Yeah, so we can kind of get started. We're going to give just kind of an overview of our programs, and then I'm sure you all have a lot of questions, so if you want to put those into the Q&A box in the Zoom chat at the bottom of your toolbar, we'll be getting to those -- answering them live today. But yeah so I guess a little bit about the Entertainment Lab. It first started in 2019 -- was the very first year. It was in person in L.A. and really started as sort of this -- in our work we would often get asked the question, oh -- I'd love to hire a disabled writer or a disabled director but -- I don't know any, I can't find any. And so we -- the Lab really started as -- just finding all these amazing disabled creatives who are already working in positions behind the camera and just getting them into the rooms with people who are in hiring positions in entertainment. So that was kind of how everything started in 2019. Since then, we have expanded. We have our Virtual Lab which happens all on Zoom, and we have our in-person intensives which are designed a little bit more niche focus areas, they're one week long in Los Angeles. And yeah, I mean, aside from just connecting folks with people in hiring positions, a big focus on the Lab is about building that community with other disabled creatives. And we're -- we're all about networking across and really bringing each other up together. Our favorite thing that happens is when Lab alumni hire each other for their own projects and just really seeing people grow and thrive. That's our goal with the Lab. I myself am an alumna of the 2020 Lab, the very first virtual year. I'm a comedy writer. And yeah, I think the main thing that I really found through the lab was that sense of community and just kind of being able to talk a bit more about my own disability and learning how to advocate for myself and advocate for others, I think that was a big -- big part of what I learned. Lawon, anything you want to add about just general Lab programming and everything before we get into questions?

>> Lawon Exum: I just really want to say to everybody that we really enjoy the communities that we build when it comes to the Labs and the intensives, because it seems like you all always who are in the Labs come together and and feel that there's people out there that are -- welcome you and welcome your disability as well, but just having a sense of knowing you can come to people that are like your family, and we always try to tell you that this is your community and we're here for you, and just want to say that.

>> Lesley Hennen: Yeah. Let's see. So I see we have a few questions that have already come in and been answered by our colleagues in the chat -- thank you. One question was "are there any entertainment Labs remote or in a New York City area?" Our virtual Labs are fully remote, they happen over Zoom. And we do have folks -- anybody is welcome to apply to the Virtual Lab from all over. So we've had folks from New York, from literally everywhere -- we've had folks from Australia that have come and joined the Lab. So we have our Virtual Lab, and our intensives are in L.A. in person. And Dani asked if this Q&A session is mostly geared towards the Virtual Lab or also the in-person intensives, and yes, you can ask questions for either, for both. Another question is "how long are the days and how physically demanding is the in-person Lab?" Great question. So the in-person intensives are one week long. We're going to have the -- first day of both intensives will be on Zoom as kind of a virtual orientation day, just kind of getting to know the staff, getting to know the other fellows, and just kind of an overview of the in-person programs. And then from there, the in-person programming will kind of vary. We typically, just based on last year's in person programming, we typically would meet for maybe one to two hours at a location. It -- there -- it's a lot of sort of panel-based conversations, meeting with writers, meeting with execs, and just sitting and talking to each other. We were able to do a few studio tours or tours of productions that were actively filming, so it will vary, but I would say the longest day we had was there were a few hours in the morning, a break in the middle of the day, and then we met for another few hours later in the evening. So that -- if that helps kind of answer the question, it does vary but -- and we also -- obviously every cohort is going to have different accommodations and different needs so we -- if you are accepted into the cohort, we work with everybody to make sure we're meeting everybody's accommodations and needs for each cohort.

>> Lawon Exum: Yeah, we make sure that we always accommodate whatever your needs may be, even if we have like longer breaks or what have you. It just -- it just all depends on the cohort and the Intensive that you may be in. So we always make sure that we accommodate your needs.

>> Lesley Hennen: Yes. Let's see. I'm not seeing any others in the Q&A for now. I see one question in the chat which was "what are you looking for in applicants?" Great question. I feel like the main thing that we're looking for is just folks who are -- I think in the essay question where we ask why this Lab specifically, we ask you to tell us a little bit about your connection to the disability community, a little bit about your experience in entertainment up through now, and then the most helpful thing for us to know about you is, like, what are your short-term and your long-term career goals. And they can also be personal goals as well. So if a goal of yours is to become more comfortable talking about disability and learn more about other types of disabilities, and how to add advocate for each other, like, all of these things are really great for us to know as we're kind of putting cohorts together. We want to find people that can not only learn from our Lab programming, but learn from each other as well. So if your goal is to find a writer's assistant job, that's helpful for us to know. If your goal is to direct a feature film that you have written, like, that's really great for us to know. I think the more specific you can be with your goals, both in the short term and the long term, is really helpful for us to know.

>> Lawon Exum: And I'd like to reiterate that. Yeah, more detail of what your short-term goals and your long-term goals may be, that is really helpful for us.

>> Lesley Hennen: Yes. Let's see. And just going through the Q&A box. Looks like one question was also answered -- "are National Leadership Program participants allowed to participate in the Entertainment Lab, even if the two cohorts overlap?" And Isabella already answered this, thank you Isa. The National Leadership participants are -- everybody is welcome to apply to the Lab. I think the most important thing to note is that the Entertainment Lab and the National Leadership Program are two very different -- they just focus on very different things. I would say if your -- goal is to again be in a writer's room, kind of be working in entertainment, be in the creative field, the Lab is what you would want to apply for. If you are interested in more of the advocacy side, learning more about the nonprofit side of things, then I would say the National Leadership Program is more what you might be looking for. But as far as if -- you're welcome to apply to both, and if there's -- it's always case- by-case basis. Like, if you happen to be someone who is a good fit for both programs, yeah, there's nothing that says you couldn't do both. And oh -- another great question. "What submission materials are required?" So the application asks for just some basic kind of personal information. Name, email, that type of stuff. And we want to know what your kind of main focus areas are in entertainment. You can select up to three. So if you're a writer, director, producer, you would select those three, or if you're very -- you're just focused on directing, you can just select directing. Whatever -- basically whatever you are, we want to know about it. So just you can select your focus areas. And then we would love a resume just to kind of get a sense of -- your background and your professional experience. And then our essay question, which you can either submit a written response which -- up to 500 words maximum -- or a video response, up to 3 minutes maximum. And that's answering our question of just, tell us about yourself, tell us about your connection to the disability community, your entertainment experience, and what you're really looking to get out of this Lab. And then we do require at least one work sample. And so that can either be up to 10 pages of a script or a written material, or up to 10 minutes minutes of a video or filmed material. And we do require at least one, but you are welcome to submit up to two if you have an -- a secondary work sample that you'd like to show. And yeah, then there's also just a space for if there's anything that the application didn't cover that you want us to know about you, you can let us know in that optional kind of anything else you would like us to know question. And let's see -- just going to go through some of these open questions now. "What are common threads that you see in successful applications?" Great question. Again, I feel like just reiterating, the most successful applications are really the ones that are very specific and can tell us exactly how we can help you reach your goals. I, as someone who applies to a lot of fellowships and things, I know how it can feel like the best option is to say like oh, I want to learn everything, I want to know -- anything and everything about being disabled in this industry, and I think that is true to some extent, right, we all want that, but I think -- being on the other side of things has really helped me understand, like, the more specific, the better, because then we know exactly what room to place you in, we know exactly what cohort to place you in, and the other types of people that you might learn from or work well together with. So again, just that specificity in your goals. And I think another thing that we really try to identify in applicants is wanting to -- that sense of community and wanting to -- I think automatically everyone that we've had go through the Lab just helps make our community even better, and so just kind of getting that sense of wanting to bring the community up together is another common thread that we just -- I think that's a successful application as well. Lawon, anything you wanted to add?

>> Lawon Exum: I would say being really specific on what really -- what your goal is in the field that you want to get expertise in, or just being in the sense of the community in the industry, what have you. I feel like being more detailed specific makes it better. So I just feel like being very detailed of what you really want to do, I really think that really makes a big help for us.

>> Lesley Hennen: Okay. And so this question: "are travel accommodations and lodging covered for the in-person Lab?" Unfortunately as much as we would love to, we just do not have the budget available to cover accommodations or lodging for folks who want to participate in the in-person intensive programming. So if that is something you're interested in applying for, we do recommend you either are already based in L.A. or we've had a lot of folks who might be bi-coastal or have friends or family that they can stay with in L.A. during the duration of the programming. Again I think a big -- since a goal of the Lab is that we're hoping to introduce you to folks that are in hiring positions, if you're -- the ideal scenario would be you meet someone in the Lab and they offer you a job after just like natural kind of mentorship and just networking -- we're big on networking. We can never promise a job after the Labs, but every person you meet is a potential mentor so through networking if you happen to find -- get a job opportunity through another Lab -- someone you met in the Lab, that would be ideal if you're either already in L.A. or like actively trying to move to the area. Yeah, unfortunately we just don't have funds for covering everybody's travel accommodations and lodging for the in-person Labs. And let's see -- so this question is "can you elaborate on the opportunity to create a short film during the Lab and what that entails? Do you provide funding for the short film?" So basically for the the Virtual Lab which is, I forget if I covered this already, but the Virtual Lab is five months long -- it's you meet on Zoom once a week for two hours, we're looking at 12 to 2 p.m. Pacific, 3 to 5 p.m. Eastern -- time zones are not my friend [laughs]. But so two hours on Zoom once a week on Tuesdays with some optional sessions happening on Thursdays as well that are going to be for more niche areas of interest that are optional. But within all of that, we always encourage folks to be working on their own projects, and we will have -- we just call them creative workshops, so a chance for you to bring in a few pages or a short scene of something that you're working on currently just to get feedback from your peers in the cohort. In the past we've done table reads, so if that's something you're interested in, you can -- we just kind of do a very informal table read with your cohort members and just that chance to kind of have your work read out loud and -- but as far as funding, we are not able to unfortunately fund your short films, as much as we would love to, but it's more of just an opportunity. It's not a requirement by any means for you to come in with a specific project that you want to work on, but we just know that everybody is working on something during the Labs, so they're my personal favorite part of just kind of getting to see all the great work that you all are making and kind of build the kind of peer feedback relationships. We've had a lot of Labs that I believe are still actively meeting with each other and have different writing groups or directing groups going on. So yeah, it's more of a opportunity for feedback and just getting support through your cohort of creative notes. And I know one thing I really appreciated going through the Lab was, as a disabled person person writing about disabled characters, disabled themes, it was kind of indescribable to finally have that -- just a room full of other disabled people who are also working on disabled projects, and finally have a space to kind of unpack things that I personally just hadn't been able to unpack with other groups. As much as I've loved every other writer's group and writing class and fellowship I've ever been in, sometimes it's you -- when you're surrounded by other disabled people you don't have to explain certain things, where like people, we just get it. So I think it's been -- that's kind of what -- our goal with the workshops is more of just kind of providing a space for feedback and an option for people to bring in any projects you're currently working on for some collaborative time.

>> Lawon Exum: And I have to add like for the Labs as well, the reward for us, well, for me, is what I feel like you all being able to network with each other and being able to form different communities within our communities with each other. I -- we joke and call them Lab collabs. Like, we love seeing that. Like, I mean, you all getting to talk to each other and being able to review each other's, like, scripts or whatever work that you're doing -- that that's what is really rewarding for us to see how some people are comfortable now to even talk about their disability, or even some people feel comfortable after the Labs now that they've say I can now tell people that I have a disability or I can tell a production company now that I do have disability, because some people come to the Labs and never have disclosed their disability. So that's rewarding to us. So that's what I feel like when people are in these Labs and in these different communities that we have, it's just great. It's -- it's just good, so.

>> Lesley Hennen: Yes. Let's see, that question's done. I'm seeing a few in the chat, so just want to make sure we get to folks' questions. I see a question from Chansen in the chat -- "what would you like to have applicants do with or for Virtual Labs after finishing the program?" Love that question. So I mean, our goal -- I always say the Labs are very -- you get out of them what you want to put into it, like, you can really -- if your goal is to come in and complete a new script like on your own time, if your goal is to kind of build your rolodex of industry connections and maybe you want to make a short film this year, and you want to crew up with other disabled crew members and just like meeting other crew through your -- through the cohort and other speakers, that's -- I would say I don't know if we have any specific goals as to like what we want for people to do after the lab, other than just like, we we want you to get what you want out of the Lab, and we want -- like Lawon was just saying we love what we call Lab collabs, where folks are creating their own projects, hiring each other -- that's what we really want people to do. Because again, the -- our main goal for the Lab in the first place is really just to kind of -- there are so many disabled people working in this industry already, and just sort of we're bringing each other up together. And -- we love to have our alumni come back and speak to future cohorts. That's a a big focus of what we do is just finding ways -- any ways that we can kind of involve our alumni in the future Labs. We also -- we're -- as our Lab alumni community continues to grow, I believe we're over 225 alumni currently, and that number is just going to keep growing -- we're trying to find more ways to kind of actively support our alumni, which was our -- again, our goal with sort of the in-person intensives this year is invite only, all alumni are automatically invited to apply for the intensives. If you are -- you know someone that you think would benefit from an in-person intensive with us and they haven't previously completed a program with us, just send us an email and we can kind of go on a case by case basis and chat through next steps about what a recommendation would look like. But yeah, there's really -- again, the goal is just that disabled people get what they're looking for and getting -- more work and more just visibility in the industry. Okay great I'm seeing -- I think that that's it in the chat, so I'm going to go back over to the Q&A box. "Can you describe what the Virtual Lab would be like week to week please?" Another great question. So yeah, the Virtual Lab is going to start on Tuesday May 6th, and it's going to run through Tuesday September 9th. The zoom sessions will be from 12 to 2 p.m. Pacific, 3 to 5 p.m. Eastern, all on Zoom. And all of our programming is very, I would say conversation based. Like, it's a lot of bringing in -- the first few weeks will be very focused on previous alumni kind of coming in, talking about their experience in the Lab, what they're up to now, any advice that they have for current Fellows and what -- it's kind of chatting with alumni and kind of getting to know a little bit more about what to expect for the next five months. And then over the course of the Lab, we also just have speakers from all aspects of the entertainment industry, so with producers, development execs, TV drama writers, TV comedy writers, film writers. And every conversation I think is very much through the lens of what is it like being a disabled creative in these specific areas, how can you advocate for yourself, how can you advocate for others. As we all know, like, entertainment has been going through a rough few years recently, and these -- the fires are going to change everything again. So I think -- it's the specifics of the conversations might change day to day, but in general, our goal is just to bring in a wide variety of different speakers through entertainment, talk about what -- the current state of being disabled in the industry, and again, just really provide space for folks to connect with each other, other disabled creatives, other folks working in the industry, and just kind of ask questions. We do a lot of just like internal networking as well, so time for the cohort to just kind of unpack as you're kind of going through this five-month experience together, you'll have time to just kind of unpack and network with each other. And yeah, so it is weekly sessions on Tuesdays. We are trying something new this year that we're calling Community sessions, so those will be on Thursdays, also from 12 to 2 Pacific, 3 to 5 Eastern, and those will be open to all alumni of our programs and the current virtual cohort. So those are optional sessions that will focus maybe on more kind of niche or focused opportunities, for example, different other pipeline programs that exist that have upcoming deadlines, and -- or we typically will have somebody from Final Draft come in and go over how to use their latest software and answer any accessibility related questions about Final Draft. So those are going to be our kind of optional Thursday community sessions, and again, just a chance for you to kind of meet with other previous alumni of the programs as well. And we have one more question: "is this lab open for international applicants, or only USA based?" It is -- the Virtual Lab -- I mean, all the labs are open for International applicants. I would say the Virtual Lab, if you are -- if you're not thinking about actively moving to L.A. or wanting to travel to L.A. for a week -- our International applicants typically will go for the Virtual Lab. But yes, there's no requirement that you are USA based to apply. Let's see, "what hours would the virtual be?" So just 12 to 2 p.m. Pacific, 3 to 5 p.m. Eastern on Tuesdays, and yeah, so those are the hours for the virtual, and then those optional Thursday sessions as well from 12 to 2. And let's see -- I believe -- so we answered this question, thank you Chanthen, and yes, so this question is "can you elaborate a little more on the TV intensive for this year if you have those details?" Yes, thank you Dalila. So yeah, the TV intensive -- I can go over what we did last year and then kind of get into what that might look like this year, but last year we had two different cohorts. We had separated drama and comedy writing. This year we're doing sort of just one -- one cohort all together. But again, it started with sort of that first day of a virtual orientation, meeting the staff, meeting each other, the other cohort members and meeting -- just kind of going over the -- overview of the programming. We try to bring in a guest speaker for that first day as well from the the TV industry. And then the last year we met with a few different writers rooms that were ongoing. So each day we went to a different kind of in-person physical location and just sort of talked with the writers rooms about, again, just sort of the current state of things and just the showrunners and just kind of meeting with different writers. It's really, again, just like an opportunity to ask questions about the state of the industry right now, kind of get maybe pitching advice -- or again just kind of meeting with each other. And then we did have a combined day at ABC entertainment where it was a practice pitch session. So all of the fellows came in with like a quick elevator pitch and there were folks in the -- on the development team at ABC that were -- they provided just kind of immediate feedback. It was all practice but just kind of a chance to hear -- get some real live feedback from working execs on your pitches. And as far as this year, we are in the stages of like checking back in with everybody that we had previously been in conversation of having -- hosting us for the TV intensive this year. We're first just making sure everyone is safe from the fires, and then just kind of over the next few weeks kind of re -- kind of locking in that programming. But we're hoping for a similar kind of format of just coming in having -- everything is very conversation based of just like meeting with writers, meeting with showrunners, and meeting with each other, and doing some type of practice -- practice pitching session. We'll keep you all updated as we know more. But yes, I hope that was at least somewhat helpful, Dalilah, and let's see, just going through the chat. Let's see. And let's see -- the deadline -- so the deadline for the Labs is January 19th. However, if you have been in any way affected by the fires in Los Angeles, just send us an email, you will automatically get a one week extension. If you need more time -- just stay in communication with us -- and we want to make sure everyone can get their applications in amidst everything that is happening right now. So yes, let's see. I think that was the -- thank you Isa and my other team members who are helping me answer questions in the chat, thank you all. And we have one more in the Q&A. Let's see -- if the second part of my -- oh wait sorry -- "if my goals are focused on writing, then is it best for both of my samples to be writing?" Yeah, great question. I would say yes, if your focus is primarily writing, both samples I think ideally would be scripts that you have written. I think what's most helpful -- so if you're someone who's a writer/director, so if you are someone who is -- your goal is to direct scripts that you have written, I think that is -- a perfect situation where you would upload a script that you've written and then also upload a 10 minute sample of a film that you've directed, because that will help us see that your goals are writing and directing. But if you're focused solely on directing, then like one -- again, we only require one, but if you -- you always have the option to submit up to two. So if your goal is solely directing, then submitting two directing samples is great. If your goal is solely writing, then two writing samples is great. Let's see, just making sure we've got all of the questions going. Let's see -- oh this is a great question. "Is there a theme or focus for each year that you plan the lectures or roundtables around ahead of time, or is that based on the needs of who enters the cohort for that year?" Thank you for this question. The answer is sort of both. I will also say like in most recent years, like, the general theme has just been like the rapidly changing state of the industry, right? So 2023 Labs which was the year of the writers and the actors strike, that was sort of the ongoing theme of the Lab, of like, what does this mean for disabled people in the industry? What does this mean for everybody in the industry? And -- but also, I think a big part of the -- our programming team is, as we're going through applications, we're getting a sense of what people are looking for, which again, is why it's so important for you to really include those specific goals of what you're looking to get out of the Lab, what your career goals are, what your personal goals are, because that will really help us kind of shape the programming or rethink any programming that we might have been working on already, but yeah -- and then it -- so it's kind of both. Like, I think it's always sort of this big ongoing question or ongoing theme of being disabled in entertainment, what does that mean for me right now, and sort of how to advocate for yourself and how to advocate for each other. Those are I would say are like our main recurring themes for the Lab no matter what. But then as we're going through applications and interview process, and we're getting a sense of what each cohort is really looking for, that will help us kind of tailor things even more. So for example we've had cohorts in the past where people are really interested in what questions should I be asking my potential managers or agents, like, how do I advocate for myself in that situation or -- we also have had folks who are -- how do I hone my pitch, like, so we've had a lot of practice pitching sessions. Those are just like a few examples of specific programming that has come directly from things people have asked us in applications or interviews. But -- yeah, so I think that is -- let's see just going to make sure -- looks like my team has been answering a lot of these questions, so I'm just going to go through and make sure to call out any that I haven't called out verbally. Let's see. This is a great question, I just want to call out. So this person asked, "is there any preference towards a written essay versus a video response, especially for the in-person writing intensives, or is this choice mostly provided for accessibility and whatever is easiest for the applicant?" Yeah, there is no preference either way. It is truly just whatever is more accessible for you or -- some folks, if you're a writer, you might feel that you can express yourself better through writing. Other folks feel that they can express themselves better verbally through a filmed response. We are -- in no way also looking for a -- produced -- like, really just yourself in front of a laptop camera, a phone camera, any type of camera just answering the question is what we're looking for. So that -- yeah, there's no preference, it's really just for accessibility and just providing options for different ways to answer the question. So thank you for that question, that was a very -- that was a good one. Let's see -- this person is asking "what if I have zero experience starting from scratch?" I do -- this is a great question, we get this a lot. I think we do encourage folks if you have no experience whatsoever, you don't know where you want to start, you aren't quite sure, like, you're still kind of learning about where you might want to end up in entertainment, I do -- we do encourage you to maybe wait for to apply to the Lab, because I think to -- in order to get the most out of the Lab it is helpful for folks to at least have a few samples of whatever their focus area might be, at least have -- have like very specific goals in mind, so that we can better help you reach those goals. If your goal is just to figure out where you want to go in entertainment, I would encourage you to just reach out to other -- other folks you might know that are working in entertainment just kinda for an informational interview, learn a little bit more about what it is that they're doing, about their job, and just kind of get a sense of where it is you might want to end up, and that will -- I think just to really make sure that you're getting the most out of the Lab, I think it is helpful to have at least some type of -- and not even experience, because I want to make sure -- if you haven't been able to find a professional job opportunity in entertainment yet, but you are actively writing, you're actively directing, you're actively working on that -- honing that whatever your goal is, like, we would consider that experience. But again, if you're still really figuring out what that might mean, I think maybe just hold off on applying for now until you kind of can figure out what that is. I will say we have had a lot of folks who maybe they worked for years in the entertainment industry in one area and now they're looking to pivot into another area. That is sort of a different story where maybe, again, you have figured out that this actually isn't what I want to do anymore, I want to pivot into this area, but again, that's -- I think that's a good example of a goal that we could realistically help support you in through the Lab. So as long as you have some type of active goal or you're working towards this goal, we would consider that experience, so I hope that helps answer that question. Let's see -- and yes, Isa also put in the chat for any questions or if you have follow-up questions, you can also reach out to us outside of this info session at Lab@DisabilityBelongs.org. We love questions so please reach out to us. I will add please be patient with us, as we are all kind of trying to answer everyone as quickly as we can while also kind of monitoring the situation in L.A. Just thank you in advance for your patience. We will answer you -- we are trying to do that as quickly as possible, but we might -- things are kind of changing hour to hour here, we don't -- we just don't -- we're trying [laughs]. So thank you for your patience. Let's see -- and I see a question. "Do you require a resume for students?" Yeah, we do require a resume, I think, for all applications, again, just to get a sense of where you're at, what your experience has been up to this point. If you're a student, just adding in your education there -- yeah I think, just, resume is really just sort of a supplementary document to your work samples and your essays just to kind of help us get a full picture of each applicant. Let's see, this question is, "is it better to submit two work samples? Will candidates who submit two work samples score higher?" Absolutely not. We require one work sample, so there's no higher scoring based on how many work samples you submit. But again it's -- the optional secondary work sample is, again, just if you want to show us another project you have, another sample, or again, if you're sort of a hybrid creative and want to show us like two different focus areas that you -- that you have work in. Those are -- that's sort of the purpose of the two samples. And yes, so this question is "is the in-person intensive Lab invite only?" Yes. So this year -- we are trying a new format. Again, really, the goal is not to be exclusionary in any way. It's really just -- we have so many alumni in our community that have -- maybe they're now in new positions where they might need more different support on their career, and more -- they're more focused in a different area than they were when they first went through the Lab, so anybody that has gone through our -- any other program with us in the past is automatically invited to apply. If you missed the invite link, just send us an email, we'll send you that link to apply. And again if you're -- if you know someone that you would like to recommend for the program, again, just send us an email and we can kind of go from there for a recommendation. But we're trying this out this year, just again, the goal is to focus on helping support our alumni community with our intensives, and then keeping the Virtual Lab open to our -- to anyone and everyone that is interested in applying. Let's see. And "can the scripts be both specs or original?" Yes, we welcome both. So if you have a spec -- a spec script of an existing show, I know some fellowships are still asking for those, so if you have that on hand and you want to submit that, absolutely. If you have an original script, definitely, we welcome either or both. Again they are -- there is no preference either way, it is truly whatever you feel best represents your personal skill level, and your personal kind of voice and perspective. That's what we want to read or see if it's a video. Let's see. Trying to go through any that we haven't already answered. This question is about work samples, so for example, "if you plan to submit a short film that you have written or directed, but it exceeds 10 minute, would you recommend we cut the sample even if the film starts or ends abruptly?" My answer is yes. I think if you -- submit something for -- if it's a video, if you submit something that is over 10 minutes long, we will let our reviewers know to watch the first 10 minutes. Or if you submit something that's longer and you give us a specific time code that you want the reviewers to watch, we will tell them that. If you're able to edit it to the specific time that you want, that is also great. And the same goes for scripts. If you have something that's over 10 pages, we recommend just finding the 10 page excerpt that you feel best represents your voice and your perspective. All of our reviewers understand that these are 10 minute excerpts or 10 page excerpts, and so if it starts or ends abruptly, no one's going to lose points for that, because it's -- you understand that this is just a -- it's just an excerpt of a project, it's not a fully contained thing, unless you might happen to be submitting something that is a fully contained 10 page script. Let's see. I see one question: "Are people with a lot of experience discouraged to apply?" Absolutely not. I think this -- my personal favorite part of the Lab is we really try to make each cohort as variety -- as much variety as possible, so that we have folks that have a lot of experience in the industry, but maybe less experience talking about their disability or advocating for themself, and so everyone is on a different journey in terms of their entertainment career and their disability identity journey. And so we really do want to make sure that we're building cohorts where folks have a wide variety level of experience. I would say the the Virtual Lab tends -- we might -- if you have maybe less experience, that might be a good place to kind of get, again, a sense of like a really wide overview of the industry and meet folks from a lot of different areas. Our in-person intensives are very focused in -- it's a week devoted to TV writing, and then a week devoted to unscripted content. So everybody that you're meeting in those intensives are going to be very focused in those areas. So I think it's less on experience level, and just more so on, like, what are your goals, what are your focus areas. And yeah so I hope that helps answer that question. Let's see -- I'm seeing -- let's see -- "Are you looking for folks interested primarily in directing producing and writing? If I am a choreographer or intimacy coordinator, would this be a potential fit for the Virtual Lab?" Again, we are -- any -- we are interested in any disabled creatives who work behind the camera, or in some type of hybrid creative position. I think just historically we have had mostly writers apply, and I think directors are probably the second most group of folks that apply. But that does -- anybody is welcome to apply. I think choreographers, intimacy coordinators, that would be great. So yeah, it's really anyone and everyone that is working behind the camera. If you're -- we've had a lot of kind of multi-hyphenate -- if you're a actor/writer, producer/actor as well, I think if it's the -- primarily for folks that are working behind the camera though. So yeah, this question: "so if you're not a writer, no need to apply?" Definitely not true. Please -- we encourage all positions behind the camera, so yes, definitely. Let's see "for the TV writing intensive, what level do you need to be? Do you need to have managers/agents, or be already working as a support staff member?" Definitely not. There's no need -- there's no requirement to have representation or have already worked. Again, I think in the past, I think -- have been folks that have maybe slightly more midlevel quote unquote, but I think even -- I think the midlevel in entertainment is becoming a bit hard to define, right, because folks are -- we could need a whole other webinar to chat about that. But yeah there's there's no -- it's -- we review each application as a whole picture, so there's no going into it -- there's no requirement basically of, like, oh, this person doesn't have a manager, we can't consider them for this, or this person has never worked in a writer's room, we can't consider them for this. It's truly just case by case, focus area, and what your goals are. Let's see, this person has the question about "is there a final project as a requirement of completing the Virtual Lab program?" No final project requirement. Again, it's really just an option, and just acknowledging that as Fellows are going through our five month virtual program, everybody is at the same time working on their own projects, working on other things, and so it's just to provide a space and an option for -- a lot of folks, if you have -- you haven't had sort of that space to bring in a project and get feedback from peers before, that's really the main goal of it. But there's in no way a requirement that you're completing a project by the end of the Virtual Lab. And let's see -- I think, oh, great question. "If you miss a session, will they be recorded to watch?" So the answer to this is, for the most part, yes. We try to record every Virtual Lab session for a variety of reasons, for accommodation reasons, and for -- we do -- we hope that folks are, if you're accepted into the Lab that you're attending every session, but we also are very aware that life happens. So if you have to miss a session, we have a -- you'll receive a recording link and a passcode to watch those sessions that you might have missed. There are occasionally, for legal reasons that might go above our heads, like, some speakers might just not legally be allowed to be recorded. Some folks just don't feel comfortable being recorded, so they want to speak without the sense of being recorded. So it's a case by case basis, but for the most part, yes, if you have to miss a session, the recordings will be available to watch during the Lab. And let's see -- let's see another -- also just a quick time check, we have about eight minutes left, but thank you for all of these questions, these have all been really really great questions, and also emphasizing if we didn't cover your question here, you can always email us at Lab@DisabilityBelongs.org. So this question was "The Virtual Lab is just one cohort of up to 20 people, or would there be multiple groups depending on people's interests?" Yes, so correct. It -- the Virtual Lab is one cohort of 20 Lab Fellows. Each Lab Fellow is going to have a different kind of focus area. They're -- depending on the session, we do try to break people up into small groups throughout the Lab just to kind of get a chance to kind of meet with smaller groups of Fellows, sometimes it's divided by focus area, sometimes it's just totally random, and just kind of to mix each other up and meet other people in the Lab, but there's no like cohorts within the cohort, if that makes sense. So it's just one group of 20 Lab fellows for the virtual -- Virtual Lab. And let's see, yeah, so this person is asking "if my writing sample is 11 pages, will it still be accepted?" So yeah, the answer is technically yes. Coverfly will -- the application will go through. If you submit something over than -- longer than 10 pages, reviewers will only read through the first 10, unless you submit something and give us, like, specific page numbers or time codes if it's a film that you want us to review a specific 10 minute or 10 page section of. Let's see -- just making sure -- yeah, there's no requirement for agents or managers. Just going through -- Lawon, if you have anything else you wanted to add while I'm just kind of making sure [crosstalk and laughter]

>> Lawon Exum: I just really want to reiterate that detail is best for whatever you're applying for, so we can -- have a good idea of where you want to be, and what your -- where you want to lie within the future of the entertainment industry. As you all know, it's changing, it's changing daily, and especially with -- I have to say now with what's going on out here in L.A. now with the fires and stuff. So -- it's like, want you to be very honest with what you, what your goals is for wanting to be in the program. That's really really helpful for us. I just can't say that enough. So just be very detailed of your goals, your short-term goals, and your long-term goals. Because again, the industry is changing, and we want to be able to help you as much as we can to assist you with your goals.

>> Lesley Hennen: Yeah. Agree with all of that. I found another good question I just want to call out here. This person asked "is the resume specifically entertainment resume, or do you want all work experience?" Truly, we want just whatever you feel gives us, like, the most -- the picture of who you are, so I think it's always helpful to see outside of entertainment experience as well. I do recommend for resumés keeping them to, I would say no more than two pages. One is great, two at the most. I know a lot of folks out there have had a lot of different experiences, but maybe giving us whatever you feel is most relevant experience, or what kind of gives us the best picture of who you are as a creative and, like, what your background has been, and what you're looking to do next, and what you're hoping to kind of get out of the Lab. But yeah definitely not looking for only entertainment, anything you want to include on your resume, education, interests, any -- we just want to know who you are, we want to know about you. So -- I think that's my advice on resumes. Let's see and let's see -- this person is saying "do you need or would you appreciate character or professional references, or is that not needed?" Yeah, there's no requirement for a reference. I would say if you have -- if you want to provide a reference contact, that could maybe go in the other section of anything else you want us to know about you, anything the application didn't cover, that -- definitely feel free to submit that. But yeah, let's see -- and this person asking "do we need to remove our name from our scripts?" No, that's not necessary. Again, everything is held confidentially within Coverfly so -- there's no -- I believe there's a Coverfly setting where you're -- if you submit something with a cover page it's automatically removed, but so -- there's no -- your -- if you have your name on something, it's not like you'll be disqualified, or if you don't have your name on something, you won't be -- yeah, it's -- either way is great. Let's see. Ooh, I see someone just applied, thank you Ryan, can't wait to review your application, I'm glad this has been helpful. We have about three minutes left. I'm just going to go through. Yeah, I mean -- current question, this person asked, "how do the fires affect the industry, besides delays and loss of premises?" Amazing question, I wish I had the answer, I wish I had a crystal ball, I wish I had more than two minutes to answer that question, but the -- we don't know, we're figuring this out together, we will rebuild, we've been through a lot the last few years, and over many many generations and decades, but we'll all -- we'll see how this is affected together. But yeah, we've got two minutes left. Just going to pause a bit in case there's any last minute questions in the Q&A or in the chat. Let's see and -- but yeah, if there's no more questions, just reiterating -- get your applications in! We really want to meet you. We want to learn about you. We want to help you with your goals, short-term, long-term, professional, personal. And if you have any questions that we didn't cover here, please reach out to us at Lab@DisabilityBelongs.org. If you need an extension on the deadline because of the fires, again, just reach out to us at that email. Thank you -- Isabella just put the email address into the chat. The link to the in-person intensive, again, so this is invite -- the two intensives are invite only, if you are an alumni of our program, you have already received an email to apply to that. And yeah, so yeah -- that, I believe, is it. Lawon -- any last words?

>> Lawon Exum: Apply!

>> Lesley Hennen: Apply, yes. [laughter] Yes thank you, and reiterating, our Virtual Lab is open to everyone so that link is on our website, and everywhere, so please, please apply to that one.

>> Lawon Exum: Yeah.