

Ellen Schneider is founder and executive director of Active Voice, a team of strategic communication specialists that puts socially relevant film to work for personal and institutional change in communities, workplaces, and campuses across America.

Previously Schneider was executive producer of P.O.V., PBS' longest running independent nonfiction film series. She helped transform the series into an entrepreneurial non-profit media organization dedicated to "leveraging the power of independent film in public life." This included developing High Impact TelevisionR, a technique for creating links between documentaries, individuals, grassroots organizations and other media. In 1997, with funding from the Ford Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation, Schneider took this concept several steps further with the Television Race Initiative, one of the few media projects recognized as a "promising practice" by President Clinton's Initiative on Race.

She was also the creator and executive producer of the pilot series, Right Here, Right Now, PBS' first laboratory for small format video diaries. When the series premiered, Entertainment Weekly wrote, "Finally, a blueprint for what reality television should be all about." She has lectured on the implications and potential of subjective television at the Neiman Foundation at Harvard University, the Sundance Film Festival, Columbia University, The New School for Social Research, The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and other institutions.

Schneider was a member of the start-up team for the Congressionally-mandated Independent Television Service and has served on panels and juries ranging from the Sundance Film Festival to the RioCine Festival in Brazil. In the late 1980s, she was a Hollywood-based story analyst, associate producer and production manager for low budget independent feature films and original television movies.

She lives in San Francisco with her husband, a feature film sound designer, and their 8 year-old daughter.