

Talent Fund
2024-2025
Annual Report



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01

About the Talent Fund



Telefilm’s Talent Fund, a Certified Independent Production Fund (CIPF), supports the production of first feature films with donations from individuals and companies, stimulating film production and helping develop the careers of emerging filmmakers.

Mission

By supporting emerging filmmakers and their productions, the Talent Fund directly encourages and stimulates Canada's thriving audiovisual industry.

Objectives of the Talent Fund

- Remove barriers and create career opportunities for emerging artists within the industry
- Contribute to the development of emerging creators from underrepresented and equity-deserving groups
- Promote gender equality, the advancement of women, amplify the voices of creators from Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs), diversity and inclusion, and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in the arts
- Build skills: provide opportunities for personalized professional development and high-level coaching through mentorship, knowledge sharing and training

"Talent to Watch is a powerful springboard for emerging filmmakers, giving them the opportunity to share their unique voices and contribute to the mosaic of stories that shape Canada's identity. The richness and diversity of these projects reflect our deep commitment to showcasing a wide range of genres, languages and perspectives in many of our regions, each one adding a vital thread to the fabric of Canadian storytelling."

Julie Roy, Executive Director and CEO of Telefilm Canada

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"The Talent Fund is essential to enabling the next generation of filmmakers to add their creativity to Canadian and Indigenous film. The donations that we receive from our generous donors are equally important. Thank you to our thoughtful supporters across Canada for ensuring that the Fund can continue to have an impact on homegrown film and the sense of belonging it inspires."

Sandi Treliving, Chair of the Talent Fund Advisory Committee

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About the Program

The Talent Fund supports filmmakers through Telefilm's Talent to Watch Program. The program supports emerging filmmakers seeking to fund the production phase of their first feature film.

The Talent to Watch Program has three streams:

Industry Partner Stream 1

For projects that are recommended by a Designated Industry Partner

Festival Selection Stream 2

For emerging filmmakers who have directed a short film that was selected at a recognized film festival

Filmmaker Apply-Direct Stream 3

For emerging filmmakers who are members of the following groups:

- Women
- Indigenous
- Black
- People of colour
- Gender-diverse individuals
- 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals
- Persons with disabilities and/or
- Members of an Official Language Minority Community

All eligible projects are evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Creative elements
- Track record of the key members of the creative team (Producer, Director, and Screenwriter)
- Project viability
- Cultural impact and audience reach potential

Success measures used in the program

The program's decision-making process aligns with Telefilm's goal of promoting diversity of voices within the Canadian audiovisual industry. To this end, Telefilm ensures that it funds a balanced portfolio of projects reflecting a diversity of genres, budgets, company sizes, regions of the country and perspectives.

To measure the success of the projects it supports, Telefilm tracks gross sales reports—including Canadian theatrical and non-theatrical sales, as well as international sales—and cultural performance indicators, such as festival selections, awards and other recognized distinctions. The career progression of filmmakers is also an important qualitative indicator, especially when they move on to projects with larger budgets through the Production Program.

Advisory Committee

Advisory committees assess projects based on the evaluation criteria described above and make recommendations to Telefilm. Advisory committees may be composed of internal members, external members, or a combination of internal and external members.

In fiscal 2024–25, the following were members of the advisory committee:

English Language Projects Committee

Internal members

- Adriana Chartrand
- Alison Zimmer
- Brian Mullen
- Meghna Haldar
- Charles Michael Robson

External members

- Dena Razapoor
- Jacky Mills
- Lydia Ogwang
- Marlene Rodgers

Persons responsible for ensuring that OLMC issues and realities are taken into account

- Alison Zimmer
- Meghna Haldar

French Language Projects Committee

Internal members

- Anita Damiani
- Hager Namly

External members

- Paige Galette

Persons responsible for ensuring that OLMC issues and realities are taken into account

- Anita Damiani
- Hager Namly

Indigenous Stream Projects Committee

Internal members

- Adriana Chartrand
- Ken Proulx

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Year in Review

Highlights

During fiscal 2024-25, Telefilm received a high volume of applications under the Talent to Watch Program, with **150 projects assessed.**

Telefilm and the Talent Fund welcomed 17 new filmmaking teams as this year’s selection of projects in the Talent to Watch Program.

The lineup presents feature films and feature documentaries from different regions of Canada financed through the three streams:

Table 1 – 17 new filmmaking teams

Title – Genre – Language – Description	Stream	Production company (PC) and producer(s) PC location Filming location
<p>1</p> <p><i>Danse Laurence!</i> Documentary French</p> <p>Laurence used to be a sick child. When she was young, she could not move without risking internal bleeding.</p>	<p>Industry Partner</p>	<p>FRB Art Inc.</p> <p>Francesca Rubartelli Barcnas PC location: Blainville, Québec Filming location: N/A</p>
<p>2</p> <p><i>EXP</i> Drama English</p> <p>Robert shares a cramped single bedroom apartment in the Junction with his mother, Maria.</p>	<p>Industry Partner</p>	<p>EXP FILM INC.</p> <p>Momo Daud and Katarzyna Anielak PC location: Toronto, Ontario Filming location: N/A</p>

Title – Genre – Language – Description	Stream	Production company (PC) and producer(s) PC location Filming location
<p>3</p> <p>Meat Science-fiction/Fantasy English</p> <p>On the cusp of resorting to cannibalism, a group of plane crash survivors discover the corpse of blue alien.</p>	<p>Industry Partner</p>	<p>M.E.A.T. Corporation Worldwide Ltd.</p> <p>Braden Brickner</p> <p>PC location: Winnipeg, Manitoba</p> <p>Filming location: Winnipeg, Manitoba</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Hair or No Hair Drama English</p> <p>A feature length psychological coming-of-age drama about a young black woman who's been hiding her alopecia for years.</p>	<p>Festival</p>	<p>HONH Productions Inc.</p> <p>Mariam Barry</p> <p>PC location: Vancouver, British-Columbia</p> <p>Filming location: N/A</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Hue & Cry Drama-comedy English</p> <p>After a dinner with her family, Nicole accuses her boyfriend, Dev of checking out her sister, escalating past grievances like his habit of ogling women and her emasculating behaviour.</p>	<p>Festival</p>	<p>Funny Bone Pictures Inc.</p> <p>Tyler Mason and Anya Chirkova</p> <p>PC location: Toronto, Ontario</p> <p>Filming location: Toronto, Ontario</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Alice Documentary French</p> <p>Alice is about a woman who reported her attacker 10 years ago in the midst of the #MeToo movement.</p>	<p>Apply-Direct</p>	<p>9528-9492 Québec Inc.</p> <p>Sophie Gagnon-Bergeron</p> <p>PC location: Chicoutimi, Québec</p> <p>Filming location: Montréal and Dolbeau, Québec</p>
<p>7</p> <p>Cette Terre m'appellera Maître Documentary French and Creole</p> <p>A Canadian filmmaker makes a road movie in Guadeloupe, his country of origin, seeking answers to the generational conflicts in his family.</p>	<p>Apply-Direct</p>	<p>KaFé Productions Inc.</p> <p>Katia Café-Fébrissy</p> <p>PC location: Toronto, Ontario</p> <p>Filming location: Guadeloupe</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Civilian Documentary and Animation English and Sudanese Arabic</p> <p>Civilian is an animated documentary that explores the 2019 Sudanese revolution and the reason there is war today.</p>	<p>Apply-Direct</p>	<p>Diaspora Filmworks Inc.</p> <p>PC location: Toronto, Ontario</p> <p>Filming location: N/A</p>

Title – Genre – Language – Description	Stream	Production company (PC) and producer(s) PC location Filming location
<p>9</p> <p>External Neighbours Science-fiction/Fantasy English</p> <p>Anna, a choreographer from Toronto, goes to Ghost Ranch, New Mexico to take part in an artistic retreat a week before a prophylactic double mastectomy.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>Friendly Neighbour Productions Ltd.</p> <p>Erin Carter and Anna Maguire PC location: Toronto, Ontario Filming location: N/A</p>
<p>10</p> <p>Fios da Terra Documentary Portuguese (Azorean dialect), French, and English</p> <p><i>Fios da Terra</i> is a feature-length documentary that follows the Brilhante family, Azorean immigrants who have been living in Canada for over half a century, as they return to the island of São Miguel.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>Les documentaires Nemesis inc.</p> <p>Amélie Tremblay PC location: Saint-Jean-de-Matha, Québec Filming location: N/A</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Homewrecker Drama English</p> <p><i>Homewrecker</i> is a drama-comedy about a non-binary zillennial coming to terms with the loss of their mother, while renovating the home of the person they're having an affair with.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>Picosphere Inc.</p> <p>Graeme D. Blyth PC location: Vaughan, Ontario Filming location: Toronto, Ontario</p>
<p>12</p> <p>Les Priants Documentary French</p> <p>While the decline of religious communities, the scandals and the church closures are widely documented, what happens to the faithful who go on praying to the God of the Catholics?</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>Tapis Rouge Films 3 inc</p> <p>Evelyne Lafleur Guy PC location: Rimouski, Québec Filming location: N/A</p>
<p>13</p> <p>MARCHEUSES Documentary French, English and Algonquin</p> <p>At 58 years of age, Grandmother Francine, of the Anishinaabe nation, is dedicated to a crucial mission: Guaranteeing that future generations have access to clean water.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>A PAS PEUR INC.</p> <p>Hippolyte de Chanlaire and Nathalie Guérard PC location: Montréal, Québec Filming location: N/A</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Puddy Tat Drama English</p> <p><i>Puddy Tat</i> is the story of an artist on the verge of blowing up and breaking down.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>Puddy Tat Productions Ltd.</p> <p>Kyla Ferrier and Kevin Dong PC location: Calgary, Alberta Filming location: N/A</p>

Title – Genre – Language – Description	Stream	Production company (PC) and producer(s) PC location Filming location
<p>15</p> <p><i>Requiem for a Sad Girl</i> Thriller English</p> <p>A brilliant young art director is forced to journey through the darkness of her inner psyche when her trauma unexpectedly takes on a human form.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>9440-6386 Québec inc.</p> <p>Jen Viens and Maude Michaud</p> <p>PC location: Montréal, Québec</p> <p>Filming location: N/A</p>
<p>16</p> <p><i>Uninvited</i> Documentary French and English</p> <p><i>Uninvited</i> is presented as a musical road trip, following drummer Manu Katché on Peter Gabriel's latest tour.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>Orchidée Films inc.</p> <p>Méridith Gonzalez-Bayard</p> <p>PC location: Montréal, Québec</p> <p>Filming location: Ivory Coast, United States, Paris, Montréal</p>
<p>17</p> <p><i>Houseboat</i> Science-fiction/Fantasy English</p> <p>River and Omri, two ten-year-old boys, are playing in the forest when they meet an eccentric girl named Saylor, who leads them to her secret houseboat in the woods.</p>	Apply-Direct	<p>Houseboat Pictures Ltd.</p> <p>Adeline Bird</p> <p>PC location: Woodstock, Ontario</p> <p>Filming location: N/A</p>

As some projects are still in production or have not yet begun, Telefilm does not yet have the location data to disclose the funding granted to productions made in Canada's regions (i.e., outside Toronto and Vancouver for English-language productions, and outside Montréal for French-language productions).

"Making Blue Heron under the Talent to Watch program allowed me creative freedom while also imposing helpful guardrails and limitations that challenged me as an artist. We worked hard to create an environment that encouraged emerging talent in front of and behind the camera to take risks, and as a director I could not be more proud."

Sophy Romvari, Canadian director, screenwriter and actress

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Talent to Watch funding

The Talent Fund helps fund certain Telefilm programs, such as the Talent to Watch Program. The latter receives all funds from the Talent Fund.

It should be noted that Telefilm did not receive any funding in 2024-25 from licensed companies or online streamers. In addition, the Fund's activities are disclosed transparently in Telefilm's annual report, as well as to its main donors and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Main financial contributors

Through the generosity of its donors and partners from across Canada, the Talent Fund raised \$348,565 during fiscal 2024-25. The balance of the program's funding comes from Telefilm funds.

- RBC Foundation (principal partner)
- Warner Bros. Discovery Access Canada (main sponsor)
- Madonna Foundation
- Toronto Foundation
- KPMG
- Fenwood Foundation
- The Paul and Carol Hill Family Foundation

In addition, the Talent to Watch Program funding agreement stipulates that funded projects must be available with audio description and in a version with closed captioning for the hearing impaired.

They also have to be made available on digital platforms no later than one year following their completion. This information is not available for the 17 projects funded in 2024-25, as the projects have not been completed.

It should be noted that no funding is granted for digital content other than programming under the Talent to Watch Program.

Permanent envelope

Since October 2025, the Talent Fund also has a permanent and dedicated funding envelope for producers from OLMC (in either official language) and producers from diverse communities.

The Talent Fund will ensure that at least 10% of its total contribution revenues, is allocated to this envelope and split evenly between OLMC producers and producers from diverse communities. This envelope will be allocated through Telefilm Canada's financing programs, currently including the Talent to Watch Program.

In 2024-25, funding for the Talent to Watch Program stood at \$3.5 million, and was allocated as follows:

- \$0.9 million in French, including \$150,000 for projects led by Francophone minority-community producers

- \$2.6 million in English, including \$400,000 for projects led by Anglophone minority-community producers

- \$150,000 for third-language projects

- There were no productions primarily in Indigenous languages

The results show that the Talent Fund generally exceeds the 10% requirement mentioned above. In fiscal year 2024-25, 16% of the support provided through the Talent to Watch Program went to projects by OLMC producers, 16% of support went to projects by Black producers, 30% to producers of colour, 59% to projects by producers from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and 70% to projects by women producers. These figures show that the Talent Fund exceeds the regulatory requirements imposed by the CRTC to receive contributions from online streamers, confirming its role as a partner of choice for those broadcasters wishing to support the funding of OLMCs and diverse groups.

Four projects in French and three projects in English and other languages involving Francophone minority producers were evaluated in 2024-25. One French-language project was funded.

Telefilm also evaluated six projects in English and other languages involving Anglophone minority producers, two of which were funded.

Permanent envelope (continued)

Table 2 – Number of projects submitted and funded by members from the diversity community and members of Official Language Minority Communities⁽¹⁾

	# projects submitted	# projects funded
Women	105	13
Gender-diverse individuals	17	3
Black persons	22	3
People of colour	63	6
Indigenous	8	– ⁽²⁾
2SLGBTQIA+	62	9
People with disabilities	35	–
Projects led by producers from at least one diversity community	156	17
Francophones in minority situations	4	1
Anglophones in minority situations	6	2

Table 3 – Funding for projects from the official language minority communities and diversity communities⁽³⁾

	Funding of signed projects (\$)	Funding of signed projects(%)
Women	2,400,000	69.6%
Gender-diverse individuals	650,000	18.8%
Black persons	550,000	15.9%
People of colour	1,050,000	30.4%
Indigenous	250,000	7.2%
2SLGBTQIA+	2,050,000	59.4%
People with disabilities	500,000	14.5%
Projects led by producers from at least one diversity community	3,300,000	95.7%
Francophones in minority situations	150,000	4.3 %
Anglophones in minority situations	400,000	11.6 %

(1) If more than one person holds a key role in a project, the position must be held by a majority of people (50% or more) of a given identity for the project to be associated with that identity. A project where two identities are represented at a level of 50% in a key role would be associated with both identities.

(2) Confidentiality: Telefilm uses a disclosure threshold of three (3) observations. Results cannot be disclosed publicly below this threshold.

(3) Note: The sum of the percentages may not equal 100%. For instance, a project may be counted under more than one racial or ethnic category if participants identify with more than one category. Additionally, some people completed the questionnaire but chose not to disclose their racial or ethnic identity or gender.

OLMC-related activities and actions

To promote the representation of OLMCs, Telefilm is taking several actions, particularly by prioritizing projects from these communities to ensure national representativeness. Telefilm supports OLMC projects at all stages of their life cycle through its programs and initiatives.

Specifically, during the 2024-2025 period, Telefilm maintained an active presence at several events with the goal of reaching creators from OLMCs. These included the Festival international du cinéma francophone en Acadie (FICFA) in Moncton, the Regroupement des artistes cinéastes de la francophonie canadienne (RACCORD) forum, the All Access 365 conference in Manitoba, as well as panels at the Festival du nouveau cinéma (FNC) in Montréal and festivals associated with the Being Black in Canada program. These activities provided Telefilm with an opportunity to present its programs and meet with OLMC creators. Telefilm also supports the RACCORD-initiated Plan-Séquence program, which each year offers the organization's members support for creating their projects and developing their careers, as well as mentoring support, professional development opportunities and exchanges within the screen industry. Several program participants submit projects through the Talent to Watch Program or the Production Program for potential funding.

Moreover, the Talent to Watch program includes a dedicated mentorship program delivered in partnership with the Institut national de l'image et du son (INIS), the National Screen Institute (NSI) and the Canadian Film Centre (CFC) which includes an intensive two-day training session. All funded teams are required to actively participate in the mentorship program. In 2024, the 17 new teams, including some CLOSM filmmakers, were able to benefit from the mentorship program including the two-day bootcamp.

In addition, OLMC-specific criteria have been integrated into two Talent to Watch Program streams—the designated industry partner stream and the filmmaker apply-direct stream—to ensure the eligibility and representativeness of creative teams. Finally, all projects must include a community engagement plan that demonstrates a collaborative and respectful approach to the communities concerned, as well as an analysis of the potential impact of the proposed content.

03

Governance

Board of Directors

The Talent Fund is an integral part of Telefilm, a federal Crown corporation established under the *Telefilm Canada Act*. Telefilm’s Board of Directors oversees the Fund’s activities and affairs to ensure it fulfills its mandate effectively. Telefilm has also established an advisory committee to support and advise the Talent Fund.

The Board is comprised of six members, appointed by the Governor in Council, as well as the Government Film Commissioner, who is appointed under the *National Film Act*. The Governor in Council designates the Chair from among the members of the Corporation, who serves at pleasure.

The Board has defined its fiduciary responsibilities in a mandate that provides a framework for exercising its stewardship role. This mandate covers various areas, including strategic planning, governance issues, and the review of funding programs and decision-making processes for the allocation of funds (including those of the Talent to Watch Program).

Section 5 of the *Telefilm Canada Act* ensures that all members remain independent by stipulating that no person who has any pecuniary interest in the audiovisual industry, directly or indirectly, individually or as a shareholder, partner or otherwise, is eligible to be appointed or to hold office as a member. Telefilm is therefore established and operated independently of broadcasting distribution companies and online audiovisual companies that may make contributions to it.

This guarantee of independence comes with an obligation for all members. As outlined in the Corporation’s internal regulations, members must disclose any private interests that could create a conflict of interest regarding their official duties. They must also abstain from voting on any resolution that could create a conflict of interest.

The Board is also subject to a code of conduct that’s applicable to all members. In addition to conflicts of interest, the code includes provisions governing political activities, public comment, confidentiality obligations and post-mandate activities, among other things. Members are also subject to the provisions of the *Conflict of Interest Act*. Finally, all members are independent of the Executive Committee.

Board of Directors (continued)

Members in office as of March 31, 2025:

Sylvain Lafrance

Chair of the Board of Directors
Montréal, Québec

Etoile Stewart

Vice Chair of the Board of Director
Chair of the Nominating,
Evaluation and Governance Committee
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Suzanne Guèvremont

Ex-officio member
Film Commissioner and Chair of
the National Film Board of Canada
Montréal, Québec

Claude Doucet

Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee
Ottawa, Ontario

Emmanuelle Létourneau, LL.M., ASC, C.Dir.

Chair of the Communications and Public
and Governmental Affairs Committee
Montréal, Québec⁽¹⁾

Deborah MacPherson, FCPA, FCA, ICD.D, CFP

Member
Calgary, Alberta

Sean Ponnambalam

Member
Halifax, Nova Scotia

(1) Member Emmanuelle Létourneau's term ended on May 31, 2025. Member Dominique Lapierre's term then began on June 1, 2025.

The Talent Fund Advisory Committee

Sandi Treliving chairs the Talent Fund Advisory Committee, which is composed of six prominent Canadian entrepreneurs and philanthropists from across the country.

The committee plays a key role in helping Telefilm raise the profile of the Fund and promote it to potential donors.

The members contribute their expertise and networks to encourage support for promising emerging filmmakers and established creators, enabling these individuals to reach their full potential in Canada and abroad.

The members of the Talent Fund Advisory Committee are:

Sandi Treliving

Chair, Advisory Committee
(British Columbia)

David Aisenstat

Chair, Keg Restaurants Ltd.
(British Columbia)

Carol R. Hill

Director of Communications for
Harvard Developments Inc., A Hill Company
(Saskatchewan)

John Bitove

CEO, Obelysk Inc.
(Ontario)

Christine Magee

Co-Founder and Co-Chair of Sleep Country
(Ontario)

Dr. Anil Gupta

Medical Director, Clinical Cardiology,
Trillium Health Centre
(Ontario)

Nathan Yeung

Chief Marketing Officer, Find Your Audience
(British Columbia)

04

Financial Statements

Financial year ended March 31, 2025

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Talent Fund

The transactions specific to the Talent Fund are shown in the tables below:

Revenues	2025 Budget	Other donors	Total 2025	Total 2024
Donations	300	349	349	271
Total revenues	300	349	349	271

Assistance expenses	Other donors	Total 2025	Total 2024
Talent to Watch Program (including Mentorship Program)	297	297	300
National and International promotional activities	2	2	3
Total assistance expenses	299	299	303
Surplus (deficit) for the year	50	50	(32)
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	61	61	93
Accumulated surplus, end of year	111	111	61

For the fiscal year ended March 31, 2025, the Corporation incurred \$172,700 in expenses related to business development and promotion of the Fund (\$377,900 for the previous fiscal year).

Cash – Talent Fund	Other donors	Total 2025	Total 2024
Balance, beginning of year	49	49	93
Receipts	512	512	261
Contractual payments under financial assistance programs	(440)	(440)	(303)
Bank charges	2	2	(2)
Balance, end of year	123	123	49

As at March 31, 2025, the Talent Fund is contractually committed to pay an amount of nearly \$12,000 to the Due from Consolidated Revenue Fund (nil for the previous fiscal year).

The above tables are taken from the financial statements audited by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, which are included in Telefilm's 2024-25 annual report. Telefilm fully covered all other costs related to the administration of the Talent Fund, which are included in the operating and administrative expenses reported in the audited financial statements in [this report](#).

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