

TELUS originals **Producer Guidelines**

Thank you for your interest in the TELUS originals stream of content.

TELUS originals are high quality documentaries that reflect the kaleidoscopic Canadian experience, and exemplify TELUS' social purpose values into an ever-widening network of communities.

We aim to bring awareness to topics and communities who are underserved, advancing equity and amplifying the impact of filmmakers' voices by providing access to public spaces previously beyond their reach.

We care about both the stories we tell and the storytellers with whom we collaborate - we work to grow mutually beneficial relationships with our external production teams.

The TELUS original Team

The TELUS original team is a group of people who are passionate about storytelling, and represent decades of experience in the screen based industries. These are the individuals you can expect to connect with when you collaborate with TELUS originals.

Christina Willings, Senior Production Executive
Ken Tsui, Production Executive
Malcolm Oliver, Production Executive
Leah Camenzind, Managing Production Executive

What we do

TELUS original films have global resonance, but they start close to home. They are all locally reflective of, and relevant to the communities across British Columbia and Alberta listed below. We provide funding in 15 communities:

Kamloops	Calgary
Kelowna	Edmonton
Nanaimo	Fort McMurray
Penticton	Grande Prairie
Prince George	Lethbridge
Vancouver	Medicine Hat
Vernon	Red Deer
Victoria	

We license a variety of film formats including, feature length (70-85 minutes), broadcast hour (42-60 minutes), short docs (30 minutes), and short format documentary series.

We are interested in telling stories that fall within the following social purpose themes:

- Health and Well-being
- Flourishing Communities

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- Environment/Sustainability
- Connectivity/Technology
- Food Systems and Security

As we don't need to accommodate advertising, we have more format flexibility than conventional broadcasters, and we do not require built-in 30 second blacks or conventional act breaks.

All of our content is exhibited on TELUS Optik® VOD and TELUS' digital platforms, including the TELUS originals YouTube channel (fixed term web-holdbacks may be negotiated).

All TELUS original films are created and owned by independent Canadian producers. We cannot engage in international co-productions.

We do not fund the following content:

- Game
- Competition
- Lifestyle
- True crime
- Music video
- Scripted (short or long-form)
- "Reality" TV/Web (docu-soap, occu-soap or soft-scripted)

When we do it

TELUS originals accepts pitches for documentary production funding during two intake windows annually. Please allow up to 8 weeks following the closing date of each intake window for TELUS originals to communicate funding decisions. Pitch intake windows:

- Fall 2022: Opens on September 1 and Closes on November 15
- Spring 2023: Opens on February 1 & Closes on April 22, 2022

Our Fiscal Year restarts on September 1 of each year, which is when we can begin to flow funding to productions.

We aim to provide producers with a 10-18 month production cycle from greenlight to delivery.

Who we work with

We work with Canadian independent producers who are committed to engaging authentically with the local community represented in their film, and who have the proven ability to deliver projects of the scope and budget they are proposing.

We are willing to provide support in select cases where a project constitutes a "level up" for a production company or producer. We are happy to support your development, though this will be on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with you.

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How we collaborate

We do our best to be very producer-friendly in all of our policies and approaches.

We work collaboratively with producers providing end-to-end collaboration as required through development (though we cannot fund it), pre-production, production, post-production and delivery. This includes a notes process at the standard post-production milestones of rough, fine and pre-lock cuts.

In all of our dealings with you, we adhere to a Code of Conduct.

This is important because it empowers you with explicit standards of conduct to which you can hold the TELUS originals team accountable.

In turn, we require that all TELUS originals-funded content producers read and acknowledge their intent to abide by the same Code.

What to consider

In general, TELUS originals funds documentaries with unique points of view driven by access, characters or subjects, and compelling narratives. In our evaluation process, we look for projects that:

- Capture a contemporary narrative, unfolding in the present
- Or, present formerly overlooked historical narratives, making clear their relationship to the current moment
- Explore issues of social relevance to Canadians
- Are story-driven, and from a specific, explicit POV
- Or, are access-driven, providing unprecedented entry into a subject or world
- Or, provide a new point of entry to a world we thought we knew - but clearly don't!
- Are locally reflective, and *also* have national or global resonance.
- Provide a compelling vision of human empowerment, one that prompts change, or that fosters new understanding.
- Present a clearly intersectional perspective.

Some questions we will ask ourselves when we review your pitch:

- Does your film shed light on something formerly hidden from view?
- Does your story challenge stereotypes?
- Is your film truly reflective of the geographic and demographic communities you seek to represent?
- Why are you the person to tell this story?
- Why does this story need to be told?
- Why now?
- Where will this story be a year from now? Five years from now?
- How will this story shift perspectives?

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Indigenous Stories

“Nothing about us without us”

Derived from 16th Central European political slogans, adopted by South African disability activists in the 80's, popularized by North American disability activists in the 90's. Adopted by Turtle Island Indigenous narrative sovereignty activists in the 2000's.

TELUS takes its responsibility to provide funding and platforms that support Indigenous narrative sovereignty seriously. In all matters concerning Indigenous content, we defer to the following document: [On Screen Protocols & Pathways](#), a media production guide to working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, cultures, concepts and stories.

We will not fund any content that concerns Indigenous themes, concepts, stories or subjects unless the project is driven by Indigenous key creatives who can ensure an adherence to inter- and intra-community protocols, and unless the represented communities benefit from the creation of this film in some or all of the following areas:

- Material benefit to the Indigenous community, or communities, represented.
- The employment of Indigenous crew.
- Crew training opportunities, especially in communities where experienced Indigenous crew may be unavailable.
- Exposure of inequity, where relevant.
- Celebration of Indigenous perspectives and cultures.

A good general practice before you pitch us an Indigenous themed concept is to ask yourself, “How and why is this my story to tell?”

Financing

We are a telecommunications company, not a broadcaster. We contribute funds to local production in accordance with our CRTC conditions of license (COL). This means that TELUS originals are funded from TELUS' community access pool, an allotment that allows us to commission local producers to produce content that we support—and we are thrilled to support local production!

Please note that as this is a production fund, we do not acquire finished films through the TELUS originals stream.

We are often able to provide funding at greater levels than a traditional broadcast license. Our funding contributions can range from \$30,000.00 to \$250,000.00, depending on the scope and potential reach of the project. In addition, our standard practice is to flow funding 80/20 to support your production/post cash flow.

Due to TELUS' CRTC Conditions of License, we are unable to support projects with financing that includes pre-sold second windows, either to conventional broadcasters or to OTT providers.

We are also unable to combine our local content production funds with:

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- The Canada Media Fund
- Telefilm
- The National Film Board of Canada, or
- Certified Independent Production Funds (including Bell, Rogers, Shaw and Cogeco)

TELUS original productions are eligible for:

- CAVCO Federal Tax Credit
- Alberta's Screen-based Production Grant (or Film and Television Tax Credit)
The Film Incentive BC Tax Credit
- For Indigenous-led content, we are able to accept projects that are supported by the Canada Council For the Arts and the Indigenous Screen Office.

We are also able to accept arms-length, private contributions to your program, including corporate sponsorships from non-telecommunications companies, provided that they take a secondary position to TELUS in your credit obligations.

Films must, however, remain free of any direct references to, or endorsements of, products or services related to your content.

Development

- TELUS is unable to provide development funds.
- We do accept some development costs in your production budget.
- Please ensure that you identify any previously received development funding.

Significant benefits of partnering with TELUS originals

Working with us means that you will retain all copyright, and are therefore free to sell your visual asset to a broadcaster, OTT provider or other platform as soon as you have received written confirmation that your asset is technically accepted and has been uploaded to our SVOD platform

TELUS does not require you to carry Producers' Errors and Omissions Insurance, as our business model is not contingent upon our ability to program your film at a specific time in order to deliver an audience to advertisers.

We require producers to have all chain of title elements in place before entering into a long form agreement with us. You must also formally release all participants, materials, music and locations.

Our local content production funding does not grind tax credits, either federally or provincially.

Next steps

- Review the TELUS original Submission Guidelines found on our [website](#).