



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2020-2021**



Funding content that promotes the health and well-being of Canadians



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*“TELUS Fund’s investments to increase the discoverability of funded projects have paid off with an emerging upward trend in audience success and new tools for Canadian production companies.”*



**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, NINI BAIRD AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ELIZABETH FRIESEN**

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the producers of health content in 2020-21. Distribution platforms pivoted to meet changing audience preferences and greenlit projects faced new and costly safety protocols. TELUS Fund responded with initiatives to stimulate creative ideas, timely funding decisions, and a new suite of audience tools to help producers continue creating exceptional health content.

TELUS Fund renewed the *Stories for Caregivers* initiative with four web series that earned over 5.2M views; more views than seasons 1 and 2 combined! Health content for caregivers has proven to be prescient and even more powerful during the pandemic. In-depth audience research led to the *Take Care* initiative and a new special call for content targeted to Canadian young people. Three web series were selected from 50 creative ideas that explored the theme of mental wellness as it intersects with technology, relationships, and money. These special calls for content have safeguarded the creation of exceptional health content as lockdowns eased and the industry restarted.

This year other funders began to embrace the audience analytics platform that TELUS Fund was beta testing and had championed at the National Audience Data Project. The *ViewerCentric™* platform received a ringing endorsement from the Canada Media Fund, Bell Fund and Shaw Rocket Fund. These Canadian Independent Production Funds joined forces with TELUS Fund to standardize audience development requirements, define key audience data points, automate data collection, and provide producers with data visualizations to support decision making.

Nineteen new health projects premiered in 2020-21 and are already achieving total viewership comparable to those that have been in market for a much longer time. An increasingly robust viewership benchmark reveals funded projects are typically achieving between 302K and 1.7M views. In addition, a significant increase in online news and social media reach indicated a larger number of people may have been exposed to funded projects. Producers stayed on top of online conversations related to their health content with weekly bulletins from the Fund. TELUS Fund social media channels amplified the online efforts of funded projects in market and will continue to increase the discoverability of quality evergreen content after producers have shifted to new content creation.

**TELUS Fund has contributed over \$30.4M to more than 185 projects and initiatives since launching in 2013.**

TELUS Fund research identified material changes in health topics of interest to Canadians and highlighted the potential impact of complementary content on audiences. Research into three superbly crafted documentaries dealing with mental health topics showed the vital role of passionate filmmakers and committed producers during the launch campaign. New audience tools and resources infused with intelligence gathered from funded projects are bridging the skills gap hindering health content from achieving its full potential.

TELUS Fund has contributed over \$30.4M to more than 185 projects and initiatives since launching in 2013. Financing from TELUS Fund is essential to develop the creative materials, create the audience development plan, produce the health content, and implement the audience development plan. At every stage, TELUS Fund is equipping producers with the financing and resources they need to create health content and drive audience success.

## 1. ABOUT TELUS FUND

TELUS Fund is a federally incorporated, not-for-profit corporation, certified by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (the Commission) as a Canadian Independent Production Fund (CIPF). TELUS Fund (the Fund) is authorized by the Commission to administer contributions from TELUS Communications Company (TCC) in support of Canadian programming. Since launching in 2013, TCC has contributed nearly \$40M to the Fund.

## 2. MANDATE

TELUS Fund's mandate is to finance exceptional content that promotes the health and well-being of Canadians. Potential subject areas are as diverse as the *determinants of healthy Canadians* which range from socioeconomic variables and lifestyle to culture and services. The Fund measure its success by the degree to which funded projects reach the intended audience in Canada, engage that audience, and positively impact their health and well-being.

## 3. GOVERNANCE

TELUS Fund is independently governed and operates at arm's length from TCC. In 2020-21 the Board of Directors was composed of four independent directors and two representatives of TCC. More information about these Directors is found in [Appendix A](#).

## 4. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

TELUS Fund acts in accordance with the Commission's Broadcasting Regulatory Policy [CRTC 2016-343](#) (the CRTC Policy). The CRTC Policy in 2016 included new flexibility for the Fund to develop creative ideas and increase audience success for health content in an increasingly multiplatform environment while continuing to operate within a 5% cap on administration expenses. Within this policy framework, the Board of Directors identified three strategic priorities to guide its activities in 2020-21:

1. Increase audience success of health content
2. Learn from the results achieved by health content
3. Share intelligence for the benefit of future health content



### DARK CLOUD: THE IMPACT OF CYBERBULLYING

A mother campaigns to ensure the tragic death of her daughter Amanda serves as a warning to other parents about the dangers of digital bullies and their impact on modern teens' lives.

Release date: 10-Oct-20 | Episode: 1 x 45 min

SPOTLIGHT TELEVISION AND FILM PRODUCTIONS INC.



With these three strategic priorities, TELUS Fund has created a positive feedback loop wherein lessons learned from the results achieved by health content are informing decision making and being shared with the future creators of health content.

#### 4.1. INCREASE AUDIENCE SUCCESS

TELUS Fund increased the audience success of health content by partnering with digital distribution platforms that have the capacity and expertise to deliver audience success. The Fund also took action to amplify the online digital marketing efforts of funded projects in market.

##### 4.1.1. Special Calls for Health Content

TELUS Fund partnered with two digital distribution platforms on special calls for health content in 2020-21. These special calls for web series stimulated creative ideas dealing with a priority health issue previously identified in audience research. The selected web series received financing from the Fund and an exclusive premiere on digital distribution platforms with the expertise and capacity to implement a comprehensive audience development plan for the target audience.

#### Stories for Caregivers with S4C Media Inc

TELUS Fund's first partnership with a digital distribution platform began in 2017 with the *Stories for Caregivers* (S4C) platform owned by S4C Media Inc. The S4C initiative called for creative ideas with the potential to change the way Canadians think and feel about providing care, share knowledge in entertaining ways, build empathy for better health care and social policies, and lead family and friends to available resources and communities of support. Three seasons of the S4C initiative have stimulated the creation of twenty pilot episodes, seven web series, and complementary content that has premiered on the *Stories for Caregivers* website, *YouTube* and *social media* channels. The selected web series have achieved more than 9.2M views and been featured in national media outlets. Followers on S4C platforms have grown to over 60K, the largest online following of caregivers in North America.

In 2020, season 3 of S4C restarted after COVID-19 lockdowns eased. Five projects adjusted to new safety protocols and delivered pilot episodes. The Board of Directors selected two of the five pilot episodes to receive production financing to create the web series, *How We Die* and *Culture of Caring*. Two web series from season 2, *Growing Together with Jan Arden* and *Cypher*, also received production financing to create additional episodes.



#### STORIES FOR CAREGIVERS SEASON 3

Stories for Caregivers is an initiative designed to generate awareness about caregiving through the creation of original web series that showcase the inspiring work of caregivers across Canada.

Release date: 15-Oct-20 | Episodes: 13 x 2 min

S4C MEDIA INC. / THE COUP COMPANY LTD.

[f](#) [t](#) [v](#) WEBSITE [▶](#)

By fiscal year-end the four web series produced in season 3 had already earned over 5.2M views; more audience success than the web series in seasons 1 and 2 combined! Season 3 also included additional complementary content for caregivers including *Caring During a Pandemic*, *Letters from Caregivers*, and *Bif Naked on Caregiving*. Health content for Canadian caregivers and their care recipients has proven to be prescient and even more powerful during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Encouraged by the success of this first collaboration, the Fund embarked on a partnership with VICE Media which led to the launch of the *Take Care* initiative in 2020-21.

### Take Care with VICE Media

The *Take Care* initiative called for web series ideas to inspire youth to take care of their mental wellness. This partnership began in 2020 when VICE media received development financing to better understand the health problems young people are struggling with, the actions Gen Z and younger millennials are taking to address these problems, and the type of content most likely to positively impact their health and well-being.

In early 2021 TELUS Fund launched a special call for creative ideas. Fifty submissions from emerging and diverse creators explored the theme of mental wellness as it intersects with technology, relationships and/or money. With support from a jury of experts and stakeholders in the subject area, the Board of Directors selected three web series which will premiere next fiscal year.

### 4.1.2. Amplify the Online Efforts of Funded Projects

TELUS Fund amplified the online efforts of funded projects through its social media channels and provided producers with access to a social listening tool. These actions were identified in direct response to lessons learned from funded projects in the market which were often starting from ground zero, with limited or no online community, and no tools to monitor online conversations. Findings also indicated that producers and platforms typically focused their marketing strategies and resources around the initial project premiere. After six to twelve months in market, the project website and social channels lay dormant and funded projects were difficult to find. These findings revealed a missed opportunity for evergreen health content which the Fund is addressing.



### TAKE CARE

Take care is an initiative designed to inspire young people to improve their mental wellbeing through the creation of original docuseries that explore the theme of mental wellness as it intersects with technology, relationship and/or money.

Release date: 17-May-21 | Episodes: 6 x 2 min

[VICE PRODUCTIONS \(CAPTURED\) INC.](#)

[WEBSITE](#) ▶

## TELUS Fund Social Channels

TELUS Fund launched *Instagram*, *Facebook*, and *Twitter* profiles in May 2020 with the long-term objective of creating a social media community.

These social media channels in 2020-21:

- stimulated online conversations for 32 funded projects
- raised awareness of the new audience development tools available at [www.TELUSFund.ca](http://www.TELUSFund.ca), and
- executed modest paid advertising campaigns to support four new projects entering the marketplace.

Video content posted organically and in paid campaigns earned over 55K views, most of which were ThruPlays with all or a significant percentage of the videos played. The paid campaigns also vastly outperformed Cost Per Click and Cost Per ThruPlay industry benchmarks. TELUS Fund's social media channels launched while online conversations were often dominated by COVID-19, racial tensions, and protests. The overwhelming influence of these events made it difficult to draw conclusions, but the results achieved in the first year give reason to be optimistic about the future potential of this effort.

## Social Listening Tool

Producers who pay attention to online conversations happening around their health content and subject matter, are better positioned to seize opportunities but most small to medium sized production companies do not have access to a social media listening tool. Every week 30 producers received news from TELUS Fund about online conversations related to their funded projects. These newsletters are generated from the Fund's subscription to *Meltwater*. By tracking keywords connected to topics relevant to funded projects, the Fund is helping producers to find their audience, measure how their health content is being perceived, and identify where they should invest more time and energy.

## Funded Projects Showcase

This fiscal year, work began on redesigning the *Funded Projects webpage* to ensure evergreen health content remains accessible to Canadians. Historically this webpage has served as a repository of funded project information where prospective applicants were encouraged to get acquainted with the existing portfolio of health content to help them make a competitive submission. The redesigned *Funded Projects webpage* will launch next fiscal with an



### OLLIE! SUPERPOWER FOOD DAY

Ollie is the world's pickiest eater, who when he finally takes a bite of his food, gets food fueled superpowers - and in the end loves his food and saves the day! Superpower Food Day was a virtual event for kids and families to get active and learn more about food.

Release date: 31-Oct-20 | Episodes: 52 x 11 min

OEA (CANADA) LIMITED   [WEBSITE >](#)

enhanced project gallery, a new banner video, and access to freely available health content.

*Section 4.1* described the actions taken by TELUS Fund to increase audiences for health content. Special calls for content leveraged the expertise and capacity of digital distribution platforms and ensured the creation of health content of high interest to Canadians. The Fund's social media channels and Funded Projects webpage will ensure evergreen content can be discovered and accessed whenever the health issue recaptures media attention. The next section 4.2 describes the results achieved by funded projects, lessons learned, best practices, and emerging trends.

#### 4.2. LEARN FROM THE RESULTS

TELUS Fund began receiving the first performance reports from funded projects in 2015. These ad hoc reports started the Fund on a long journey that led to beta testing the audience analytics platform, *ViewerCentric™* owned by *Magnify Digital*. The Fund championed the platform during the National Audience Data Project and this year the platform received a ringing endorsement from the Canada Media Fund, with a significant investment from their Experimental Fund. Bell Fund and Shaw Rocket Fund also joined



the beta test and began providing access to the platform for the producers of funded projects. These CIPFs worked together to define key audience data points, standardize audience development requirements, and to support the creation of new features for data entry and uploading documents to the platform.

Producers of funded projects on the *ViewerCentric™* platform now have access to quality audience data and benchmarks to help them set reasonable performance targets, monitor progress, and identify trends during the launch campaign. The visualizations of complex audience data customized for screen media are starting to give Producers the insights they need to make informed decisions in the allocation of limited marketing resources. Funders on the



### JENNY – MON AVENIR SEASON 3

After gaining the upper hand over her leukemia, Jenny can take a step back to understand how the disease has changed her life. By seeing how to turn her trials into strength, she can carve out a new path for herself.

Release date: 30-Apr-21 | Episodes: 20 x 13 min & 55 x 1-2 min

9347-4732 QUÉBEC INC. / PRODUCTIONS AVENIDA INC.





platform can now see trends across their portfolio, identify benchmarks, set targets, and report on audience success for funded projects. As more funders recognize the potential of this platform and come onboard, the size of the project cohort will grow, the audience benchmarks will become more robust, and the visualizations will become more insightful.

Health content financed by TELUS Fund is onboarded to the ViewerCentric™ platform prior to the first public screening of the programming. The platform automatically collects audience data from channels owned by the project. At 6-month intervals, producers enter other performance data and upload their source documents. The Fund then analyzes the results achieved against targets and the benchmarks of comparable content. This analysis surfaces areas of interest to examine in-depth. The results achieved by funded projects and research findings are described in the following sections.

#### 4.2.1. Key Measures of Performance

TELUS Fund measures its success by the degree to which funded projects

- **reach** the audience,
- the audience **views** the programming, and
- the programming **positively impacts** their health and well-being.

Project Premieres

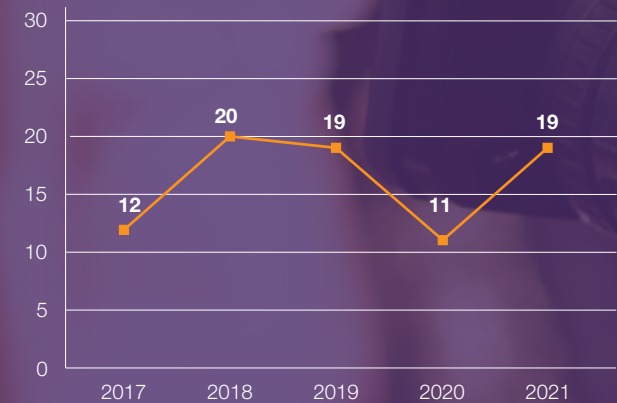


FIGURE 1

Nineteen projects premiered in 2020-21 consisting of five web series and complementary content for the *Stories for Caregivers* and *Take Care* initiatives, and 12 projects financed in the main program (Figure 1). Last fiscal year the



### MOMENTS OF LIFE

Moments of Life focuses on perinatal bereavement following medical termination of pregnancy.

Release date: 15-Oct-20 | Episode: 1 x 20 min

PRODUCTIONS APPALACHES INC.

[WEBSITE](#) ▶

COVID-19 lockdowns resulted in a significant decline in project premieres. As lockdowns eased, postponed projects adjusted their distribution plans and the number of project premieres rebounded this year.

### Reach

Social media and online news reach are an indicator of the potential number of people worldwide who may have been exposed to funded projects. *Shine True* generated the largest share of social media and online news reach this year. This trailblazing makeover show breaks down barriers and fosters a sense of social inclusion for trans and gender non-conforming participants, reducing the risks of mental health issues caused by discrimination and fear of rejection. This project was featured in news publications and magazines worldwide and drove significant results: 800M news reach and 21M social reach. Without this project, the social media reach results were comparable to last year, while online news reach was significantly higher than last year.

This fiscal year 19 projects premiered within the last 12 months compared to 11 last year. Project premieres this fiscal year achieved 1.6B in online news reach compared to 377M last year and 75M in social media reach compared to 59M last year (*Figure 2* bars labeled 0-12 Months). This increase is explained by the significant reach this year of funded project, *Shine True*,

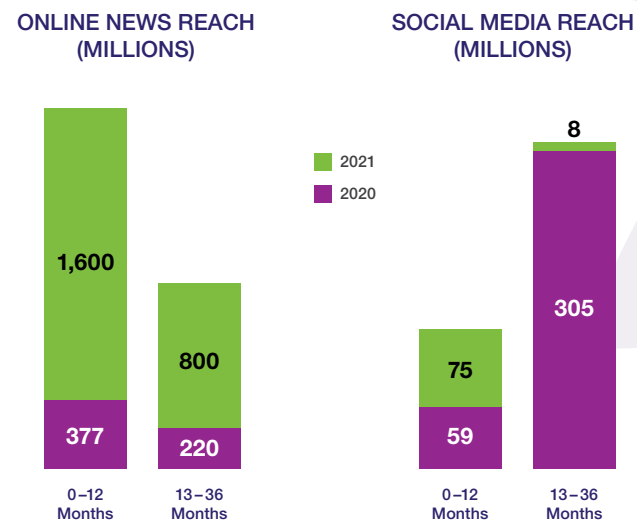


FIGURE 2



### SHINE TRUE

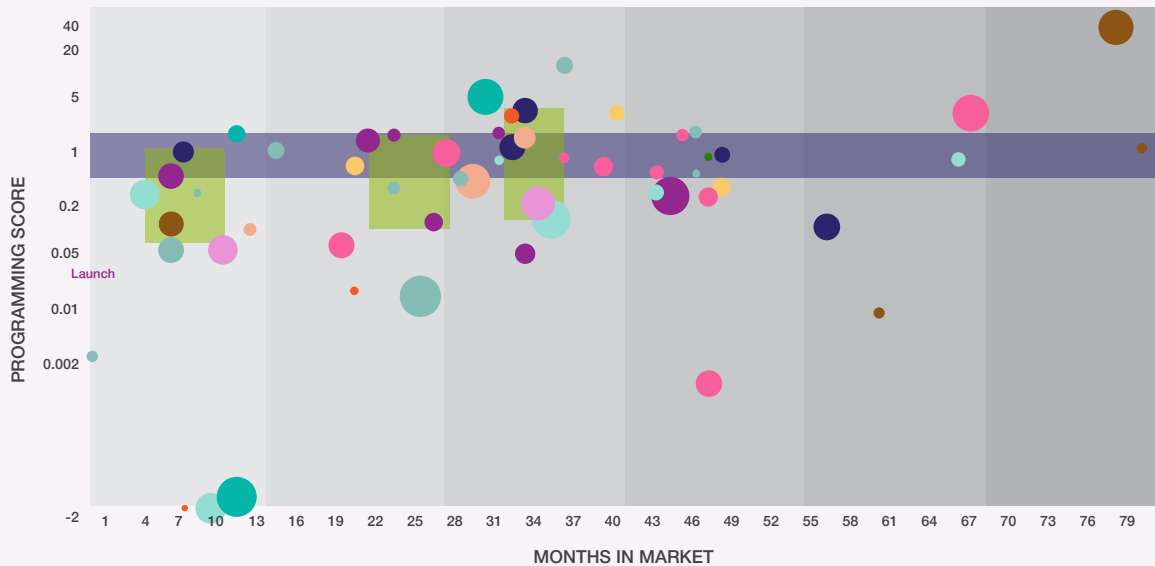
Shine True is a trailblazing new makeover show celebrating the trans and gender non-conforming community – because showing up feeling your best is never easy. Breaking down barriers, Shine True connects LGBTQ2+ and straight audiences alike to the very human struggle of growing up and becoming yourself, no matter your age.

Release date: 1-Mar-21 | Episodes: 8 x 30 min

VICE PRODUCTIONS (MINDED) INC.

WEBSITE >

## OVERALL VIEWERSHIP



### Cumulation of:

- YouTube video views
- Facebook total video views
- Instagram video views
- Vimeo plays
- Twitter views
- Broadcast AMAs
- Digital platform views
- Live event attendees
- Sales and rentals

FIGURE 3

an increase in the number of projects premiering, and the lower impact of COVID-19 in online news and social media reach compared to last year.

Five projects that have been in market between 13 to 36 months continued to drive results in 2020-21, earning 800M in online news reach and 8M in social media reach. Last year the top 5 projects in market between 13 to 36 months achieved 220M in online news reach and 305M in social media reach (Figure 2 bars labeled 13-36 Months). This year *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch* and *Ghost BFF* continued to be top drivers of online news and social media reach amongst projects in market for 13 to 36 months, demonstrating the power of evergreen and multi-episode health content. This online news and social media reach data is gathered from key words related to funded projects onboarded to the social media listening tool, *Meltwater*.

### Viewership

Funded projects generally achieve between 302K and 1.74M views for core and complementary programming combined. Recent project premieres are

also achieving total viewership comparable to those that have been in market for a much longer time, which suggests audience success may be increasing. These findings are based on 52 funded projects for which audience data is available, approximately 50% of TELUS Fund's portfolio of health content.

*Figure 3* shows the viewership achieved by each of the 52 funded projects relative to the total viewership achieved by the entire suite of projects (Programming Share). The purple horizontal band reveals an increasingly robust viewership benchmark achieved by 28 of the 52 projects. The benchmark subdivides into a high benchmark of 12 projects ranging from 586K to 1.17M, and the biggest cluster of 16 projects for which total viewership ranges between 302K and 753K. The green boxes show new emerging benchmarks for funded projects that have been in market for one, two and three years. These green boxes suggest new health content may be finding audience success earlier, although the reasons are not yet evident. Additional time and data are required to understand the factors that may be contributing to this emerging and exciting trend.

## Impact

Based on the reach and viewership results described above, TELUS Fund has good reason to be optimistic that Canadians are being positively impacted by funded projects. A comprehensive understanding of if, when, and how quality health content impacts Canadians is an emerging challenge to be considered in the next fiscal year. However, the Fund does have some indication of the impact of funded projects with outcomes such as:

- *Les aventures du Pharmachien 5* was nominated for a G meaux Award for Best Digital Component for a Documentary
- *Connecting the Dots* has had more than 50 hosted screenings around the world, been invited to numerous festivals, won the Award of Excellence at the Accolade Global Film Competition, and been featured in the Hot Docs - Bell "Let's Talk" Workman Arts Series.
- *Jenny 3 – Mon avenir* was nominated for six G meaux Awards and won two in the category of Youth Fiction for Best Director and Best Program or Series.
- *The Magnitude of all Things* has been invited to numerous festivals, won Best Canadian Feature at the Planet in Focus International Environmental



“So beautiful. Taking away the fear of moving forward into the next phase of our journey... this information needs to be known, that we have a choice in the way we make our transition.”

– Viewer of How We Die



## HOW WE DIE

Who helps us die? A compassionate look at caregivers who support end-of-life patients, the family members involved, and innovations in the world of death.

Release date: 5-Apr-21 | Episodes: 7 x 3-6 min

KITAB PRODUCTIONS [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) WEBSITE [➤](#)



“What an amazing film! Thank you for using your platform to amplify the youth voice. Amazing job to all the youth involved – you are all so well-spoken and your strength is immeasurable.”

– Viewer of *Connecting the Dots*

Film Festival, and won Audience Choice Award at DocLands Documentary Film Festival.

- *On parle de santé mentale* was nominated for six Géméaux Awards and won three in the category of Digital Media Youth for Best Script, Best Male Actor, and Best Original Program or Series.
- *Parfaitement Imparfait* was nominated for Best Documentary Web Series at the Marseille Web Fest, Rendez-vous Québec Cinéma and the Numix awards.
- *Stories for Caregivers* surveyed their followers and 477 responded with 86% identified as caregivers. 91% of those who responded said that the platform had improved their journey as a caregiver, 95% said sharing stories is an effective way to generate awareness about caregiving, and 92% wanted to see more programming.

This fiscal year TELUS Fund joined an industry partnership between *OCAD U* and *Magnify Digital* to deepen our understanding about the qualitative success of funded projects, their critical reception, and the impact on the audience. This initiative will develop, test, and implement tools that can measure impact.



## CONNECTING THE DOTS

*Connecting the Dots* breaks down barriers of communications to reveal why we face a population of children and young adults suffering from anxiety, depression and ultimately suicide.

Release date: 1-Nov-20 | Episodes: 1 x 90 min & 1 x 52 min

2221607 ONTARIO LIMITED / FILMBLANC INC.      
WEBSITE 

#### 4.2.2. Examine Areas of Interest

TELUS Fund examined the role of complementary content in audience success and the lessons learned from three feature length documentaries whose content dealt with mental health issues and whose distribution plans were impacted by pandemic restrictions. The Fund also refreshed audience research to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the demand for and supply of health content.

#### Complementary Content

Complementary Content refers to ancillary assets that complement the programming such as a project website, short digital videos, and learning resources. Research that started last year revealed complementary content can expand audience reach, diversify audiences, deepen engagement, increase impact, and deliver rich target market insights. This year the Fund focused on complementary content related to television series in the French market. Findings underlined the value of planning for complementary content early on and obtaining input from experienced audience development experts to help shape the content to the culture of the channels on which it will be posted. A further theme that emerged was the importance of tracking data on an ongoing basis and staying nimble to optimize where, when, and how

complementary content is deployed. The capacity of the production company played a significant role in determining the volume of high value, purpose built, complementary content that could be created and its ability to collect, analyze and respond to audience data.

#### Documentaries Dealing with Mental Health Issues

Three documentaries, all dealing with mental health topics, premiered within the last 18 months:

- *Connecting the Dots* offers a raw and intimate look at youth mental health from a global perspective. Hosts can book a screening of this film at [ConnectingtheDotsFilm.com](http://ConnectingtheDotsFilm.com)
- *Dark Cloud* continues a mother's crusade against the growing epidemic of cyberbullying, eight years after her daughter's tragic suicide. This film is available for free viewing at [TELUS](http://TELUS) and [AmandaToddLegacy.com](http://AmandaToddLegacy.com)
- *The Magnitude of All Things* explores the emotional and psychological dimensions of grief caused by climate change and the death of a loved one. This film is available for purchase through the [National Film Board](http://NationalFilmBoard)



#### ON PARLE DE SANTÉ MENTALE

Through funny sketches, educational animation and engaging testimonials, this web series shatters the mental health stigma and gives young people a better understanding of the elements affecting their psychological well-being.

Release date: 25-Jan-21 | Episodes: 35 x 6 min

ÉCHO MÉDIA PRODUCTIONS 3 INC. [WEBSITE ►](#)

## AUDIENCE DEMAND 2020-21

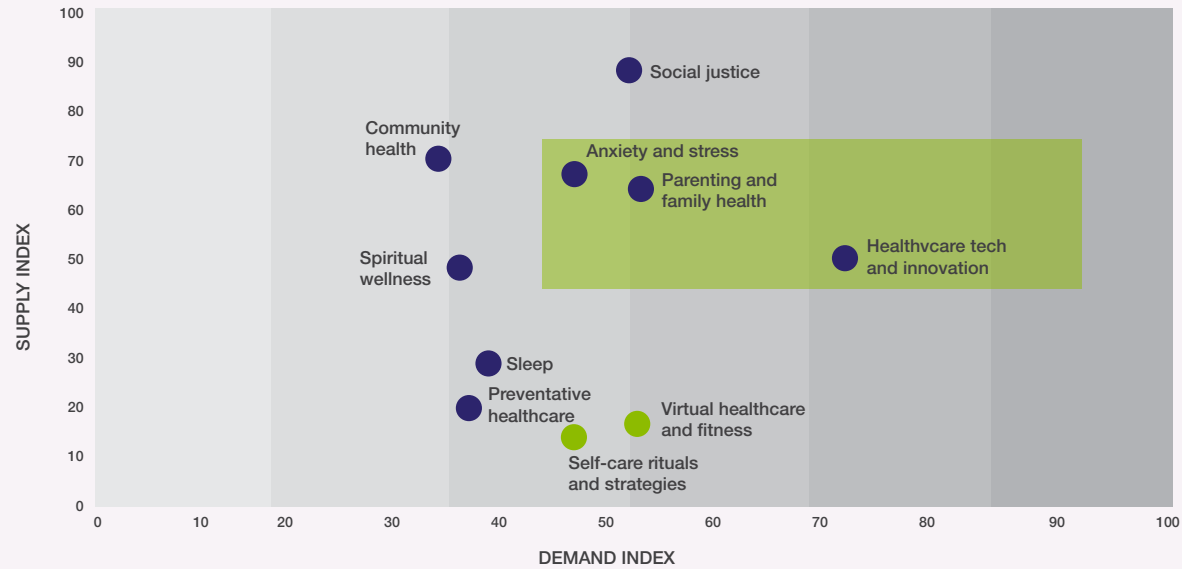


FIGURE 4

TELUS Fund found that the filmmakers and producers played key roles during the launch campaign. Platforms and partners came and went, but these creators remained passionate about and committed to the success of their projects. All three films created ample complementary content to deepen audience experience and engaged external marketing expertise to drive audience success. Findings underlined the need to include qualitative metrics in measured success (e.g., earned media, critical acclaim, awards, survey responses). Their distribution plans included film festival premieres, which historically have led to opportunities for earned media, exposure, awards, and sales. The global pandemic and venue closures had a major impact on their distribution plans and raise questions about the festival-first strategy as the new normal for live events has yet to be established. These superbly crafted documentaries will surface in the media and be of interest to audiences for years to come. The challenge will be to ensure each project is ready to seize emerging opportunities and the content remains accessible to Canadians.

### Audience Research

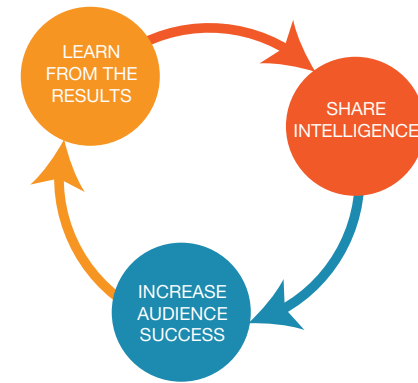
TELUS Fund undertakes annual research to identify the health and wellness topics of most interest to Canadians searching online and the availability of free, quality, video content for each topic. *Figure 4* visualizes the health topics of most interest relative to supply of video content for each topic. In 2020-21 the top 3 topics of interest where video content is lacking included:

- **Healthcare technology and innovation.** Whether it's advances in vaccine technology, agriculture, or specific treatments for diabetes, cancer and other common illnesses, technology is changing the healthcare landscape.
- **Parenting and family health.** Remote schooling, childcare challenges and introducing mindfulness at a younger age are drivers for conversations around family health and parenting.
- **Anxiety and stress.** The focus is on anxiety and stress related to 'getting back to normal' and dealing with the mental health shadow of COVID-19.

These top 3 areas are a material change from before the COVID-19 pandemic when Canadians searching for health and wellness content were most interested in conscious consumption, personalized health, and self-care as reported in the *2019-20 Annual Report*. Virtual healthcare and fitness, and self-care rituals and strategies are identified in *Figure 4* as being of significant interest to Canadians online with a relatively low supply of video content. However, there is a high supply of content on these topics connected to hardware and applications, consequently they were deprioritized.

As Telefilm Canada stated in their *Study of Canadian Consumption Habits*, “the availability of Canadian/Quebec content on online services is an important issue that must be considered in order to increase the visibility of this content”. Telefilm’s findings are consistent with the unique challenges that TELUS Fund encountered doing audience demand research for French language health content. The Fund was not able to establish unique trends for demand and supply of French health content. Instead, the top English trends identified across the internet were used as a starting point and then validated in a review of available French language sources.

*Section 4.2* presented the results of funded projects in market. Findings were also presented from research into areas of interest and refreshed audience research. The next section describes the actions the Fund took to share gathered intelligence.



**FIGURE 5**

**4.3. SHARE INTELLIGENCE FOR FUTURE SUCCESS**

TELUS Fund has taken action to increase audience success for health content. The results have been collected and analyzed to reveal areas of interest for further examination. The third strategic priority is to share the intelligence gathered to increase the audience success of future health content and avoid the known pitfalls along the way. With these three strategic priorities, TELUS Fund has created a positive feedback loop where the lessons learned and best practices are increasing the likelihood of greater audience success in future (*Figure 5*).



**LES AVENTURES DU PHARMACHIEN SEASON 5**

Les aventures du Pharmacien goes after mis-truths and popular beliefs on health issues.

Release date: 11-Dec-20

Episodes: 23 x 30 min & 23 x 1-2 min

**SPHÈRE MÉDIA TROIS INC.**

**WEBSITE** ➔





**FIGURE 6**

Last fiscal, TELUS Fund developed strategies for sharing gathered intelligence when and where producers were most likely to be seeking these insights. Priorities were set at each step in the application process based on the known skills gap that was hindering health content from maximizing success. Findings indicated that applicants were typically struggling to define the target audience, forecast reach and engagement, build cohesive strategies,

work with partner organizations and influencers, implement marketing tactics, and track results.

In 2020-21 producers received new tools and resources to bridge the skills gap. The producers’ journey with TELUS Fund begins with checking eligibility for funding and ends with submitting a performance report on the measured results of funded health content (*Figure 6*).



## CHAMPIONS

*Champions* is a “feel good” documentary that focuses on the positive impact of sport and physical health on social inclusion of people with an intellectual disability.

Release date: 3-Nov-20 | Episodes: 2 x 48 min, 2 x 94 min, 20 x 2-3 min

9355-1752 QUÉBEC INC. LES VUES DE L'ESPRIT INC. /  
PRODUCTIONS VOIR AUTREMENT INC.

[f](#) [@](#) [t](#) [v](#) WEBSITE >

**STEP 1:** Producers use the *checklists* on TELUS Fund’s website to confirm eligibility of the project and the company. Here is where producers are introduced to three key stakeholders known to have an important role in driving audience success for health content:

- **Expert Organizations** that deliver services in the health subject area and recognize the potential of the project to improve health outcomes
- **Distribution Platforms** with a successful track record of audience success with comparable content
- **Audience Partners** with large online reach, for example, social media influencers, sponsors, expert individuals, and celebrity talent

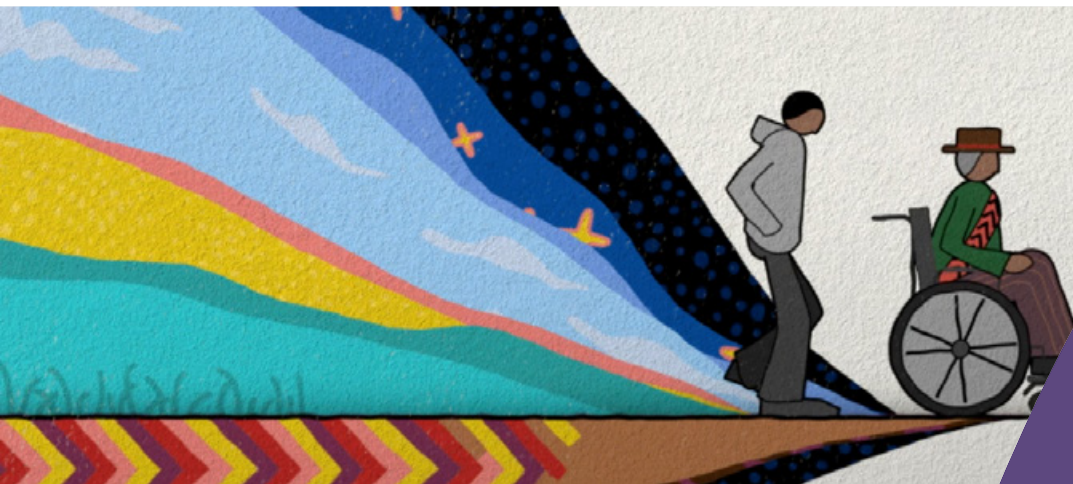
The program guidelines were updated to include new minimum support requirements from each of these stakeholders prior to submitting an application for funding. New support forms help producers to clarify the role, responsibility, and commitment of each stakeholder.

**STEP 2:** The *Alignment Tool* helps prospective producers to determine if their project is a good fit for financing from TELUS Fund. Applicants respond to 21 questions about their health content, the project plan, the audience development plan, and the project team. Best practices and lessons learned

from funded projects in market suggest that submissions that respond favorably to these questions have the highest likelihood of achieving measured success. In 2020-21, TELUS Fund embedded links into the tool leading to new audience development tip sheets and videos relevant to the survey questions. Here producers learn more about, for example, how to partner with Expert Organizations and work with marketing experts. This Alignment Tool has already been viewed 6K times and started 1.6K times.

**STEP 3:** At this step, producers with eligible health content request an invitation to apply and upload high-level project documentation. In 2020-21 TELUS Fund, Bell Fund and the Shaw Rocket Fund worked together to standardize requirements for an *Audience Development Preliminary Plan (ADPP)* which producers upload with their request. This template guides producers in essential areas of an ADPP and lays the foundation for building a well-researched, comprehensive, and measurable Audience Development Plan.

**STEP 4 and 5:** The Board of Directors has sole and exclusive responsibility for funding decisions. The submissions are evaluated and weighed individually and in comparison, to others in TELUS Fund’s portfolio according to the four evaluation criteria published in the program guidelines. These evaluation criteria and corresponding survey questions in the *Alignment Tool* are updated each year to reflect most recent intelligence.



## CULTURE OF CARING

The Culture of Caring transcends cultures to ask one of the most important questions we all face – “How can we take better care of our elders?”

Release date: 3-May-21 | Episodes: 7 x 3-6 min

NORTH OF NOW FILMS [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) [WEBSITE >](#)

**STEP 6:** Prior to receiving production financing, successful submissions must secure marketing expertise to complete the *Comprehensive Audience Development Plan*. Producers can now visit the new *Audience Resources* web page where they are introduced to the ALERT® process to help them develop the plan. Ten tip sheets and 5 bilingual videos help producers navigate this proven method for driving audience success with health content. This page achieved 1.7K users and 2.5K page views in English and 200 users and 544 page views in French. Tip sheets have already been downloaded 417 times. The early usage data is encouraging considering the relatively small size of the Canadian production community. The total membership of the Canadian Media Producers Association is approximately 500 production companies and the total number of producers in Canada is generally estimated to be about 1,000.

**STEP 7:** When producers prepare to premiere health content, they now onboard the project to the new ViewerCentric™ platform. Visualizations of audience data help producers track their results against the benchmarks established by prior comparable funded projects and identify trends for further investigation.

**STEP 8:** Producers with projects in market receive weekly newsletters from the social listening tool to help them surface opportunities and optimize

online marketing efforts. They are also guided in making a full performance report through the ViewerCentric™ platform. These visualizations of audience success can be helpful for leveraging additional support to expand the launch campaign and/or produce additional content.

*Section 4* described the three strategic priorities established by the Board of Directors and the actions taken in each area. TELUS Fund has partnered with digital distribution platforms and expanded its online influence to increase the audience success of funded projects. The Fund measured the results and identified an exciting trend emerging. New audience tools and resources launched to share intelligence and bridge the skills gap constraining health content from achieving its full audience potential. With these three strategic priorities, TELUS Fund has created a positive feedback loop where the lessons learned and best practices of funded projects in market are informing future funding decisions and increasing the likelihood of greater audience success in future. Going forward TELUS Fund will continue learning from the results and sharing the findings to ensure the creators of health content have the tools and resources they need to achieve audience success.



## CYPHER SEASON 2

On the frontline of peer-supported caregiving, can music amplify the healing process?

Release date: 5-Feb-21 | Episodes: 14 x 6 min

SAUCY MOMO INC. [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) [WEBSITE >](#)

## 5. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND SELECTED

TELUS Fund finances exceptional health content from across the country in English and French. Funding is available at every stage of the project lifecycle from developing the creative idea to driving audience success. There are no pre-established funding allocations which enables the Fund to be responsive to the financial needs of the best submissions received, regardless of health subject matter, region, language, genre, format, or target audience. This section 5 provides information on the requests for TELUS Fund financing and the allocation of funding.

### 5.1. DEMAND FOR TELUS FUND FINANCING

TELUS Fund does not have application deadlines in the main program. Instead, the Board meets frequently during the year to quickly respond to applications for financing that are ready to proceed with new COVID-19 safety protocols. The new “invitation to apply” application handling process has resulted in a higher success rate for producers that are invited to submit a complete application and reduced administration for both producers and TELUS Fund on projects that are not a good fit with the program guidelines.

In 2020-21 TELUS Fund received 35 requests for an “invitation to apply” accompanied by high-level project information. All eligible requests received feedback on their alignment with the published evaluation criteria and suggestions to increase the likelihood of receiving a positive funding decision. Twenty-three of the 35 requests were invited to apply. Sixteen (73%) of the 22 that submitted a complete application before the end of the fiscal year, received a positive funding decision.

In the *Stories for Caregivers* initiative there were five applications for production financing to create the web series along with two web series from last season that received additional production financing this year to create more episodes. The special call for web series in the *Take Care* initiative stimulated 50 applications from across the country. Three were selected to receive production financing.



### LETTERS FROM CAREGIVERS SEASON 2

Songs for unsung heroes on the frontlines.

Release date: 28-May-21 | Episodes: 3 x 3 min

SAUCY MOMO INC. [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) [WEBSITE >](#)

## 5.2. TOTAL TELUS FUND FINANCING

This fiscal year, TELUS Fund signed 15 development and production financing agreements valued at \$3.1M (Figure 7). At the end of the fiscal year there were also eight outstanding commitment letters valued at \$2.8M. As the industry slowly restarted with new and costly safety protocols, it is not surprising that applications were received later in the year and fewer were able to contract by the end of the year.

Nine of the 15 projects contracted in 2020-21 were generated by the *Stories for Caregivers* and *Take Care* initiatives. These initiatives played an important role in safeguarding the creation of exceptional health content and supporting the capacity of Canadian production companies as the industry re-opened.

TELUS Fund has entered into 181 project financing agreements representing over \$29M in funding since launching in 2013. In addition, six special discoverability initiatives received more than \$1.4M for a total of 187 financing agreements valued at over \$30.4M.

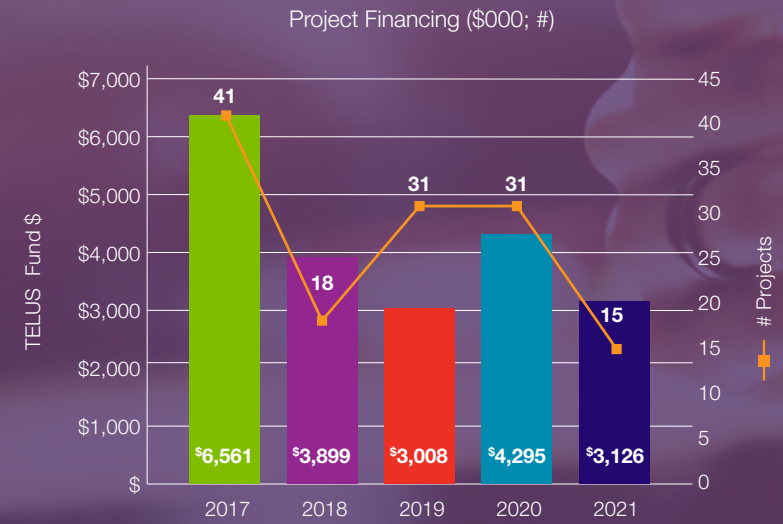


FIGURE 7



## THE MAGNITUDE OF ALL THINGS

Exploring grief and loss in changing times, filmmaker Jennifer Abbott applies what her dying sister taught her about life to the emotional challenges of climate change.

Release date: 15-Oct-20 | Episodes: 1 x 90 min

OFF ISLAND FILMS LTD [f](#) [@](#) [t](#) WEBSITE [➤](#)

Programming, Non-programming and Marketing (\$000)

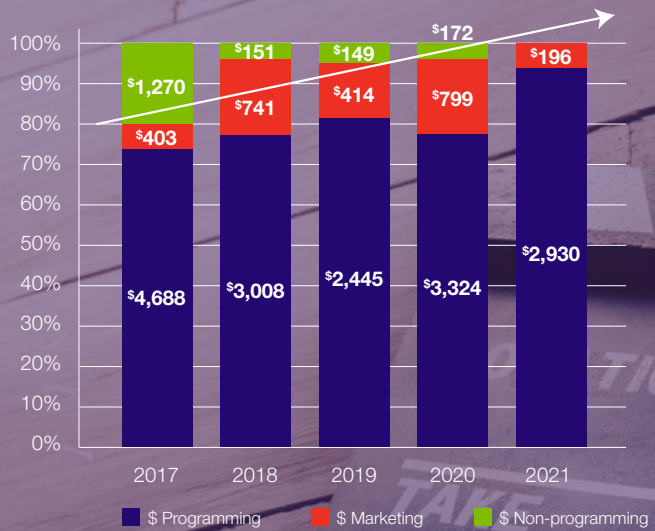


FIGURE 8

### 5.3. DIVERSITY OF PROJECT PORTFOLIO

The charts in section 5.3 present data on projects contracted in the most recent five fiscal years inclusive of amending agreements. The data presented in prior annual reports is updated in this 2020-21 Annual Report to include subsequent amending agreements that adjusted the final amount of TELUS Fund’s financing in the project. The eight outstanding commitments at the fiscal year-end are not included in these charts. Significant fluctuations from year to year are often caused by projects with a positive funding decision in one year not being captured in the data until the next fiscal year, when they are ready to proceed to contract. In addition, one project receiving a significant funding amount can materially impact the diversity of the portfolio from one year to the next. While annual amounts have been provided for the past five years, the trend line over time is often a more meaningful portrayal of TELUS Fund’s ever evolving portfolio of health content.

#### 5.3.1. Programming, Non-programming and Marketing

Programming is audiovisual content intended for viewing from beginning to end without user interaction. 100% of TELUS Fund program funding in 2020-21 was allocated to programming and related marketing efforts (Figure 8).



### SIX DEGRÉS

*Six degrés* tells the unique story of a blind boy who has only six small degrees with which to discover his new life.

Release date: 1-Mar-21

Episodes: 13 x 30 min & 6 x 2 min

ENCORE TÉLÉVISION INC.    WEBSITE 

The amount of TELUS Fund financing allocated specifically to the marketing budget was lower than prior years. An increasing number of projects are absorbing marketing costs within their production budget rather than tracking the marketing budget and financing separately.

Non-programming is interactive and customizable digital content including video games, complex websites, community forums, and mobile applications. The CRTC Policy requires that no more than 10% of program funding may be allocated to non-programming. Financing for non-programming has been steadily declining since the CRTC Policy came into effect in 2016. In 2020-21 TELUS Fund did not finance the creation of non-programming.

### 5.3.2. Language

English health content has increased as a result of the special calls for web series in the *Stories for Caregivers* and *Take Care* initiatives. This fiscal year English health content accessed 75% of total development and production financing or \$2.3M (Figure 9). Four French projects received \$789,000.



FIGURE 9



## PARFAITEMENT IMPARFAIT

*Parfaitement imparfait* revolves around the meeting between a teenager and a well-known Quebec personality who is or has already had the same mental health disorder.

Release date: 2-Mar-21  
Episodes: 20 x 10 min

6842 887 CANADA INC. / MC2 COMMUNICATION MÉDIA INC.

[f WEBSITE >](#)

In the most recent five years, 136 projects have received over \$20.6M in financing:

- 86 were projects first available to the public in the English language (54% of total financing or \$11.2M)
- 35 were projects first available to the public in the French language (31% of total financing or \$6.4M)
- 15 were projects with commitments to transmit the programming in both English and French (15% of total financing or \$3M). In these cases, the TELUS Fund financing amount is allocated to the language in which the content is first available.

### 5.3.3. Gender

Health content in 2020-21 included strong representation of women in the key roles of producer, director, writer, or lead performer. Eleven of the 15 projects contracted in 2020-21 included at least one woman in a key role. Six projects included women in at least three key roles.

### 5.3.4. Indigenous, Black, and other Racialized Communities

TELUS Fund participated in the Canada Media Fund's Equity and Inclusion in Data Collection round table with over 30 national and regional media funding agencies and under-represented community organizations in Canada. The goal was to discuss best practices, common standards and develop mechanisms to track, share and compare data across the industry. The initiative started by defining the appropriate terminology to address and identify the under-represented communities. *The Terminology Guide for Data Collection on Racialized and Indigenous Communities* is the result of this effort and informed changes to TELUS Fund's program guidelines, evaluation criteria and application forms.

### 5.3.5. Regions

Production companies headquartered outside of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver (the Regions) face unique challenges because of their distance from decision makers, training, facilities, and industry services. After receiving a strong share of TELUS Fund financing in 2016-17, the amount of financing to production companies in the Regions has remained low. Two of the three projects from the Regions that received financing in 2020-21 were a direct result of the *Stories for Caregivers* and *Take Care* initiatives. The special calls



## TOOLS FOR CARING

Tools for Caring puts the evidence-based and impactful power of positivity tools into the hands of those who provide care with a new skill each episode.

Release date: 28-May-21 | Episodes: 4 x 3 min

FULL SWING PRODUCTIONS    WEBSITE 



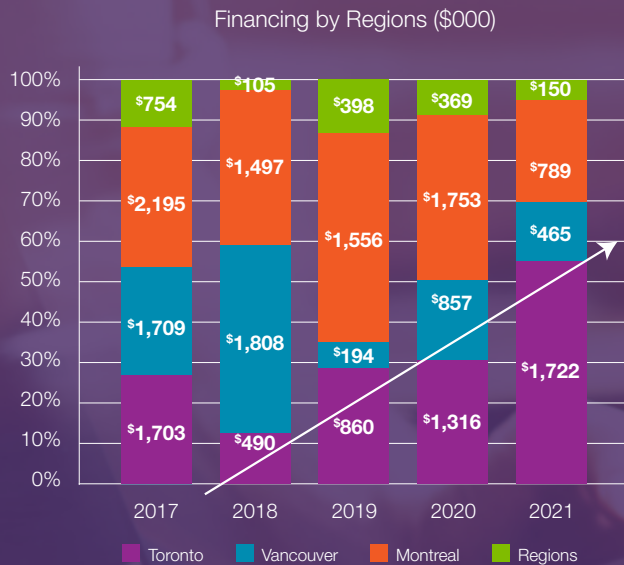


FIGURE 10

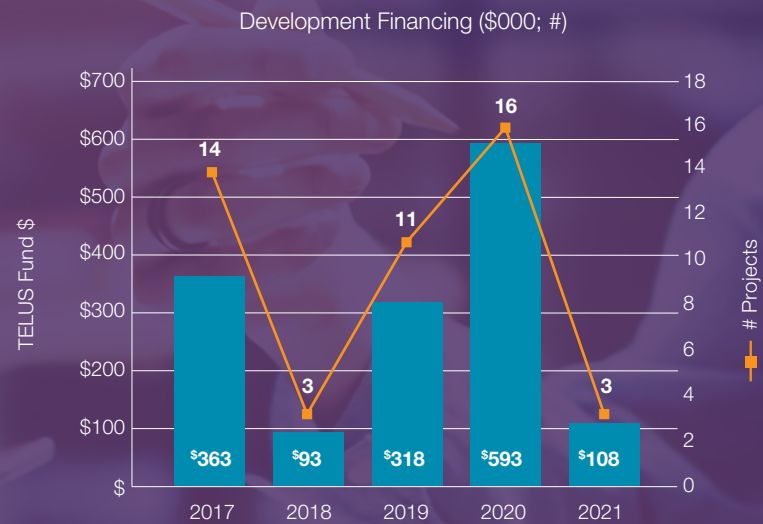


FIGURE 11

for web series are essential to stimulate and support production companies located in the Regions (Figure 10).

In the past five years, 136 projects received over \$20.6M in development, production, and discoverability financing:

- 22 were produced by production companies headquartered in the Regions (9% of total financing or \$1.8M)
- 26 were produced by production companies headquartered in Vancouver (24% of total financing or \$5M). Production companies based in Vancouver have accessed considerably lower amounts in the most recent three of five years.
- 44 were produced by production companies headquartered in Toronto (29% of total financing or \$6M). Production companies based in Toronto have seen a steady increase in their share of financing over the past four fiscal years.

- 44 were produced by production companies headquartered in Montreal (38% of total financing or \$7.8M). Companies based in Montreal have been the largest beneficiary of TELUS Fund financing in the past five years. However, their share has been declining in recent years.

### 5.3.6. Official Language Minority Community

TELUS Fund did not receive any applications from the Official Language Minority Community (OLMC) in 2020-21. Next fiscal year TELUS Fund will raise awareness of its programs and initiatives within this community and seek feedback on whether there are any unique obstacles this community is experiencing in applying.

### 5.4. DEVELOPMENT STREAM

TELUS Fund signed three development financing agreements valued at \$108K during 2020-21 (Figure 11). In addition, there was one outstanding commitment. On average, financing from TELUS Fund was \$50K per project

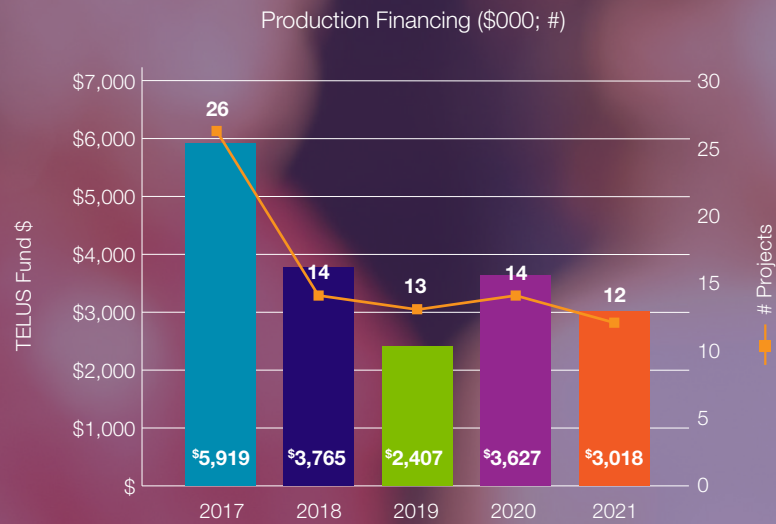


FIGURE 12

and 55% of the development budget. This high amount and percentage underscores the need for TELUS Fund financing to develop health content.

The steep decline from sixteen projects in the prior year to three this fiscal year is in large part due to the delay in launching season 4 of the *Stories for Caregivers* initiative until it was safe to proceed. All three projects that received development financing were triggered by non-broadcast, digital distribution platforms, including the *National Film Board*, *Curio*, and *Question Time*.

Since launching in 2013, sixty-six projects have received almost \$2.6M in development financing to advance creative materials, create an audience development plan, and prepare for production. Thirty-two, or 48% of those developed, have received the greenlight to proceed into production. Eight of the projects are currently in development and the remaining twenty-six are raising financing to proceed into production.

A list of development financing agreements is provided in [Appendix B](#)

## 5.5. PRODUCTION STREAM

In 2020-21 TELUS Fund signed 12 production financing agreements valued at more than \$3M. In addition to these 12 agreements, there were 7 outstanding commitments valued at \$2.7M. On average, financing from TELUS Fund was \$251K per project and 58% of the production budget. As with the development stream, this high amount and percentage confirms that much of this health content would not be possible without financing from TELUS Fund.

The volume of 12 production financing agreements in 2020-21 was the lowest level in five years ([Figure 12](#)):

- Eight of the 12 production financing agreements were directly related to the special calls for web series in the *Stories for Caregivers* and *Take Care* initiatives.
- Four of the 12 projects had commitments from Canadian broadcasters including *Savoir média*, *Société Radio-Canada*, *ICI Tou.tv*, *ICI Explora*, *Knowledge Network*, *TVOntario*, and *Sportsnet*.

A list of production financing agreements is provided in [Appendix C](#).

## 5.6. DISCOVERABILITY STREAM

In 2020-21 TELUS Fund did not sign any discoverability financing agreements. Production budgets now include minimum allowances to create and implement the audience development plan leading up to the first public launch and continuing over 6 to 12 months. After this time, producers in need of capital to sustain their production company typically move on to create new content (see discussion in [Section 4.1.2](#)). TELUS Fund will review the future of this funding stream next year.

## 6. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

TELUS Fund's operations are dependent on one contributor, TELUS Communications Company (TCC), which is required by the Commission to direct a portion of its revenue from internet protocol television subscribers to Canadian programming under section 29 of the *Broadcasting Distribution Regulations*. The Commission monitors and enforces compliance with the requirements of the regulations.

### 6.1. COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact TELUS Fund and the producers of health content in 2020-21. There was a noticeable delay in production orders as broadcasters and digital distribution platforms shifted their focus to developing new content to meet changing audience preferences. TELUS Fund's main program continued without application deadlines in 2020-21 so that applicants could receive a funding decision as soon as their project was ready to proceed. TELUS Fund also pushed forward to renew the *Stories for Caregivers* initiative and to launch the new *Take Care* initiative. These initiatives stimulated new creative ideas and the production of health content while the industry re-opened.

Lockdowns and travel restrictions limited opportunities to engage in-person with the industry. TELUS Fund reached out digitally through newsletters to subscribers and posts to fans and followers on social media channels. Through these communication tools, the industry remained up to date on special calls for content and program guidelines. TELUS Fund is also available via a Contact form on the website and queries can be sent directly to [info@telusfund.ca](mailto:info@telusfund.ca). TELUS Fund experimented with virtual industry liaison opportunities at roundtables hosted by the Canada Media Producers Association, Académie Canadienne du cinéma et de la télévision, and Conférence Média-Jeunes.

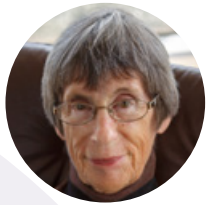
Productions able to restart faced new and costly safety protocols and the fourth wave created insurance challenges. Projects premiering in 2020-21 doubled down on digital marketing strategies, self-distribution, and virtual screenings while festivals and live events stayed closed and online conversations continued to focus on the pandemic. TELUS Fund ensured funded projects had adequate contingency plans and remained flexible for projects that experienced delays and cost variances due to the pandemic.

### 6.2. REVENUE AND EXPENSES

Revenue to TELUS Fund was up from \$5.2M to \$5.5M due to an increase in TCC contributions, investment income, and recoupment of project financing from production revenue. In accordance with the CRTC Policy, TELUS Fund invests 95% of TCC contributions and 100% of project repayments into programs within 24 months. Up to 5% of TCC contributions are allocated to administration expenses. Revenue from investment income helps to stabilize funding from year to year and is available for special projects aligned to TELUS Fund's mandate.

TELUS Fund receives submissions from across the country and delivers programs to clients working in English or French. The lean operations of TELUS Fund are delivered by a part-time team of independent consultants. There are no employees, physical office space, or information systems. The administration expenses to manage the Fund and deliver programs were down from \$275K in 2019-20 to \$254K this year. TELUS Fund is supported by a volunteer Board that meets frequently by video conference to render funding decisions and oversee operations. The Fund also receives donations of in-kind facilities and services from TELUS.

In summary, this fiscal year TELUS Fund saw the first fruits of investments to increase the discoverability of funded projects that began in 2017. These investments have paid off with a promising upward trend in audience success for recent project premieres. The audience analytics platform that TELUS Fund began beta testing was embraced by key industry stakeholders. The cohort of funded projects on the platform has grown, along with the insights from sophisticated data visualizations. The lessons learned and best practices of health content have been infused into new tools and resources throughout the application process to bridge the skills gap for future applicants. Producers are fully equipped with financing, tools, and resources from TELUS Fund to create exceptional health content with the potential to reach, engage, and positively impact the well-being of Canadians.



**Nini Baird**

Board Chair (Independent Director, residing in West Vancouver, BC)



**Dr. Mike Evans**

Board Member (Independent Director, residing in Toronto, Ontario)



**Nelson Kwan**

Board Vice-Chair (Independent Director, residing in Richmond, BC).



**Carissa McCart**

Board Member (TELUS Representative, residing in Victoria, BC)



**Michel E. Bélec**

Board Secretary (TELUS Representative, residing in Vancouver, BC, and responsible for representing Official Language Minority Community in funding decisions)



**Nadine Cole**

Board Member (Independent Director, residing in Vancouver, BC)

## APPENDIX B: DEVELOPMENT FINANCING CONTRACTS IN 2020-21

Project Title	Logline	Production Company	Lead Distribution Platform	Women in leadership	Region	OLMC	Language	CRTC Program Category
The Adventures of Li'l Doc	The Adventures of Li'l Doc is an animated series that features the duo of Canadian doctor Li'l Doc and her chameleon assistant Tifou on extraordinary adventures around the world.	Gala Productions inc. Gala Média inc.	Curio	2	MTL	No	French, English	Education, recreation, leisure (5ab)
Anything for Fame	Anything For Fame focuses on the mental health challenges youth face when competing for recognition on social media platforms.	North of Now Films	National Film Board	No	Region	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
Rogue Psychology	Ethan and Jon are two comedians attempting to save the world, one social experiment at a time.	Heyd and Saffer Inc., (dba "HeydSaffer")	Question Time	No	TOR	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)

## APPENDIX C: PRODUCTION FINANCING CONTRACTS IN 2020-21

Project Title	Logline	Production Company	Lead Distribution Platform	Women in leadership	Region	OLMC	Language	CRTC Program Category
Les aventures du Pharmachien S5	Les aventures du Pharmachien goes after mistruths and popular beliefs on health issues.	Sphère Média Trois inc.	Société Radio-Canada, ICI Explora	2	MTL	No	French	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
Bad at This	Bad at This is a documentary series about people who suck at things and do them anyway.	Stitch Media Ontario, Inc.	VICE Studio Canada Inc.	4	TOR	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
Breaking Ground	Breaking Ground explores the narrative of low to middle class Asian Canadian youth and their accessibility for wellness and self-care during this period of isolation.	Film.ca Productions Inc.	VICE Studio Canada Inc.	4	TOR	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
Culture of Caring	The Culture of Caring transcends cultures to ask one of the most important questions we all face - "How can we take better care of our elders?"	North of Now Films	S4C Media Inc. storiesfor caregivers.com	1	VCR	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
How We Die	Who helps us die? A compassionate look at caregivers who support end-of-life patients, the family members involved, and innovations in the world of death.	Kitab Productions	S4C Media Inc. storiesfor caregivers.com	3	TOR	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
I CAN	I CAN is a series of inspirational stories about kids with autism overcoming barriers and thriving through sports.	Run Jump Play Media Inc.	Knowledge Network, TVOntario, Sportsnet	3	VCR	No	English	Education, recreation, leisure (5ab)
Letters from Caregivers S2	Songs for unsung heroes on the frontlines.	Saucy Momo Inc.	S4C Media Inc. storiesfor caregivers.com	No	TOR	No	English	Music, dance (8abc)

## APPENDIX C: PRODUCTION FINANCING CONTRACTS IN 2020-21

Project Title	Logline	Production Company	Lead Distribution Platform	Women in leadership	Region	OLMC	Language	CRTC Program Category
Living in Flow	Living in Flow focuses on six diverse characters and their journeys to improve their mental well-being with the use of water as a tool to get there.	Everyone's Famous Productions Inc.	VICE Studio Canada Inc.	3	Region	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
Ma vie aux rayons X	Ma vie aux rayons X informs the public on factors beyond nutrition and exercise that have direct and equal impact on health.	URBANIA TV3108 II Inc.	Savoir média	3	MTL	No	French	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
Six Degrés S2	Six Degrés tells the unique reality of a blind man who has only six small degrees to discover his new life.	Encore Télévision – Six Degrés Inc.	Société Radio-Canada, ICI Tou.tv	2	MTL	No	French	Drama, comedy (7)
Take Care	Special initiative with VICE to stimulate mental health content targeted to Youth.	VICE Productions (Captured) Inc.	VICE Studio Canada Inc.	2	TOR	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)
Tools for Caring	Tools for Caring puts the evidence-based and impactful power of positivity tools into the hands of those who provide care with a new skill each episode.	Full Swing Productions	S4C Media Inc. storiesforcaregivers.com	No	Region	No	English	Analysis, documentary (2ab)

## APPENDIX D: TELUS FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2021

### MANAGEMENT STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

The financial statements of TELUS Fund have been prepared by management and approved by the Board of Directors. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian Accounting Standards for Not-for-Profit Organizations. Management is responsible for the contents of the financial statements and the financial information contained in the annual report.

To assist management in the discharge of these responsibilities, TELUS Fund has a system of internal controls over financial reporting designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are accurate and complete in all material respects

The Board of Directors oversees management's responsibilities through an Executive Committee (Committee). The Committee will meet as required with both management and the external auditors to discuss the scope and findings of audits and other work that the external auditor may be requested to perform from time to time, to review financial information, and to discuss the adequacy of internal controls. The Committee reviews the annual financial statements and recommends them to the Board of Directors for approval.

TELUS Fund's external auditors, **Rolfe Benson, Chartered Professional Accountants**, have conducted an independent examination of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, performing such tests and other procedures as they consider necessary to express an opinion in their Auditors' Report. The External Auditors have full and unrestricted access to management and the Committee to discuss findings related to the integrity of TELUS Fund's financial reporting and the adequacy of internal control systems.

### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Directors of The TELUS Fund

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The TELUS Fund (the "Fund"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 August 2021, and the statements of operations and changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Fund as at 31 August 2021, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations ("ASNPO").

#### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Fund in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Other Matter

The financial statements of the Fund for the year ended 31 August 2020 were audited by another auditor who expressed an unmodified opinion on those financial statements on 20 October 2020.



## Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Fund or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Fund's financial reporting process.

## Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for

one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Fund's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Fund to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Rolfe, Benson LLP  
Chartered Professional Accountants  
Vancouver, Canada  
16 October 2021

**The TELUS Fund**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**August 31, 2021**

	2021	2020
<b>Assets</b>		<i>(Note 8)</i>
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 1,530,444	\$ 797,928
Marketable securities	10,956,219	9,990,988
Interest receivable	2,012	3,662
Due from TELUS Communications Inc. <i>(Note 3)</i>	60,920	—
	<b>\$12,549,595</b>	<b>\$10,792,578</b>
<b>Liability</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 124,767	\$ 404,560
Contingencies and commitments <i>(Note 7)</i>		
<b>Net Assets</b>		
<b>Unrestricted</b>	12,424,828	10,388,018
	<b>\$12,549,595</b>	<b>\$10,792,578</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS**



Nini Baird



Michel E. Bélec

**The TELUS Fund**  
**Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets**  
**for the Year Ended August 31, 2021**

	2021	2020
<b>Revenues</b>		
Contributions <i>(Note 3)</i>	\$ 4,877,334	\$ 4,623,205
Investment income net of fees <i>(Note 5)</i>	929,397	709,307
Recoupments	407,101	108,096
	<b>6,213,832</b>	<b>5,440,608</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Consulting fees	203,589	219,497
Professional and insurance fees	15,543	15,434
Marketing and communications	15,000	20,577
Office expense	11,641	4,523
Honoraria	11,399	14,138
Travel	—	365
Board expenses	—	40
	<b>257,172</b>	<b>274,574</b>
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses from operations</b>	<b>5,956,660</b>	<b>5,166,034</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>		
Program funding disbursements	2,982,560	3,403,924
Project promotion and discoverability	937,290	901,085
	<b>3,919,850</b>	<b>4,305,009</b>
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses for the year</b>	<b>2,036,810</b>	<b>861,025</b>
<b>Net Assets</b> , beginning of year	<b>10,388,018</b>	9,526,993
<b>Net Assets</b> , end of year	<b>\$12,424,828</b>	<b>\$10,388,018</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**The TELUS Fund  
Statement Of Cash Flows  
for the Year Ended August 31, 2021**

	2021	2020
<b>Cash flows provided by (used in)</b>		
<b>Operating activities</b>		
Excess of revenues over expenses for the year	<b>\$2,036,810</b>	\$ 861,025
Change in unrealized gain due to increase in value of investments	<b>(519,083)</b>	(72,898)
	<b>1,517,727</b>	788,127
Changes in non-cash working capital balances		
Marketable securities	<b>(446,148)</b>	(2,956,481)
Interest receivable	<b>1,650</b>	(434)
Other receivables	<b>–</b>	4,836
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	<b>(279,793)</b>	356,964
Due from TELUS Communications Inc.	<b>(60,920)</b>	–
	<b>732,516</b>	(1,806,988)
<b>Investing activity</b>		
Decrease in long-term investments	<b>–</b>	827,745
<b>Net increase (decrease) in cash</b>	<b>732,516</b>	(979,243)
<b>Cash, beginning of the year</b>	<b>797,928</b>	1,777,171
<b>Cash, end of the year</b>	<b>\$1,530,444</b>	\$ 797,928

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**The TELUS Fund  
Notes to Financial Statements for the Year Ended August 31, 2021**

**1. PURPOSE AND OPERATIONS**

The TELUS Fund (the “Fund”) is a not-for-profit organization incorporated under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act on 13 June 2013. The Fund effectively commenced operations on 1 September 2013. It is certified as an independent production fund by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (“CRTC”).

The purpose of the Fund is to encourage and support the creation of exceptional Canadian health and wellness content for television and/or digital media. The Fund receives cash contributions primarily from TELUS Communications Inc.’s broadcasting distribution undertakings as permitted by the CRTC. The Fund then makes disbursements in the form of recoupable advances to eligible productions which may be recovered, in accordance with the funding agreements, if the funded projects earn revenue. Since the purpose of CRTC’s contribution regime is to allow contributions to be funneled directly to eligible productions, all contributions to the Fund and any recoupment on equity or loans must be directed to eligible content productions within a period of two years from the date of the contribution or recoupment.

**2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The significant accounting policies are detailed as follows:

(a) Revenue recognition

The Fund follows the deferral method of accounting for revenue. Contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Interest and other investment income is recognized as revenue in the year that it is earned. Changes in fair value of equity instruments that are quoted in an active market are recognized as income in the period in which they are incurred. Recoupable advances are recognized as revenue in the year in which funded projects report earned revenue.

#### (b) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations require management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ materially from these estimates as additional information becomes available in the future.

#### (c) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, bank accounts and those items that are readily convertible into cash that mature in three months or less.

#### (d) Financial instruments

The Fund initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value when acquired or issued. With the exception of equity instruments that are quoted in an active market, the Fund subsequently measures all of its assets at amortized cost less impairment, if applicable. Equity instruments that are quoted in an active market are measured at fair value at each reporting period.

Financial assets are tested for impairment when changes in circumstances indicate the asset could be impaired.

Transaction costs on the acquisition, sale or issue of financial instruments are expensed for those items remeasured at fair value at each statement of financial position date and charged to the financial instrument for those measured at amortized cost.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash, interest receivable and due from TELUS Communications Inc.

Financial assets measured at fair value include marketable securities that are quoted in an active market.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

#### (e) Investments

Marketable securities that are readily liquidable are reported as current assets on the statement of financial position. Investments with fixed terms that

will not mature within one year are reported as non current assets on the statement of financial position. The Fund has cashable GIC investments of \$1,499,999 maturing in June 2022 that earn 0.48% per annum.

#### (f) Related parties

Related party transactions in the normal course of business are recorded at the exchange value.

#### (g) Income taxes

The Fund is incorporated as a not-for-profit society and therefore is not subject to income taxes.

#### (h) Program funding commitments

The development and production financing agreements that are entered into by the Fund with independent production companies define conditions and milestone dates to be met by the independent production companies prior to the disbursement of payments by the Fund. The Fund records payments as program funding disbursements in the statement of operations when the specific milestones have been achieved. The balance of funding commitments for production and financing agreements are identified in Note 7 for which specific funding milestones were not achieved by the fiscal year end.

### 3. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year the Fund received contributions of \$4,877,334 (2020 – \$4,623,205) from TELUS Communications Inc. These transactions are in the normal course of operations and measured at exchange value, the amount of consideration established and agreed to by the related parties. The amount receivable from TELUS Communications Inc. as at 31 August 2021 was \$60,920 (2020 – \$Nil).

### 4. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

The Fund's operations are dependent on one contributor, TELUS Communications Inc., which is required by the CRTC to direct a portion of its required contribution to Canadian programming under section 29 of the Broadcasting Distribution Regulations to one or more independently administered funds.

## 5. INVESTMENT INCOME

Investment income is reported on the statement of operations net of fees.

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Unrealized gain on increase in value	\$ 519,083	\$ 72,898
Other fund distributions	226,567	84,105
Realized gain on disposition of securities	219,581	478,632
Interest	12,378	23,579
Foreign exchange gain	-	44,991
Dividends	-	40,731
Investment fees	<u>(48,212)</u>	<u>(35,629)</u>
	<u>\$ 929,397</u>	<u>\$ 709,307</u>

## 6. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

### (a) Carrying values

The carrying value of financial assets measured at amortized cost is \$1,593,376 as at 31 August 2021 (2020 – \$801,590).

The carrying value of financial assets measured at fair value is \$10,956,219 as at 31 August 2021 (2020 – \$9,990,988).

The carrying value of financial liabilities measured at amortized cost is \$124,767 as at 31 August 2021 (2020 – \$404,560).

### (b) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that the Fund will incur a loss due to the failure by its debtors to meet their contractual obligations. The Fund assesses its credit risk as low for cash and interest receivable as cash is placed in a credit-worthy Canadian chartered bank and guaranteed investment certificates. Credit risk on the contributions receivable is limited due to the government-mandated requirement for TELUS Communications Inc. to direct a portion of its funding to Canadian media production.

### (c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Fund cannot meet demand for cash or fund its obligations as they come due. The Fund maintains adequate levels of working capital to ensure obligations can be met when they fall due. The nature of the Fund's operation is to disburse project funding only after it has

received contributions from TELUS Communications Inc. The Fund's bank accounts are held at one Canadian financial institution.

### (d) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument can fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Fund controls market risk by investing in conservative investment portfolios, money market funds, and guaranteed investment certificates in accordance with a detailed investment policy. For purposes of disclosure, the Fund further segregates market risk into two categories: interest risk and currency risk.

- (i) Interest rate risk is the risk that changes in interest rates can affect future cash flows or fair values of financial instruments. The Fund's exposure to interest rate risk is low as interest-bearing instruments are either commercial savings accounts or guaranteed investment certificates with maturity dates within a one year period.
- (ii) Currency risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument can fluctuate due to changes in foreign exchange rates. The Fund considers its currency exchange risk to be low as its investment portfolio is being managed by a professional manager and it is being managed with a detailed and conservative policy.

## 7. CONTINGENCIES AND COMMITMENTS

During the years ending 31 August 2014 to 2021 inclusive, the Fund authorized funding for ongoing development, production, promotion and discoverability activities that were not completed and for which not all funding milestones were completed by the respective fiscal year ends. The Fund has entered into commitments to make payments as follows:

	<u>2014 – 2021</u>	<u>2014 – 2020</u>
Cumulative funding commitments	\$ 28,544,559	\$ 26,108,543
Less cumulative disbursed funds	<u>(27,297,026)</u>	<u>(23,954,346)</u>
Undisbursed funding commitments	<u>\$ 1,247,533</u>	<u>\$ 2,154,197</u>

## 8. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain comparative figures have been reclassified from those previously presented to conform to the presentation of the 2021 financial statements.