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Documentary Calling Card program creates new opportunities for emerging documentary producers

ONTARIO FILM
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Toronto, Ontario – The Ontario Film Development Corporation, in partnership with TVOntario, is pleased to announce the launch of the Documentary Calling Card program, an initiative designed to create new professional skills development opportunities for Ontario’s emerging documentary filmmakers.

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Up to four teams of emerging Ontario producers and directors will receive support to create a half-hour “calling card” documentary for television with which to prove their readiness to make commercial length, market-supported projects. These will be aired on TVO’s *“The View From Here”*.

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“We’re thrilled that TVOntario recognizes our commitment to professional development by partnering with us on this important new program”, says Marcelle Lean, OFDC Chair. “By pooling our resources and expertise we are able to maximize the impact of the program for everyone.”



“Documentaries constitute an increasingly important sector in the Ontario media industries”, states Adam Knelman Ostry, Chief Executive Officer of the OFDC. “The Documentary Calling Card program will create new opportunities for emerging Ontario producers and filmmakers to showcase their abilities, enhance their careers, and compete more effectively in this growing market.”

The Documentary Calling Card program will be administered by the OFDC, and is modelled after their highly successful Calling Card program for dramatic shorts that supported, among other titles, the Genie Award-winning *“Moving Day”*. Financial support will be available for four documentaries annually, with two application deadlines per year. The completed films and the talent of the creative teams will be promoted through a program-sponsored industry screening and a premiere broadcast on TVOntario, with on-going support through the OFDC’s Calling Card Marketing Fund.

“TVOntario is taking its training and education mandate to heart with this initiative, and is proud to help develop the next generation of Ontario documentary filmmakers”, says Isabel Bassett, Chair of TVOntario. “When the OFDC asked us to partner with them on the Calling Card Documentary program we realized it was an excellent partnership. It will allow our audience to see creative documentaries from new Ontario filmmakers, and it will allow the filmmakers to hone their craft and showcase their talent.”

Project proposals should be for half-hour documentaries that are original, provocative, creative, and story-driven. Applications will be shortlisted based on creative merit by two industry readers, and the shortlisted teams will pitch to a jury of documentary industry professionals, including Rudy Buttignol, TVO's Creative Head of Documentaries and Drama, for a final greenlight decision. Successful applicants will receive \$15,000 in assistance from the OFDC together with a \$10,000 pre-license from TVOntario.

Ms. Lean and Ms. Bassett announced the new initiative to a sold-out Opening Night audience at the Hot Docs 2000 Canadian International Documentary Film Festival that included most of the movers and shakers in the Canadian documentary industry. The Hot Docs Festival will be an additional industry partner on the program, together with the Canadian Independent Film Caucus (CIFC).

"This is a long overdue initiative", says Cornelia Principe, co-Chair, CIFC Toronto Chapter. "There are a lot of talented filmmakers looking for that break that will take their career to the next level. This program is exactly what our community needs."

Additional program partners include Canon Canada, who will lend Documentary Calling Card producers their Canon XL1 mini DV camcorder, and post-production partners Primitive Digital and Kitchen Sync Digital Audio, who will be offering service support to the successful applicants.

The Documentary Calling Card program is coordinated by OFDC Skills and Marketing Initiatives (SDMI), which provides practical opportunities for the development of Ontario's emerging producers in partnership with the industry. SDMI is one of four departments of the OFDC, a provincial government agency which provides a range of innovative programs and services to stimulate the growth of Ontario's film, television and digital media industry.

The View From Here is TVO's Gemini Award-winning series of the best commissioned documentaries from independent Canadian filmmakers. Ian Brown is host, and Rudy Buttignol is commissioning editor.

TVOntario's mission is to support lifelong learning in Ontario by providing quality educational programming services in English and French, using television and other communications technologies, and to develop new media content to complement on-air children's programs and provide skills training to adults across the province.

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For more information go to the website: www.ofdc.on.ca or contact:

James Weyman, Program Consultant,
Skills Development and Marketing Initiatives
Ontario Film Development Corporation
(416) 314-6858 ext. 327
jweyman@ofdc.on.ca

Rosanne Meandro, Publicist,
Documentaries, History and Science
TVOntario
(416) 484 2600 ext. 2389
rosanne_meandro@tvo.org