

Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA)

Submission to the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and
International Trade

**Study on the impact and utilization of Canadian culture and arts in Canadian
foreign policy and diplomacy**

October 29, 2018

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Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade
c/o Ms. Marie-Eve Belzile, A/Deputy Principal Clerk
The Senate of Canada
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A4

To the Members of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade:

Enclosed you will find the Canadian Media Producers Association's (CMPA) formal submission related to the *Study on the impact and utilization of Canadian culture and arts in Canadian foreign policy and diplomacy*.

The CMPA is the national advocacy organization for independent producers, representing hundreds of companies engaged in the development, production, and distribution of English-language content made for television, cinema and digital media channels.

We work on behalf of our members to promote the continued success of the Canadian production sector, including the diverse content made by our members for both domestic and international audiences. Specifically, we organize and participate in many international initiatives, represent industry interests to government, negotiate labour agreements, oversee copyright-related activities, offer mentorship programs, deliver professional development sessions, hold an annual conference and produce industry publications.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our comments regarding the impact and utilization of Canadian culture and arts in Canadian foreign policy and diplomacy in the following submission. We would be pleased to provide any additional information the Standing Senate Committee may require.

Sincerely,



Reynolds Mastin
President and CEO



Introduction

1. The Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) is pleased to provide the following comments in the context of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade's *Study on the impact and utilization of Canadian culture and arts in Canadian foreign policy and diplomacy, and other related matters*.

CMPA in the international arena

2. The CMPA is engaged in helping foster effective business to business relationships to advance the commercial interests of Canada's screen-based industry. As such, we consider our association and its members to be part of a broader network of cultural diplomacy efforts – a network that includes federal and provincial governments, and various provincial and municipal agencies that strive to promote their artists and cultural industries on the world scene.
3. We have been active in the international arena for over 25 years, promoting production partnerships, expanding and sharing international market knowledge, and strengthening links with our industry partners around the world.
4. Working in partnership with Canadian industry stakeholders and government, we strive to meet our international objectives by:
 - Leading missions;
 - Coordinating CMPA presence at international events (e.g. festivals, markets, conferences) to support Canadian producers and the Canada brand;
 - Assisting with access to foreign events, markets, workshops, training sessions and educational opportunities which are aimed at prospective co-production participants; and,
 - Providing information to our members on foreign markets pertinent to financial support, technical capabilities and key organizations.
5. We also regularly liaise with our counterparts in key foreign media markets to help carry out our respective international objectives. One of most recent collaborative efforts involved signing a memorandum of understanding earlier this month with our counterparts in Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, France, India, Italy, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, the US and the UK under the umbrella of a new Global Creative Alliance (GCA).



6. The aim of the GCA is to forge broad cooperative relationships to encourage:
 - Broader collaboration in the areas of co-development and co-productions;
 - The visit of delegations from partner territories and maintaining cooperative relations in international business; and,
 - Sharing of market intelligence, reports and other associated statistics to further benefit mutual knowledge.

7. Ultimately, our international efforts are aimed at increasing interest from foreign producers, buyers and financiers, increasing direct knowledge of foreign markets, strengthening individual relationships with co-production partners, increasing export opportunities – which is especially important for small and medium-sized companies – and promoting greater country penetration for producers through contacts made during missions and other forms of international presence.

8. By extension, our members are active ambassadors for Canada: as independent media producers, they seek to develop mutually beneficial relationships with their foreign counterparts, and build on mutual understanding, respect and trust. Canadian independent media producers have regular dealings with their counterparts around the globe, with foreign governments and with international distributors, broadcasters and creative talent.

Canada in the international co-production arena

9. While there are a number of challenges facing the industry as a result of disruption caused by the digital shift, there is still a solid foundation for the industry to build on. Borderless consumption of content is now prevalent and our industry is able to capitalize on new digital routes to reach audiences around the world. Cultural diplomacy further amplifies global outreach and demand for Canadian-made works by helping to generate return on investment in the form of program sales and co-production partnerships.



10. As reported in *Profile 2017*¹, the media production industry in Canada reached over \$8 billion CAD in total volume of film and television production.
11. Canada has co-production agreements with almost 60 countries. For over 15 years, the UK and France have been Canada's main co-production partners, with Australia, Germany and Ireland rounding out the list of main partners. With the top two partners making up 65% of the total co-production budgets, there is considerable potential for increases in production activity outside of these two countries.
12. Co-productions continue to be critical in the international arena: they contribute to the vitality of the audiovisual industries of all partners and to the development of their economic and cultural exchanges, as well as offer an opportunity to share best practices and learn from each partner's expertise. They are important vehicles to strengthen international ties in the audiovisual sector, and a way to promote and market Canadian talent abroad. They also enhance each partnering country's production capacity by drawing foreign investment and facilitating project financing for works that might not otherwise be produced, thereby boosting production budgets, generating employment and developing local talent. In the last 10 years, Canada's screen content producers partnered in over 700 international co-productions totaling over \$5 billion CAD.

Support for the Canadian cultural industries in the global marketplace

13. We commend this government for holding strong on maintaining the cultural exemption in the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement. The exemption is a key component of our robust creative economy – an economy based on a solid framework that recognizes and preserves Canada's sovereign right to adopt policies and measures aimed at strengthening its cultural industries in the digital era, that supports our country's diverse cultural expressions and that ensures the vitality of Canadian enterprises that produce and disseminate these expressions.

¹ Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) – *Profile 2017: Economic Report on the Screen-Based Media Production Industry in Canada* ("Profile 2017"), produced in collaboration with the Association québécoise de la production médiatique (AQPM), the Department of Canadian Heritage and Telefilm Canada, (Ottawa: CMPA, February 2018): <http://cmpawebsite.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Profile-2017.pdf>.

14. Government's other recent actions aimed at elevating Canada's international business and trade presence are also welcome. Canada joining Eurimages (thereby becoming the first non-European country to join this common cultural support fund) and concluding the Strategic Partnership Agreement with the EU are but two recent examples of successful proactive measures taken to build a strong nexus with our European counterparts, and optimize the potential for attracting financing and achieving commercial success.
15. In 2016, the Minister of Canadian Heritage launched broad consultations on how to adapt our country's content policy to the digital world and seize the full potential of international markets. In our submission to the Department of Canadian Heritage, we recommended that a "Brand Canada Strategy" be developed to target both domestic and select international audiences, with the ultimate goal of generating strong interest in, and demand for, Canadian linear and interactive screen content. We believed, and continue to strongly believe, that there is a need for a concerted voice between the various federal agencies that are active on the international scene.
16. We recommended that the Department work in collaboration with industry stakeholders, including other levels of government and provincial agencies, to develop and implement a concerted national export strategy for Canadian screen-based content. The strategy would comprise a range of modernized export programs and services necessary for Canada's media content industries to be globally competitive and even more active in international co-production.
17. When the Department subsequently released its *Creative Canada Policy Framework*, we were heartened to learn about, among other positive pillars of support, our government's commitment to invest in our creators and cultural entrepreneurs, and to promote the discovery and distribution of Canadian content at home and abroad. Both of these pillars involve cross-collaboration between government departments (including Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada [ISED], and Global Affairs Canada) and both are essential for effective and far reaching cultural diplomacy.

18. The establishment of the Creative Industries Council (CIC), co-chaired by the Department and ISED, is a prime example of a positive collaborative endeavour intended to focus on concrete objectives to access new markets and coordinate Canada's international presence.² We have encouraged government to structure the CIC and its member composition in such way as to reflect a diverse array of creative voices in order to enhance cross-cultural industry collaboration and nurture vibrant discussion on the strategic domestic and international direction of our creative sectors. As such, the inclusion of representatives from Canada's screen-based media production industry is essential. The CMPA remains eager for the opportunity to represent our membership of over 400 Canadian content companies on the CIC, and to recommend the participation of leading independent media production executives whose entrepreneurial accomplishments and global experience would add significant value to the government's near and longer term economic and cultural diplomacy efforts.
19. We also welcomed the Department's actions to enhance in-market connections in strategic international territories and markets through the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (CTCS); specifically, through a greater number of cultural and trade officers in Canada and in key Canadian missions able to assist companies entering foreign markets by, among other valuable services, disseminating market intelligence and providing export guidance. The CTCS is an important diplomacy and export mechanism for the positioning of the Canadian screen-based content industry in the global market.
20. In addition, we commended the new investment of \$125 million over five years to support Canada's first *Creative Export Strategy*³ (Strategy) predicated on the development of new tools to facilitate access to information on federal export programs and market opportunities for Canadian creators. These tools would involve cross-collaboration with a number of entities, including with Export Development Canada, the Business Development Bank of Canada, the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) and diplomatic missions abroad.⁴

² Department of Canadian Heritage, *Creative Canada Policy Framework* : <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/creative-canada/framework.html#a9>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.



21. The recently launched *Creative Export Canada* fund is a very new and welcome measure of the Strategy.⁵ The fund helps fill in some of the export support gap left by the winding down of the federal Trade Routes and PromArt programs in the late 2000s. In tandem with successful federal and provincial export programs such as *CanExport*, *Export Guarantee Program* and *Global Opportunities for Associations*, it is intended to further amplify the international reach of Canada's creative industries through annual funding to high-potential projects and initiatives, and promote the discoverability of Canadian creative works regardless of platform or format.⁶

Digital diplomacy

22. Given Canada's finite institutional and financial resources commitment to cultural diplomacy, we believe that digital diplomacy would maximize the impact of committed resources devoted to our industry and, by extension, to cultural diplomacy. Digital diplomacy is usually understood as governmental relations on digital platforms. The National Film Board's and TFO's YouTube channels are just two homegrown examples of successful outreach to world audiences at a fraction of the cost of physical presence. Canada's digital diplomacy could also build on existing initiatives such as the National Canadian Film Day and the YouTube channel Encore+, showcasing iconic Canadian content and promoting the discoverability of Canadian content by domestic and foreign audiences.

23. Successful examples of "digital diplomacy" undertaken by other countries abound:

- UniFrance Film is the agency responsible for promoting France's cinema to international markets. The 8th edition of their online cinema festival *MyFrenchFilm Festival* attracted more than 10 million views.
- Germany, France, the UK, Spain, Italy, Norway, China and Japan are but a few examples of countries that operate public international broadcasting services, usually with a complimentary video on demand service. In 2016, cultural diplomacy networks British Council (UK), Centre for Fine Arts/BOZAR (Belgium), EUNIC Global (EU), European Cultural Foundation (Netherlands) and Institut français (France) formed a

⁵ Government of Canada, *Creative Export Canada*: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/creative-export-canada/application-guidelines.html#a1>

⁶ Ibid.



consortium led by the Goethe-Institut (Germany) to support the implementation of the Cultural Diplomacy Platform. The purpose of the Platform is to “gather all the actors – governments, regions, cities, cultural institutes, civil society organisations, artists, scientists, performers, individuals and many more – of the European external cultural relations, and engage them on a continuous basis, receive feedback, policy advice and support”.⁷

- The Japan Communication Media Center has translated a library of 1,700 programs and made them available to TV stations in developing countries. These programs include documentaries, educational programs and programs for children and fiction. Since its creation in 1991, the Center has provided a total of 12,028 programs to 96 countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East.

Conclusion

24. Looking ahead, the CMPA would be pleased to collaborate with our government and industry partners on crafting a renewed and concerted cultural diplomacy strategy. Defining an evaluation framework with performance indicators would give stakeholders a common understanding of any gaps and challenges both in the short and longer term. We believe this exercise could be undertaken on an annual basis to keep pace with rapid changes in technology as well as political and market conditions in priority markets.

Sincerely,



Reynolds Mastin
President and CEO
Canadian Media Producers Association

⁷ <https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/about-us-2/>

