



CBC LAUNCHES "ACCESSCBC," A NEW INITIATIVE FOR CREATORS WITH A DISABILITY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE REELABILITIES FILM FESTIVAL

New pilot program offering training, mentorship and financing support to deaf and disabled creators launches today, with submissions for scripted and documentary projects open now through January 26

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January 5, 2022 – CBC today announced **AccessCBC: A CBC Initiative for Creators with a Disability**, a new national pilot program for Deaf and disabled creators that will provide training, mentorship and, on certain selected projects, financing support, to create scripted and documentary content. For this pilot program, CBC is partnering with the ReelAbilities Film Festival Toronto presented by the Miles Nadal JCC (RAFFTO), which provides creative opportunities and training for persons with a disability who work in film, television and/or video content production. Detailed information is available on the AccessCBC information page hosted by RAFFTO at reelabilities.org/toronto/accesscbc.

"The Canadian media industry is full of exceptional creative talent, and we are proud to partner with the ReelAbilities team to launch this new initiative that encourages even more of those voices to be heard and amplified," said Sally Catto, General Manager, Entertainment, Factual & Sports, CBC. "This first of its kind program will provide professional development, skill enhancement, mentorship and funding opportunities to creators who have the necessary talent to thrive in the media industry when not faced with accessibility barriers."

"At ReelAbilities we're constantly blown away by the immense talent and innovation within Deaf and Disability communities," said Ophira Calof, Program Coordinator at ReelAbilities Film Festival Toronto. "We're thrilled to be partnering with the CBC on this groundbreaking project, increasing opportunities for storytellers who are often excluded from the media industry along with showcasing the possibilities a more accessible media landscape can bring."

"The Miles Nadal JCC is committed to the integration of people of all abilities into our programs, and ReelAbilities is just one of the many ways we strive to create a culture of inclusion," said Harriet Wichin, Executive Director of the Miles Nadal JCC. "We are unbelievably proud to host this Film Festival that brings together the community to explore, embrace, and celebrate the diversity of our shared human experience. The partnership between RAFF and AccessCBC will open the doors wider to include a world of new creative talent with important stories to tell."

AccessCBC is designed for creators in two streams: scripted comedy/drama and short documentaries. Ten creators will be invited to join the scripted pitch development stream where they will participate in multiple development workshops tailored to scripted content. Over the course of these workshops, participants will receive practical experience writing pitch documents, individualised feedback, coaching on how to package and market their project, and the opportunity to network with other industry professionals from CBC and across the industry.

In the short documentary stream, filmmakers will take part in a two-month development mentorship that will see 10 participants shortlisted and awarded development funding. The

participants will be closely mentored by a CBC executive who will provide guidance on the development process. At the end of the development period, one of the 10 shortlisted projects will be greenlit for production.

Submissions are open to creators with a demonstrated interest in the media industry who self-identify as having a disability and are not employed by CBC. For eligibility purposes, AccessCBC will follow the Accessible Canada Act's definition of a disability: any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society. The eligibility criteria of "a demonstrated interest in the media industry" includes previous storytelling experience and past or present employment, in any media industry position, including volunteering and workshops.

Additional information about the scripted and documentary streams, the application process, including eligibility criteria, and support for accessibility needs during the application process can be found on the AccessCBC information page hosted by RAFFTO at reelabilities.org/toronto/accesscbc.

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About CBC/Radio-Canada

CBC/Radio-Canada is Canada's national public broadcaster. Through our mandate to inform, enlighten and entertain, we play a central role in strengthening Canadian culture. As Canada's trusted news source, we offer a uniquely Canadian perspective on news, current affairs and world affairs. Our distinctively homegrown entertainment programming draws audiences from across the country. Deeply rooted in communities, CBC/Radio-Canada offers diverse content in English, French and eight Indigenous languages. We also deliver content in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Punjabi and Tagalog, as well as both official languages, through Radio Canada International (RCI). We are leading the transformation to meet the needs of Canadians in a digital world.

About ReelAbilities Film Festival Toronto

The ReelAbilities Film Festival Toronto is the Canadian chapter of the largest film festival in North America dedicated to promoting awareness and appreciation of the lives, stories and artistic expressions of people with disabilities and/or who are Deaf. RAFFTO showcases award-winning and compelling shorts centering Deaf and disability cultures, along with providing a platform for film industry professionals to learn about accessible screenings, relaxed performances, captioning, and described audio. Through participating in the festival and year-round programming, artists with disabilities and Deaf artists find a platform for their work, networking opportunities, and professional development, and audiences discover the unique voices and art of underrepresented filmmakers. RAFFTO is presented by the Miles Nadal JCC in Toronto, ON.

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For more information on AccessCBC submissions, please visit reelabilities.org/toronto/accesscbc and contact info.accesscbc@gmail.com.