

## **CONSENSUS SET OF PRINCIPLES GUIDING AND SUSTAINING DIVERSE, NON-PROFIT, COMMUNITY BROADCAST PROGRAMMING AND DISTRIBUTION MODELS**

In preparation for the February 13, 2018, deadline to participate in Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2017-359<sup>1</sup> on future models, the undersigned organizations have prepared a set of principles to guide groups and individuals interested in sustaining diverse, non-profit, community programming and distribution.

### **Signatories (in alphabetical order):**

#### **Organizational Signatories**

- CHUO 89.1 FM (Erin Flynn, Station Manager)
- CKUT Radio 90.3 FM
- Community Media Advocacy Centre
- Debbie Brisebois, Executive Director, Inuit Broadcasting Corporation
- First Mile Connectivity Consortium
- Indigenous Culture and Media Innovations
- Internet Society
- Inuvialuit Communications Society
- Isuma Distribution International (IsumaTV)
- Morris Prokop, Executive Director, OKâlaKatiget Society
- Native Communications Society of the NWT
- Nigel Bariffe, President, Urban Alliance on Race Relations
- Nuxalk Radio

#### **Individual Signatories**

- Becky Lentz, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, McGill University
- Claudia Sicondolfo, PhD Candidate, Cinema and Media Arts, York University
- David Skinner, Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, York University
- Dolores Chew, Faculty, Marianopolis College
- Jooneed Khan, Executive Committee Member, Independent Community Television - Montreal
- Lorna Roth, Professor Emeritus, Department of Communication Studies, Concordia University
- Mark Watson, Executive Producer, Nipivut - Montreal Inuit Radio Show, and Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Concordia University
- Michael Lithgow, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Athabasca University
- Robert Hackett, Professor, School of Communication, Simon Fraser University
- Shirley Roburn, Visiting Scholar, Department of Art History and Communication Studies, McGill University
- Sid Tan, media producer and community organizer Vancouver

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<sup>1</sup> <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2017/2017-359-3.htm>

## Common Principles on Future Programming Distribution Models

1. Whereas Canada is a signatory to binding international agreements (such as the *United Nations' Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*,<sup>2</sup> the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*,<sup>3</sup> and the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*<sup>4</sup>), that guarantee stakeholders including First Nation, Inuit, Métis, linguistic and ethnic, and disAbility groups, telecommunications and broadcasting rights through ownership and control of communication infrastructure to produce and distribute content that reflects diverse interests and needs while protecting and promoting cultures and languages;
2. Whereas the current and future reality of media production, curation, distribution, and consumption consists of multimedia, multiplatform, hyperlocal and hyperglobal formats, the *Telecommunications and Broadcasting Acts*, and the divisions between those two sectors, stand in conflict with the current and future reality of technical integration between telecommunication and broadcasting production, distribution, consumption, and use;
3. Whereas the *Broadcasting Act* distinguishes three sectors -- Public, Private and Community -- and public policy in Canada has invested billions in programming and infrastructure, today's communication industry is dominated by vertically integrated companies who own multimedia conglomerates that profit from hyper-concentration within the system, while non-profit community media are overburdened and unsustainable because existing funding mechanisms, are increasingly scarce due to new (untaxed) distribution platforms and provide little benefit for much of the Community sector;
4. Whereas diverse stakeholders representing all regions of Canada, including rural, remote, Northern, and isolated communities,<sup>5</sup> should participate in consultations, public engagement at the CRTC is hampered by a lack of accessible media coverage of the Commission, few community-based consultations, limited research opportunities, and financial barriers for not-for-profit advocacy groups who must absorb the cost of participating and apply for scarce funds to cover these costs, if approved;
5. **Given the above, the signatories of this document respectfully resolve that:**
6. The CRTC should uphold Canada's international obligations by guaranteeing the communication rights of First Nation, Inuit, Métis, linguistic, ethnic, and disAbility

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<sup>2</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=31038&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31038&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2.html>

<sup>5</sup> See Principle 1 from Key Principles presented to the CRTC Broadband Fund Proceeding 2017-112 by the Nunavut Economic Forum Coalition (pp. 4-5, <https://services.crtc.gc.ca/pub/DocWebBroker/OpenDocument.aspx?DMID=2921406>) and see Paragraph 2 from Final Comments of the First Mile Connectivity Consortium for Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2017-112 (p. 1, <https://services.crtc.gc.ca/pub/DocWebBroker/OpenDocument.aspx?DMID=3034564>).

communities within the system and serving urban, rural, remote, Northern, and isolated regions;

7. The CRTC should collaborate with First Nation, Inuit, Métis, linguistic, ethnic, and disAbility communities to deliver better outcomes for government and all peoples in the state of Canada through better consultation, more openness, and collaboration;<sup>6</sup>
8. The Commission should re-imagine broadcasting and telecommunications as one system supported equally by three sectors -- Public, Private and Community -- who provide a communication ecosystem in multimedia formats;
9. The Commission should commit to maintaining the important place, contribution, and sustainability of community-based not-for-profit communication infrastructure for media creation and distribution;
10. The CRTC should endeavor to support alternative models of distribution by recognizing and working with communities to reserve and allocate licenses and bandwidth for non-profits to provide community, First Nation, Inuit, Métis, ethnic, and disAbility multimedia in every broadcast zone and distribution platform;
11. The CRTC should assess the communication ecosystem from licence to content to infrastructure to participation. This approach positions digital infrastructure, bandwidth, spectrum, production, broadcasting, platforms, technical aspects and associated capacities as community-managed resources that can be aggregated to support access to sustainable and appropriate communication solutions;
12. The CRTC should explore ways to identify and support strategies that enable the development of local multimedia centres designed and sustained by community/regional production and broadcast initiatives, and thereby provide a decentralized, community-focused “first mile” model of digital infrastructure and content production that supports innovation, develops local skills, and creates employment and other participation opportunities among urban, rural, remote, Northern, and isolated communities in progress on the road to becoming a nation of innovators;<sup>7</sup>
13. The Commission should review existing funds available for public participation, media producers, and distributors. That process should be similar to that used to develop the Commission’s Broadband Funding Mechanism (CRTC 2015-134 and CRTC 2016-112). Any fund might be designed as a public benefit tied to industry revenues, similar to the model used to develop the Broadband Funding Mechanism and other initiatives, and should be apportioned to include distinct and dedicated streams of funding for:
  - a. Public, Private and Community-owned media;
  - b. Languages (Official Language Minorities, Third, and Indigenous), First Nation, Inuit, Métis, Ethnic and disAbility media;

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<sup>6</sup> <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/rp2020.htm>

<sup>7</sup> <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/rp161221/rp161221.htm>

- c. Print (including online publication), Audio (radio, online streaming, and podcast services), and Video (film, television and online), as well as Multimedia formats that integrate print, audio, video or any future media format;
- d. Public Participation, Media Education, Digital Learning, and Research.

This fund should operate at arms length of government or corporate control, should offer non-taxed allocations for not-for-profit organizations, and should require public and accessible reporting of funds to ensure delivery on promises.<sup>8</sup> The Commission should establish a public proceeding to determine the specifics of this Fund.

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<sup>8</sup> See Principle 7 from Key Principles presented to the CRTC Broadband Fund Proceeding 2017-112 by the Nunavut Economic Forum Coalition (pp. 4-5, *ibid.*). The Commission has established internal precedent in the formation of governance structures involving representatives from a diversity of communities and organizations. One example is the CRTC-associated Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC). Another is the CRTC-associated Broadcasting Participation Fund (BPF). At least two thirds of the BPF's directors represent public interest and consumer groups with non-commercial mandates.