

Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund

\$80 M invested in over 750 projects since 1997

www.bellfund.ca

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Objectives

To advance the Canadian broadcasting system by funding excellent Canadian digital media associated with Canadian television programs

To develop the Canadian new media digital sector, its creative and business growth

Structure

- CRTC mandated private Fund
- Independent Board operates at arm's length from the parent company
- Bell TV contributes a percentage of their revenues annually to the Fund (over \$11M)
- \$10 M endowment from BCE/CTV
Benefits – interest used for Development Program

Financial Support “Production Program”

- grants of up to 75% of the costs of production of the new media component to a maximum of \$250,000
- broadcaster “bonus” to match cash contributions from any broadcasters, to a maximum of \$100,000
- In addition, grants of up to 75% of the Canadian broadcast licence fee to a maximum of \$75,000 for the television component
- New “Low Budget” program for budgets under \$100,000 eligible for grants up to 75% of the budget; no funding for associated tv program

Financial Support “Development Program”

- Grants up to 75% of the costs of development of the new media digital property to a maximum of \$50,000
- “Professional development” grants to non-profit industry organizations for training and educational purposes

Project Eligibility

- A broadcast licence for the television component, and a Broadcast Support Form for the new media digital content are the key eligibility triggers
- The television component must meet 8 out of 10 points Canadian content certification
- Eligible programs may *not* be news, reporting and actualities, or sports
- Applications must be submitted prior to completion of principal photography and prior to commencement of the new media component
- new media projects may *not* be corporate, promotional or stand-alone (like CD-ROMS, arcade games)

Evaluation

- The primary criteria is *excellence*
- Emphasis is on interactivity and a “wow” factor
- Projects are rated based on content, interaction between the tv program and the new media project, design, technology, business and marketing plan, financing and budget, strength of the broadcaster support

Evaluation process

- Three deadlines per year: February 1, May 1 and October 1
- Evaluators review and analyze projects in detail
- Evaluators meet to discuss and pitch projects
- Evaluators make priority recommendations to the Board
- The Board receives all materials and makes final decisions

How are they financed?

- The average production budget is approximately \$ 350,000 - \$400,000
- Budgets range from \$75,000 to over \$1M
- Typical sources of financing include: Bell Fund, broadcaster licence, Canadian Television Fund, tax credits, provincial funding agencies, broadcasters, Le Fonds Quebecor, government/educational sponsors...and producer deferrals...
- IT'S TOUGH!!

Revenue Models

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- Advertising/sponsorship/branding
- International licensing
- Subscription fees/membership
- syndication
- Pay-per-download
- Wireless fees
- E-commerce, merchandising
- Licensing content and technology

Other Bell Fund activities and resources

- Publications: New Media, New Business
- “Tips for Success” : comprehensive summary
- Research; bliki
- Training events and workshops
- Legal templates
- International promotion/trade missions

Good luck!

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