



Canadian Media Guild

La Guilde canadienne des médias

CWA/SCA CANADA

**CBC/Radio-Canada, now more than ever, must play its central role
in Canada's media system**

Submission in response to BNC CRTC 2019-379

February 20, 2020

Introduction and Context

1. The Canadian Media Guild (CMG) is a national union with 4,500 CBC/Radio-Canada members outside Québec and the City of Moncton. CMG members are on-air hosts and anchors, reporters, videographers, producers, sound and lighting technicians, media librarians, IT, finance, communications and administrative specialists, as well as freelance contributors. We are the dedicated, talented workers who create and produce high-quality news, current affairs, and cultural programming, as well as other original content available across all CBC/Radio-Canada platforms. As workers at CBC/Radio-Canada, we have a deep understanding and experience of the practical work and combined efforts it takes to sustain and operate the national public broadcaster every day.

2. We are pleased to share our firsthand knowledge and unique perspective in this public proceeding. We fully support the renewal of CBC/Radio-Canada's broadcasting licences, and we request to appear at the public hearing in order to comment and provide more material on any additional information that becomes available by that time.

3. It is important to acknowledge that this process to renew CBC/Radio-Canada licences is taking place in an unusual context. The *Broadcasting Act*¹ which currently governs the public broadcaster and this licence renewal process is up for review, and the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Legislative Review Panel (BTLR) has just issued its final report² with recommendations that seek to bring significant changes to the media ecosystem in Canada, including for CBC/Radio-Canada.

4. In Canada as elsewhere, technological changes have brought major disruptions that are having profound impacts on media systems, including the ability to provide quality news and information, combat disinformation, and protect employment opportunities in the industry.

5. According to the 2020 report from the Local News Research project, 251 news outlets have closed across Canada since 2008³, many in small- and medium-sized communities, and thousands of journalists and other media workers have been laid off.⁴

6. That recent BTLR report titled *Canada's communications future: Time to act* found that "While advertising revenues for newspapers, radio, and television undertakings (including from their online services) are in decline (...) It is estimated that Google and Facebook receive almost

¹ Broadcasting Act (S.C. 1991, c.11) <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/b-9.01/>

² Canada's communications future: Time to act <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/110.nsf/eng/00012.html>

³ Local News Research Project <http://localnewsresearchproject.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/LocalNewsMapDataFebruary2020.pdf>

⁴ Canadian Media Guild data shows 10,000 job losses <https://j-source.ca/article/canadian-media-guild-data-shows-10000-job-losses-in-past-five-years/>

75 per cent of online advertising revenues in Canada. By comparison, the websites of traditional television and newspapers only account for 8.5 per cent of all Internet advertising.”⁵

7. The report concludes that “the current model for supporting news is not sustainable. The traditional news industry in Canada, as in many countries around the world, is facing a crisis, which has serious implications for Canada's democratic system and social values.”⁶

8. In addition, no serious discussion about CBC/Radio-Canada can overlook the fact that our national public broadcaster continues to be severely underfunded. This is another contextual element we must keep in mind, even as we discuss a strong future role for CBC/Radio-Canada.

9. Even before successive cuts to its parliamentary appropriations and unfunded inflation are taken into account, CBC/Radio-Canada is one of the lowest funded national public broadcasters in OECD countries. Where public broadcasters in the UK and in France respectively get \$150 and \$73 in funding per capita to meet their mandates, CBC/Radio-Canada receives \$29 per capita⁷ to deliver services to Canadians in two official languages, eight Indigenous languages and across six time zones. Recent additional funding brought the per capita funding to \$34, still well below the average of \$87 per person per year in OECD countries for public broadcasting funding.

10. A recent Forum for Research and Policy in Communications study found that “when considered in terms of daily life in Canada, the funding received from Parliament by CBC for its operations has decreased 54%, from 14 cents per person per day in 1985, to 6 cents per person per day in 2019.” The study also found that “funding for CBC’s operations has not kept pace with economic growth: since 2009 Canada’s Gross Domestic Product has increased by 21% while public funding for CBC’s operations decreased by 11%”⁸

11. This is why CMG, supporters of public broadcasting, Canadians in minority language communities, and other groups that benefit from the public broadcaster’s mandate, as well as other concerned citizens, have been calling for appropriate levels of funding to allow CBC/Radio-Canada to play its role in our culture, communities and media. We have proposed that the per capita funding increase to \$50 per person.

12. Chronic underfunding is also in part why CMG questions renewed calls to drop advertising from CBC/Radio-Canada platforms. Not only did revenue advertising help keep the national public broadcaster afloat over decades of underfunding and continuous cuts, but there is no

⁵ Canada's communications future: Time to act <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/110.nsf/eng/00012.html>

⁶ Canada's communications future: Time to act <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/110.nsf/eng/00012.html>

⁷ Canada's communications future: Time to act <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/110.nsf/eng/00012.html>

⁸ An analysis of CBC’s financial history from 1937 to 2019

<http://frpc.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Public-funding-of-CBC-operations-2020-4-February.pdf>

evidence that removing ads would be beneficial either to CBC/Radio-Canada's public mandate, or to the system as a whole.

13. In a 2016 article titled *Takings ads out of the CBC will kill everything else*⁹, author and publisher Ken Whyte argued that those who “want the CBC to quit selling ads, in part to save its private competitors, which are struggling” are wrong, because the “CBC is actually supporting the Canadian digital media market.”

14. Whyte explained that “In today's digital world, established Canadian media properties are a category, against a number of competing categories, not least of these being Google and Facebook. Established Canadian media are a small category, barely relevant against the giants from the south. The CBC is a large part of the established Canadian media mix ((which is why traditional publishers and broadcasters hate it). But if the CBC were to go, the category would be smaller and less useful to media buyers in reaching desirable audiences. Google and Facebook would get richer still.”

15. His conclusion was that “the certain outcome of an ad-ban at CBC will be to speed the collapse of established media properties in Canada.”

16. It is also important to keep in mind that public broadcasters in most industrialized countries carry advertising¹⁰.

17. Sustainable, long-term funding for CBC/Radio-Canada is overdue, and we note widespread agreement on that point. The government has indicated it plans to act quickly on some of the BTLR recommendations, and we look forward to thoughtful, broad and evidence-based discussions on increasing CBC/Radio-Canada funding, strengthening the public broadcaster's independence, and securing its unique mandate within a robust media system that supports a diversity of voices.

18. Against this backdrop of instability in Canada's media system, CBC/Radio-Canada as the public media option for Canadians has never been more vital. Our democracy, our culture and our connection to each other in our communities and across the country rely on it. Canada needs a stronger and more ambitious CBC/Radio-Canada that must be empowered to step up and deliver on its full mandate as outlined in the Broadcasting Act:

⁹ Takings ads out of the CBC will kill everything else <http://www.kwhyte.com/single-post/2016/11/24/Taking-ads-out-of-the-CBC-will-kill-everything-else>

¹⁰ Why Advertising on CBC/Radio-Canada is Good Public Policy <https://site-cbc.radio-canada.ca/documents/vision/strategy/latest-studies/nordicity-advertising-impact-analysis-en.pdf>

(l) the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, as the national public broadcaster, should provide radio and television services incorporating a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens and entertains;

(m) the programming provided by the Corporation should

(i) be predominantly and distinctively Canadian, reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while serving the special needs of those regions,

(ii) actively contribute to the flow and exchange of cultural expression,

(iii) be in English and in French, reflecting the different needs and circumstances of each official language community, including the particular needs and circumstances of English and French linguistic minorities,

(iv) strive to be of equivalent quality in English and French,

(v) contribute to shared national consciousness and identity,

(vi) be made available throughout Canada by the most appropriate and efficient means and as resources become available for the purpose, and

(vii) reflect the multicultural and multiracial nature of Canada.¹¹

Recommendation 1– CMG recommends that in upcoming discussions about the future of media in Canada, the Commission bring to bear its institutional knowledge, data and information to emphasize the role and value of a strong national public broadcaster, and to support the need for adequate levels of funding for CBC/Radio-Canada.

Back to first principles:

Rebuilding in-house production, maintaining critical levels of programming on TV and Radio

19. Given the context described above, CMG believes that it is critical that CBC/Radio-Canada embrace its leading role in the country's broadcasting system and aim to do more – not less – to inform, enlighten and entertain Canadians on all the platforms they access.

20. A majority of Canadians continue to rely on TV and Radio as a source of trusted news and other meaningful programming. Many Canadians are accessing online programming, but as the

¹¹ Broadcasting Act, S.C. 1991, c.11 <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/b-9.01/page-1.html#h-34144>

Commission's Communications Monitoring Report 2019 shows, "traditional television viewing still far exceeds viewing of Internet-based television. In 2018, Canadians 18+ watched on average a total of 29.4 hours of television per week, with traditional television representing 89% of the viewing and Internet-based television only 11%."¹²

21. The report adds that "ICI Radio-Canada Première and its English counterpart, CBC Radio One, are popular talk radio services," and points out that "Without CBC/SRC stations and rebroadcasters, population in official language minority in Canada would lose 68% of radio services in their first official language spoken."¹³

22. Significantly, a 2019 Nanos survey conducted for Friends of Canadian Broadcasting indicates that "a majority of Canadians have high trust and confidence in the CBC to protect Canadian culture and identity on television."¹⁴

23. Yet, CBC/Radio-Canada has cut back its television and radio services over the years, diminishing its in-house production capacity, and all but abandoning its role as a standard-setter in content production and programming, and as an incubator of Canadian talent.

24. In 2014, CMG members were joined by members of the public in calling upon their employer, CBC/Radio-Canada, to do what it can to preserve some of what was left of the CBC Documentary Unit "which has produced 'The People's History of Canada', 'The Canadian Experience', 'Eighth Fire' as well as topical quick-response documentaries such as the award-winning 'Syria: Behind Rebel Lines'; they pointed out that "CBC Television, to be true to its core mandate, needs more long-form journalism and legacy programming –not less."¹⁵ CBC Staff proposed a compromise, but despite their efforts, the Unit was shut down, along with other critical services such as detailed weather reports.

25. Even after the federal government "reinvestment" of the \$675 million in CBC/Radio-Canada over five years starting in 2016, CBC/Radio-Canada directed two-thirds of the new money (\$92 million out of \$150 million per year) to outside productions for prime-time television shows in each fiscal year from 2017-18 to 2020-21, instead of using the additional funding to restore core competencies such as news programming including local news, other local programming, as well as documentaries.

¹² Communications Monitoring Report 2019 <https://crtc.gc.ca/pubs/cm2019-en.pdf>

¹³ Communications Monitoring Report 2019 <https://crtc.gc.ca/pubs/cm2019-en.pdf>

¹⁴ Canadians continue to report the highest intensity of trust in the CBC to protect Canadian identity and culture on television
<https://friends.ca/workspace/uploads/documents/2019-1386-fcb-populated-report-with-tabs-min.pdf>

¹⁵ 40 journalists protest reported plans to close down documentary team at CBC

<https://www.cmg.ca/en/2014/06/23/40-journalists-protest-reported-plans-to-close-down-documentary-team-at-cbc/>

Save Docs at CBC – Sign the petition

<https://www.cmg.ca/en/2014/06/24/petition-against-privatization-of-cbc-news-and-current-affairs/>

26. Here is what a former CBC President Pierre Juneau had to say about the importance of in-house production capacity for public broadcasters:

“Public television cannot merely be a programmer. The particular ethics of public broadcasting demand that programs be designed with particular care. This requirement implies that the public broadcaster should also become involved in audiovisual production. While public broadcasters may buy or commission some programs, in-house production not only guarantees that programs will adequately meet the purpose of the broadcaster, but also ensures the perennality of expertise—some would say a “culture” of creativity—particular to the public broadcaster.”¹⁶

27. The public deserves bold and innovative programming from CBC/Radio-Canada wherever they access it, including television, radio and online. The digital world is here to stay and CMG members are fully immersed in it as are most Canadians. Still, this is an evolving area which remains outside Canada’s regulatory system. All indications are that media, including the digital space will continue to undergo significant shifts, and our national public broadcaster must play a key role in all these media spaces. But it’s the core principles of public service media – quality news, original programming, internal production capacity, meaningful presence in communities, and promoting Canadian talent and content, that will stand CBC/Radio-Canada in good stead over time, no matter the platform.

28. It is impossible to overstate how vital it is, therefore, for the national public broadcaster to rebuild its production capacity and create programming that strengthen the television, radio and online services Canadians can access in communities across the country for their information needs as citizens; to see, hear and tell their stories; and to see their values reflected.

Recommendation 2 – CMG recommends that the Commission maintain high expectations in terms of original production, quality and quantity for CBC/Radio-Canada radio and television services – the main platforms Canadians continue to rely on for news, children programming and other programming of national interest.

We look forward to the digital space being brought into our media system. In the meantime, it would be appropriate for CBC/Radio-Canada to uphold its high standards and practices for its online journalism service and other digital programming.

Expanding local news, information and current affairs programming

¹⁶ Public Broadcasting – Why? How? <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000124058>

29. 81% of those who took part in a CRTC survey said local news – a huge part of what CBC/Radio-Canada delivers – is most important to them, followed by Canadian national news (78%), documentaries (72%) and international news (68%).¹⁷

30. Numerous surveys show Canadians greatly value local news and programming. It provides the information they rely on, and is effective in reflecting their communities.

31. We point to the Commission’s definition of local programming as “programming produced by local stations with local personnel or programming produced by locally based independent producers that reflect the particular needs and interests of the market’s residents.”¹⁸

32. CMG believes this type of programming is a priority for the national public broadcaster.

33. Unfortunately, CBC/Radio-Canada has made major cuts to staff who cover local stories in communities across the country and has continued to downsize local news programming, including the daily French newscast that was heard in Western provinces.

34. This is a disservice to Canadians, particularly in areas where there are few or no other options such as in minority-language communities.

35. In 2018, CMG members were astounded when the public broadcaster decided not to show Ontario municipal election results live on television¹⁹. Pointing out that the majority of people watch elections on television, Ottawa newsroom staff wrote to the employer asking: “What does it say about our priorities as a public television broadcaster that on the one night where local politics takes centre stage, we are missing in action?” They added that “many of our viewers in the Ottawa region, who either cannot afford internet access, don’t have ready access to it, or who are not inclined to watch election newscasts online, will not be able to watch live coverage of the local election results provided by their public broadcaster.”

36. The experience of other CMG members across the country is also telling. Here is what some of them had to say after constant cuts in local news programming:

From Western Canada:

¹⁷ Let’s Talk TV: Quantitative Research Report <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/rp140424.htm#t6>

¹⁸ Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2013-263
<https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2013/2013-263.htm>

¹⁹ CBC staff push back as broadcaster opts not to air live coverage of Ontario municipal elections
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/television/article-staff-push-back-as-cbc-ottawa-opts-not-to-air-live-coverage-of/>

-“We lack a dedicated reporter, one person is tasked with reading and writing the news for our whole region, as well as providing current affairs pieces for the morning show. If news breaks after noon, we have no one available to cover it, with our closest reporter 2.5 hours away.”

-“Our community is relying so heavily on Skype interviews with the anchor and long form interviews to fill time that the program is painful. This is how we are now filling space that used to be filled with reporters doing genuine local coverage from the streets.”

-“There is less original journalism on the ground.”

-“Everyone knows “boots on the ground” are an important part of reporting, but after so many cuts, the remaining boots are more often than not in the office doing what they can to feed stories to multiple platforms.”

From Central Canada:

-“I am most concerned about the total decimation of the tv supper hour news. All resources are going into web, at the expense of TV.”

-“Radio and TV production units are devastated on a daily basis. They are starting to give up. Morale is low.”

From Eastern Canada:

-“It’s very clear to us that there has to be money put back into the regions. To say they’ve been cut to the bone would be kind. We have to get back to producing our own shows in house.”

-“If someone locally is being taken advantage of, or is not being treated right by their government, there may be no one who will tell that story because you just don't get as much coverage. (...) Is your politician representing your interests or his own? That's as important to know in our communities as it is on Parliament Hill.”

37. As Canada and the world grapple with increased disinformation that threatens our democratic values, CBC/Radio-Canada – a trusted source of news and information across the country – is well positioned, if appropriately funded and guided, to step up and do more in ensuring Canadians have access to local news in their communities and on the platforms they use.

38. We do not believe that there is a public service rationale for CBC/Radio-Canada to be cutting back traditional broadcasting hours in order to migrate them to the non-regulated online service at this time.

39. As the Ottawa newsroom employees emphasized in 2018:

“We still need to be where people are, not just where we predict or hope they will eventually be. Could we fathom not airing a federal or provincial election live on TV in 2019? If not, then why is it acceptable to jettison our local TV coverage in 2018? Now that the precedent has been set, will this become the new normal for local television? The decision smacks of a kind of egregious elitism.”

40. The digital space continues to evolve, and at the same time, the public, in the majority counts on CBC/Radio-Canada’s core services on television and radio. It is an important balance that the national public broadcaster must work to maintain.

Recommendation 3 – We recommend that the Commission require CBC/Radio-Canada to expand – instead of reducing – current expectations in weekly hours of news programming, including local news on TV and Radio. We also support continued mandatory distribution, in communities across the country, of vital news services CBC News Network in French-language markets with a \$0.05 increase to its monthly wholesale rate, and ICI RDI in English-language markets with a \$0.03 increase to its monthly wholesale rate.

We urge the Commission to support the BTLR proposal that it play a leading role in overseeing a fund dedicated to the production of news, including local news on all platforms (BTLR recommendation 71). CBC/Radio-Canada can make good use of such a fund to improve its local news programming.

In addition, we recommend that the Commission monitor CBC/Radio-Canada’s online news services and gather the information that will allow it and the public to assess quality, and to address how digital fits into the overall news service offering by the national public broadcaster.

Nurturing the next generation of Canadian media workers – key role for CBC/Radio-Canada

41. The broadcasting Act states that:

(d) the Canadian broadcasting system should

[...]

(iii) through its programming and the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations, of Canadian men, women and children, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of aboriginal peoples within that society, and

42. We believe the employment requirements in the *Broadcasting Act* are there for a reason. As the main cultural institution and largest news organization in the country, the opportunity for CBC/Radio-Canada's to play a key role in nurturing future generations of media workers is unparalleled.

43. There are ongoing layoffs in the media industry, and increasing numbers of precarious workers in the sector, including at CBC/Radio-Canada.

44. At the same time, recent developments in the use of robotics, especially in the unregulated side of the media (i.e., online) force us to pay attention. There can be significant negative ramifications for quality, reliability and employment. All the more reasons to expect and support transparency in online practices from all players in this space. The reality is that lack of oversight makes it impossible to have accurate information on what's going on.

45. Newsroom automation is advancing around the world daily. This can take the form of new technology tools to reduce the workload on journalists, or in some cases, replace the journalist entirely.

46. Major news organizations have already relied on artificial intelligence, in part to cover world events such as the Olympics, or European elections. Technological advances such as automatic transcription of lengthy interviews or news conferences can shave minutes, even hours off a reporter's day, while removing some of the drudgery of painstakingly writing down every word.

47. Increasingly however, algorithms are being used to automate journalistic tasks without the interaction of humans. The Institute for Future Media & Journalism (FUJO) at Dublin City University Ireland concludes news automation is now employed at "every stage of newsmaking, from the collection to the distribution of news."²⁰

48. Algorithms can produce entire news stories without using context, sources, or first hand interviews with subjects.

49. As Canada's public broadcaster entertains the idea of moving more content to the digital sphere, it might be tempting to incorporate even more technology tools to replace reporters in the field.

50. Unlike a journalist, an algorithm doesn't pay into a pension plan, make community connections, or take a regular vacation. In the long run, it's less expensive to employ an algorithm, than a real person.

²⁰ Fujo: The Institute for Future Media and Journalism
<https://www.dcu.ie/communications/research-centres-networks-fujo.shtml>

51. Always under pressure to cut costs, CBC/Radio-Canada could find itself with more digital content generated by artificial intelligence, and fewer real people in the field to tell Canadian stories.

Recommendation 4 – We urge the Commission to clarify how it honours the employment part of the Act, and recommend that, ahead of upcoming discussions on the future of media and digital services, the CRTC commission a study on the use of robotics in media and journalism.

Equity – CBC/Radio-Canada must set an example and must be held accountable

52. As the country's national public broadcaster, CBC/Radio-Canada has a moral and legal responsibility to uphold equity standards and reflect Canada's diversity for the four designated groups: women, people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and visible minorities.

53. In 2018, CBC/Radio-Canada began the implementation of a three-year Diversity and Inclusion Plan and has made some progress to make the workplace more diverse. It is a positive step in the right direction that the plan is now available for all to track the progress and the gaps that remain. The public broadcaster needs to address those gaps in leadership positions, for unionized positions as well as management.

54. According to CBC, "in 2018, the representation rate for women on CBC/Radio-Canada's permanent staff increased by 0.64% over last year (49.04%). For Indigenous employees, the representation rate increased by 0.24% over last year (2.24%). For persons with disabilities, the representation rate increased by 0.42% over last year (3.02%). There was also an increase of 0.85% for members of visible minorities (12.35%). Women were 51.01% of hires and 51.36% of promotions. The hiring rate for members of visible minorities (26.69%) was above their representation rate, and their share of promotions was 18.36%. The hiring rate for Indigenous peoples was above the group's representation rate."²¹

55. The Diversity and Inclusion Plan reveals that overall CBC/Radio-Canada is doing well in its representation of women, but gaps remain in having adequate representation in the other designated equity groups of visible minorities, people with disabilities and Indigenous peoples. The lack of diversity is most acute in the higher leadership positions in the Corporation.

²¹ 2018 Employment equity annual report presented by CBC/Radio-Canada to Employment and Social Development Canada

<https://cbc.radio-canada.ca/en/impact-and-accountability/diversity-and-inclusion/equity-reports>

56. With regard to pay equity, a 2018 media report found that “Male hosts who work for the CBC/Radio Canada make an average of almost 9.5 per cent more than their female counterparts, despite the public broadcaster using what it calls “gender-neutral criteria in order to recruit and retain highly sought-after employees.”²²

57. With increasing expectations of fairness and equity in all spheres of Canadian life, it is more crucial than ever that Canada’s public broadcaster lead the way in bringing equity to the media industry. While CBC/Radio-Canada has made a commitment to diversity and inclusion, it now needs to act with urgency. The Corporation needs to do more than just meet the number targets for diversity and actually create a better environment for diverse employees to have an equitable environment in which to thrive. Failure to nurture and create opportunities for diverse employees in more senior roles remains a challenging gap that CBC/Radio-Canada must address.

58. The public broadcaster must move boldly to meet equity objectives and must be held accountable. This is important on many fronts, including the public broadcaster’s relevance to all Canadians who fund it, and its leadership place as a major cultural institution.

59. In particular, CBC/Radio-Canada should be leading efforts to comply with recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which sets a key role for the public broadcaster in terms of reconciliation in media and the preservation of Indigenous languages.

Recommendation 5 – Therefore, we recommend that the Commission require CBC/Radio-Canada to report annually, publicly and in a clear accessible fashion, on its performance in the following areas:

-Pay Equity

-Employment Equity

-Truth and Reconciliation

6. Canadians and CBC/Radio-Canada – in their own words

60. For decades, Canadians from all walks of life have told us that they support a strong properly funded public broadcaster. With the proliferation of “fake news” and disinformation, a vibrant national public broadcaster is more important than ever. We believe the case has long

²² Male CBC hosts earn almost 9.5 per cent more than their female colleagues, data show <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/article-male-cbc-hosts-earn-almost-95-per-cent-more-on-average-than-their/>

been made that a stronger CBC/Radio-Canada is critical for our information needs, our culture and our communities.

61. We'd like to end by sharing these evocative comments from Canadians who express their appreciation of CBC/Radio-Canada:

Maude Barlow

"I have listened to and loved CBC radio all my life. I could always turn to the CBC for in-depth analysis and fair reporting. But in these troubled times, with the rise of fake news and the distortion of the major issues of our time, the CBC/Radio-Canada is more important than ever. Successive governments have slashed funding for the only Canadian broadcaster that exists solely to serve the public civic interest. I will stand up for the CBC/Radio-Canada and hope that you will too. Our country and its body politic would be greatly diminished without it."

Maude Barlow

Author and activist

National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians

Robert Melanson

« Le Canada est un vaste pays doté d'une diversité culturelle et linguistique qui mérite d'être célébrée. Afin de voir refléter cette diversité dans nos contenus culturels et nos actualités, il est primordial que nous nous donnions comme outil un diffuseur national robuste et adéquatement financé. Radio-Canada et CBC sont des joyaux de notre paysage médiatique canadien qui promeuvent depuis leur création une unité nationale fondée sur le respect des autres ainsi que sur le respect de soi. Bien qu'il y ait toujours du travail à faire quant à une plus grande représentativité de toutes les régions du pays, demeure que Radio-Canada soit une de nos plus importantes institutions pour la dissémination de l'information et la promotion de la liberté d'expression et des valeurs démocratiques. C'est pour ces raisons que la SANB appuie le maintien d'un diffuseur national fort et en mesure de remplir son mandat avec brio. »

Robert Melanson

Président de la Société acadienne du Nouveau-Brunswick (SANB)

« Canada is a vast country with a cultural and linguistic diversity that needs to be celebrated. In order to reflect that diversity in our cultural contents and in our current affairs, it's vital that we give ourselves as a tool a robust and adequately funded national public broadcaster. Radio-Canada and CBC are gems of our Canadian media landscape that have been promoting, since

their creation, national unity that's based on respect of others and self-respect. Although there is always more to do in terms of greater representation of all the regions of the country, it remains true that Radio-Canada is one of the most important institutions for providing information et promoting free expression as well as democratic values. It is for these reasons that SANB supports a strong national public broadcaster that is able to fulfill its mandate brilliantly.»

Robert Melanson

President, Société acadienne du Nouveau-Brunswick (SANB)

George Elliott Clarke

CBC/Radio-Canada has been instrumental in strengthening our democracy via savvy documentaries, investigative journalism, and comedy. (Indeed, it was CBC-produced comedy, lampooning McCarthyism in the 1950s, that helped to erode support for it in the U.S., thanks to the cross-border reach of "our" signals.) Too, the Massey Lectures brought Martin Luther King Jr. to Canada in 1967.

But CBC/Radio-Canada has also been foundational to our culture--and multicultures--and Indigenous cultures. Just think *Hockey Night in Canada* and *Don Messer's Jubilee* and *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. Simply put, CBC/Radio-Canada has helped Canadians become "glorious"- and stay "free."

George Elliott Clarke

7th Parliamentary Poet Laureate (2016 & 2017)

Brett Kessel

"Stories... Music... Culture... These are some of the things in life that live on forever. Long after we're gone, our stories of triumph and tribulation, our music that inspires and celebrates, and our culture (I'm talking about the great things that make us unique and proudly Canadian), will be passed down to the next generation, and the generation after that. But who will archive our stories? Who will play our music? Who will celebrate our culture and forge the future with what we've learned and earned in the past? The CBC. That's who. I fiercely support a strong CBC/Radio-Canada and believe that we, as a nation ought to do what we can to ensure that our national public broadcaster remains healthy and well funded for generations to come. The CBC preserves our epic history, while also paving new paths for future Canadians."

Brett Kissel

- Allan Slaight Honour Recipient - Canada's Walk of Fame
- Multiple JUNO & CCMA Award Winner
- 5th Generation Canadian
- Cattle Rancher & Country Singer
- Proud Husband & Father

Atom Egoyan

"The CBC/Radio Canada is simply the thread that binds this country together. I trust it for insight, clarity, and as an invaluable forum of ideas and points of view. It fully reflects the diversity and openness that define our national consciousness and a stronger CBC is - without doubt - a stronger Canada."

Atom Egoyan, C.C.

Vincent Lam

We need to hear what makes us uncomfortable: voices that surprise us, voices that challenge us, and sometimes voices we disagree with. The tension of disagreement, and the work of listening to one another, is what makes democracy possible. In a content environment increasingly dominated by unregulated media giants and social media corporations, and engineered to deliver content that we 'like', it has never been more important to support a public broadcaster. Support the CBC, so that it can continue to ask important, uncomfortable questions, and present us with the opportunity to listen to the answers.

Dr. Vincent Lam

- Physician
- Novelist
- Scotiabank Giller Prize winner
- Author

Francine Pelletier

Aucune organisation médiatique n'a joué un si grand rôle pour bâtir la nation dans notre pays comme Radio-Canada/CBC.

Sans le diffuseur public, et sa feuille de route caractérisée par l'excellence, le Canada serait plus isolé sur le plan régional, appauvri culturellement, et plus vulnérable politiquement.

Une grande partie de l'âme du Canada français est entre les mains de Radio-Canada. L'avenir de Radio-Canada, c'est l'avenir du Canada français, il s'agit d'une institution culturelle indispensable pour tous les francophones au Canada. »

France Pelletier

Journaliste et documentariste primée

“No media has had a greater role in nation building in this country than CBC/Radio-Canada.

Without the public broadcaster, and its record of excellence, Canada would be more isolated regionally, impoverished culturally and more vulnerable politically.

A great part of the soul of French Canada is in the hands of Radio-Canada. The future of Radio-Canada is the future of French Canada, it is a vital cultural institution for all francophones in Canada.”

Francine Pelletier

Award-winning journalist and filmmaker

Lawrence Hill

There is no better forum in Canada for national debate , disagreement, dialogue and unity than the CBC. On television, radio and the Internet, it is through the CBC that Canadians talk to each other, move each other, discover each other in the arts, in the world of journalism, in the sciences and social sciences, and in practically every sphere of activity in this country. Through the CBC, we urge each other to greater understanding and towards greatness itself as a people and as a nation. The CBC is a bedrock of Canadian society, and utterly unique in its ability to bring together citizens from the borders of our three oceans and all lands in between.”

Lawrence Hill

Author

Hugh Segal

“At a time when the BBC, already substantially better funded than our public broadcaster, is reflecting on broadening its reach and collaboration with other news organizations and in countries where freedom of expression is severely constrained, CBC needs to be better funded

and doing more! In terms of arts, culture, news and public affairs, it's a unique and invaluable presence, which must be strong at home and broadly transmitted on all platforms abroad."

Hugh Segal
Former Senator

We will be pleased to appear at the public hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmel Smyth
President, Canadian Media Guild (CMG)

Kim Trynacity
CBC Branch President, Canadian Media Guild (CMG)