

## HOT DOCS NAMES HEATHER CONWAY ITS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-PRESIDENT

Toronto, ON, October 13, 2021 - Hot Docs Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Heather Conway, former executive vice president of English services at CBC/Radio-Canada, has been named the organization's new executive director and co-president. Ms. Conway was selected for the position after a months-long international search following the departure of former executive director Brett Hendrie in March 2021. She will assume responsibility for the strategic leadership and management of the annual Festival, industry programs and other special year-round initiatives starting November 4. As the organization's lead executive officer, Ms. Conway will collaborate as a peer leader with Hot Docs co-president Chris McDonald who oversees the direction of Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, Hot Docs at Home VOD platform and other select funding programs and projects. Ms. Conway will also collaborate with long-time Hot Docs directors Alan Black and Erin Lau who have helped grow the cinema, organization, and strategic community partnerships, and who have both been recently named to the new executive team as managing directors.

"Heather is a visionary leader who brings with her a sharp intellect, acute strategic skill and an impressive breadth of experience," said board co-chair **Lalita Krishna**. "At CBC she embraced independent documentary filmmakers and championed diverse stories and voices. Speaking on behalf of my co-chair Robin Mirsky and the entire board, we're excited that Heather will be leading Hot Docs into its next chapter, and we are eager to work with her to realize the boundless opportunities ahead."

"Hot Docs is a hugely valuable cultural institution as famous for its down-to-earth friendliness and inclusion as it is for its commitment to documentary filmmakers and their important work," said **Heather Conway**. "I'm thrilled to be joining the team that has so successfully grown the organization into one with such impact and relevance."

Ms. Conway is an accomplished media and financial services executive who was the head of CBC English Services from 2013-2018. During her tenure she led CBC's digital transformation resulting in it becoming the number-one Canadian digital media company and launched CBC Gem, the public broadcaster's streaming service. She refocused the CBC's programming bringing critical and audience acclaim with shows such as *Schitt's Creek*, *Kim's Convenience*, *Baroness Von Sketch*, *Anne with an E*, *Alias Grace*, *Caught* and *The Book of Negroes*, and put arts programming back on the network. She shifted the focus of documentary programming from in-house to independent POV documentaries. In radio, CBC became the number-one podcaster in the country during her tenure and reached record high audience numbers in music and talk.

Prior to CBC Ms. Conway ran all non-curatorial/development operations at the AGO. A Top 40 Under 40 winner, Ms. Conway was named Woman of the Year by Women in Communications and Technology (WCT) in 2017. She has been honoured with a Bonham Centre Award by the University of Toronto's Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies and in 2019 was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by Leaders to be Proud Of. A director on the boards of Amex Bank of Canada and Great West Lifeco, Ms. Conway has also served on numerous charitable boards, and currently sits on the advisory boards of Samara and The Walrus.

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Hot Docs, ([www.hotdocs.ca](http://www.hotdocs.ca)) North America's largest documentary festival, conference and market, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary and to creating production opportunities for documentary filmmakers. Year-round, Hot Docs supports the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and a multi-million-dollar production fund portfolio, and fosters education through documentaries with its popular free program Docs For Schools. Hot Docs owns and programs the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, a century-old landmark located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood and the world's first and largest documentary cinema, and operates Hot Docs at Home streaming platform.

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