

**HOT DOCS LAUNCHES PODCAST DEVELOPMENT LAB FOR BIPOC CREATORS IN CANADA
WITH INSPIRIT FOUNDATION**

FIVE PROJECTS AND SEVEN CREATORS SELECTED FOR INAUGURAL LAB

Toronto, ON, August 4, 2021 – Hot Docs is pleased to announce the launch of its new year-round Podcast Development Lab serving emerging BIPOC creators based in Canada, created in partnership with Inspirit Foundation. The new Lab will offer five fellowships for non-fiction series ideas in the early stages of development. Throughout the program, participants will work with seasoned audio creators and mentors to develop their story ideas, hone their skills, and navigate pathways to success in the podcast industry. Each project will also receive a \$1,000 grant to support its development. The Podcast Development Lab joins the growing number of career development programs created as part of the annual Hot Docs Podcast Festival, including the Hot Docs Podcast Career Accelerator, the Opening Act program, and Creators Forum.

“We’re thrilled to welcome these seven creators to participate in our inaugural Podcast Development Lab,” said Hot Docs Managing Director **Alan Black**. “Their projects got us excited both by the important and rich stories they are aiming to tell as well as their dynamic and creative approaches. We’re so pleased to be able to provide these up-and-coming podcasters with the mentorship they need to further develop their project and bring it to the next level.”

“Inspirit is excited to welcome the inaugural cohort of the Hot Docs Podcast Development Lab. We look forward to seeing these talented storytellers develop their skills, build connections, and tap into their creativity throughout their time with the Lab,” said **Chris Lee**, Director of Programming, Inspirit Foundation.

The 2021 Lab will continue until the end of September with seven podcast creators and five projects participating in the inaugural program. In order to apply, principal applicants must be either Black, Indigenous, or a person of colour; be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada; an emerging or sophomore storyteller; and have a non-fiction podcast series idea in early development.

The selection committee for the Podcast Development Lab includes Toronto podcasters and producers **Al Donato** (*Born and Raised*, HuffPost Canada) and **Aliya Pabani** (*We Are Not the Virus*, Apple Podcasts), and **Stephanie McArthur**, Senior Industry Programs Manager for Hot Docs.

For more information, please visit the [Hot Docs](https://www.hotdocs.ca) website.

Participating podcasts for the 2021 year include:

20 RED FLAGS

Creators: Nicole Doucette & Lucas Kavanagh (Vancouver)

The story of Bre-X, a small Canadian mining company that pulled off the world's biggest gold mining fraud, costing investors billions. Over 20 years later, this podcast plans to uncover the mystery of who did it, how and why.

EXCEPTIONALISN'T

Creator: Melissa Haughton (Toronto)

A podcast that steps outside of our definitions of Black excellence and sitting with the messy, challenging and joyful stories that exist on the other side.

MADE UP WORDS

Creator: Isabelle Ruiz De La Orden (Montréal)

What has to be forgotten, hidden, or invented, to have a liberated Canadian childhood? *Made up Words* examines Canadian summer camps and their reliance on Indigenous dispossession and exploitation to foster meaningful nature and land-bound experiences for largely non-Indigenous children. Creator Isabelle Ruiz De La Orden's years as a camper and staff member at Quebec's oldest summer camp are revisited in the context of their Kayen'kehá:ka (Mohawk) identity, and the smaller scale cultural and social dispossession they, and many other Indigenous people, must reckon with.

MONEY NO GET ENEMY

Creators: Oshamimi Mayaki & Alexandra Sproule (Toronto)

From the Middle Ages, caravans crossed the desert and ships crossed the seas to spend money, lots of it, at West Africa's greatest markets. This is the story of that money, in all its forms, and what happened to all that wealth.

STORIES MY GRANDMA NEVER TOLD ME

Creator: Sarena Parmar (Toronto)

Stories My Grandma Never Told Me uncovers the unconventional figures and untold histories of the Sikh-Canadian community. Grounded by multigenerational conversations between Sikh elders and the next generation, this six-part podcast series illuminates how these hidden stories from the past impact our sense of identity today, as guests and audiences unfold the legacy of Sikh-Canadians in real-time.

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[Hot Docs](http://hotdocs.ca), (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.

[The Hot Docs Podcast Festival](#) is one of North America's premier podcast festivals, presented by Hot Docs, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary. Featuring live performances of chart-topping Canadian and international non-fiction podcasts and the Creators Forum, an industry conference for audio insiders and emerging podcasters, the Festival celebrates the ingenuity of audio storytelling. The sixth annual Hot Docs Podcast Festival will be held from January 26-28, 2022, details to be announced.

[The Inspirit Foundation](#) funds media and arts for social change, supports young content creators, and invests its assets to align with its mission to promote inclusion and pluralism in Canada – specifically addressing discrimination based on ethnicity, race, or religion.

Media Contacts:

Hot Docs
Andrea Smitko
Media Relations Manager
asmitko@hotdocs.ca

Inspirit Foundation
Jozef Agtarap (he/him)
Communications and Outreach Manager
416.644.3600 ext. 9
jagtarap@inspiritfoundation.org