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FILM & TV UNIONS AND GUILDS LAUNCH “FAIR” COALITION TO DEMAND RESPONSIBLE INDUSTRY POLICY & FAIR USE OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS

Eight major unions and guilds question Telefilm at Annual Public Assembly on investment in projects that fail to sign or respect collective agreements

Toronto – Unions and guilds representing over 87,000 screenwriters, directors, performers, artists and crew in Canadian film & television joined together today to form FAIR, the Film & Television Alliance for Industry Responsibility. This new coalition is dedicated to ensuring accountable industry policy and the responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

The members of FAIR have asked Telefilm to require the application of fair minimum standards through collective agreements for creative professionals working in Canadian film by adopting the policy already in place at the Canada Media Fund (CMF) requiring producers remain in good standing with industry unions and guilds, and to stop investing in productions that won't sign collective agreements. These changes would leave in place all union and guild policies and programs to accommodate lower budget productions, but would require larger productions meet their obligations to the broader industry and film & television community.

Today at Telefilm's Annual Public Assembly, these unions and guilds put the following question to Canada's film agency:

“In recent years, there has been a number of large productions that refused to sign collective agreements with organizations representing film and TV workers. Telefilm’s refusal to implement basic minimum standards is leaving these workers unprotected. Why does Telefilm continue to invest taxpayer money in these projects that undermine our industry’s ecosystem?”

Telefilm President Julie Roy responded:

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Without fair contracts, the creative professionals who make this industry run have no advocates, nor guarantees, with respect to fair compensation, timely payment, talent development, diversity, workers’ health & safety, workplace protections, health and retirement benefits, sustainability standards or the protection of creative rights. As a public institution, we believe Telefilm has an obligation to industry members, taxpayers and the public to advance and uphold each of these aims.

Currently, an alarming number of larger productions receiving taxpayer dollars leave film & television professionals unprotected. Even for productions with budgets over \$5 million, 27% are still not signing agreements.

- 65% of productions with budgets under \$1 million sign with only half, or fewer, of the applicable unions and guilds.
- 31% of productions with budgets between \$1 million and \$5 million sign with only half, or fewer, of the applicable unions and guilds.
- 27% of productions with budgets over \$5 million sign with only half, or fewer, of the applicable unions and guilds.

The members of FAIR comprise Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), Association des réalisateurs et réalisatrices du Québec (ARRQ), Directors Guild of Canada (DGC), International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), NABET 700-M UNIFOR, Société des auteur.e.trice.s de radio, télévision et cinéma (SARTEC), L’Union des Artistes (UDA), Writers Guild of Canada (WGC).

[QUOTES]

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