



PRESS RELEASE

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Bringing the world to Canada: 2018 report illustrates BANFF as a bridge to exports, transforming how global business gets done

TORONTO, NOVEMBER 9, 2018: The Banff World Media Festival (BANFF), Canada's leading B2B global media industry gathering, leveraged its international reach this year to provide unparalleled opportunities for Canadian creators, producers and content businesses, bolstering success in the worldwide export market.

BANFF's annual report was released today following a successful *BANFF Connect LA*, an exclusive networking event in Los Angeles that connects producers, broadcasters, distributors, content creators, and executives across the film, television, advertising and digital media industries. The LA event underscored BANFF'S record of success at bringing together far flung production partners and getting new projects showcased and "green-lighted."

The 2018 report shows how the annual four-day interactive event represents today's global media business environment and transforms this country's export model by bringing the world to Canada.

According to the report, \$1.7 billion in business was closed or advanced at BANFF 2018 as Canadian artists, creators, producers, and screen industry entrepreneurs took advantage of networking and relationship-building opportunities to grow their export success.

The 2018 BANFF delegate list shows significant participation from the U.S., China, Australia, the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, and other European regions. This year's B2B marketplace attracted 1,500 participants from across Canada and over 250 buyers from 25 countries, including representatives from NBC, HBO, Disney and Netflix.

As an example of BANFF's expanding role as an export conduit using B2B interaction in Canada, there were two breakthrough Chinese MOU signings this year. The deals to expand partnerships followed on the success of the Government of Canada's cultural trade mission to China in spring 2018 and the Government of Alberta's agreement with China's Guangdong province to be sister provinces last year.

"With the global media business becoming ever more competitive, Canadian content producers and screen media businesses need to be able to do business anywhere – at home and abroad. That is what BANFF is all about," said BANFF executive director Jenn Kuzmyk, adding that BANFF provides Canadians with a unique and dynamic environment that successfully increases exports of Canadian culture. "This is the modern export model. It's about doing business everywhere."

The report also highlighted the success of the inaugural *Netflix-Banff Diversity of Voices Initiative*. Launched in 2018 and designed to support and accelerate the careers of underrepresented emerging and established Canadian Indigenous, Francophone and women creators and producers, the initiative provided



88 participants with critical training and networking opportunities with key industry players. Applications for the 2019 edition of the Diversity of Voices Initiative, supported by the Canada Media Fund, Sodec Quebec and the Indigenous Screen Office, are now open to provide even more opportunities for unique Canadian stories to be told.

In addition to successful keynotes and master classes from executive producers, directors and screenwriters of hit shows including *Game of Thrones*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and *Anne with an E*, over 1,000 facilitated meetings occurred at the festival, linking Canadian creators and producers with international buyers, a 20 per cent increase from 2017. Over 600 projects were showcased and more than 90 development executives took meetings with delegates.

In 2018, BANFF also expanded its export-oriented activities into a year-round endeavour, with two additional events in Toronto and Los Angeles; through the BANFFXchange online networking platform and with the Rockie Awards, an international program competition, which attracts participation from over 45 countries annually. BANFF continues to work to expand export opportunities for Canada's creative industries as it enters its 40th year.

The full report and a BANFF by the numbers overview are available here:

http://banffmediafestival.playbackonline.ca/2018/final_report/

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About Banff World Media Festival

The Banff World Media Festival is one of the world's largest and most important gatherings of entertainment industry executives and creators, dedicated to content development, production, broadcast and distribution within TV and digital media. BANFF provides a platform for the evolving international media industry to develop its creative and business objectives. It is an unparalleled marketplace for over 1500 delegates to connect with new partners, learn from industry leaders and execute new business deals. The 40th annual BANFF World Media Festival will take place June 9-12, 2019 at the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel in Banff, Canada.

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