

HOT DOCS LAUNCHES INDEPENDENT CINEMAS RELIEF FUND TO HELP SUPPORT SHUTTERED CINEMAS ACROSS CANADA

Toronto, April 6, 2021— Hot Docs is pleased to announce the launch of Hot Docs Independent Cinemas Relief Fund in response to the extreme challenges of the past year, which forced the closure of independent cinemas across the country. Developed and administered in consultation with the Network of Independent Canadian Exhibitors (NICE), the Fund will provide urgent financial relief to Canadian independent cinemas to better prepare to them for their eventual reopening and the continuation of their vital role in bringing communities together to experience the transformational power of documentaries and other forms of cinematic storytelling. Donations will be collected from March 23 until the close of this year's Hot Docs Festival, May 9, on [Hot Docs' website](#) and at the end of the online ticket checkout process. One hundred per cent of all funds received will be dispersed to Canadian independent cinemas in late spring and early summer of this year.

"The past year has been incredibly hard for independent cinemas across the country, and as the owners and operators of a cinema, we felt compelled to help," says **Alan Black**, managing director of Hot Docs. "Independent cinemas offer unique and valuable cultural experiences for their communities, and they need this support now if they are to survive and eventually thrive."

"Cinemas from coast to coast have been hit hard this past year, doing their part to reduce community transmission of COVID-19," says **Wendy Huot**, co-chair of NICE and owner/operator of The Screening Room in Kingston, ON. "We applaud Hot Docs for their commitment to keeping these treasured institutions open for audiences across Canada. We're certain that when the economy reopens, our neighbours will want to reconnect and head out to the movies!"

The Hot Docs Independent Cinemas Relief Fund will distribute 14 grants of \$2,000 each. Cinemas can apply to receive resources collected from the Fund through the [Hot Docs website](#), with an application deadline of May 9. Cinemas applying must: operate a physical space year-round where the primary purpose is film exhibition to public audiences; have no more than four locations and not be publicly traded; be located in Canada; and have exhibited at least three feature length documentaries in the 12 months prior to pandemic closures.

All donations are considered charitable and are eligible for a tax receipt. For more information, please visit the website at <https://hotdocs.ca/p/cinema-relief-fund>.

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[Hot Docs](#), 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. Hot Docs will present its 28th annual edition online from April 29-May 9, 2021, during which a full roster of industry conference sessions, market programs and networking events will be held for Canadian and international delegates, including the renowned Hot Docs Forum, Hot Docs Deal Maker, Distribution Rendezvous and The Doc Shop. 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.

Hot Docs is proud to include Scotia Wealth Management as its Presenting Platinum Partner; Rogers Group of Funds as its Founding Partner; CBC Gem as its Signature Partner; Crave and Netflix as its Presenting Partners; and Telefilm Canada and the Government of Ontario as its Major Supporters.

The Network of Independent Canadian Exhibitors (NICE) is an alliance of Canadian independent cinemas, festivals and professional programmers offering curated film programming to public audiences. NICE film exhibitors are community oriented; we provide a meeting space for audiences and present high quality Canadian and international films. nicecinema.ca

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