



## **BANFF SPARK ACCELERATOR ANNOUNCES 2ND COHORT OF 50 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

### **SUPER CHANNEL JOINS INITIATIVE AS FOUNDING INDUSTRY PARTNER**



Entertainment Network

**TORONTO, June 4, 2020** – BANFF Spark Accelerator for Women in the Business of Media is proud to welcome Super Channel as Founding Industry Partner. The premium entertainment network joins BANFF Spark as it welcomes the second cohort of inspiring women set to participate in the Banff World Media Festival’s exclusive entrepreneurial program supported by the Government of Canada’s Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES).

With a strong mandate to champion diversity at its core, the program is designed to specifically empower women of colour, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, LGBTQ2+ women, and non-binary individuals. Across the first and second cohorts, 46% of participants self-identify as being from diverse communities.

“We are delighted to welcome Super Channel as Founding Industry Partner. Their support along with that of our other partners will enable us to offer increasingly meaningful education, resources, and industry access to our program participants as they navigate these challenging times,” said Jenn Kuzmyk, Executive Director, Banff World Media Festival, adding: “The participants taking part in this program are leading some of the most exciting media companies in the country. We look forward to working with them as we all come together with the shared goal of advancing economic security and parity for women in the screen industry.”

“We jumped at the chance to lend our support to BANFF Spark and are thrilled to come on board as the Founding Industry Partner, especially at a time when our industry is experiencing so much uncertainty,” said Don McDonald, President and CEO, Super Channel. “We are committed to supporting diversity and the advancement of gender equality in the industry and we are honoured

to be part of this important initiative that will help to advance the careers of so many talented and deserving women.”

The Banff World Media Festival (BANFF) recently announced that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 edition of the Festival, scheduled for June 14-17, has been cancelled. However, thanks to the support of the Government of Canada and partners at Super Channel, the Schulich School of Business, and CIX, we are able to continue to offer BANFF Spark programming in a revised format, which will be delivered in concert with the recently launched BANFF Virtual Edition rolling out from May to September 2020.

The candidates selected for Cohort 2 of BANFF Spark hail from Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, and will participate in a tailored business planning curriculum, receive one-on-one mentorship, and will gain access to potential strategic business partners. BANFF Spark programming will be ongoing over the coming year and will include a suite of bespoke virtual offerings. Cohorts 1 and 2, a total of 100 women entrepreneurs, will come together at the 2021 Banff World Media Festival, gaining access to top international media industry players and taking part in a bespoke stream of professional development programming.

Two additional Cohorts will be chosen in the coming years. Overall, BANFF Spark will support up to 200 women entrepreneurs with an aim to advance gender equality across the media sector and to bolster the economic success of all women.

**The 50 entrepreneurs selected to take part in the second cohort of the BANFF Spark Accelerator for Women in the Business of Media are:**

- Maria Armstrong
- Camille Beaudoin
- Carol Beecher
- Cjay Boisclair
- Kerri Borsuk
- Carly Brenner Hunter
- Carla Bridgewater
- Tanya Brunel
- Emma Catalfamo
- Sara Lynn Cauchon
- Alysse Glick
- Lauren Grant
- Kate Green
- Chantal Jackson
- Joan Jenkinson
- Sarah Juma
- Alyson Kelly
- Nauzanin Knight
- Annelise Larson
- Michelle Leader
- Nicola Pender
- Jill Roberts
- Sheena Rossiter
- Amy Saunders
- Patricia Scarlett
- Emily Schooley
- Lauralee Sheehan
- Gina Simone
- Pamela Slavin
- Kaitlan Stewart

- Petie Chalifoux
- Rachelle Chartrand
- Suzy Choueiri
- Eva Colmers
- Sara Corry
- Mackenzie Donaldson
- Rebecca Gibson
- Denise Lee
- Rennata Lopez
- Joanne Loton
- Leslea Mair
- Leah Mallen
- Michelle Melanson
- Marylou Mintram
- Amy Tepperman
- Bonnie Thompson
- Sarah Timmins
- Katy Tooth
- Ying Wang
- Brandy Yanchyk

For additional information, please visit:

<http://www.spark.banffmediafestival.com/>

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#### About the Banff World Media Festival

The Banff World Media Festival is one of the world's 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 media industry to develop its creative and business objectives. It serves as a leading destination for co-production and co-venture partners and is an unparalleled marketplace for over 1500 international decision-makers to connect with new partners, learn from industry leaders and execute new business deals.

### **About BANFF Spark**

Supported by The Government of Canada's Women Entrepreneurship Strategy and the Banff World Media Festival, BANFF Spark offers training, mentorship, and market access to women entrepreneurs in the screen and media industries. The program has a strong mandate to champion diversity at its core and is designed to advance gender equality across the media sector, bolstering the economic success of all women, including women of colour, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, LGBTQ2+ women, and non-binary individuals. It is open to applicants from Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia who are ready to grow or launch their own businesses in the screen-based industries.

### **About the Government of Canada's Women Entrepreneurship Strategy**

The Government of Canada is committed to advancing gender equality, women's economic empowerment and supporting women entrepreneurs through the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES), a \$2-billion investment that seeks to double the number of women-owned businesses by 2025.

For more information on the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy, visit:

<https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/107.nsf/eng/home>

### **About Super Channel Entertainment Network**

Super Channel is a national pay television network, offering subscribers exceptional entertainment value, uncut and commercial-free, with four diverse channels – Super Channel Fuse, Super Channel Heart & Home, Super Channel Vault and GINX Esports TV Canada – plus, access to Super Channel On Demand where available by service provider.

Super Channel's mission is to entertain and engage Canadian audiences by providing a unique and exclusive entertainment experience. With a core foundation of integrity and accountability, we dedicate ourselves to implementing innovative programming strategies and unparalleled teamwork that provides viewers with exceptional value and variety.

Super Channel is owned by Allarco Entertainment 2008 Inc., an Edmonton-based media company. For a list of service providers, please visit: [superchannel.ca/subscribe](http://superchannel.ca/subscribe)

[www.superchannel.ca](http://www.superchannel.ca)