

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FUND

Realignment of the Edmonton  
Screen Media Fund



**DECEMBER 2022**

**PREPARED BY**

Edmonton Screen Industries Office

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## I. Edmonton Screen Industries Office

In May 2017, the City of Edmonton took the bold step of establishing the Edmonton Screen Industries Office (ESIO) to lead community efforts to take advantage of the opportunities and technology changes impacting the screen media sector in the Edmonton region.

With early support from the Edmonton Arts Council and Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, and financial support from the City of Edmonton, the ESIO set to work to re-establish and expand leadership roles once assigned to the Edmonton Film Commission into an expanded vision for the growth and sustainability of all of the Edmonton region's creative screen enterprises and industries.

The ESIO's strategy considers and addresses the challenge of a wide diversity of interests, history, and business models by approaching the sector with an entrepreneurial mindset, building on and leveraging the Edmonton region's existing strengths to support more sustainable enterprises and new sector opportunities. Our strategy requires listening to the various players in the industry, appreciating their diverse needs, and understanding and responding to the benefit of the entire Edmonton screen media ecosystem.

**OUR PURPOSE:  
TO BE A DARING PARTNER THAT CHAMPIONS CREATIVITY,  
POWERS THE SUCCESS OF OUR SCREEN INDUSTRIES, AND  
DRIVES PRIDE IN A RADIANT CITY!**

**OUR BOLD GOAL: TO BUILD A \$300 MILLION SCREEN INDUSTRY RIGHT HERE IN EDMONTON.**



## II. ESIO Strategic Plan - 2022-2026

The ESIO Strategic Plan - 2022-2026 was developed and refined throughout 2021 and early 2022. Approved by the Board of Directors in April 2022, it guides the organization's planning and development of the ESIO's programs and activities over the next several years.

### Strategic Objectives

There are five steps to the ESIO Strategic Plan that are each represented by a strategic priority. While there is an order and progression to these steps, they will often be worked on simultaneously. These strategic priorities guide what we do now and how we plan for the future.



Within these strategic priorities are key objectives that guide the work of the programs and initiatives of the ESIO. The following objectives directly inform the planning and implementation of the ESIO's strategic initiatives funding priorities:

- (Commit) Engage with Indigenous and other under-represented communities and foster their growth.
- (Promote) Foster an attractive creative environment.
- (Collaborate) Leverage resources of other organizations
- (Build) Develop programs to deploy strategic initiatives capital and leverage third-party funds.
- (Build) Promote and support the creative talent pipelines.
- (Build) Remove obstructions that prevent business from growing in a sustained way.



### III. History of the Edmonton Screen Media Fund

The Edmonton Screen Media Fund (ESMF) was created in 2018 to help stimulate the growth of the screen industries in Edmonton. Since then, the ESIO has used the fund to invest in several film and television and interactive digital media productions. So far, one of these projects has been completed and the ESIO has fully recouped its investment. Two of the projects are nearing recoupment and the others are still in production. While there has been success in our investments so far, we are always seeking ways to create a more significant impact in our industries.

The ESMF was created to be used for economic development initiatives supporting/ expanding the screen media industries in Edmonton. The ESMF was to achieve the strategic priorities of

- **Funding** – To encourage sustainable economic development, the ESIO will work with the partners to invest in the local ownership and development of premium intellectual property and will leverage resources to access public and private capital and resources in support of the ESIO mission.
- **Advocacy** – To ensure that all our stakeholders are competitive with other regions, the ESIO will market and advocate for the Edmonton metro region and opportunities to maintain a competitive playing field for traditional film and television as well as interactive digital media.
- **Infrastructure** – To accelerate the screen media industries and enhance the creative communities, the ESIO will develop interdisciplinary relationships and networks between Edmonton organizations and beyond.

Getting feedback from our community has been an important part of our process and we have worked with the community to gather their input through direct and third-party consultation. In response to the feedback gathered, we want to amplify our ability to create impact by moving from investing in individual projects to investing in things that will create increased opportunity and growth for many projects at a time.

## IV. Strategic Initiatives Fund

The initial programs that were considered for deploying the ESMF to achieve the ESIO's strategic priorities at the time were focused on venture capital-type investments that would provide a financial return. While it is a worthy goal to make financial returns on this investment, the ultimate goal is actually an economic return. What is needed is meaningful change in the industry, not a financial return on the investment itself. Elements of the ESMF agreement currently prevent the ESIO from investing in opportunities that would help to achieve both the original strategic priorities and the new key objectives of the current strategic plan and create meaningful and sustainable change in the industry. In particular, the agreement makes the infrastructure and advocacy priorities difficult if not impossible to invest in.

As a result, we are seeking an amendment to the agreement that would expand our ability to impact the industry and bring the fund more into alignment with its strategic priorities and those of the City. To differentiate between the activities of the ESMF and the proposed realigned priorities and activities, the fund would be renamed the **Strategic Initiatives Fund (SIF)**. The ESIO proposes three types of spending for the realigned fund:

### 1. Foundational Infrastructure Partnerships

If you don't build it, they WON'T come. To create a centre of gravity, we need the necessary infrastructure and assets required to support our local creatives and attract foreign producers, we need to spur and encourage private investment into infrastructure that will become a point of attraction to Edmonton, and also help to push our creatives into the future and elevate their skills.

Examples of specific spending that may be considered:

- Film & TV and Interactive Digital Media (IDM) - Strategic partnerships around assets such as a film and television sound stage or space for a creative hub.
- Film & TV and IDM - Support technological advancements such as virtual production facilities.

### 2. Strategic Funding Partnerships

Targeted funding that provides a measurable result in terms of leveraging other financing, economic impact, and enabling the creation of Edmonton-owned intellectual property (IP) and projects with a tangible benefit for Edmonton. Funding types and practices would align with existing Canadian, USA, and international funding programs for film, television, and interactive digital media.

Examples of specific spending that may be considered:

- Film & TV and IDM - Impact funding that prioritizes achieving metrics such as triggering other project financing and advancing the work of Edmonton-based creatives who seek to create viable long-form or series projects for commercial release.
- Film & TV - Create a Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) certified fund, potentially in partnership with an Alberta broadcaster such as Super Channel. The goal would be to eventually use only the CRTC funds however we may need our own funds to trigger their investment in the short run.
- Film & TV - Interprovincial funding partnerships (e.g., within western Canada) on projects benefiting more than one province. This would encourage productions to use both regions.

### 3. Education

To elevate our screen industries, we need to elevate our people. We can increase the creation of local IP by arming our creatives with the skills needed to commercialize their products as well as developing the talent resources needed to produce them.

Examples of specific spending that may be considered:

- IDM – An accelerator program in partnership with an educational institution and sponsors; adding a pre-accelerator and incubator component may also be beneficial.
- Film & TV and IDM - Combined with the partnership into a sound stage and technology, practical instruction on core crew skills within that facility and using that technology.

To invest in these three categories, we need to shift the focus from a returns-based fund to an impact-based fund that will create meaningful change in the industry.

## Funding Requirements

Assets or programs under consideration for funding through the fund will be evaluated based on their ability to:

- have an enduring effect on the local ecosystem
- create a point of attraction to the region
- increase opportunity, experience, or educational impact on a large number of creators
- leverage third-party funding

### ESIO OPERATIONAL FUNDING

Operational funding is focused primarily around people and the resources they need to manage, develop and sell the Edmonton screen industries.

Operational funding covers items such as community grant, rebate and sponsorship programs; national and international travel to access markets and industry events to promote Edmonton; delivering networking events, workshops and webinars to the community; advertising and marketing efforts; and, office operations and staffing.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FUND

Strategic initiatives funding is focused on the assets and resources that make Edmonton a compelling place to develop and produce screen media projects.

This fund will ensure critical infrastructure is in place; build enduring points of attraction; bridge the gap between the present and the future by creating access to technologies that are changing the industry; and, stimulating the creation of programs run and funded on an ongoing basis by partner organizations.



## V. Performance

In alignment with Connect Edmonton, the Edmonton Economic Action Plan, and the ESIO success measures, we aim to increase competitiveness through education and productivity, relevance through global and national awareness, business innovation through the creation of local IP, prosperity through employment and GDP growth. We will further develop an inclusive creative industry. We will stimulate new entrepreneurship, diversify our economy, increase accessibility within the creative industries, and make Edmonton a destination of choice for creative talent.

We will use the following measures to gauge the success of the fund overall:

1. Third-party funds activated by SIF investments and applied to Edmonton projects or initiatives
2. Number of Edmonton creators assisted, either financially or in-kind, by SIF investments
3. Number of individuals with qualifications, credits, or credentials provided through programs or initiatives funded by SIF investments

## Appendix 1 - Summary of Engagement

In 2021, the Edmonton Screen Industries Office (ESIO) engaged a third party to conduct community engagement as part of the Edmonton Screen Media Fund (ESMF) program review. The process was meant to gather insights to inform how ESIO manages and administers the fund.

This process included a total of focus groups/interviews as well as an online survey by members of both the film and television and interactive digital media industries. There were a total of 42 participants in the focus groups and 21 participants completed the survey. Of the 63 total participants, nine had previously applied to the ESMF.

Perspectives on whether the ESMF could benefit participants' work were mixed, but the overall trend of both film and television and interactive digital media participants was toward seeing it as less useful. Participants identified that the fund may be appropriate for certain kinds of projects under particular circumstances, such as projects that were likely to become profitable/allow recoupment quite quickly, had small enough budgets for the maximum level of investment to make a meaningful difference, and could secure the remainder of their budget from other sources. However, participants raised many concerns about how few projects in the region were likely to be a good fit for the fund.

Participants noted that the expectation of timely recoupment was a serious limitation. There was a perception that it would be difficult to guarantee the kind of financial return ESIO was looking for and projects of that size and scale would have little need for the fund. Many participants felt that the fund was based on a model that may work well in other sectors but is unsuited to a creative sector like the screen industries where investors must be willing to accept a higher degree of financial risk. Most participants empathized with the desire to keep the fund evergreen and sustainable but did not feel that sustaining it entirely through return on investment from funded projects was realistic.

When asked about their needs and how they would like to see the local ecosystem evolve, participants expressed a desire for greater access to funding, higher levels of commitment from all levels of government, cultivation of a larger and better qualified local talent pool, greater connections with entities that could increase market exposure and distribution, and more collaboration and connectivity. Participants indicated their desire for this collaboration and network-building within the local ecosystem (eg. sharing information and resources and providing mentorship to new content creators) as well as with other jurisdictions such as Calgary. Many participants believed that the screen industries will require significant, no-strings-attached investment up front to build the critical mass of projects and talent that would allow it to be more self-sustaining and a significant driver for the local economy.

## Appendix 2 - GBA+ Overview

An upcoming study was recently completed for a provincial working group that provided an analysis of the film and television workforce in Alberta. The analysis indicated that women are less prevalent in the film and television workforce (38%) than in Alberta's workforce overall (47%). Limited jurisdictional comparisons are available, however, a similar study was conducted in BC in 2019 that found that women counted for 34% of the film and television workforce in BC.

In terms of Indigenous identity, about 4% of the film and television industry workforce identified as having one or more Indigenous identities. This representation lags behind the provincial workforce (5%). Analysis of the demographics of the workforce also shows that people of colour are underrepresented compared to the provincial average, with only 14% of workers in the film and television industry identifying as people of colour, whereas they represent 22% of Alberta's total workforce. The low participation of people with Indigenous identities and people of colour in the film and television industry suggests that there are barriers to entry.

As part of the study, a survey of workers, contractors, and hiring managers working in the industry was completed. Challenges and barriers to entry identified by participants included lack of professional opportunities, lack of networking opportunities, lack of access to mentors and professional development/skills training, lack of representation, and systemic racism or discrimination. The long hours and demanding schedule of the industry can also make for a challenging career for those that may have personal demands on their time (eg. those requiring child care or those who look after family members).

Although local studies on the state of the interactive digital media industry have not been conducted to the same degree, the anecdotal information available supports the same lack of gender and ethnic diversity and barriers to access as in the film and television industry.

Specific GBA+ analysis was not conducted for the fund realignment proposal, however, as specific programming and initiatives are developed, further analysis will be completed.

### **REFLECT**

The study referenced above was completed by a third party in collaboration with the steering committee selected from a number of industry partners and associations from around the province. Members come from a wide range of backgrounds and demographics. Participants that were surveyed to gather the data and perspectives in the study also came from a range of backgrounds and provided perspectives of those with lived experience.

While the ESIO team is made up of mixed family/household composition, as well as a variety of gender, sexual and romantic identities, the team is predominantly made up of those of European Canadian descent. Recognizing this gap in ethnic and racial diversity, as more specific programs and initiatives are developed within the funding categories identified, further analysis will be conducted not only internally but by engaging with and listening to those that come from diverse backgrounds and those with lived experience.

## **RESEARCH**

In addition to the workforce study already referenced, a number of community organizations have or are in the process of conducting studies on the challenges faced by many under-represented groups in the screen industries. As more specific programs are developed within the funding categories identified, any decisions would take into consideration any research available from the communities that may be impacted. For example, if looking at networking opportunities, the ESIO would consider the actions identified in the Building Inclusive Networks in the Film & Television Industry study conducted by the Edmonton-based 1844 Studio and Women in Film and Television Alberta.

## **ENGAGE**

The ESIO has built relationships with a number of organizations that support under-represented groups and will strive to consult and build programming with the community. These groups include local 1844 Studio, the Alberta-based Creatives Empowered, and national organizations such as the Black Screen Office and the Indigenous Screen Office. Engagement with these key stakeholder groups and facilitated access to their members would help inform programming decisions.

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Barriers to participation and challenges identified by those in under-represented communities within the screen industries include

- lack of professional opportunities
- lack of networking opportunities
- lack of access to mentors and professional development/skills training
- lack of representation
- systemic racism or discrimination

Specific programming will require more detailed equity measures to be identified and established, but as a whole, the Alberta screen industries, and the ESIO specifically, will be looking to consider the following actions:

- Develop DEI/A and Reconciliation Strategy focused on attraction, retention, and training efforts, led by experts with lived experience.
- Create incentives or requirements for workforce training in anti-racism and DEI/A specifically for the film and TV.

- Develop and publish guidelines for consistent, transparent, and equitable human resource practices and processes for sharing learnings from those practices.
- Develop mentoring and educational programming for under-represented groups to allow them opportunities to meet and work with those already in the industry.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION**

As no specific programming or initiatives related to the SIF have been developed or approved, an implementation plan and resource requirements are not yet available.

The ESIO would use the following measures to gauge the success of the Strategic Initiatives Fund:

- Third-party funds activated by SIF investments and applied to Edmonton projects or initiatives
- Number of Edmonton creators assisted, either financially or in-kind, by SIF investments
- Number of individuals of qualifications, credits or credentials provided through programs or initiatives funded by the SIF investments

Further evaluation criteria and measures will be developed as specific programming or initiatives related to the SIF are developed or approved.



## Appendix 3 - Policy Context

The Edmonton Economic Action Plan provides a clear direction on how, together, we can build a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable economy in Edmonton and the region. The plan sets out specific actions to support and advance The City Plan and ConnectEdmonton and lays out how the City can implement the actions but also how to leverage economic development and community partners around the region to further those goals for all. The ESIO agrees that partnership is key to implementing the plan and following through on the actions contained within it

The Edmonton Economic Action Plan highlights five guiding principles:

1. We will support new and established businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive in the new economy
2. We will seize the potential of our existing land, assets and physical attributes
3. We will support growth and diversification of our economy in a sustainable and equitable way
4. We will remain and become a destination of choice for talent and capital
5. We will embrace and grow our relationships and partnerships

The ESIO believes in the value of these principles and strives to uphold the same principles in it's work every day. As a member of the Edmonton Economic Action Plan Implementation group, the ESIO works with the City and other community partners to shape the regional economy and help implement a number of the actions relevant to the screen industries in Edmonton. The operations of the ESIO support a wide variety of the actions identified within the plan, but the Strategic Initiatives Fund would specifically target a number of the actions.

### **Action 3 Support building capacity and access to resources for entrepreneurs from marginalized communities, such as racialized entrepreneurs, and newcomers.**

*This action includes further supporting and strengthening partnerships and programming with organizations that support marginalized communities who have faced institutional, historical and social barriers and challenges, including Black and Indigenous entrepreneurs. It involves collecting and analyzing data to identify opportunities for support and working with our post-secondary partners to increase access to education and training for members of under-represented groups. It also includes developing training specific to those working in economic development to support culturally sensitive customer service and building inclusive workplace cultures in ways that encourage access, participation and partnership*

*The City Plan Policies: 3.1.3.3 Partner to reduce barriers to education, employment and business opportunities for Indigenous people and newcomers.*

#### How we will support this action with the fund

The ESIO will look at funding opportunities and initiatives with an inclusive lens on under-represented communities, this could include:

- IDE/A training programs and initiatives,
- accelerator program in partnership with educational institutions and sponsors,
- partnerships and training programs to provide access to equipment, facilities and technology,
- partnering with community members and local, national, and international and groups to facilitate equitable access to training, assets, and mentorship (EAVE, Black Screen Office, Indigenous Screen Office, Creatives Empowered, 1844 Studios)

**Action 5 Support projects aimed to strengthen or eliminate gaps within existing local supply chain networks.**

*This action includes providing integrated support to projects that strengthen or eliminate gaps in local supply chains. Potential projects may include research of, and support for, development or adoption of technology solutions such as platforms and databases that support online transitions and matchmaking programs to connect businesses and entrepreneurs. This includes working in partnership with local organizations, businesses and entrepreneurs when appropriate as well as exploring private-public sector solutions.*

*The City Plan Policies: 3.3.1.1 Partner with local organizations to develop community economic development opportunities.*

How we will support this action with the fund

The ESIO will look at funding opportunities and initiatives that would align existing resources, fill gaps in resources, and provide easy and equitable access to resources, this could include:

- Strategic partnerships to secure and provide access to assets such as a film and television sound stage or space for a creative hub to provide co-location opportunities
- Support technological advancements such as virtual production facilities

**Action 19 Develop and implement an integrated place brand strategy.**

This action supports economic development by articulating the reason why Edmonton is a place where people, entrepreneurs and businesses can prosper. This strategy uncovers and shares examples of Edmonton economic development and talent attraction success stories. It will help tell Edmonton's story of being a diverse and inclusive city. It focuses on the reasons why people relocate here, and why businesses and entrepreneurs invest and grow here. To acknowledge that our post-secondary institutions nurture new entrepreneurial talent, discoveries, and ideas, the place brand strategy uncovers and illuminates those examples as well. This complements tourism marketing efforts and includes exploring opportunities to become a host city of choice for Indigenous cultural, business, political, and sporting events. This identifies an opportunity to promote Indigenous tourism operators and activities in, and for, Edmonton. The City Plan Policies: 3.2.2 Promote the attraction and retention of a highly skilled and talented workforce in support of ongoing innovation, investment, entrepreneurship and quality of life

#### How we will support this action with the fund

The ESIO will look at funding opportunities and initiatives that would enhance the city's reputation as a place to do business, this could include:

- Establishing a creative hub to attract film/tv and IDM production to the city, while providing access to resources not available in other jurisdictions, such as virtual production facilities
- Development of training programs that provide access to equipment, facilities and technology, in partnership with community groups and educational institutions

#### **Action 20 Promote and support academic programs that advance the local economy.**

This action focuses on supporting programs tied to research, innovation, employment equity, and labour market needs in order to retain national and international talent in the region. It involves undertaking activities that encourage recent graduates to remain in the region, particularly the growing international student base. This includes highlighting employment opportunities, supporting entrepreneurship, and developing/ expanding partnerships between post-secondary institutions, economic development entities, and the business community. The City Plan Policies: 3.2.2 Promote the attraction and retention of a highly skilled and talented workforce in support of ongoing innovation, investment, entrepreneurship and quality of life.

#### How we will support this action with the fund

The ESIO will look at funding opportunities and initiatives that would support local educational opportunities, with the aim to keep talent in Edmonton and attract new learners to the city, this could include:

- Collaboration with post-secondary institutions on programs to provide practical instruction on core crew skills within a facility and using technology not always available to the community for educational purposes

### CALGARY FILM CENTRE (Calgary, AB)



The Calgary Film Centre is owned by the City of Calgary and operated by Calgary Economic Development. The planning, design, and construction of the project had a total budget of approximately \$28 million, with the City of Calgary contributing \$10 million to the project<sup>1</sup>.

Having officially opened its doors in May 2016, the Calgary Film Centre sits on an 8.35-acre site in an emerging creative centre in the Great Plains Industrial area of Calgary, providing easy access to downtown and the airport. Three sound stages have a combined 50,000 square feet along with 35,000 square feet of multipurpose workshop warehouse and office space.

The development of the Calgary Film Centre has since spurred further infrastructure investment in the area. The Calgary Film Centre, William F. White Studios, and Rocky Mountain Film Studios contribute to over 500,000 sq. ft. of purpose-built and retrofitted studio space<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [\\$28M Calgary Film Centre celebrates grand opening](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Calgary Film Centre: Calgary's story on the big screen](#)



## **FRESHWATER PRODUCTION STUDIO (Sudbury, ON)**



The Freshwater Production Studio is a proposed facility looking to be built in Greater Sudbury. The proposed project is estimated at \$35 million for a 116,000 sq ft purpose-built facility with 3 soundstages, workshops, and office space<sup>3</sup>. Additional land would be dedicated to the expansion of the studio. William F. Whites, Sales and Management services, would also lease 12,000 sq ft of space for an equipment rental facility.

Cultural Industries Ontario North (CION) is the main proponent of the project and is seeking \$7 million from the City of Greater Sudbury in the form of a grant through a new employment land community improvement plan (CIP). The CIP is meant to achieve economic objectives, specifically to attract and promote new industrial development and expansion. The CIP is a tax increment equivalent grant. At a high level, the land is assessed prior to development and once the project has been completed and reassessed, the owner would pay the newly assessed tax rate and receive a rebate for the incremental increase in the rate from the municipality over a specified period of time (5-10 years).

No funding has been committed; however, City Council voted recently to support the Freshwater Production Studios project as a candidate for the employment land CIP now in development.

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<sup>3</sup> [Proponents advocate for \\$35M film studio in Greater Sudbury](#)



## **MUNICIPAL SUPPORT FOR OTHER JURISDICTIONS**

As part of a review of the proposal for the Freshwater Production Studio, City of Greater Sudbury Administration conducted research into film studio developments in other jurisdictions and the role of municipal support in each case<sup>4</sup>. Below is a summary of their findings.

<b>Studio</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Municipal Role</b>
Bayfront Studios (Hamilton, ON)	Aeon Studio Group is developing Bayfront Studios which will include an 80,000-square-foot live-work-play hub for the creative industries on a site adjacent to its current property in Hamilton. The hub would include studios to produce film & television, animation, video games, virtual reality, music, and fashion, as well as affordable workspace for artists and makers, office, event, and performance spaces, as well as learning and training spaces to build the local workforce.	In 2019, the City of Hamilton executed a memorandum of understanding with the developer to sell City lands for the purpose of constructing the facility, as well as soil remediation at the site.
Capreol Arena (Greater Sudbury, ON)	In April 2020, New Metric Media made a proposal to Greater Sudbury City Council for the exclusive use of one of the ice pads at the Capreol Arena for filming purposes.	In August 2022, New Metric Media's request to rezone the arena to permit audio visual studio use was approved and a lease agreement between New Metric Media and the City is now being finalized.
Cinespace (Toronto, ON)	Cinespace owns and operates studios in Toronto, Vaughan, and Chicago, and is seeking a new expansion of the Marine Terminal Studio Hub to expand the current footprint.	Ports Toronto works with all levels of government to enhance economic growth in the City of Toronto and GTA. Ports Toronto signed a long-term lease with Cinespace for the most recent expansion.
Northern Ontario Film Studios (Greater Sudbury and North Bay, ON)	The Northern Ontario Film Studio (NOFS) features a 16,000 square foot single span main stage floor, a hair and makeup room, a prop shop, a craft kitchen, laundry facilities and 3,000 square feet of office space. NOFS has also expanded to operate a studio space in North Bay through the purchase and renovation of a former school in 2016.	The City of Greater Sudbury supported the development of NOFS through a lease agreement for the former Barrydowne Arena since 2012.

<sup>4</sup> [Freshwater Production Studio Opportunity for Municipal Support](#)

<p>Pinewood Studios (Toronto, ON)</p>	<p>Pinewood Toronto offers a 250,000 sq ft purpose-built production space located just outside Downtown Toronto. It currently consists of eleven stages, including North America's largest purpose-built soundstage – the 46,000 sq ft Mega Stage. A further expansion is in the works with 224,864 square feet of new non-residential uses, including studio space, new communication, broadcasting, and office space. When the work is finished, the Toronto location will offer a total of 16 sound stages.</p>	<p>The City of Toronto acted in the capacity of landlord, owner, and lender to support the development of Pinewood Studios.</p>
<p>Studio Bottega (Mississauga, ON)</p>	<p>Studio Bottega is an 850,000-square-foot project consisting of three buildings, two of which are sound stages with office and support spaces and the third is an above-ground parking structure.</p>	<p>The City of Mississauga supported the development of Studio Bottega by requesting a Ministerial Zoning Order and worked with the other studios in the area by ensuring services and approvals required for their development</p>
<p>TriBro Studios (Ottawa)</p>	<p>TriBro Studios was intended to be Ottawa's first dedicated and purpose-built film studio and would feature 25,000 square feet of workshop space and 50,000 square feet of production facilities and co-working space for film, television and animation studios. - The project is not proceeding as planned due to a number of factors, citing each party's timelines, refocused business direction, and COVID-related challenges such as supply chain issues.</p>	<p>In 2020, the City of Ottawa guaranteed a \$40 million 30-year loan to support the development of the TriBro Studios proposal. The Ottawa Film Office (funded through the City of Ottawa) has expressed its commitment to sourcing and supporting the development of a sound stage following the pause of this specific capital project.</p>

## Appendix 5 - Screen Industries in Edmonton

The following points summarize the highlights of the financial performance of Edmonton's screen-based industries in 2021:

- AV companies worked on an estimated 1296 projects set in Edmonton and 486 projects featuring Edmonton landmarks.
- AV companies that had production activity in 2021 indicated an average of \$262,900 in production volume each with a total production volume estimated at \$23.4 million.
- 85% of AV companies' total production volume took place in the Edmonton region and is estimated at \$19.9 million. Only 15% of the production volume by Edmonton-based production companies occurred outside of Edmonton.
- AV companies had 54% foreign, location, and service production volume estimated at \$12.8 million, which is lower than the wider Canadian estimate of 58%.
- IDM companies generated an average of \$525,000 in revenue each, almost all (92%) of which was sourced from outside Canada.
- IDM companies in Edmonton that earn revenue from owned IP generated \$1.67 million while companies that earn primarily from fee-for-service work earned \$120,800.
- IDM companies' expenditures amounted to an average of \$695,500 each in 2021.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Peggy Garritty**  
Board Chair

Peggy currently serves as the Chancellor of the University of Alberta, involved in all aspects of university life and building connections with the community. For more than ten years, Peggy was the Chief Reputation and Brand Officer for ATB Financial, responsible for helping build ATB's reputation, articulating ATB's brand story and differentiating ATB in the marketplace, marketing ATB's services and raising its profile and reputation with Albertans, and telling ATB's stories through various forms of media. She continues to own and operate her own company, PG Communications Ltd., where she works with a variety of clients to provide expertise and advice on communications, issues management, and articulating their purpose.

Peggy is also a member of the board for the Art Gallery of Alberta and was previously the chair of the board for the Winspear Centre and the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra.



**Kerry Day**  
Board Vice-Chair

Kerry is an experienced business lawyer with Parlee McLaws LLP who assists businesses, financial institutions, non-profit organizations, and government-related entities resolve legal issues related to financing, acquisition or divestiture of significant assets, the development of new lines of businesses, regulatory compliance, and internal governance. Kerry returned to private practice in 2009 following a 14-year legal executive career in the telecommunications and financial services industries.

In addition to her legal training, Kerry has completed the Canadian Securities Course and the Partners, Directors, and Officers Course offered by the Canadian Securities Institute. Kerry received her Queen's Counsel designation in 2006. She received ICD.D certification from the Institute of Corporate Directors in June 2009.



**Rod Matheson**

Rod is Chief Executive Office of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF), which has assets of \$21 billion and provides pension services to 85,000 active and retired teachers in Alberta. Rod has more than 30 years' experience in the investment and finance field. Prior to joining ATRF, he was Assistant Deputy Minister of Treasury and Risk Management for the Government of Alberta where he had responsibility for the treasury and risk management and insurance operations of the provincial government, as well as policy areas dealing with capital markets and financial institutions.

Rod has a Bachelor of Commerce degree and an MBA from the University of Alberta as well as a CPA (CMA) designation, a Chartered Financial Analyst designation, and an ICD.d designation. He is a member of the Government Relations Committee of the Pension Investment Association of Canada. Rod has served as a Director on the Board of the International Forum of Sovereign Wealth Funds and the Board of the Alberta Local Authorities Pension Plan. He was a member of the Asset and Liability Committee for the Alberta Capital Finance Authority and has served on the Investment Committee of the Alberta Cancer Foundation and the Advisory Committee for the Government of Alberta's Long Term Disability Plan.



**Darryl Boessenkool**

Darryl is a visionary, entrepreneurial executive with more than 25 years of leadership experience in the sports, media, and entertainment industries. Darryl currently runs a consulting/advisory company focused on the trend toward interim executive assignments. His clients are based in industries such as life sciences, luxury resorts, industrial, manufacturing, venture capital/start-ups, and entertainment. His prior experience included serving as a key member of the Oilers Entertainment Group executive team from 1996 to 2018, as Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President, Corporate Strategy & Business Development, and previously as their Chief Financial Officer.

Darryl continues to serve on various strategic corporate advisory boards while maintaining his commitment to the community by serving on non-profit boards such as the Alberta Jubilee Auditoria, Edmonton Elks Football Club, Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation, and many others. He is also a member of the Institute of Corporate Directors and a graduate of the University of Alberta in Economics.





**Penny Omell**

Penny is an owner, partner, and investment advisor of The Omell Financial Group CIBC Wood Gundy, having joined CIBC Wood Gundy in 1994. Before that time, Penny taught physical therapy at the University of Alberta while serving as President of the Alberta College, as well as owning a private physical therapy practice.

Penny is dedicated to participating in her community. She has served as Chair of the Edmonton Community Foundation and Chair of its investment committee. She is past chair of the Board of Directors of the Edmonton Downtown Business Association. She is currently Vice Chair of the Alberta Real Estate Foundation.



**Chris Izquierdo**

Chris is an entrepreneur and inventor that has founded and scaled several technology companies. Chris believes revolutionary change happens at the interception of innovation, humans, and technology. His

life-long mission is the create communities, companies, and ecosystems for a better future. Chris is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Sparrow Connected Inc., an Edmonton-based SaaS company improving the way companies communicate with their workforce. Chris brings an abundance of experience from the tech sector to the ESIO Board. In 2012, Chris received E&Y Prairies Entrepreneur of the Year award for Professional/Investment Services.

Chris also enjoys spending quality time with his wife and two children, exploring the world, hiking, biking, surfing and volunteering with various community and charitable organizations.

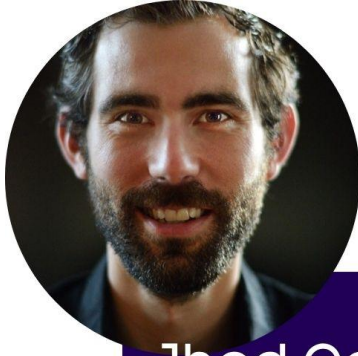


**Arden Tse**

A venture capital Investment Manager with Yaletown Partners, Arden leads a team focused on Alberta-based technology startup companies. He is an accomplished investment professional with almost 20 years of private and public sector experience and is highly active in the Alberta startup community.

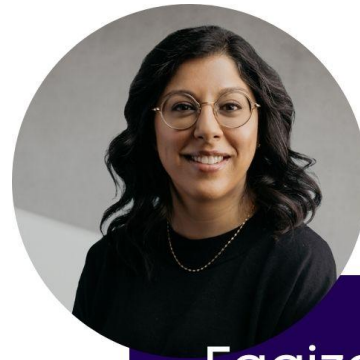
Coming into venture with a strong background in commercial real estate and public equities, Arden's career as a professional investor in multiple asset classes gives him a broad perspective on capital markets and various ways to look for value. As a trained Executive Coach and former business owner, Arden helps entrepreneurs

understand how their business and capital strategies align. A long-time Edmontonian, he holds an MBA in finance from the University of Alberta and is a graduate of Royal Roads University's Certified Executive Coaching program.



**Jhod Cardinal**

Jhod is a content specialist who has financed, sold, and produced Films and TV Series for more than twenty years. In 2013 he founded Upstream Flix, which creates progressive sales opportunities for independent projects. In a few short years Upstream Flix has grown its catalogue to over 700 hours of content and also represents the catalogue for Thunderbird Entertainment (Kim's Convenience, Beat Bugs, Intelligence). Jhod is partnered with dotstudioPRO, specialists in OTT Platforms and CMS, as the VP of Distribution & Acquisitions. Overseeing a combined content catalogue of 2700 hours, and working with all major broadcasters and platforms, Jhod continues to develop strategies to release content in the ever-changing digital space.



**Faaiza Ramji**

Driven by curiosity, Faaiza is an entrepreneur and marketer whose best work comes from exploring connections between seemingly disparate ideas. This curiosity has led her into roles in investment banking, tech, broadcast media, and economic development—and placed her in the middle of challenging, satisfying, and memorable experiences.

As leader of OnPurpose, her strategic marketing studio, Faaiza helps organizations figure out how to tell their story in crowded landscapes, and create meaningful connections with their audiences through products, partnerships, and purpose. Faaiza also recently launched Field Notes, the first company in North America to craft herbal liqueurs from distilled Canadian field peas.

Whether in business or in her community, Faaiza's work often begins by asking questions like, "how might we," "what if," and what happens when."



**Michael  
Jorgensen**

Michael is an Emmy® award-winning filmmaker and broadcast storytelling consultant in both the fiction and nonfiction formats. As a producer, writer and director, his work has earned more than 80 international, national and regional awards. Michael garnered five titles as WCNPA Television Photojournalist of the Year and was one of the first journalists into war-torn Somalia prior to the UN-sanctioned Operation Restore Hope. Michael helped launch the world's first weekly science program, Discovery Channel's Daily Planet. He's the only filmmaker in history to be granted access inside a U.S. Department of Defense weapons competition. Battle of the X-Planes earned him his first Emmy® for best long-form news and current affairs documentary. Michael has produced, written, and directed numerous primetime specials for National Geographic, Discovery Channel, History, PBS, ZDF Germany, and Arte France. In addition to his work for the screen, Michael's company Myth Merchant Films also secured the rights and produced several international nonfiction books which include Far Side of the Moon and The Fierce that were released by publishers in the U.S. and U.K. Michael is a member of the Canadian Media Producers Association and the former

Chair of the Alberta Media Production Industries Association. Michael has been a judge for the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences Emmys® since 2010 and is a member of the Producers Guild of America.



**Tarick Ahmad**

Tarick is the Chief Technology Officer for the Workers' Compensation Board – Alberta. Prior to this, he worked in the construction, energy, and technology industries. He was the Chief Innovation Officer for a public long-term disability and extended healthcare organization overseeing finance, technology, enterprise risk management, and facilities. Tarick has extensive experience in all aspects of business technology innovation, business intelligence, cybersecurity, and complex project management. He was the recipient of a global innovation award for his work with optimizing a case management platform in 2016. Tarick volunteers as a judge for the national Ingenious Awards, which celebrate enterprises that demonstrate measurable evidence of productivity improvement, efficiency gains, revenue growth, overall business transformation, or other organizational outcomes using technology. He sits on the Innovation, Technology, and Accounting Conference advisory committee for CPA Alberta.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Chair: Peggy Garritty  
Board Vice-Chair: Kerry Day

### AUDIT & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Audit & Finance Committee is accountable for the overall probity and integrity of financial systems and practices of ESIO, including areas such as financial reporting, internal control systems, external audits, financial management policies, business and budget planning, risk management, and investment strategies.

**Committee Chair:**  
Rod Matheson

**Members:**  
Tarick Ahmad  
Peggy Garritty  
(*ex-officio*)

### COMMUNICATIONS & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications & External Relations Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its strategic oversight responsibilities related to the reputation and branding of the ESIO, media relations and communications policy and monitors the effectiveness of communications strategies in relation to the ESIO's strategic plan.

**Committee Chair:**  
Faaiza Ramji

**Members:**  
Peggy Garritty  
(*ex-officio*)

### GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee assists the ESIO Board carry out its due diligence function related to healthy development and operation of the Board, its committees and performance of the individual Board members.

**Committee Chair:**  
Kerry Day

**Members:**  
Penny Omell  
Peggy Garritty  
(*ex-officio*)

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES COMMITTEE

The Strategic Initiatives Committee works in an advisory capacity, reviewing recommendations from ESIO management, and providing advice and recommendations to the board regarding policies, procedures, and investments regarding capital from the Strategic Initiatives Fund.

**Committee Chair:**  
Arden Tse

**Members:**  
Chris Izquierdo  
Jhod Cardinal  
Michael Jorgensen  
Peggy Garritty  
(*ex-officio*)

## ESIO TEAM



**Tom Viinikka**  
CEO

Born and raised in Edmonton, Tom grew up with a passion for sports and musical instruments. His entrepreneurial spirit came to life when he started his first business during his undergraduate studies at the University of Alberta. Since then he has founded, bought, and sold businesses in a variety of industries including, construction, real estate, logistics, and retail. Tom's passion for the screen industries came while owning companies in education technology and virtual reality. Tom has a passion for continued learning. He is fluent in Spanish and working towards his goal of French fluency. Married with six children, Tom loves to spend time with his family and share life's adventures with them. He is actively involved in several community organizations and is an MBA graduate of the University of Alberta and a proud alum.



**Dorian Rowe**  
Film Commissioner

Dorian has been a leader in the Canadian motion picture industry for more than two decades. He has worked in a variety of production and post-production roles including as a writer and editor and as showrunner of two unscripted series. Always keenly involved in the bigger picture of cultural industry growth, he served on many boards and committees prior to joining the provincial Crown corporation responsible for screen industries in Newfoundland and Labrador. There, and in government, his responsibilities have included working with the music industry, delivering film industry professional development programs, spearheading the establishment of an interactive digital media tax credit, and advocating for the successful creation of an all-spend film tax credit. As co-chair of the National Tax Credit Committee for many years, he is deeply familiar with screen industries' incentive offerings across Canada and internationally. While responsible for film tax credit and equity investment programs, and serving as provincial film commissioner, production activity more than doubled on his watch.



### **JEN MARR - Director of Finance & Operations**

Jen was born and raised in Ontario, attended the University of Waterloo, and became a Chartered Accountant more than 20 years ago. Since that time, she has spent most of her career working with charities and non-profit organizations in the health and education sectors, including Queen's University, Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, NAIT, Telus World of Science Edmonton, and Covenant Health. Jen moved to Edmonton in 2010, and before joining the ESIO in 2019, she built and managed a team that provided financial services to Covenant Health hospital foundations across Alberta. Jen has served as a board member at the Grand Theatre Restoration Foundation and Momentum Walk-in Counselling Services Society.

### **ANDIE BARDECK - Executive Assistant**

Andie was born and raised in the Vancouver area and began her professional career in the music industry. She spent 8 years working for a large music festival, in various roles including volunteer coordinator, festival production, conference coordinator, and artist coordinator. She also worked independently with local bands and production companies working with national and international artists. After moving to Edmonton in 2007, Andie started a 15-year career with the City of Edmonton. In various administrative roles with the City, Andie worked closely across departments establishing a knowledge base and deep understanding of City processes. A key role included overseeing the report process within Citizen Services, which saw hundreds of reports flow in and out of the department. Andie worked collaboratively on corporate projects that looked to improve council report processes among other corporate activities.

### **LYDIA LAM - Communications and Outreach Officer**

Lydia is dedicated to enhancing the creative life in Edmonton. She is passionate about increasing visibility to indie filmmakers and developers, along with attracting newcomers to make Edmonton home. Prior to joining the ESIO, she practiced accounting at MNP, but found her true passion in marketing, communications, and storytelling. Lydia believes in the continuation of her learning and is constantly learning new materials to strengthen her portfolio.

Lydia is a Canadian-born Chinese and hopes to bring more diversity and inclusivity to the screen media industry whenever possible. During her free time, she is actively involved in supporting local businesses and sharing their story on her social platforms, YEG Cravings.