

Fastest Growing Industries: Film & Television

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Overview of the Film & Television (TV) Industry

Introduction

In 2019/2020 BC Film & TV Industry was worth \$2.8 billion - the industry is capable of serving all sizes and budgets of local and international productions.

Value of Film & TV Industry in British Columbia

In 2019 (pre-2020 pandemic), the Vancouver Economic Commission’s (VEC) annual film industry research showed that the B.C. film, television, visual effects and animation industry broke new records spending more than \$4.1 billion in 2019. Of this, more than \$3.1 billion was spent on physical production alone, with the remainder accounted for by the sheer volume of post-production and animation activity largely centered in Vancouver. Spending in B.C. has more than tripled over the last eight years, increasing from \$1.6 billion in 2012 to \$4.1 billion in 2019.

During 2019/2020 (pandemic time period) production companies spent \$2.8 billion on an estimated total of 411 domestic and international productions in BC.

Motion Picture Tax Credit Administration

B.C.’s motion picture industry in FY2019/20 is estimated by Creative BC at **\$3.6B** and **411** productions, based on direct tax credit application knowledge.

Actual certifications processed were 309 and \$2.78B due to technical system upgrade and COVID-19 disruption.

Source: **Creative BC: Impact Report 2019/2020**
<https://www.creativebc.com/about-us/research-and-reports/index#creative-bc-annual-impact-reports>

Exhibit 1-4 Total volume of film and television production in Canada, by province and territory

(\$ millions)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2019/20 share of total
Ontario	2,077	2,586	2,439	2,439	2,769	2,750	3,015	2,918	3,229	3,550	38%
British Columbia	1,729	1,578	1,605	1,618	2,243	2,133	2,957	3,567	3,462	2,802	30%
Quebec	1,321	1,316	1,351	1,280	1,582	1,429	1,759	1,779	2,043	2,307	25%

Source: Profile 2020, ECONOMIC REPORT ON THE SCREEN-BASED MEDIA PRODUCTION INDUSTRY IN CANADA https://cmpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PROFILE-2020_EN.pdf

BC’s thriving creative industries are well established, with world-class film, television, visual effects, animation and post-production companies. A rich pool of creative talent is able to support major feature-length projects - both on-screen and online.

BC’s creative industry is recognized for:

- having the highest number of interactive gaming companies in Canada;
- being one of North America's top four largest motion picture production centres, after LA, New York and slightly behind Ontario

For more details see:

▪ **Creative BC**

<https://creativebc.com/sector/#creative-industries-overview>

▪ **Vancouver Economic Commission**

<https://www.vancouvereconomic.com/blog/media/b-c-s-film-tv-vfx-animation-industry-set-new-records-in-2019-spending-more-than-4-billion/>

Scope of BC’s Film & TV Industry

BC’s creative industries include everything from writing, casting, production, post-production, and distribution of films to animation and visual effects. Companies in BC produce and distribute screen-based content for audiences around the world including feature films, dramatic and lifestyle series for television, documentaries, short films and commercials.

BC's Creative and Production Crews

The industry in B.C. includes both foreign and domestic production, and CIERA (Creative Industries Economic Results Assessment) new baseline results are 21,305 traditional FTE equivalent jobs, and 35,332 total jobs (direct, indirect and induced).

Economic Impacts & Employment Estimates

Context: Recent Realtime Economic Research Conducted by Industry			
The following resources add currency and context and can be considered as complementary insights to CIERA outputs each year.			
Study	Economic Impact	Employment Estimates	
Profile 2019 Industry-wide annual publication on the screen industries' economic impact and estimated jobs.	\$3.4B	30,840 Direct FTEs	65,270 Direct + Spin-Off FTEs
B.C. Motion Picture Labour Market Study 2019 , based on actual payroll data	N/A	43,800 Unique BC workers paid for below-the-line work in 2017	
Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC) annual film industry research 2019	\$4.1B	40,000+ jobs in Metro Vancouver (includes positions that are not captured in CIERA or tax credit-certified projects such as commercial production or video game creation).	
Profile of the British Columbia Technology Sector: 2019 Edition, BC Stats *Cautions specifically in all figures relevant to Motion Picture industry: "Note that Statistics Canada data for British Columbia's film industry are understated. Efforts are under way by Statistics Canada to better capture the true nature of the industry"	\$1.4B* Direct GDP	11,201* Direct FTEs	

Source: Creative BC Impact Report, 2019/2020
<https://www.creativebc.com/about-us/research-and-reports/index#creative-bc-annual-impact-reports>

The 2019 report, *British Columbia Motion Picture Industry Below-the-Line Labour Market Study*, notes that two-thirds of the 70,000 people in BC who work in this industry are described as "below-the-line workers". These are the technicians and craftspeople, designers, background performers, drivers and managers working on location in neighbourhoods or remote parts of B.C., in large purpose-built sound stages or on urban streets. Below-the-line workers number 43,800 with 14,144 employed full- and part-time and collectively earned \$1.362B in 2017.

Below-the-line motion picture workers in B.C. are paid a median annual wage of \$58,460 which is 34% higher than B.C.'s median individual income of \$43,732 for full-time and part-time workers.

Below-the-Line Occupations in BC Film & Television Industry

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Source: **British Columbia Motion Picture Industry Below-the-Line Labour Market Study 2019** <https://sites.google.com/view/bc-mopic-labour-study-2019/home>

BC's large established infrastructure for film & TV production:

The province offers over 120 sound stages representing over 2.5 million square feet, including purpose-built stages and conversions, more than 131 animation, VFX and post-production companies, as well as an estimated 160+ expert industry supply companies,

Most motion picture activity occurs in the Lower Mainland/Southwest economic region with more than 80% of jobs are located in Metro Vancouver. However, increased activity levels have pushed more domestic and some foreign productions into B.C.'s other economic regions with Vancouver Island emerging as a secondary hub. The Okanagan may follow as a third hub with new purpose-built infrastructure.

BC offers:

- creative and technical talent who can provide the full range of services needed for both domestic and international productions.
- a talent pool that includes acting talent, set construction, filming, post-production, and video effects

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- outstanding facilities, training, and research services are provided by BC's educational institutions engaged in digital media and motion picture production
- can support the largest movie productions, from set construction and casting through to post-production and visual effects

Sources:

- **Creative BC: Impact Report 2019/2020**
<https://creativebc.com/sector/research-reports/annual-impact-reports/>
- **Profile 2020: Economic Report on the Screen-Based Media Production Industry in Canada** [Canadian Media Producers Association – CMPA]
<https://cmpa.ca/profile/>
<https://cmpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Profile-2022-EN.pdf>
- **British Columbia Motion Picture Industry Below-the-Line Labour Market Study 2019**
<https://sites.google.com/view/bc-mopic-labour-study-2019/home>
- **Film & Television Production [Vancouver Economic Commission]**
<https://www.vancouvereconomic.com/film-television/>

2. Occupations in the Film & Television Industry

From 2019-2029, new immigrants to BC are projected to fill 31% of all job openings in the province.

BC Labour Market Outlook 2019 Edition
<https://www.workbc.ca/research-labour-market/bcs-labour-market->

Film & Television Industry: Occupations in Demand across all BC regions:

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Cumulative Number of Jobs* 2019 - 2029</i>
Managers – publishing, motion pictures, broadcasting and performing arts, NOC 0512	870
Producers, directors, choreographers and related Occupations, NOC 5131	2390
Film and video camera operators, NOC 5222	950
Audio and video recording technicians, NOC 5225	1410
Other technical and co-ordinating occupations in motion pictures, broadcasting and the performing arts, NOC 5226	2050
Support occupations in motion pictures, broadcasting, photography and the performing arts, NOC 5227	1,760

* combination of replacement jobs and newly created jobs

Source:

- **British Columbia Labour Market Outlook 2019 Edition**
<https://www.workbc.ca/research-labour-market/bcs-labour-market-outlook-2023-edition>

Careers available in the film & television industry:

Film, television and video production are the world's fastest growing cultural industry. Employment opportunities in this sector are available in:

- Motion pictures
- Television
- Specialty Pay Television channels
- Animation
- Indie podcasting

Film & Broadcasting Careers¶

Interpretation

Actor/·Arranger/·Conductor/·Director/·Host/·Reporter/·Vocalist/·Voice-over·Artist'

Production & Post-Production

Animator/·Audio/Sound-Recording·Engineer/·Broadcast·Engineer/·Camera·Operator/·Cinematographer/·Continuity/·Costume·&·Wardrobe·Coordinator/·Dialogue·Coach/·Executive·Producer/·Film·Dubber/·Film/Tape·Editor/·Foley·Artist/·Grip/Gaffer·Information·Architect/·Lighting·Designer/·Location·Manager/·Make-Up/Hair·Artist/·Musician/·Production·Manager/·Programmer/·Property·Master/·Re-recording·Mixer/·Script·Editor/·Script·Supervisor/·Set·Builder/Carpenter/Painter/·Set·Designer/·Sound·Designer/·Sound·Editor/Mixer/·Special·Effects·Technician/·Stagehand/·Stunt·Coordinator/Stunt·Person/·Wardrobe·Supervisor/Dresser/Attendant/·Wrangler

Distribution

Advertising·Sales·Manager/·Box·Office·Manager/·Marketing·and·Distribution·Manager/·Presenter/·Publicist/·Rights·Sales·Manager/·Sales·Coordinator/·Technical·Coordinator/·Television·Audience·Relations·Specialist/·Web·Designer

Conservation

Archivist/·Conservator/·Film·Historian/·Film·Restorer/·Librarian/·Web·Designer

Support

Agreement·Administrator/·Casting·Agent/·Entertainment·Accountant/·Entertainment·Lawyer/·Web·Analyst/Developer

Source: Cultural Human Resources Council, <https://www.culturalhrc.ca/education-training-mentoring/film-and-broadcasting>

Trends and Changes in Film & Television Industry Careers:

New media and the Internet are creating new performance markets. If you dream of working in film or broadcasting, make sure that you keep your computer skills up to date.

Computerization is changing the way many people in film and broadcasting careers do their work. Some actors now wear body mics that are hooked to computerized sound systems. Specialized software is being used for all aspects of production from scriptwriting, to costume design, to musical scoring. Animation and special effects programs are central to many of today's film and television programming. Radio, film and television editing is now completely digitized so that technicians can cut, mix and add elements by computer.

Sources:

Careers in Culture [Cultural Human Resources Council]

- Film & Broadcasting Careers
<https://www.culturalhrc.ca/education-training-mentoring/film-and-broadcasting>
- New Opportunities
<https://www.culturalhrc.ca/education-training-mentoring/film-and-broadcasting/focus-on-tomorrow>

3. Getting Started and Finding Jobs in the Film & Television Industry

How do you get started in the Film & Television Industry?

You will need to complete the Motion Picture Industry Orientation Course (MPIO). Developed in partnership between Creative BC, MPPIA and industry labour organizations, this course is administered by Actsafe and provides information you need to know before working on a film set. It's also a requirement for membership or permittee status in most unions. The Motion Picture Industry Orientation is a 1-day course and costs \$75.00 + GST.

Course topics include the structure of the BC film industry, stages of production, industry jobs, set terminology, set etiquette, basic safety and communication skills.

MPIO is offered through the following educational institutions:

- **Actsafes**
<https://www.actsafe.ca/courses-workshops/motion-picture-industry-orientation-and-exam/>
- **Capilano University**
<https://cs.capilanou.ca/courses--programs/courses/motion-picture-industry-orientation-mpio/>
- **InFocus Film School**
<https://infocusfilmschool.com/motion-picture-industry-orientation/>
- **Vancouver Film School**
<https://vfs.edu/programs/motion-picture-orientation>
- **Royal Roads University**
<https://pcs.royalroads.ca/motion-picture-industry-orientation-online>

You **may** be asked to also complete:

- **ActSafe** workshops
e.g. Motion Picture Safety Awareness
<https://www.actsafe.ca/courses-workshops/motion-picture-safety-awareness/>
<https://www.actsafe.ca/courses-workshops/>
- **WHMIS** (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/whmis/education-training>

Which Unions Represent Workers in the Film & Television Industry?

After completing coursework, contact the Union representing your type of work and ask about membership.

- **ACFC West, Local 2020 CEP** - The Association of Canadian Film Craftspeople
<https://www.acfcwest.com/> represents accounting, art, catering, construction, continuity, craft services, editing, electric, greens, grip, hair, make-up, production office props, prop building, publicity, scenic art, security, set decoration, sound, special effects, transportation, wardrobe, wranglers (animal)

- **B.C. Council of Film Unions**
representing IATSE Local 891, ICG Local 669 and Teamsters Local Union 155
<https://bccfu.com/>
- **Directors Guild of Canada, British Columbia District Council**
<https://www.dgc.ca/en/british-columbia/>
represents: Director, 2nd Unit Director, Production & Unit Manager, plus those employed in the various Assistant Director and Locations Departments
- **International Cinematographers Guild ICG Local 669 of IATSE**
membership includes: Directors of Photography, Camera Operators, Camera Assistants, Unit Publicists, Unit Still Photographers, Electronic Camerapeople, Video Assist, Digital Engineers and Technicians
<https://icg669.com/>
- **IATSE - Local 891**(International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees - Production Technicians) represents accounting, art, construction, costume, editing, first aid / craft service, greens, grips, hair, lighting / electrics, make-up, painting, production office, props, script supervisors, continuity coordinator, set decorating, sound, special effects, visual effects
<https://www.iatse.com/>
- **Teamsters Union Local No.155**
represents drivers, security, catering, animal handlers & wranglers, mechanics
<https://www.teamsters155.org/>
- **Union of BC Performers**, branch of ACTRA
represents actors, stunt people, singers, dancers, puppeteers, voices
<https://www.ubcpactra.ca/>

See also

- **Joining the Unions**
<https://creativepathwayscanada.com/about/people/unions-and-guilds/>

Getting Experience

Everyone who hires in film and broadcasting want applicants who already have experience, whether volunteer or professional. Most people get their first film or broadcasting job through a contact – an acquaintance who knows about an unadvertised job or where work can be found.

How can you make these very important contacts?

- Make yourself visible. The only way people will know about you is because you're already working, or from your school or volunteer work.
- Be an enthusiastic worker. If you're willing to try anything and enjoy what you're doing, people will remember you.
- Be curious about others. Your network is not just about you. Have a genuine interest in what others do and enjoy learning from them.
- Stay in touch. Relationships need constant work. Give your contacts a call now and then, and ask them how they're doing. Tell them what you're up to.

Source:

Careers in Culture [Cultural Human Resources Council], Careers in Film & Broadcasting, Career Routes

<https://www.culturalhrc.ca/index.php/education-training-mentoring/film-and-broadcasting/career-routes>

Online Job Postings

- **Indeed.ca**

- <https://ca.indeed.com/Film-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>

- <https://ca.indeed.com/Film-Production-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>

- <https://ca.indeed.com/Film-Industry-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>

- <https://ca.indeed.com/Television-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>

- **Playback.ca**

- <https://playbackonline.ca/careers/>

- Careers in film production, broadcasting and interactive media across Canada;

- **Culture Works**

- <https://www.cultureworks.ca/jobs>

Creating a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of employers in the film & television industry in British Columbia. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Vancouver Post Alliance – Member Directory**

- <https://vancouverpostalliance.com/membership-directory/>

- **Creative BC – Motion Picture Contacts**

- <https://knowledgehub.creativebc.com/s/industry-contacts/motion-picture>

- **Creative BC - In Production**

- <https://creativebc.com/provincial-film-commission/in-production/>

- weekly updated list of all productions currently shooting in BC (feature films, TV series, TV pilots, reality TV)

- **Directors Guild of Canada – B.C. Production List**

- <https://www.dgc.ca/en/british-columbia/production-list>

4. Additional Resources

Still looking for more information? Try looking at the following resources:

- **Creative BC**

<https://www.creativebc.com/>

independent non-profit BC government agency promotes development of creative industries in British Columbia and provides a single point of access for industry programming, production support services, tax credit administration, international marketing and policy development

- **Creative Pathways**

<https://creativepathwayscanada.com/>

- **Canadian Media Producers Association, BC Producers Branch**

<https://cmpa.ca/cmpa-bc/>

- **Careers in Culture: Careers in Film & Broadcasting**

<https://www.culturalhrc.ca/education-training-mentoring/film-and-broadcasting>

- **Vancouver Film Commission**

<https://vancouvereconomic.com/vancouver-film-commission/>

- **Vancouver Economic Commission: Film & Television Production**

<https://vancouvereconomic.com/film-in-vancouver/>

- **Vancouver Post Alliance**

<https://vancouverpostalliance.com/>

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.



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