

Programming Genres:

Definitions and Essential Requirements

APPENDIX A

2007-2008



Canadian Television Fund
Fonds canadien de télévision

► A - Definition

Children's programming is defined as being targeted to children aged 12 and under, is designed and produced according to their needs and expectations (rather than to those of adults) and reflects reality from a child's point of view. Children's programs usually have a major protagonist who is a child or youth under the age of 15, or a puppet, animated character, creature of the animal kingdom, comic book character or folk/super/classical/historical hero. Children's programs engage the creativity of children and provide them with both entertainment and learning experience.

Youth programming is defined as being specifically targeted to youths aged 13-17. Such programs should include youth protagonists and reflect reality from a youth's point of view.

This genre of programming does not include family programming, which the CTF considers as Drama programming.

Peak viewing hours for Children's and Youth programming is defined as the time when the largest audiences of children and/or youth are available.

► B - Essential Requirements

The CTF will allow certain exceptions specific to Children's and Youth programming. In order of importance, the Essential Requirements (ER) and exceptions are as follows:

1. **The project speaks to Canadians about, and reflects, Canadian themes and subject matter.**

The following exceptions apply to live-action and animation programming with generic or fantasy settings:

- ▶ The project must be identifiably Canadian where relevant and may not be identifiably foreign; and
 - ▶ Projects that incorporate well-known non-Canadian characters without incorporating any Canadian characters do not qualify for this exception.
- 2. The project will be certified by the Canadian Audio-Visual Certification Office (CAVCO) and has achieved 10/10 points (or the maximum number of points appropriate to the project), as determined by the CTF using the CAVCO scale**

The following exception applies to animation:

- ▶ The project has achieved 8/10 points according to the CAVCO scale, with one point going to foreign in-betweening and one point to a non-Canadian camera operator.

3. Underlying rights are owned, and significantly and meaningfully developed by Canadians

Eligible projects must be developed by Canadians. Canadian creators must have significant and meaningful involvement in the project, from concept to final script. The project may **not** be based on foreign television productions, foreign format buys, foreign feature films (unless based on a published Canadian literary work), or foreign fully developed final-version scripts.

4. The project is shot and set primarily in Canada

Allowable exception for live-action and animation programming with generic or fantasy settings:

- ▶ The setting must not be identifiably foreign.

Please refer to [Section 3.2.1.1](#) for details respecting the application of the Essential Requirements to official treaty co-productions.

Clarification:

The following is meant to clarify the CTF's interpretation of "setting" as it relates to Essential Requirements #1 and #4 for animated Children's & Youth programming.

The descriptive characteristics and examples in each of the sections below should be read as interpretative guides and not definitional absolutes.

The CTF has interpreted the ERs and exceptions above to allow generic and fantasy settings and to permit significant portions of programs/episodes to be set outside of Canada. Concerning the latter, the CTF's acceptance of foreign locales, characters, and plots depends on the extent to which the program has created a Canadian context that unmistakably grounds the show "in" Canada.

The two most common examples of eligible foreign content usage in animated Children's and Youth programming are as follows:

1. When the characters and/or setting are established as Canadian and they make foreign references:

It is not uncommon for programs to establish their setting as Canada and their characters as Canadian, but also to incorporate the "reality" of foreign contexts through foreign cultural and social references. In this way, creators are not constrained by having to avoid the most sensible or creatively useful elements. This eligible approach is distinctly different from generic settings/characters combined with exclusively foreign references (i.e., United States) which effectively set the program in Any Town, USA rather than Canada.

- ▶ **Example:** *Being Ian* is an example of an eligible program that is grounded in Canada but makes use of foreign references. It is firmly established that Ian and his family live in Burnaby, British Columbia. Ian, however, is obsessed by film and television and most of the films and television shows referenced by him are American-cultural references, which are reasonable given their influence over typical Canadian teenagers.

2. **When the characters and/or setting are established as Canadian and the characters travel to foreign locales:**

As noted previously, it is not uncommon for programs to establish their setting as Canada and their characters as Canadian, but also to incorporate foreign locales/settings as integral to the programs. In this way, creators need not constrain the environments and settings that are essential to the program. It is typical in such programs to unmistakably root the program in Canada – usually through early establishment of the protagonist’s identity as Canadian and home as Canada and/or through references to Canadian experiences, events, people, etc., while in the foreign locale.

- ▶ **Example:** *Ollie’s Under the Bed Adventures* is an example of an eligible program that features foreign locales seen through the eyes of a Canadian boy. It is firmly established that Ollie is Canadian and that his house is in Canada. However, when he goes under his bed, he steps through a portal to many different places in the world. This is an acceptable way to allow a character to travel to foreign places while still maintaining a Canadian identity.

The two most common examples of **ineligible** foreign content usage in animated Children’s and Youth programming are as follows:

1. **When the program is set in a foreign location(s) and there is no firm establishment of a Canadian context – through either character, setting, or plot:**

While no judgment is made about the creative merit of such programs or their appeal to viewers, it is evident that they do not meet the CTF’s mandate to support “culturally significant” programming.

- ▶ **Examples:** *Paddington Bear* is clearly set in London, England and, as far as the viewer can tell, Paddington is British. Even though the characters are clearly of the fantasy realm, the context of the show is entirely grounded in a foreign locale/culture. *The Simpsons*, while being set in a generic town named Springfield, makes frequent social/cultural references that ground the program in the U.S.

2. **When the program is ostensibly set in a generic/fantasy world but foreign elements effectively establish a setting through inference:**

Often, programs of this nature incorporate anthropomorphized animals, space aliens, and other non-human characters and settings, which do not resemble real places. The frequent presence of foreign elements, however, (i.e., character names, signage, place names, social/cultural references, etc.) conspires to effectively place the program in a foreign setting.

► **Example:** A fictional show called *Adventure Land* is not established as being set in the U.S. (or elsewhere) through blatant naming of a city/country. However, when the air force jet rolls up behind a character, it is stickered with a U.S. flag and star; the characters often talk about calling in the FBI; as the characters fly down the road in their jet car, a sign points in one direction to Gotham City and in another to Disney World; a character talks about visiting his mother in the Lone Star State; etc.

► **Documentary Programming**

► **A - Definition**

A Documentary is defined as an original work of non-fiction, primarily designed to inform but that may also educate and entertain, providing an in-depth critical analysis of a specific subject or point of view over the course of at least 30 minutes (less a reasonable time for commercials, if any). These programs shall not be used as commercial vehicles.

1. **Auteur Point of View/Creative Documentaries (POV)**

The CTF makes a distinction between Factual Documentaries as described above and Auteur Point of View/Creative Documentaries (POV), for the purposes of tracking the incidence of the latter among projects supported.



The CTF will make a discretionary evaluation of what it considers a POV. The CTF will apply a very narrow and traditional interpretation of the above documentary definition. In all cases, the filmmaker's approach as much as the subject will determine whether the CTF regards the project as a POV. Specifically, the CTF will review:

- Who the filmmaker (or filmmaker team) is and his/her track record and/or film background, regardless of whether they are an emerging or experienced filmmaker;
- The intent of the filmmaker in making the film;
- The research that has gone into the project;
- The production and post-production crew that is crafting the piece;
- In the case of arts auteur documentaries, how experimental is the filmmaker's approach;
- The budget and the cost of the production;
- That it is a single work (or in rare situations - a limited series);
- Whether the project is licenced to air in a broadcast strand recognized or formatted for POV documentaries (i.e., *Rough Cuts*, *Witness*, *The View From Here*, *Zone Libre* and *L'œil ouvert*);
- Generally, a POV documentary is not:
 - A docudrama, docu-soap, historical re-enactment or performance piece with people playing themselves or with professional actors;
 - A factual project;
 - A profile or biography;



- ▶ A segmented or capsular one-off or series;
- ▶ A video diary of social events (i.e., a series on graduations or family reunions);
- ▶ A project dependent on light information format; or
- ▶ Surveillance television.

2. Series and Limited Series

In Documentary programming, special consideration is given to a “limited series.” A limited series is generally defined as being six episodes or less and will always handle a subject matter in its entirety and in a manner that results in a conclusion. As such, the intention is that the limited series will not be renewed. Multiple episode productions that do not meet these criteria will be considered a series for the purposes of the CTF’s evaluation.

3. Feature-Length Documentaries

Feature-length documentaries are defined as being of 75 minutes in length or more.

4. Ineligible Programming

Projects presenting information primarily for its entertainment value are not considered documentaries for CTF purposes. The descriptive characteristics and examples in each of the categories that follow should be read as interpretive guides and not definitional absolutes. The following are examples of ineligible types of programming:

“How-to” Programming

“How-to” programming presents information or explores topics in order for the viewer to, for example:

- ▶ Learn the methodology for accomplishing a task, project, or the like;
- ▶ Understand the manner in which an issue or situation can be resolved (i.e., improve one’s finances or marital relations, help students deal with bullying and peer pressure, etc.);
- ▶ Gain a view or understanding towards achieving an objective;
- ▶ Receive information which enhances his/her skill development in a field; or
- ▶ Receive tips on how to accomplish tasks.

The presentation of the information above may be superficial or in-depth. Typically, “how-to” programming will be directive in approach and will draw conclusions for the viewer to aid them in fulfilling one or all of the points above and, as such, is results-oriented. As well, such programming often features a demonstration element(s) to illustrate how to achieve resolution of the matter at hand. Often, “how-to” programming will incorporate tips (either verbal or with on-screen supers) in order to condense information for the ease of consumption of the viewer.

Lifestyle Programming

Lifestyle programming presents information or explores topics in a manner that emphasizes the practical information aspect of the subject matter. While the programming is informative, it typically addresses topics in a superficial way, such that depth of insight and critical analysis/commentary are rudimentary or absent. Usually, lifestyle programming reflects the aspirations of the viewer.

Lifestyle programming, like “how-to” programming, often focuses on subject matter in which accomplishing practical objectives is illustrated, discussed, or explored. Practical information is shared with the primary goal of helping to achieve those objectives and thus, the aspirations

of the viewer. Unlike “how-to” programming, Lifestyle programming usually has a less linearly structured manner of conveying the information.

Lifestyle programming often contains elements of other ineligible genre forms (i.e., travelogue, “how-to,” reality television). The inclusion of these forms, while typically necessary to explore the subject matter in the desired manner, is indicative of an approach designed primarily for entertainment and the receipt of information with practical utility.

Reality (fully contrived)

- Reality show elements drive the program: competition, teams, set-up devices, prizes and conceits propel the plot;
- The intent of the program is not to convey information but instead celebration, voyeurism, entertainment, sensationalism, etc.;
- **Examples:** *The Amazing Race, Survivor, The Surreal Life, Occupation-double, Loft Story, Le Bachelor.*

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Reality (less contrived)

- The line between fact and fiction is blurred as it is between actuality and a set-up or contrivance;
- A lack of exploration of a real storyline beyond immediacy of events;
- Little or no establishment of context and story;
- Cinéma-vérité style is used as an excuse to suggest that in-depth treatment unfolds through following subjects through their experience/lives, but the short time frame of exploration, the formulaic nature, and repetitive approach strip cinéma-vérité of its true documentary contribution;
- **Examples:** *Cops, Dog the Bounty Hunter.*



Reality/Lifestyle (Celebrity-based)

- The line between fact and fiction is blurred as it is between actuality and a set-up or contrivance;
- A lack of exploration of a real storyline beyond immediacy of events;
- Celebrity-focused, where entertainment value and sensationalism are at the forefront;
- **Examples:** *The Osbournes*, *Growing Up Gotti*, *Michèle Richard*.

Lifestyle/Achievement

- The exploration of the topic is second to providing vicarious achievement of aspirations of the viewer;
- Often, the storyline is held together merely by an unveiling of a “result,” which is the product of hosts/participants’ expertise;
- A program is a hybrid of ineligible elements, such as “how-to” and eligible ones such as documentary;
- **Examples:** *Dogs with Jobs*, *Holmes on Homes*, *American Chopper*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *Pimp My Ride*, *The Dog Whisperer*, *Good Dog*, *Chef at Large*, *Myth Busters*, *Décore ta vie*, *Le grand ménage*, *Ma maison RONA*.

Lifestyle/Contest

- Is formulaic, with contrivances and elements, which emphasize entertainment and reduce exploration of topic in any in-depth manner, or where the contest/prize element drives the viewer’s interest;
- The contest and prize need not be money, but can just be the experience or exposure;
- **Examples:** *Blind Date*, *Elimidate*, *EX-treme Dating*, *SAS Jungle*, *Spy*, *Making the Cut*.

Lifestyle/Travelogue

- Is an exploration, often through a host, relying on visits, fleeting encounters, and superficial commentary;
- Has a lack of assessment of themes, or analysis;
- **Examples:** *On the Road Again, The Thirsty Traveller, Sur la route des étoiles, Gilles Proulx Globe-Trotter, Rendez-vous motoneige.*

Lifestyle/Docusoap (previously entitled Docusoaps Type 2)

- Depends on extreme formula and contrivances;
- Has non-recurring characters;
- The location changes such that the setting is not an integral part of the storyline;
- Often, the storyline is held together merely by an unveiling of a “result” which is the product of subjects’ participation;
- Often the characters seek to be subjects to gain media or other exposure;
- **Examples:** *A Baby Story, An Adoption Story, A Wedding Story, Intervention.*

Segmented Programming

- A program is segmented into multiple parts with no connection among the segments or a connection only via a very broad theme or short comments by a host. Due to the lack of treatment of one subject over 30 minutes, there is an absence of the required in-depth exploration;



- ▶ A program is a mere compendium of examples with no analysis, context or storyline connecting them beyond a host offering rudimentary linkage;
- ▶ **Example:** A thirty-minute program on the theme of “Water” – one 12-minute segment is on water export to the USA; the second is about water pollution in Australia OR 30 minute show on clocks – 5 minutes on the clock used by Sir John A. Macdonald; 5 minutes on Halifax’s tower clock, etc. The program is presented as a documentary on historical clocks of Canada.

Note: A Documentary that includes elements from ineligible formats, be they large or small in proportion to the total program time, may be considered ineligible.

5. Eligible Programming

While the following two categories of programming share some superficial similarities to the foregoing ineligible categories, the CTF views these as eligible because they meet the documentary definition.

Living Histories

- ▶ Where competition and selection of subjects is behind the scenes and where any prize or contest element is eliminated;
- ▶ Is characterized by voluminous research;
- ▶ Has a window into the past through use of subject/characters (i.e., a docu-drama brings alive the past through recreation);
- ▶ **Examples:** *Pioneer Quest*, *1900 House*, *Destination Nor’Owest*.



Docusoap

- ▶ Is not dependent on contrivances;
- ▶ Characters recur on future episodes;
- ▶ The location does not change and therefore, the setting is integral to the storyline;
- ▶ **Examples:** *Life's Little Miracles*, *Birth Stories*;

▶ B - Essential Requirements

In order of importance, the Essential Requirements and exceptions are as follows:

1. The project speaks to Canadians about, and reflects, Canadian themes, subject matter or point of view

- ▶ Documentaries whose eligibility relies on Canadian themes or subject matter, regardless of content and are factual documentaries (i.e., science, architecture, arts, history, social issues, medicine, etc.) must feature and focus on themes, subjects and/or events that are relevant to Canadians and must acknowledge and make prominent the use of Canadian experts, knowledge, talent, opinions or concepts.
- ▶ Documentaries applying to the CTF whose eligibility relies on the auteur's point of view (as described above), regardless of content, must provide perspective, context and interpretation of relevant international events, themes or subjects, as seen through the eyes of a Canadian independent auteur filmmaker or creative team. The project provides, in the way the story is told on screen, a clear Canadian view of such events, themes or stories.

2. **The project will be certified by the Canadian Audio-Visual Certification Office (CAVCO) and has achieved 10/10 points (or the maximum number of points appropriate to the project), as determined by the CTF using the CAVCO scale**

3. **Underlying rights are owned, and significantly and meaningfully developed, by Canadians**

Eligible projects must be developed by Canadians. Canadian creators must have significant and meaningful involvement in the project, from concept to final script. The project may not be based on foreign television productions, foreign format buys, foreign feature films (unless based on a published Canadian literary work), or foreign fully developed final-version scripts.

4. **The project is shot and set primarily in Canada**

- ▶ The project may be shot and set in a non-Canadian location if it is integral to the story being told.

Please refer to [Section 3.2.1.1](#) for details respecting the application of the Essential Requirements to official treaty co-productions.

For series (including limited series), all episodes must meet all four Essential Requirements in order for the series to qualify as 4ER programming. Documentary series which contain 2 ER episodes (defined below) will be deemed 2ER series.

2ER Documentary projects (Broadcaster Performance Envelope Stream only)

2ER Documentary projects are Documentaries that meet Essential Requirements 2 and 3, but do not meet Essential Requirements 1 and 4. The CTF will consider projects that do not clearly meet ER1 and ER4 as 2ER projects. Broadcasters may only commit a fixed proportion of their initial Documentary allocation of their Broadcaster Performance Envelope to 2ER Documentaries.

► A - Definition

Drama is defined as an entertainment production of a fictional nature, including but not limited to: series, mini-series, made-for-television movies, theatrical feature films shown on television, situation comedies, sketch comedy, and stage plays adapted for television (television movie).

Dramatic programming targeted to children or youth (up to 17 years of age) falls into the Children's and Youth genre.

Dramatic programming targeted to families is included in the Drama genre. Such programming is differentiated from Children's and Youth programming by virtue of its attraction to people of all ages: adults and children or youth together, or to adults watching without children.

A mini-series is generally defined as six or less episodes, handling a subject matter in its entirety and in a manner that results in a conclusion. The intention is that the mini-series will not be renewed.

► B - Essential Requirements

The Essential Requirements and exceptions are as follows:

1. **The project speaks to Canadians about, and reflects, Canadian themes and subject matter**
2. **The project will be certified by the Canadian Audio-Visual Certification Office (CAVCO) and has achieved 10/10 points (or the maximum number of points appropriate to the project), as determined by the CTF using the CAVCO scale**

Allowable exceptions:

- ▶ In live-action drama, one point, according to the CAVCO scale, may go to a non-Canadian performer who has significant recognition among Canadian audiences. This non-Canadian performer may not play the protagonist role in the production.
- ▶ In animation, one point may go to foreign in-betweening and one point to a non-Canadian camera operator.

3. Underlying rights are owned, and significantly and meaningfully developed, by Canadians

Eligible projects must be developed by Canadians. Canadian creators must have significant and meaningful involvement in the project, from concept to final script. The project may not be based on foreign television productions, foreign format buys, foreign feature films (unless based on a published Canadian literary work), or foreign fully developed final-version scripts.

4. The project is shot and set primarily in Canada

Allowable exception for live-action:

- ▶ The project may be shot and/or set in a non-Canadian location, provided it is integral to telling a Canadian story.

Please refer to [Section 3.2.1.1](#) for details respecting the application of the Essential Requirements to official treaty co-productions.



► Variety and Performing Arts Programming

► A - Definition

Variety

To determine eligibility, the CTF will look at the program in its entirety to see if, as a whole (purpose, content, form and structure), it truly meets the spirit of the definition.

Variety is defined as productions containing entertainment consisting of one or more on-screen artistic acts or performances such as singing, dancing, acrobatic exhibitions, comedy sketches, drama sketches, magic or stand-up comedy. Such acts or performances must be professional in nature and comprise at least two-thirds of the program's total running time. The maximum one-third non-performance content of the program must be comprised of other elements that are natural to the traditional Variety program such that it supports the acts or performances (i.e., stingers, bumpers, program transition segments, interview segments, etc.).

Genres ineligible for CTF participation (i.e., tributes, galas, and talk shows) cannot qualify as Variety programming merely because they are comprised of acts or performances. The CTF will not consider as eligible programs those that include ineligible elements, whether or not such elements are contained within the two-thirds performance component. Such ineligible elements include, but are not limited to, contests, prize presentations, promotional activities or commentary, sponsored presentations, video clips, awards, tributes, special event celebrations, reality TV elements, etc.

Performing Arts

Performing Arts programming is defined as productions composed of live or pre-recorded performances of traditional and popular music, opera, operetta, musicals, taping of live stage plays, ballet and other forms of dance or performing art.

Auteur Performing Arts

The CTF makes a distinction between Performing Arts productions and Auteur Performing Arts programming, for the purposes of tracking the incidence of the latter among projects supported.

The CTF defines an Auteur Performing Arts project as one that employs a Canadian auteur's vision that emanates from an individual director or creative team's artistic desire and passion to express a particular creative point of view or singular directorial vision. If the project is based on an underlying work or works, these must be creatively reconstituted for the screen in an artistic and filmic manner. The material must be represented through the eyes of a Canadian independent auteur filmmaker or creative team, which will lead to a clear Canadian view of such material.

In general, the CTF considers Auteur Performing Arts programs to:

- ▶ Be one-offs or limited episode series;
- ▶ Be reliant on scripting and/or storyboarding by the director (i.e., they are not simply recorded or filmed events);
- ▶ Provide a widening interpretation of cultural and artistic subjects or issues;
- ▶ Be projects that push margins, that reflect the range and diversity of Canadian voices so as to expand and enlighten our experience of the world;
- ▶ Spend considerable effort in all aspects of the artistic process: creation, development, production and post-production; and
- ▶ Have higher production costs.

The CTF will make a discretionary evaluation of what it considers an Auteur Performing Arts production.



► B - Essential Requirements

In order of importance, the Essential Requirements and exceptions are as follows:

1. The project speaks to Canadians about, and reflects, Canadian themes and subject matter

Allowable exception:

- The project may have a non-Canadian theme or subject, but all performers must be Canadian (with the exception of the first or second-highest paid performer).

2. The project will be certified by the Canadian Audio-Visual Certification Office (CAVCO) and has achieved 10/10 points (or the maximum number of points appropriate to the project), as determined by the CTF using the CAVCO scale

Allowable exception:

- One point may go to a non-Canadian performer who has significant recognition among Canadian audiences.

3. Underlying rights are owned, and significantly and meaningfully developed, by Canadians

Eligible projects must be developed by Canadians. Canadian creators must have significant and meaningful involvement in the project, from concept to final script. The project may not be based on foreign television productions, foreign format buys, foreign feature films (unless based on a published Canadian literary work), or foreign fully developed final-version scripts.

4. The project is shot and set primarily in Canada

Allowable exception:

- The project does not have to be set in Canada.

Please refer to [Section 3.2.1.1](#) for details respecting the application of the Essential Requirements to official treaty co-productions.