Industry Report on Production Carbon Emissions

2024/2025

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Foreword

Lisa Clarkson, CBC Business & Rights and Production Sustainability

A few years ago, CBC released our first Canadian carbon emissions report. At the time, it was the biggest release of carbon emissions data for Canadian productions. That report was built from data shared by scores of Canadian producers who started measuring their carbon emissions in 2023 with a new tool for our market, the albert carbon calculator.

Fast forward to today. With the release of this report, we are sharing our third Canadian carbon emissions summary with the industry. As with the previous reports, this report details where we are emitting carbon and what steps can be taken to reduce it. Again, this report is the biggest summary of carbon emissions data for English Canadian productions.

A new feature of this report is that it includes only completed assessments (as opposed to completed and pending assessments), so our insights are as accurate and actionable as possible. This heightened accuracy and reliability was only possible because of the detailed and diligent time invested by CBC producers and independent Canadian producers. Without them, this report would not have been possible.

What does this report reveal? Again, the “hotspot” area of carbon emissions is the travel and transport category (specifically - road transport for scripted drama and comedy productions and air transport for the other genres). One powerful way to address is through “thinking locally” on every production - hire equipment locally; use local crews; order food from local restaurants; and cut out any transport that can be achieved in other ways (video calls; car pools; packed (not half empty) equipment trucks; locations that are close to one another).

What are other ways to reduce? Previously in the English Canadian market, there wasn't a way to formally recognize productions for their environmental actions, so CBC created a carbon reduction plan for returning productions. New this year - flowing from a deal we reached with BAFTA albert - is the ability for Canadian productions - made by CBC or for CBC - to have their productions albert certified. And so, as of Spring 2025, CBC now requires albert certification for all our returning series. This is a meaningful shift from measuring and tracking carbon to actively reducing it. By mandating certification for our most established and high budget productions, we are ensuring that sustainability is foundational to the Canadian original content we support. Once we start getting data from the certifications, we will share that too.

Our evolutionary progress in tracking and reducing carbon emissions is what makes Canada a global leader in sustainable production. In an era of climate uncertainty, this Canadian commitment is more important than ever. By holding ourselves to the highest standards, we aren't just protecting the "wonders of nature" today —we are ensuring those wonders remain for the audiences of tomorrow.

Lisa Clarkson Executive Director, Business & Rights and Sustainability, CBC English Services

About this Report

In 2021, CBC/Radio-Canada released our corporate sustainability strategy, Greening Our Story. The strategy encompasses all aspects of our business: from how we produce our content, to how we operate our business, to how we make choices to reduce consumption and limit our carbon footprint. It's our roadmap that allows us to embed sustainability in all of our content. Under this strategy, CBC has committed to having 100% of in-house and 50% of independent productions using the albert carbon calculator to track their carbon emissions.

This third annual report analyzes 63 CBC-affiliated Canadian productions that finalized[1] their footprints in fiscal year 2024/2025. These productions emitted a total of 6,495 tonnes of CO_2e, averaging 25.4 tonnes per hour. These reports help to better understand where improvements can be made to address carbon emissions in the Canadian film and television industry.

2023/2024 Report

Our previous report analyzed 50 carbon footprints (35 completed and 15 marked "amendments required"). Since that release, more 2023/2024 productions have finalized their footprints, while others were moved to different fiscal years. The table below reflects the adjusted calculations based on changes in our methodology to focus solely only on "completed" productions. We anticipate similar data refinements for the current report as more productions finalize their data; these updates will be provided in next year's report.

	2023/2024 (Completed + Amendments Required)	2023/2024 (Completed Only, with Additional Footprints Completed Since Last Report)
Total Productions	35+15	45
Total Hours	288	205
Total Tonnes CO2e	6,979	6,935
Average Tonnes CO2e/hr	24.3	33.8
Top Emitting Category	Travel & Transport	Travel and Transport
Second Emitting Category	Materials	Materials

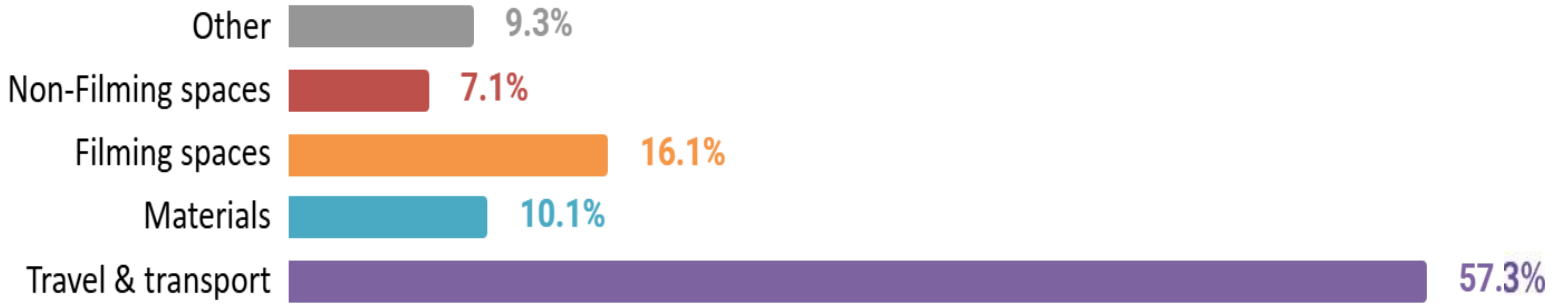
[1] *Increased sample size now allows for analysis of finalized footprints only; "amendments required" data is no longer needed nor included.*

2024/2025 Results

The 63 productions analyzed this year demonstrate that travel and transport is once again the highest emitting category across all genres (57%), followed by filming spaces (16%) and materials (10%).

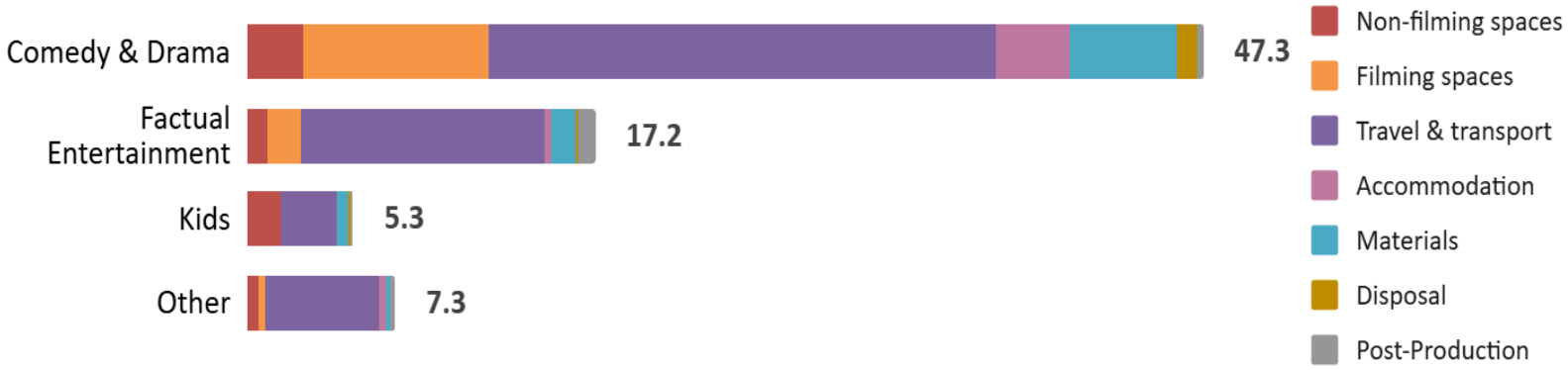
Overall, productions from fiscal year 2024/2025 emitted an average of 25.4 tonnes of CO_2e/hr, which is equivalent to over 25 one-way road trips from Vancouver to Montreal.

Which Production Activities Contribute Most to Emissions?



**Other = Accommodation, Disposal, Post-Production*

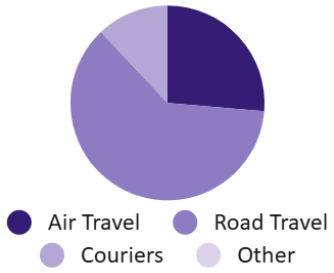
Carbon Emissions by Genre (tonnes CO_2e/hour)



A breakdown of the emission sources by genre

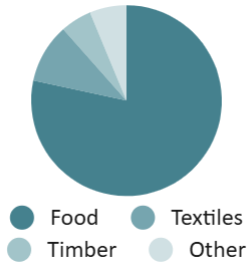
Comedy and Drama[2]:

Travel & Transport: 53%



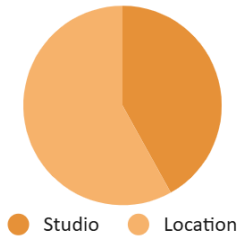
Road Travel: 61.7%
Air Travel: 26.3%
Couriers: 12%

Materials: 11.3%



Food: 78.4%
Textiles: 10.1%
Timber: 5.3%
Other: 6.3%

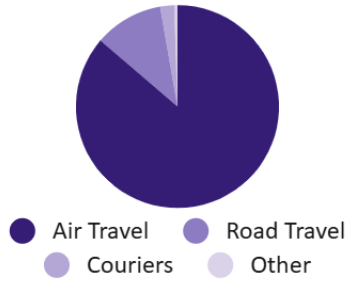
Filming Spaces: 19.3%



Location: 58.1%
Studio: 41.9%

Factual Entertainment and Docs:

Travel & Transport: 70.2%

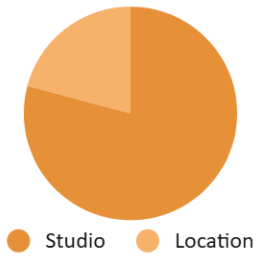


Air Travel: 86.3%
Road Travel: 11%
Couriers: 2.2%
Other: 0.5%

Materials: 7.1%

Food: 83.4%
Textiles: 9.1%
Other: 3.7%
Timber: 3.7%

Filming Spaces: 9.4%



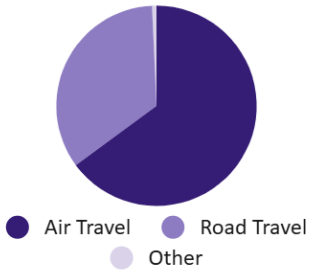
Studio: 79.1%
Location: 20.9%

2

Comedy and Drama are the highest-emitting genres in 2024/2025, with 47.3 tonnes CO_2e per screened hour, the equivalent of driving one way across Canada (Vancouver-Montreal), over 40 times. The scripted genre generally works with larger crews and budgets, have longer shooting times, and are often on location, increasing travel emissions.

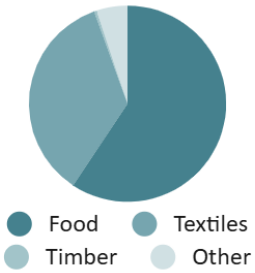
Kids:

Travel & Transport: 52.6%



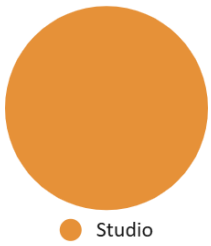
Air Travel: 64.9%
Road Travel: 34.4%
Other: 0.7%

Materials: 10.3%



Food: 59.3%
Textiles: 35.2%
Other: 5.1%
Timber: 0.4%

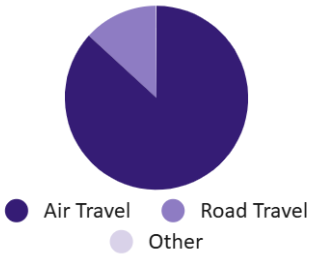
Filming Spaces: 0.9%



Studio: 100%
Location: 0%

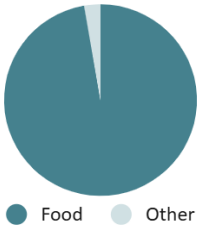
Other (current affairs/sports/misc. entertainment):

Travel & Transport:77.5%



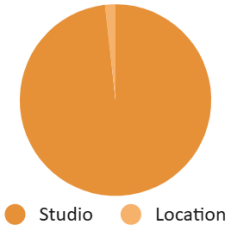
Air Travel: 86.8%
Road Travel: 13%
Other: 0.2%

Materials: 2.2%



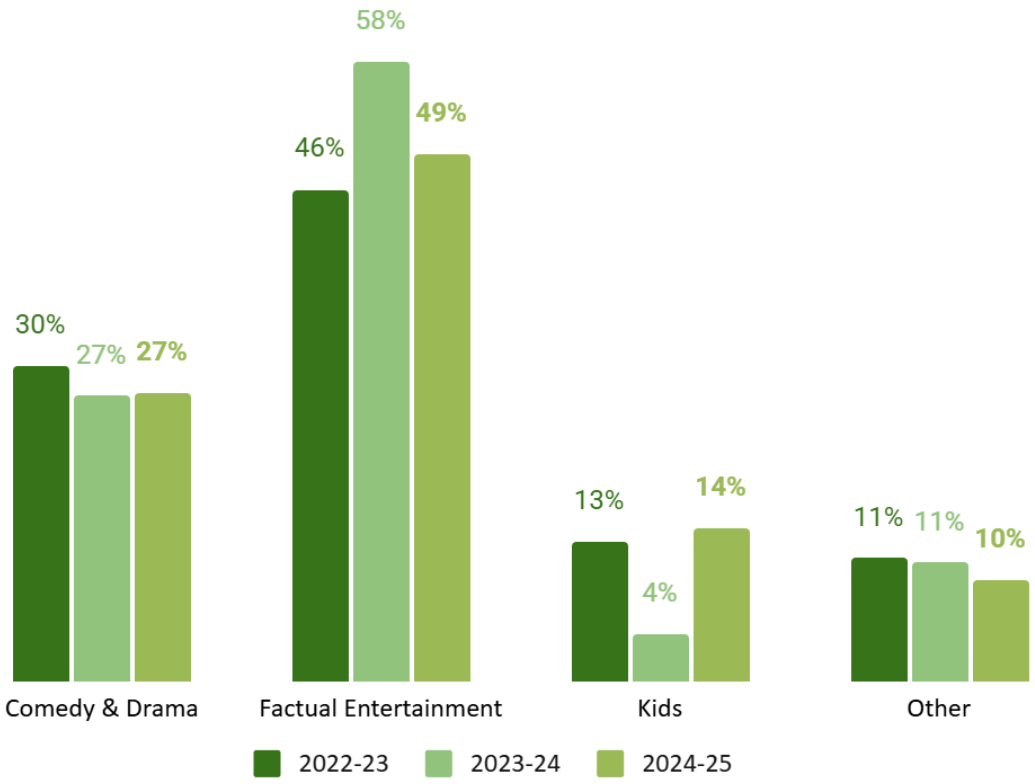
Food: 97.3%
Other: 2.7 %

Filming Spaces: 3.5%

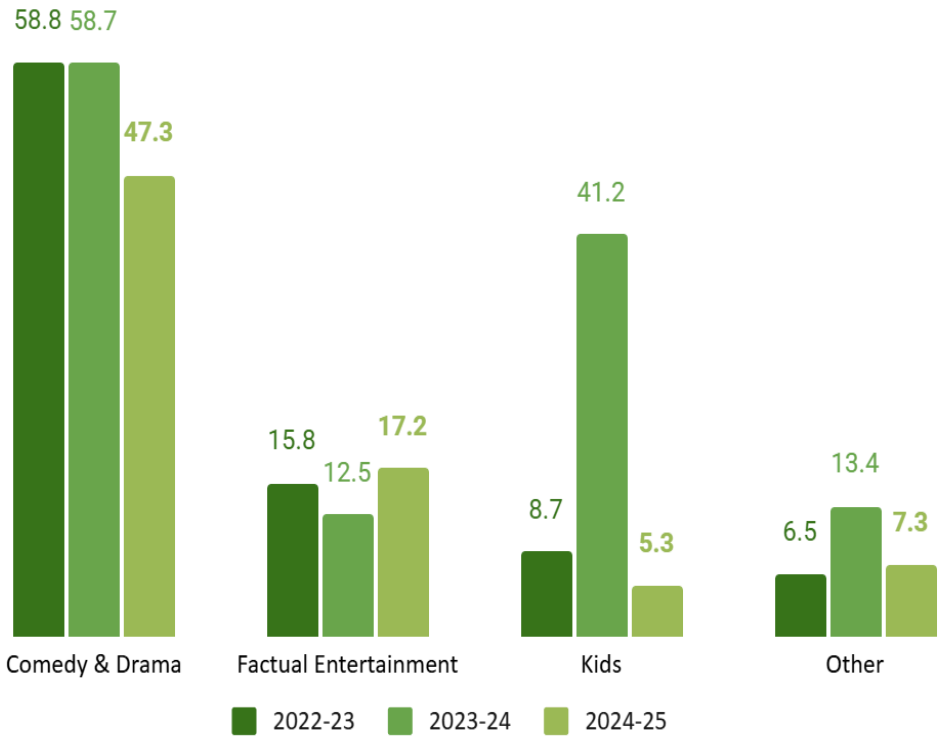


Studio: 98.2%
Location: 1.8%

Productions by Genre Year over Year



Carbon Emissions by Genre Year over Year (tonnes of CO_2e/hour)



Findings and Recommendations

We are pleased to report that three out of four genres show decreasing emissions trends. When analyzing the genres Comedy & Drama, Kids and Other (current affairs/sports/misc. entertainment), we see a decrease in carbon emissions, while we see a slight rise in the emissions from Factual Entertainment. While **Factual Entertainment** makes up approximately 50% of the productions measured, it consistently accounts for less than 20% of total emissions. Conversely, **Comedy and Drama** represent about 30% of the production mix but account for **50% of total emissions** (averaging 47.3 tonnes CO_2e per screened hour).

Travel and Transport (57% of total emissions)

Consistent with our other annual production emissions reports, travel and transport is the largest emitter of carbon. In the “factual entertainment”, “kids”, and “other” categories, air travel accounted for the most emissions, followed by road travel. In the “comedy and drama” genre, road travel accounted for the most emissions, followed by air travel.

Reductions in both air and road travel must be examined.

Actions productions can take to reduce these emissions:

- Ask if travel is necessary
    - Can crew be hired locally?
    - Can remote and digital technology be used instead?
    - Can products and services be sourced from local vendors?
- Encourage sustainable practices
    - Walking, cycling, taking public transport
    - Using low/carbon free travel options like hybrid/electric vehicles
    - Book economy seats and direct flights when air travel is necessary
    - Limit idling
- Plan in advance
    - Don’t ask for next day delivery
    - Design itineraries to avoid return trips and to optimize your route

Filming Spaces (16% of total emissions)

This fiscal year, the energy associated with filming spaces is the second largest emitter of carbon. Last year, it was third, after materials. Total emissions from filming spaces has increased from 10% in last fiscal to 16% in this fiscal.

Actions productions can take to reduce these emissions:

- Know the power needed for set and try to not overpower
- Connect to the electrical grid where possible to avoid using generators
    - If a generator is necessary, prioritize using an electric generator
- Use energy-efficient equipment such as LEDs
- Power down and unplug equipment when not using the item

Materials (10% of total emissions)

Emissions from materials decreased from 15.7% to 10% of total emissions from last fiscal year. Within this category, “food” is the highest emitter across all genres.

Actions productions can take to reduce these emissions:

- Work with a sustainable caterer
    - Offers vegetarian options with less reliance on meat options
    - Donates food leftovers to food rescue programs/local shelters
- Follow the principles of the circular economy
    - Prioritize repurposing materials, renting, or purchasing second-hand
    - Use reusable kitchenware and encourage cast and crew to bring their own water bottles, coffee cups, and food storage containers
    - Separate compost, recycling, and waste on set

Conclusion

We are encouraged by the measurable CO_2e/hour reductions achieved across our 'Comedy & Drama,' 'Kids,' and 'Other' genres. Notably, three of our productions earned BAFTA albert certification this year—signalling a shift from mere carbon measurement to tangible climate action. As our production partners increasingly adopt sustainable workflows, we anticipate a steady rise in certifications. CBC remains committed to providing the guidance and resources necessary to lead the Canadian media industry toward a greener future.

If you have any questions about this report or have any suggestions to move the Canadian media industry towards a greener future, please contact Elsa- CBC’s Environmental Sustainability Lead at elsa.tokunaga@cbc.ca.

Testimonials

This report wouldn't be possible without the hard work and contributions of the producers we work with. With that in mind, we thought it would only be fitting to include their voices in this report. Here's what they have to say about using albert and implementing sustainable production practices.

SMALL ARMY ENTERTAINMENT "The Assembly":
"*Our experience with the Albert calculator has been very positive, even if it felt slightly confusing at first. Once we became familiar with it, it prompted us to think more critically about the carbon impact of both our day-to-day production office operations and our time on set. It has helped us make more informed, conscious decisions throughout the process. One of the most valuable aspects was being able to quantify the impact of choices we were already making. For example, because we work exclusively with natural light, building our shoots around the needs of our neurodivergent cast rather than expecting them to adapt to traditional production setups, we avoid large lighting rigs altogether. The calculator allowed us to clearly measure the energy savings of this approach, reinforcing both its environmental and practical benefits.*

Sustainability is something we actively prioritise, from using natural light to relying heavily on public transport, but this process has also highlighted some of the limitations within current sustainability conversations. Too often, they overlook accessibility. For many disabled people, and those with sensory needs or serious allergies, single-use plastics or individually packaged food are not conveniences but necessities. Sustainability cannot be one-size-fits-all, and it should never come at the expense of inclusion.

Our show 'The Assembly' has ultimately broadened our perspective on what meaningful industry change could look like, not only in how we measure and reduce carbon, but in how we embed accessibility into those conversations from the outset. Inclusion should be built into sustainable practice, not treated as an afterthought."

RIVER ROAD FILMS "Shared Planet":
"*In producing Shared Planet, a natural history series centred on coexistence with wildlife and environmental restoration, it was imperative that our methods of filming were as sustainable and respectful to the planet as possible. To inform our efforts, it was enormously helpful to work with Albert, the film and TV industry's leading environmental certification program. With Albert's carbon calculator, we were able to track greenhouse gas emissions and make adjustments along the way. Filming across sixteen countries on six continents, we used local crews, minimized travel, relied on renewable power when possible, and avoided single-use materials. Teams often met and worked virtually, meals were locally and sustainably sourced, and recycling was prioritized at every location. Albert helped us measure and ensure our production impact matched the hopeful, restorative stories we told on screen*."

CBC KIDS
"*After doing this for 5 years, it's easier now for the teams to meaningfully participate in sustainability on set. From the producers to the production assistants, we now have Green in mind every day!"*

Appendix

Methodology

This report was generated using data supplied by the 63 CBC-affiliated productions that have completed their albert carbon footprint reports from the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

This data was then amalgamated using Microsoft Power BI, a tool for building dashboards to synthesize large amounts of raw data. Information on how the albert carbon calculator determines carbon emissions associated with each production can be found in their Methodology Paper.

Recalculation Statement

It is CBC/Radio-Canada's position that the data will be recalculated if a change in procedure or methodology is deemed to be material.

Clarifications

Working from home discrepancy

Energy coefficients associated with working from home were based on a global benchmark assigned by albert, as per DEFRA's recommendations. The global average they used assumes each energy grid constitutes 91% gas and 9% electricity. This energy mix is more heavily weighted toward gas than that of many Canadian provinces, including the largest filming jurisdictions: Ontario and Quebec.

This means the resulting emissions were overestimated wherever productions reported working from home. Because aggregated albert reports don't provide details on where working from home activities took place, we are unable to adjust for this retroactively.

Measurement uncertainty

CBC relies on data from both internal tools and third parties to measure these greenhouse gas emissions. While this data is based on what we believe to be reasonable calculations for the applicable periods of measurement, there are inherent challenges in collecting this information, particularly as more accurate data sources become gradually available.

For these reasons, the albert data presented herein has not been included in Scope 3 greenhouse gas calculations for CBC/Radio-Canada. Additional testing and review of the methodology, as well as third party verification, is needed.

Acknowledgements

CBC is grateful to all the independent and in-house productions that calculated their carbon footprints in 2024/2025. Without them, this report would not have been possible. Thank you for helping us advance a sustainable, healthy, and liveable future for all.

Wewould like to extend her deepest thanks to the dedicated team who made this report a reality:

- **Elsa Tokunaga**, the author of this report and CBC's Environmental Sustainability Lead (reach out to Elsa anytime if you want support or sustainable advice);
- **Rob Long**, Director of CBC's Strategic Insights & Decision Support, for his tireless work to aggregate and decipher our data;
- **Athena Traselis**, Director of Environmental Sustainability, National Sustainability Strategy for CBC/Radio-Canada;
- **Naomi Rao**, Sustainability Advisor for CBC, who was instrumental in helping Elsa navigate and distil the data;
- **David Oille**, Senior Advisor, Strategic Communications for CBC, for his thoughtful feedback; and
- **Matt Scarff,** Managing Director, BAFTA albert, and the team at BAFTA albert for their ongoing support and inspiration as we navigate Canada's path forward.