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**ONTARIO MEDIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION –
ORDER-IN-COUNCIL APPOINTMENT OF ALDO DI FELICE***

Prepared for:

Standing Committee on Government Agencies

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INTRODUCTION

This document was prepared to assist the Members participating in the Committee's review of the Order-in-Council appointment of Aldo Di Felice to the Ontario Media Development Corporation's Board of Directors. It describes the role and operations of the Ontario Media Development Corporation (commonly known as Ontario Creates), presents information about the appointee, and suggests possible lines of questioning.

ONTARIO MEDIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (ONTARIO CREATES)

Enabling Statute		Responsible Ministry	
Development Corporations Act ; O. Reg. 672/00		Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries	
Agency Type		Current Annual Report	
Operational Service		2019-2020	
Activities of the Agency			
Ontario Creates focuses on encouraging strategic business partnerships among the converging cultural media industries, including film and television production, book and magazine publishing, sound recording and interactive digital media. In addition to fostering partnerships, the agency seeks to address the distinct challenges each of the cultural industries faces in domestic and international marketplaces.			
Board Membership			
Statutory No. of Members: Up to 17		Position	Remuneration¹
No. Appointed by Cabinet: All		Chair (part-time)	Up to \$225 per diem
Term of Office: Up to three years with possible reappointment		Vice-chair (part-time)	Up to \$175 per diem
		Members (part-time)	Up to \$150 per diem
Position Requirements			
In selecting and appointing persons to be members of the corporation, the Lieutenant Governor in Council (i.e., Cabinet) shall ensure that the board fairly represents sectors in the cultural media industry.			
The board of directors of the corporation meets at least four times in each year.			

MANDATE AND OPERATIONS

Ontario Creates is a provincial government agency that acts as a catalyst for economic development, investment, innovation, and collaboration in Ontario's cultural media industries, including the film, television, interactive digital media, music, book and magazine sectors, both domestically and internationally.

¹ Appointees are remunerated according to [Schedule A, Level 1 of the Agencies and Appointments Directive](#).

The businesses of the cultural media industry are defined under O. Reg. 672/00 (s. 1) as follows:

- (a) the development, publication, distribution, marketing or sale of books or magazines in print or machine readable form,
- (b) the development, production, distribution, marketing, sale or exhibition of audio-visual products with substantive cultural content, including film and television productions, sound recording products, and interactive digital media products, or
- (c) the creation and development for commercial purposes of new or hybrid cultural media works or products which contain cultural content.

Funding Programs

Ontario Creates provides a range of financial, strategic, and tax credit assistance in support of Ontario's cultural entrepreneurs from the book and magazine publishing, film and television production, sound recording, and interactive digital media content production industries in growing their businesses.

Programs offered include the following:²

- The **Film Fund** increases domestic feature film production in Ontario by providing support to Ontario producers for feature film projects with financing for production and all stages of development activities.
- The **Ontario Creates' Ontario Film Commission** promotes the province for the purposes of generating investment in the film and television industry, and building capacity, competitiveness, and long-term industry viability.
- The **Ontario Music Fund** creates opportunities for Ontario music companies with export trade missions to events around the world (and is being replaced with the Ontario Music Investment Fund).
- The **Export Fund (Books, Film & Television)** provides eligible Ontario producers and publishers with funding to pursue strategic export development activities including attendance at international market events and targeted sales trips.
- The **Trillium Book Fund** recognizes excellence, supports marketing, and fosters increased public awareness of the quality and diversity of Ontario writers and writing.
- Various targeted **Tax Credits** that encourage critical investment in domestic and international film and television production and post-production in Ontario, including animation and visual effects.

² Ontario Creates, *Annual Report 2019-2020*.

Statement of Operations

Figure 1 provides details of Ontario Creates' statement of operations for the two most recently-available fiscal years.

Figure 1: Statement of Operations (\$ 000s)
For the year ended March 31

	2020	2019
Revenue		
Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries	38,457	45,787
Tax credit administrative fees	2,785	2,624
Prior year grants rescinded or recovered	(55)	(139)
Return of investment under assistance programs	245	252
Interest	681	693
Other	132	103
	42,245	49,320
Expenses		
Ontario Music Fund	7,267	14,037
Industry development initiatives	13,203	12,471
Operating expenses	11,000	10,768
Interactive Digital Media Fund	9,264	8,888
Tax credit transitional grant	--	136
Toronto International Film Festival Group grants	1,295	1,330
Research initiatives	202	200
	42,231	47,830
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	14	1,490

Source: Ontario Creates, [Annual Report 2019-2020](#), p. 57.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS – IMPACT OF COVID-19

Ontario Creates' Chair, along with its President and Chief Executive Officer, note that 2019-20 was a "record-setting year for Ontario's creative industries by multiple measures." The film and TV industry, for example, saw a "record \$2.16 Billion in production spending and 44,540 jobs supported." However, toward the end of the fiscal year, the COVID-19 pandemic "dramatically altered the business environment" for these industries. They note that "the short-term impact has been severe for all sectors, and recovery for some—film and TV production and live music in particular—is anticipated to be a long road."³

³ Ibid., p. 3.

THE WITNESS

The witness, of North York, is seeking appointment as a part-time member.

According to information provided by the Office of the Premier, Mr. Di Felice is a president of TLN Media Group Inc., and a former Chief Operating Officer for Sullivan Entertainment. Mr. Di Felice's community involvement includes serving as a member for St. Michael's Hospital Foundation President Council.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

What motivated the witness to apply for this position?

What particular skills does the witness bring to the work of Ontario Creates?

Can the witness describe his role within the cultural media industry?

In the witness's view, what are the greatest challenges facing Ontario's culture industries in the immediate future?