

Dear Stakeholders and applicants:

The Board of Directors of the BPF (the “Board”) wishes to update Stakeholders on certain recent developments relating to the expansion of our mandate to fund cost award applications related to the Online News Act (Canada) (the “ONA”).

To recap the process undertaken:

On November 6, 2024, the CRTC approved the inclusion of online news matters under the proceedings establishing the ONA framework, and proceedings under such framework, in the Broadcasting Participation Fund’s mandate. This approval allowed the BPF to expand its mandate to accept applications for public interest intervenor costs in such proceedings.

The BPF requested that the CRTC expand its mandate to ensure that a mechanism exists for public interest groups participating in proceedings relating to the ONA to apply for funding to offset their costs.

Since that time, the Board has worked with our corporate secretariat and our stakeholders to:

- Amend BPF bylaws and articles of incorporation to include cost awards and support for research, analysis and advocacy for proceedings relating to the ONA;
- Update the definition of “Consumer/Public Interest Stakeholders” to include consumer and public interest groups, including advocacy and service groups, that are active before the CRTC in online news proceedings;
- Update the eligibility requirements for the Consumer/ Public Interest Director and the Broadcasting Industry Director to include online news businesses; and
- Request comments and ultimately amend our Stakeholder Agreement to reflect the aforementioned changes.

In March 2025, updated articles and bylaws were filed with Corporations Canada reflecting changes and on our about, April 2025, final revised Stakeholder Agreements were circulated to BPF Stakeholders for signature.

As we continue to work through the process to finalize the expansion of our Mandate, as directed by the CRTC, we also highlight that no funding sources have been established to cover cost award claims submitted for ONA proceedings.

Furthermore, based on guidance from our legal counsel, the Board has been advised that existing funding sources to date, **which were put in place with no reference to ONA**, and include tangible benefits funding from specific CRTC decisions as well as a one-time contribution agreement from the Department of Canadian Heritage **appear not to be eligible** to be used to fund ONA related claims. Given this guidance and the finite nature of the Fund, the Board has voted to defer the review,

approval and payment of all ONA claims until a time that an eligible and sufficient funding source has been identified to fund them.

In the interest of identifying such funding sources, the Board continues to consult with the CRTC, the Department of Canadian Heritage and look for other potential funders for these claims. We will continue to keep the stakeholders and applicants aware of any ongoing developments in this area as they arise.

We are providing you with this information to ensure that Stakeholders are informed as to the status of the Fund and its mandate expansion to include the ONA. We welcome input with respect to our proposed approach; however, please note that this is a time-sensitive matter, and we ask that any comments be sent to the BPF Cost Officer, Michael Herot, at [bpf@welchllp.com](mailto:bpf@welchllp.com).

For further information on the Fund, please visit the BPF website: [www.bpf-fpr.ca](http://www.bpf-fpr.ca).

Kind regards,

Teresa Griffin-Muir, Chair  
on behalf of the Board of Directors of the BPF