

Dublin and London Mission 2025 – Final Report

Date: September 15, 2025

To: Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Board

From: General Manager, Economic Development and Culture

Wards: All

SUMMARY

From July 7 to 11, 2025, Mayor Olivia Chow led a delegation of 8 Toronto screen industry organizations to Dublin and London to foster new relationships with screen industry organizations based in the United Kingdom and Ireland in order to encourage co-production with Toronto-based companies.

This report provides an overview of the Mayor's Dublin and London Mission, including key activities, objectives, and outcomes of the Mission.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Economic Development and Culture recommend that the Toronto Film, Television, and Digital Media Board recommend the Economic and Community Development Committee to recommend that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City of Toronto's 2025 Dublin and London Mission had a total cost of \$47,248.43. After receiving \$15,000 in sponsorship contributions, the net cost to the City of Toronto Film Office was \$32,248.43. The total cost of \$32,248.43 has been fully provided for in the City's 2025 Economic Development and Culture's (EDC) Division's Operating Budget. As such, there will be no impact on the current year's budget.

The work done during the trade mission helps to diversify the Toronto film industry's production mix and client-base, which may enhance opportunities for the domestic production sector and improve production volume stability in the future.

The detailed Film Mission budget and financials are attached as **Attachment C**.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on June 7, 2016, City Council adopted item ED12.1, Mayor's Mission to Los Angeles: Growing Toronto's Screen Industry, which directed the Economic Development and Culture division to lead a staff working group with the mandate to maximize the City's support for film and television production in Toronto.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.ED12.1>

At its meeting on July 4, 2017, City Council adopted item ED22.4, Spotlight on Toronto: A Strategic Action Plan for the Film, Television and Digital Media Industry, which emphasized the importance of Los Angeles based clients and the need for the City to promote Toronto and build relationships among key Los Angeles decision-makers.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.ED22.4>

At its meeting on July 4, 2017, City Council adopted item ED22.5, Los Angeles Mission 2017, which provided a summary of the Mayor's Mission and its focus on strengthening existing relationships with Toronto's key investment partners in film, television and digital media and on expanding new business opportunities across all aspects of production including visual effects, animation, post-production and virtual reality.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.ED22.5>

At its meeting on October 2, 2019, City Council adopted item EC7.7, Los Angeles Mission 2019, which presented an overview of the Mayor's Mission to Los Angeles and focused on the consensus stakeholders demonstrated regarding the need for workforce development and expansion of production infrastructure for the growth of the film industry in Toronto.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EC7.7>

At its meeting on July 19, 2022, City Council adopted item EC31.20, Los Angeles Mission 2022, which presented an overview of the Mayor's Mission to Los Angeles and conveyed the stakeholders' consensus regarding the need for workforce development, stable and competitive tax credits, and available production infrastructure for the growth of the film industry in Toronto.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EC31.20>

At its meeting on November 13 and 14, 2024, City Council adopted item EC16.1 - Culture Connects: An Action Plan for Culture in Toronto (2025-2035), which identified increasing foreign direct investment through trade missions and outreach as an urgent action.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EC16.1>

At its meeting on November 13, 2024, City Council adopted Sidewalks to Skylines: An Action Plan for Toronto's Economy (2025-2035), which identified the growth of Toronto's global competitiveness in key anchor and high-growth sectors as a priority.

At its meeting March 26, 2025, City Council adopted the Mayor's Economic Action Plan in response to US Tariffs. The Plan details ten (10) immediate actions to ensure Toronto remains resilient amidst economic adversity while continuing to build a strong and diversified economy to enable growth.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX21.2>

COMMENTS

The focus of the 2025 Dublin and London Mission was to promote Toronto's screen industry as the ideal partner in co-production, thereby drawing production, post-production, and VFX work to the city. The Mission pursued this via meetings with potential partners and clients, where delegates explained the benefits of working in Toronto and with Toronto-based companies. Discussions championed the capacity of the Toronto industry, promoted the world-class talent and infrastructure in Toronto, and explained federal and provincial funding and incentives.

As part of the City's tariff response actions, the Mayor met with key stakeholders from Toronto's film industry on May 23, 2025. In attendance were leaders from unions and guilds, studios, service vendors, educators, and other industry organizations. Among the recommended actions were: "The City should use missions, markets, and other forms of direct outreach to promote Toronto to new partners, both for co-production and for service production."

The 2025 Mayor's Mission aligns with current strategic plans within Economic Development and Culture:

- *Sidewalks to Skylines: A 10-Year Action Plan for Toronto's Economy*, Action 22, "Strengthen and grow high-value industry sectors that will enhance Toronto's position globally to drive productivity"
- *Culture Connects: An Action Plan for Culture in Toronto*, Objective 4.2, "Facilitate greater engagement, export and international collaboration for culture and creative industries" and
- *Mayor's Economic Action Plan in Response to US Tariffs*, Action 6, "Expanding global markets for Toronto's businesses, working with industry and partners."

Mayor's Missions are important marketing initiatives the City of Toronto Film Office undertakes, and are critical in advancing the profile, relationships, and the competitive position of Toronto's industry. In 2022, production volume in the Toronto was \$2.6 billion, with 70% of that being service production. There are 40,000 people working in the film industry in Toronto, the majority in unionized roles. The strengths of the production industry will be protected by diversifying the types of productions Toronto seeks to host.

Mission Objectives:

- 1) To promote Canada's industry as partners for co-productions:
 - History of successful co-productions between Canada/Ireland or Canada/United Kingdom, including Academy Award nominated features Brooklyn and Room, and Academy Award nominated animated feature The Breadwinner.
 - Share history and affinity between nations
- 2) To showcase that Toronto is a creative powerhouse:
 - 5th largest production hub in North America
 - Top creative talent:
 - Award-winning producers, directors, writers, performers
 - 40,000 skilled crew and 3 million square feet of studio space
 - Award-winning post, VFX, and industry leading technology development
 - Most creative city in Canada:
 - More production companies and funders/broadcasters here than anywhere else
 - Second-largest tech hub in North America
 - Holds dominant market share for Canada's music and book publishing industries and is home to almost 300 interactive digital media companies
 - Third largest live theatre hub in the world after the West End in London and NYC.
 - Toronto's industry works together to amplify our strength
 - Shared engagement in Missions reflects the industry's inclination to share work, allowing them to take on larger projects.
- 3) To inform potential partners regarding Canada's generous financial support for official treaty co-productions
 - Tax credits and soft money form a significant portion of the Canadian percentage of any official treaty co-production.
 - Tax credits available federally and provincially, and are 'stackable'
 - Generous federal funding available for film and television, and the Province contributes for feature film as well.

Business/Delegate Recruitment:

Delegates represented the unions and guilds, post-production and VFX companies, as well as an expert on tax incentives. Each of the companies participating paid their own travel costs and contributed \$2,500 to the costs of the networking receptions.

In addition to Mayor Olivia Chow, Chief of Staff, Karla Webber-Gallagher and Director of Tour, Devon Sissons joined from the Mayor's Office. Additional City staff in attendance on the Mission were Film Commissioner and Director of Entertainment Industries, Marguerite Pigott and Program Manager, Film Sector Development, Jessica Menagh.

Throughout the Mission, the Mayor joined key meetings for the Film Mission and also conducted business to business meetings aligned with trade and investment opportunities and government to government engagements and knowledge exchanges to advance priority city initiatives, including housing and mobility.

A list of the Toronto delegate companies is provided in **Attachment A**.

Mission Activities:

Meeting targets were chosen for their suitability and readiness as co-production partners.

Mayor's Team Meetings - Dublin

In Dublin, on July 7 and 8, teams met with Element Pictures, Subotica, Keeper Pictures, Shinawil Productions, O'Sullivan Productions, Metropolitan Pictures, Wild Atlantic Pictures, Peer Pressure, Screen Scene, Treasure Films, Underground Films, Screen Ireland, RTE, and Tailored Films. Members of the delegation also offered a panel to the Screen Producers Ireland membership at a local industry event. The panel covered co-production with Toronto-based companies.

Mayor's Industry Appearances and Debrief - Dublin

In addition to attending key meetings throughout the days with both teams, Mayor Chow spoke to Screen Producers Ireland's membership at a local industry event, offered remarks at the Mission reception in Dublin, and led a delegation debrief to capture feedback and action points.

Reception for Dublin Industry Leaders

The City of Toronto Film Office partnered with the Canadian Media Producers Association to co-host a reception in Dublin with estimated attendance of over 100 industry leaders. With Mayor Chow as a host, the reception included representatives from leading Irish production companies and the national broadcaster, and the reception was attended by Ambassador Dennis King, Canada's Ambassador to Ireland. The reception allowed the Mission to broaden its outreach well beyond those companies with which it had scheduled meetings.

Mayor's Team Meetings - London

On July 9 to 11 the delegation traveled to London, where teams met with Cinesite VFX & Animation, See Saw Films, Banijay, Black Bear Pictures, Sid Gentle, Anton Corp, Working Title Films, Ink Factory, Hat Trick, Sister Films, Pinewood, ITV, Film 4, Sky Studios, BBC Commissioning, and BBC Studios: Comedy and Drama.

Reception for London's Industry Leaders

On July 9, at Canada House in Trafalgar Square, Mayor Chow hosted a reception for London's industry leaders. Both the Mayor and Canada's High Commissioner to the U.K, the Honourable Ralph Goodale, offered remarks. It was very well-attended with an estimated 100 guests from production companies, broadcasters, and other industry organizations, again allowing the Mission to extend its impact beyond those companies with which meetings were scheduled.

Attachment B lists the Dublin and London companies that took part in meetings.

Mission Feedback:

Companies in Dublin and London were very pleased to meet with the delegation and discuss the opportunities to be found in partnership. Many did not have an understanding of all of the funding and financial incentives available, and some were not fully aware of the scale and capacity of Toronto as a film jurisdiction. There was a recognition of creative affinity and common market challenges, both of which drive ideal conditions for co-production. Some companies we met with requested further information, which has been provided. Some are coming to Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), have been invited to xoTO House, and some meetings have been arranged.

Irish and British companies who had worked in Toronto before noted positive experiences with the local industry, including the depth and talent of Toronto crew and the established and reliable infrastructure. Many companies were happy to learn about the way tax credits function in Canada and how they work well with Irish and UK incentives. They also learned that Toronto commonly doubles for many cities in the US, making it an ideal location for shooting shows with US elements.

In terms of the Mission itself, it was seen as well-organized, with strong pitch materials, and the partnership with the Canadian Media Producers Association was regarded as beneficial, as was engagement with Screen Producers Ireland. The use of Canada House for the reception in London was particularly appreciated. The delegation was well-composed, though it would be beneficial to include one or two producers experienced in co-production in future. There is strong agreement that missions like this should continue, continuing to explore new partnerships.

Mission Outcomes:

After the Mission, the delegation met to debrief and discuss the trip. The feedback was that meetings offered high value and the delegation saw the Mission as worthwhile and effective at increasing the profile of Toronto for Irish and UK companies and broadcasters. The delegation felt the target companies in Dublin and London found the meetings valuable, a strong impression was made, and this Mission was a good prototype. One delegate said, "This changed my view regarding the possibility of pulling work from Europe."

Some action items identified:

- The Film Office will play a connector role for Toronto-based companies wishing to capitalize on the Mission by reaching out to companies we met with on the Mission.
- For producers on the UK/Ireland side, the Film Office will gather information from relevant organizations and have it to share as the companies that met the delegation reach out for more follow-ups and connections.

- The Film Office will send periodic communications to the companies engaged during the Mission with to ensure they are up to date on Toronto's industry.
- The Film Office will explore how it can help facilitate networking or familiarization tours, as Irish and UK-based companies shared interest in meeting more Canadian producers.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: List of Delegate Companies
Attachment B: List of Companies that Met with the Delegation
Attachment C: 2025 Film Mission Budget and Financials

Attachment A: List of Delegate Companies

ACTRA
Global Incentives
Rocket Science VFX
NABET 700-M UNIFOR
IATSE Local 873
Directors Guild of Canada - Ontario
Spin VFX

Attachment B: List of Companies that met with the Delegation

Dublin

Tailored Films
Wild Atlantic Pictures
Screen Scene
Screen Ireland
Treasure Entertainment
Underground
Peer Pressure
Samson Films
Element Pictures
Subotica
Metropolitan
Shinawil
O'Sullivan Productions
Keeper Pictures

London

Hat Trick
Sid Gentle
Working Title
Banijay UK
See Saw
Cinesite
Black Bear
ITV
BBC
Channel 4
Sister Pictures
SkyTV
Ink Factory

Attachment C: 2025 Film Mission Budget and Financials

(ESTIMATED COSTS / Expense reports to be finalized)

City of Toronto political and staff delegation travel (Air and ground transportation, hotels, per diem)	\$ 27,905.34
Business Events and Receptions	\$ 15,849.70
Marketing materials and advertisement	\$ 1,916.09
Delegation Transportation	\$ 1,577.30
Total Mission Cost	\$ 47,248.43
Sponsorship revenue	\$ 15,000.00
 Net Total Mission Cost for the City of Toronto	 \$ 32,248.43