



Valery Santillana

Toronto ON M5R 2S7

somniasmr@gmail.com



Somni Cabal (True Sleep)

7,085 subscribers and 790,551 views

Creating a quiet, positive & relaxing space online. Videos for sleep & relaxation. Multi-lingual channel.

November 24, 2016

The Honourable Mélanie Joly

Minister of Canadian Heritage

House of Commons

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Re: Feedback on #DigiCanCom and funding and/or grants for YouTubers

Dear Minister Joly,

Thank you for this initiative #DigiCanCom and for giving everyone an opportunity to provide you with some feedback on this topic.

I would like to share with you some of my experiences as a YouTuber, as this is a platform where many Canadians are producing great content, and I believe online creators need a grant and/or funding program designed specifically for us.

Many of the existing grant/funding programs make it impossible for YouTubers to qualify for funding, because these programs don't include online platforms. They are designed for film, TV and radio. In addition, the Canadian Content (CAVCO) scoring point is used to determine who qualifies for the grant, and to ensure the project is Canadian enough, and that many Canadians are involved in the project. However, YouTubers don't qualify because many of us, are a one man/woman show. We write, record, edit, produce and act in our work, and it's for an international audience as our work is shown on a global platform.

From my personal experience, all the work that I have uploaded in my channel for the past three years, have been produced in Toronto, but under the current requirements for grants, my work wouldn't be considered Canadian enough because I've collaborated with YouTubers from Spain, Colombia and the U.S., and I am an Associate Producer in the upcoming indie film "Murmurs" from the U.K., which will be premiered in 2017 at the South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin, Texas.

Funding and supporting Canadian YouTubers would further prevent a digital "brain drain". Some have moved abroad to places such as Los Angeles because there are more opportunities for them abroad than in Canada. Personally, I've been interviewed online by podcasters from New York and California, and most recently, I was part a group of YouTubers (from all over the world) who created videos to help raise funds for "Pajama Program". An organization that provides pajamas to children in foster care. This initiative was organized by a YouTuber from the U.S.

It is amazing the work that YouTubers have created and the following they have - some are even in the millions. Most of our work is produced at home, and with scarce resources, and as our channel grows, we have purchased equipment with money out of our own pocket.

As you can see, YouTube has become a global platform for Canadians. Our videos are seen instantaneously around the world when we upload videos. They are accessible globally. When I upload videos, within the first 24 hours, they are viewed in Europe and in North and South America, and within weeks, they have been viewed in every continent.

It is for this reason Minister Joly, that I ask that you to consider creating a grant and/or funding program for online creators in Canada. We have home grown talent with a global following.

Sincerely,

Valery Santillana