



Creatives wanted for new TV show filming near Calgary this spring

The Sugar Mama series will award someone with \$100,000



Leanne Murray
February 21, 2023



Calling all visual artists, actors, performers, comedians, painters, musicians, and other creatives.

Casting is underway for a new unscripted documentary series that will be filming near Calgary this spring.

Sugar Mama will see 12 people participate in a two-week creative retreat at [Azuridge Estate Hotel](#) in Priddis.

At the end of the series, one creative will receive \$100,000 to help take their goals and dreams to the next level.

Mystery woman

The Sugar Mama is a successful Métis business owner who is keeping her identity a secret.

She has faced her share of adversity in life; after going through a divorce and needing to use the food bank, she managed to work her way out of almost half a million dollars in debt.

Now in a position to give back to others, the Sugar Mama has made numerous anonymous donations in support of creative initiatives over the years.

Métis martyr Louis Riel once said, “My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back.”

Riel’s words have a deep meaning for the Sugar Mama.

“After overcoming hardship, my life took a wonderful turn. I absolutely love working with the next generations of creatives who have helped me regain my spirit,” she says.



The Sugar Mama will be giving one participant on the show \$100,000. // Submitted

Including Indigenous values

Indigenous values will play an important role in the *Sugar Mama* television series.

Executive producer Lolly de Jonge is also Indigenous, and Northern Dene TsuuT’ina Nation member Hal Eagletail has been brought on as a consulting producer.

“We have a really high focus on inclusion and on not taking a cutthroat or competitive approach but to take a cooperative approach,” de Jonge says about the show’s concept.

She adds the series will also feature some Indigenous stories and ceremonies as a way to support reconciliation.

“I think any time we can be educating people on our Indigenous values, that’s going to support that longer-term goal that we have as Canadians and as Indigenous people.”

A feel-good project

De Jonge says art often doesn’t get the credit it deserves as a healing and life-giving force, especially for Indigenous peoples.

She hopes the *Sugar Mama* TV series will help shine a light on art, as well as the personal and professional growth and development of the participants.

The positive nature of the show is one of the biggest reasons de Jonge is proud to be involved.

“Any project I’ve been involved in has always been a passion for me or something of the heart, about making people’s lives better,” she says.

“Time is precious and so I want to spend my time doing things that are going to touch people’s lives and make a difference in the world.”

Changing lives

Touching lives is exactly what the team behind *Sugar Mama* is setting out to do.

“All of these people are going to have their lives changed, whether they receive the \$100,000 or not,” de Jonge says.

“They’ll be doing creative challenges, they’ll be doing character demonstration activities, and they’ll be engaging on a number of different activities to help them build their understanding of how to succeed as an artist.”

De Jonge says achieving big, audacious goals isn’t easy, but the experience each participant gets on the show will help them on their journeys.

“We can be remarkably talented, but it also takes really strong character. And we have to within ourselves be able to break through those barriers that may be getting in our way. And so we’re going to be spending time looking at all of that with them as well.”

Positive impact

Another goal of *Sugar Mama* is to have a positive impact on viewers.

“What we’re also hoping is that the show will inspire others to think of ways that they can be contributing to other people’s lives in their own communities,” de Jonge says.

“You don’t need to be wealthy to be supporting people in their dreams.”

Anyone who wants to apply to be on the show must be at least 18 years old and a Canadian citizen or permanent resident who currently resides in Alberta.

Casting is inclusive and members from the 2SLGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities are encouraged to apply.

The deadline to [apply online](#) is Feb. 28, and 12 candidates will be chosen based on interviews that take place in the following weeks.

Alberta talent

Filming is scheduled for May and de Jonge says the majority of the crew will be from Alberta.

“We have so much talent in the film and TV production industry in Alberta that, besides the creatives, we really want to make sure that the talent that we have in this province is really utilized.”

If *Sugar Mama* is successful, de Jonge hopes they will be able to film more seasons and have an even bigger impact.

“The Sugar Mama is a very unique human being and her whole working life has gone and done things that have never been done before,” de Jonge says.

“Our hope, wish, and desire is that because this is such a unique idea and because it’s a feel-good idea, our hope is that we’re going to be able to continue to do this in other and big ways.”

Details on when the show will air are still to be released.

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