



2016 TRANSPARENCY REPORT

2016 was bumpy af.

We launched our arts show, The Imposter, then cancelled the launch when our host dropped out, then we took some time to find a new host, then launched it for real.

A similar thing happened with COMMONS, our politics show. After Desmond and Andray left the show we announced Vicky Mochama and Supriya Dwivedi as the show's new hosts, then lost them two months later to other gigs, and the show took a break for yet another host search. Finally, our editor Jane Lytvynenko moved on from the company. In that case, Robert Hiltz was there to seamlessly keep our coverage going. We don't take breaks from news.

Throughout all of this, we published 151 podcasts in 2016, broke a bunch of stories, and covered the hell out of the Ghomeshi trial. Also, we wrote a book.

Things are finally on track. Aliya and Kevin are killing it on the Imposter, Jonathan Goldsbie just took over as our permanent news editor, Manaal Farooqi, Russell Gragg, and Corey Marr joined our team to look after a huge span of things, and we just announced our amazing new COMMONS hosts: Ashley Csanady, Ryan McMahon and Hadiya Roderique.

There is one reason why things didn't go absolutely to shit in 2016: our patrons stepped up. We asked you for more money to let us pay our people better so that they might stop leaving (and also because it's fair). You gave it to us.

Now it's time to give you a close look at what we achieved with your help last year, and where we fell short. We do this work, which we love, because you choose to support us.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jesse Brown', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jesse Brown
Host/Publisher
CANADALAND

TOP CANADALAND NEWS STORIES, 2016

Diversity and representation in Canadian media is terrible, and we documented it: guests on politics shows are [overwhelmingly](#) male, the CBC's staff is 90% [white](#) (10% more homogenous than Canada itself) and other news orgs either don't [count](#) diversity stats or [refuse](#) to release them.

We reported a bunch of things that went otherwise ignored during the **Ghomeshi trial**: the family [connection](#) between Marie Henein and the trial judge, the fact that Ghomeshi's bail conditions were [relaxed](#), the real story behind Lucy Decoutere's [letter](#), and most importantly, the fact that Ghomeshi did in fact drive a yellow [Volkswagen](#) at the time that a "discredited" witness said he did.

The Walrus magazine allegedly [violated](#) the rules of its charitable status, [stole](#) a freelancer's pitch, and [overstated](#) its circulation numbers in a government grant application.

The **Queen's Park Press Gallery** [blocked](#) an independent journalist from the legislature.

Bell co-branded an ad campaign with the Liberal party, while they were [lobbying](#) the Liberal party. Bell was also the only company considered by a federal tourism board for a publicity contract. Bell also had [ordered](#) its radio hosts to not express opinions about Marineland, because they were a sponsor. Finally, a former Bell employee told us what the company was [really](#) like with respect to her mental health.

Saskatchewan media companies are huge [donors](#) to the ruling Saskatchewan party.

The **CBC** faced a bunch of new [harassment claims](#) and [lawsuits](#). Also, they started publishing [advertorials](#) and [blocking](#) their podcasts from apps. And we found out how much they pay [Mansbridge](#).

A **Globe and Mail** reporter who, according to the Globe itself, wrote an unbalanced (sponsored) story about a controversial diamond mine, also accepted a [gift](#) from an affiliated jewellery store. Plus, yet more [plagiarism](#) from Margaret Wente.

When the media reports on **HIV** “assaults,” the stories are about [black and immigrant offenders](#) 69% of the time, even though they only make up 20% of actual convictions.

MILESTONES

\$12,500/month: New Arts and Culture Show

Reached: March 22, 2016

UPDATE: The Imposter with Aliya Pabani launched in July. Within months, it was name-checked on the Onion AV Club's "best podcasts of the year" list. Highlights include: the Tanya Tagaq interview, the Lido Pimienta interview, the Degraasi episode, The Wiretap appreciation, and the doc about Warrendale.

\$12,500/month*: Everybody But Jesse Gets a Raise

Reached: October 18, 2016

UPDATE: Done. Base salaries immediately went up 16% to \$40,000/year. Freelance rates for posts went up 33% and we almost doubled what we pay our COMMONS hosts. Plus, we now provide health benefits and stock options to staff. We still have a ways to go, but we're now competitive with other news startups on salaries and unique in our co-ownership program.

\$13,500/month: Investigations Fund

Reached: October 20, 2016

UPDATE: proceeding ok. We've already launched some smaller long-term projects but haven't yet decided on a major investigative project. Accepting pitches now, formal call to come.

\$14,000/month: Apprenticeship Program

Reached: October 22, 2016

UPDATE: We're behind on this. Many submissions received but we haven't formalized a program yet.

\$15,000/month: Podcast Development Fund

Reached: October 22, 2016

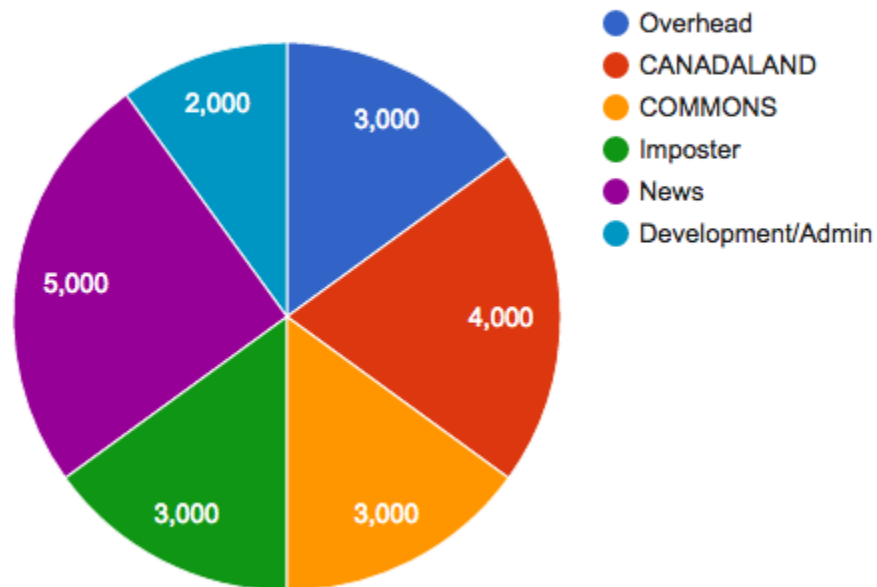
UPDATE: behind on this too. Developing one project in-house, but we need to figure out the parameters and put out an open call for pitches.

**NOTE: Patreon changed the way it displays crowdfunding totals. They used to show the total amount of money pledged by everyone, now they show only the amount we actually receive after they take their cut and some credit cards are declined. Anyhow, the change bumped our public-facing number down by over \$2000, so we set two goals in a row at the same number.*

How We Spend Your Money Each Month

(current Patreon funding as of Feb.15, 2017: \$16,080 USD)

Patreon Funds



Salaries (in CAD, 02/17): Jonathan (news editor): \$4166/month. Jesse (publisher/host): \$4000/month. Kevin and Russell (producers) and Manaal (sales & admin): \$3333/month each. Aliya (host): \$2916/month + ad rev share. COMMONS hosts \$200-250/podcast, each. Freelancers: \$200 per post (base rate).

IMPACT

Correlation is not causation, but a lot of things we cover change after we've covered them. Some of these include:

CBC - Following our coverage of CBC's unrepresentative diversity numbers, CBC put in place diversity training for certain staffers. No word on actual changes to the makeup of the workforce.

#AdFreeCBC - in 2016, CANADALAND raised and championed the idea of an ad-free public broadcaster. Shortly thereafter, the CBC announced a (ridiculous) plan to abandon advertising (in exchange for \$400 million a year). Also, a government-contracted think tank recommended that the CBC be barred from selling advertising online.

Queen's Park Press Gallery - A day after our story about independent journalist Alison Smith being denied entry to the gallery, a Gallery meeting was announced, and shortly thereafter Smith was granted membership.

Vancouver Real Estate - Back in June 2015 we focused on the work of Ian Young of the South China Morning Post, who had been reporting on corruption and foreign investment in the overheated Vancouver real estate market. It was one of our most popular stories. The topic later became a focus of a major Globe and Mail investigation, followed by government reforms.

ERRORS

We regularly publish clarifications and corrections to our news stories, and our hosts have walked-back comments or apologized when needed. A full list of all 2016 corrections and clarifications is [here](#). Three mistakes went beyond the technical:

*Responding to early reports that overstated the impact of the Fort McMurray fire, in addition to photos and videos that suggested the entire town was burning to a crisp, we titled an episode of Short Cuts "Fort Mac Is Gone". This was a stupid editorial mistake. Fort Mac is not gone, because of people who risked their lives to save it.

*During the Ghomeshi trial, we misreported that Ghomeshi was "back on Facebook" when in fact he had never deactivated his personal account, just scrubbed his public page. Besides being wrong, it was trivial stuff, and it detracted from the rest of our trial coverage.

*We misidentified the source of a leak as being the chief of staff of Ottawa's mayor.

SOME NUMBERS

We get **372,000 downloads/month.**

We have reached over **9,000,000 total downloads.**

Each CANADALAND patron (on average) pays for **10 other people** to hear the show (that's not including our radio listeners — we don't have those numbers).

MOST DOWNLOADED EPISODES, 2016

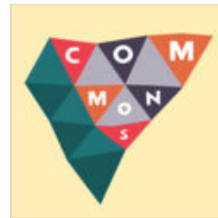
CANADALAND:

- 1.How To Save Our CBC
- 2.Notes on the Ghomeshi Trial
- 3.White Pundits Matter
- 4.Edmonton Is Weird
- 5.Newfoundland Is Screwed



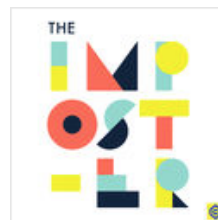
COMMONS:

- 1.Legal Weed is Bad for Poor People
- 2.Don't Let Harper Happen Here: Wab Kinew on Entering Politics
- 3.White Men Gotta Speak on This
- 4.The Government Finally Admitted They Illegally Spy On Us and Nobody Cares
- 5.Drunk on Liberal Power / Kellie Leitch on Anti-Canadian Values



The Imposter:

- 1.Brushes With Drake
- 2.Spoiler Alert
- 3.DEGRASSILAND
- 4.Tanya Tagaq is Unreconciled
- 5.Sex Canoe



GOALS FOR 2017

With your continued support, here are some plans we have for 2017:

Do everything we're doing now, only better — We may have expanded too quickly in 2016, so our top priority is to focus on the shows we're making and on our news coverage and get them as solid as we can, all the time. This involves a bunch of behind-the-scenes organizational stuff that we've ignored too long, but which we're finally dealing with. Improving conditions for our staff was a big part of this, and this process will continue in 2017.

Improve our rewards program

It takes us too long to get t-shirts and stuff to the people who support us. We need to streamline the process and get this stuff out quicker.

Diversify our team and our coverage - This was a goal for 2016, but our team is actually less diverse now than it was then. Including women and people of colour at every level of CANADALAND is not a nice-to-have, it's an essential aspect of our business, and we need to do better.

Cover the rest of Canada better than we do — While CANADALAND and COMMONS have both made headway in representing the rest of Canada, there is more work to be done, and the Imposter would benefit from covering more stories and artists from outside of Toronto.

Fight Fascism — Telling the truth and celebrating art is increasingly a political act. In 2017, CANADALAND will redouble its efforts to counter spin, false narratives, bullshit and alternative facts, while calling out the subtle and explicit ways in which standards of human decency are being eroded. Through facts over passion we will expose and ridicule efforts made to normalize lies and to appease tyrants. Yes, this is about Trump.