



CBC Radio Program Development Group

# Pitch Guide

2011 / 2012 Season

*Revised:  
October 2011*

*CBC Radio*

## What are we looking for?

New radio shows; limited run series; segments for ongoing programs. We're also looking for potential – not only in ideas, but also in people. We want to find the writers, hosts and producers of tomorrow.

## Before you send us your pitch, here are a few things to remember:

-CBC is committed to developing predominantly Canadian shows, and talent.

-CBC Radio receives hundreds of proposals every year and only a few are selected for development.

-Submissions are usually reviewed within three (3) months.

- Your proposal doesn't need to be long and complicated, but it should be well thought out and tell us what we need to know to evaluate it.

As you put your idea down on paper, here are some questions you should ask yourself:

**1. When you tell others about your idea, what seems to excite them the most?** This is often a good way to start your pitch

**2. How would you describe your show's attitude toward its content?** Will it be light-hearted or more serious? Cheeky or respectful? Entertaining or informative? Probing or reflective? Is there anything new or different about how your show will sound? Be sure and tell us.

**3. Who is the host?** Do you have someone in mind? If not, what qualities would your ideal host possess? What should they sound like? What's his or her role on the show?

**4. What will we hear on a typical program?** A list of segment ideas or interview guests is a good start, but it's not enough. Help us imagine what we'll hear coming out of the radio. How will your show's tone and attitude affect the content? What kinds of treatments can we expect?

**5. What is the online component?** What opportunities do you imagine for the web and social networking? Does it make sense for your concept to be expanded for multiple platforms? How will your show drive people to our website?

**6. What makes your show perfect for CBC rather than another broadcaster?** Why should it air now? Does it take CBC Radio somewhere new? Does it do something that we aren't already doing? Tell us how it fits our values as a public broadcaster (high quality, distinctive, Canadian programming that's intelligent, insightful and entertaining, reflective of the diversity of Canada)?

**7. What format do you see your idea taking?** Is it a one time broadcast, a limited series, a feature within another show, a summer replacement series, a full run show? Is it a half hour or an hour?

## The Checklist

Once you've worked through your idea, here's a quick checklist of other things you should include in your proposal:

- 1. Who You Are:** Tell us why you're the best person to do this show. If you've hosted, produced or written for radio before, let us know. Also: what led you to your idea? Give us a sense of your background, your passions.
- 2. Who is Who:** If you've got people you want to work with, tell us who they are. Who's producing? Who's hosting? Assume we don't know these people. Give us an idea why they're the best people for those roles.
- 3. The Proposal:** Do the tone and style of the writing in your proposal reflect the tone of show that you're proposing?
- 4. Reaching Out:** Do you have plans for using social media or other tools to attract audiences to your site, beyond those who already come to CBC Radio or cbc.ca?
- 5. Support:** What kind of support do you need? Mentoring? Coaching on your performance? In-studio training? Digital audio editing?

**6. Online Support:** Radio production teams are expected to maintain the websites for their shows. Do you or any of your team members have digital production experience? Does your idea require a resource with specialized / advanced web skills?

**7. Timing:** Is your proposal time-sensitive? Are there times when you can work on this, times when you cannot?

**8. How to Get Hold of You:** Don't forget to include your e-mail, home phone, cell phone, etc.

## Questions?

Got questions? Need help getting your idea down on paper? Get in touch with a member of the Program Development Group:

**Carolyn Warren**  
Montreal  
(514) 597-4418  
Carolyn.Warren@cbc.ca

**\* Iris Yudai, Co-chair**  
Winnipeg  
(204) 788-3193  
Iris.Yudai@cbc.ca

**Coreen Larson**  
Regina  
(306) 347-9511  
Coreen.Larson@cbc.ca

**Chris dela Torre**  
Calgary  
403-521-6019  
[Chris.dela.Torre@cbc.ca](mailto:Chris.dela.Torre@cbc.ca)

**Peter Duck**  
Windsor  
519-255-3562  
Peter.Duck@cbc.ca

**Dominic Girard**  
Toronto  
(416) 205-5618  
Dominic.Girard@cbc.ca

**Jean Kim**  
Toronto  
(416) 205-2908  
Jean.Kim@cbc.ca

**Christina Harnett**  
Halifax  
(902) 420-4193  
Christina.Harnett@cbc.ca

**Matthew Lazin-Ryder**  
Vancouver  
(604) 662-6114  
Matthew.Lazin-Ryder@cbc.ca

**\*\*Chris Straw, Director**  
**Network Program Development**  
Toronto  
(416) 205-8779  
Chris.Straw@cbc.ca

**Angela Misri**  
Toronto  
(416) 205-7510  
Angela.Misri@cbc.ca

**Leslie Goldstone**  
Edmonton  
(780) 468-7428  
Leslie.Goldstone@cbc.ca

**Jon Siddall**  
Vancouver  
(604) 662-6078  
Jon.Siddall@cbc.ca

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We prefer to receive proposals as attachments in Microsoft Word format. Feel free to send short audio samples as well – in mp3 format.

## FAQ

### **When will I hear back?**

You should hear from someone within 12 weeks.

### **Who decides if my show gets on the radio?**

The program development group will review your pitch. The PD group is a collection of programmers from across the country. They meet once a month to go through all the proposals that come in.

### **My idea is for a series that would just run for a limited number of weeks, could I still submit it?**

You bet. In fact, most of the programs we try out on-air will have a limited run.

### **Is there a deadline for getting my proposal in?**

We consider proposals year-round, but the deadline for summer proposals is January 31.

### **I have no idea how much my show will cost, do I have to submit a budget?**

No. Your suggestions are helpful, but we can manage this part ourselves. Still, you should have a realistic sense of what resources are likely to be available. If your concept is only workable with a team of 10 full-time employees making a weekly show, then it's likely not going to get made as you're imagining.

### **How long should my proposal be?**

Explain your idea thoroughly and succinctly. Most successful pitches are 3-6 pages.

