



TELUS STORYHIVE Pan-Asian Storyteller Edition 2025 Pitch Analysis Report

Documentary & Scripted

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Overview

This report analyzes 319 pitches submitted to the inaugural **TELUS STORYHIVE Pan-Asian Storyteller Edition**. These submissions reflect a robust cross-section of storytelling priorities and cultural narratives from Pan-Asian creators in British Columbia and Alberta. They offer invaluable insight into how aspiring filmmakers are interpreting and expressing Pan-Asian Canadian identity in 2025, shaped by lived experience, history and future aspirations.



PAN-ASIAN
STORYTELLER EDITION

About the Pan-Asian Storyteller Edition

Launched in April 2025, this focused Edition is a brand new funding opportunity for new and emerging Pan-Asian filmmakers across B.C. and Alberta to share their stories. We offered \$20,000 in production funding, training, professional mentorship secured in partnership with the **National Screen Institute** and distribution support to produce a narrative short film or documentary. We also extend our gratitude to our partner, **Creative BC**, for supporting B.C.-based projects with an additional \$5,000 top up funding.



National Screen
Institute



This program is a reflection of the rich diversity of narratives from Pan-Asian creatives in Canada. TELUS STORYHIVE's aim is to be inclusive of the breadth and depth of experiences of new and emerging filmmakers in B.C. and Alberta who are of Asian descent, encompassing all regions of continental Asia.



About TELUS STORYHIVE

TELUS STORYHIVE supports and champions new and emerging content creators in B.C. and Alberta through innovative programs focused on uplifting diverse and underrepresented voices. Through various programs, we provide production funding, training, mentorship and distribution on TELUS Optik TV Video on Demand channel 9, Stream+ and STORYHIVE's YouTube channel.

Learn more about **STORYHIVE**:



Major Thematic Trends



67%

1 Immigration & Diaspora Experiences

Most Dominant Theme:

Stories exploring the immigrant journey, settlement challenges and cultural adaptation.

Sub-themes:

- Professional credential recognition struggles
- Language barriers and communication challenges
- Economic hardship and survival
- Deportation fears and immigration fraud
- International student experiences



58%

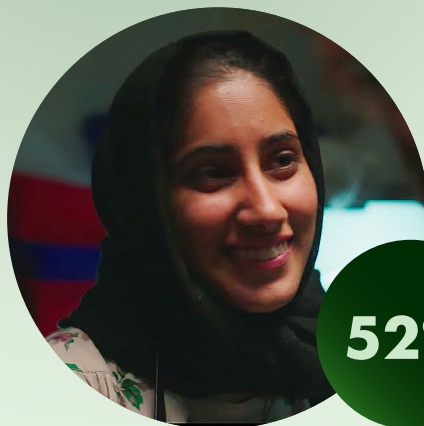
2 Intergenerational Family Dynamics

Second Most Common:

Complex relationships between immigrant parents and Canadian-born children.

Sub-themes:

- Cultural expectations vs. personal dreams
- Language loss across generations
- Caregiving for aging parents with dementia
- Traditional values vs. modern Canadian life
- Family business succession



52%

3 Cultural Identity & Belonging

Core Identity Crisis:

Stories of characters caught between cultures.

Sub-themes:

- “Not Asian enough” vs. “Not Canadian enough”
- Mixed-race identity navigation
- Cultural reconnection journeys
- Heritage preservation vs. assimilation
- Second/third-generation disconnect



31%

4 Food as Cultural Connection

Significant Cultural Bridge:

Food as a storytelling device and cultural preservation tool.

Sub-themes:

- Family recipes and culinary heritage
- Restaurant culture and family businesses
- Food as memory and belonging
- Cooking as intergenerational bonding
- Cultural fusion through cuisine



19%

5 LGBTQ+ Identity in Traditional Families

Growing Representation:

Queer stories within cultural contexts

Sub-themes:

- Coming out in conservative families
- Arranged marriage vs. authentic identity
- Late-life queer discovery
- Religious faith vs. sexual identity
- Intergenerational acceptance journeys



Critical Community Concerns

Mental Health

Mental wellness is a growing focus, with nuanced, culturally sensitive depictions.

- Therapy stigma
- Depression, anxiety, burnout
- Intergenerational trauma
- Pressure to achieve and succeed
- Suicide prevention



34%



29%

Racism & Discrimination

Submissions explore external societal challenges and internalized trauma.

- Microaggressions and stereotyping
- Workplace and education inequality
- Anti-Asian hate and historical erasure
- Social exclusion
- Cultural gatekeeping

Economic Struggles

Economic precarity remains central, especially for newcomers and students.

- Financial instability
- Underemployment despite qualifications
- Housing insecurity
- International student hardship
- Small business survival



41%



Regional Variations



Vancouver:

- Largest concentration of submissions
- More established community stories
- Focus on gentrification and housing
- Higher LGBTQ+ representation
- Intergenerational wealth themes

Victoria:

- Mixed-race identity exploration
- Historical connections
- Smaller community dynamics
- Cultural education themes

Kelowna:

- Small-town experiences
- Agricultural and land-based stories
- Cultural isolation themes
- Nature-connected narratives

Other BC Centers:

 Kamloops, Nanaimo, Penticton, Vernon

- Cultural preservation challenges
- Environmental stewardship themes
- Island and interior experiences



Calgary:

- Recent immigration experiences
- Economic survival narratives
- Community building themes
- Oil industry integration stories
- Diverse South Asian representation

Edmonton:

- Strong cultural preservation focus
- Food and restaurant narratives
- Arts and performance stories
- Community organizing themes

Other Alberta Centres:

 Red Deer, Lethbridge, Lloydminster

- Prairie integration stories
- Rural Alberta experiences
- Small-town cultural dynamics

Significant Provincial Findings



Alberta's Strong Representation



Alberta-Specific Themes:

- Energy sector integration stories
- Prairie cultural adaptation narratives
- Rapid community growth and establishment
- Economic opportunity vs. cultural preservation
- Winter/climate adaptation experiences
- Rural-urban migration within the province

British Columbia's Established Presence



B.C.-Specific Themes:

- Environmental connection and land-based healing
- Established cultural institutions and their evolution
- Gentrification and displacement concerns
- Indigenous collaboration and reconciliation
- Arts and cultural preservation initiatives
- Coastal/island identity formation

Conclusion



The 319 submissions received for the TELUS STORYHIVE Pan-Asian Storyteller Edition represent more than individual project pitches—they are a collective statement of identity, resilience and creative power from Canada's diverse communities.

At their core, these stories explore:



- Survival and resilience in the face of systemic challenges
- Love and sacrifice within family structures
- Identity and belonging in multicultural Canada
- Hope and healing through community connection

These pitches offer a vivid snapshot of what it means to be Pan-Asian Canadian in 2025—and they highlight the urgency and power of telling our own stories.

Next Steps



The selected filmmakers will be announced in September 2025. We can't wait to support these storytellers as they bring their compelling visions to life—on screen, in community and around the world.

Pan-Asian Storyteller Edition Advisory Committee



The Advisory Committee is made up of a diverse selection of community members from the Pan-Asian community.



Afsheen Malik
Senior People &
Culture Advisor, TELUS



Andrew Phung
Actor, Writer, Producer



Dilys Ng
Manager, Strategic
Platform Enablement, TELUS



Eddy Boudel Tan
Manager of Marketing, TELUS
& Canadian Author



Mieko Ouchi
Associate Artistic Director, Citadel Theatre
Actor/Director/Playwright



Nach Dudsdeemaytha
Film Producer



Yogi Omar
Manager, Diversity, Inclusion &
Talent Development, Rethink

Thank you to our partners

Thank you to our Pan-Asian Advisory Committee, TELUS and STORYHIVE teams, STORYHIVE alumni, Community Advisory Boards and partners for supporting the development of the program.

Bakau
Consulting



**cold tea
collective**



N|A|T|I|O|N|A|L



Ellen Lee
Studio