

Multi-Year Plan

FY 2021/22 – 2023/24

tvo

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Strategic & Financial Overview

Strategic Context

TVO's strategy builds on our transformation from a public television station to a multiplatform current affairs and educational publisher. Some aspects of TVO's Multi-Year Plan, including planned initiatives, statistics, financial numbers, and metrics capture the point in time upon submission (as submitted in December 2020) and are likely to shift in the life of the Multi-Year Plan.

TVO creates and distributes:

- Award-winning **e-learning products** that support Ontario's curriculum
- Multiplatform **educational programming for kids**
- The largest **online secondary school** in Ontario
- Ground-breaking **original documentaries**
- In-depth **current affairs content** from an Ontario perspective

As we respond to the growing need for online learning both at home and at school, TVO is also working to become the province's leading provider of online course material for educators, parents, and students from K-12.

We provide our content through broadcast television, websites, podcast subscription, YouTube and multiple other platforms.

In this way, TVO carries a truly Ontario perspective to every corner of the province, across Canada and around the world.

TVO has developed four strategic pillars that guide all our activities:

1. We support Ontario's transformation of learning inside and outside the classroom through digital technology.
2. We are building a digital organization where people thrive in a changing world.
3. We support citizen engagement through in-depth current affairs journalism from an Ontario perspective.
4. We will be financially sustainable through wise stewardship of funding and a focus on increased self-generated revenues.

Expanded Mandate

In July 2020, the government introduced legislation (passed, but at date of writing yet to be proclaimed) to expand TVO's mandate, asking it to play a leadership role in online learning across Ontario. Specifically, TVO (and TFO in the French system) were asked to:

- Develop and maintain a library of high-quality, engaging digital courses
- Establish a centralized, province-wide course catalogue and Student Reservation System
- Expand student access through centralized coordination and delivery of online courses

In December 2020, TVO and Groupe Média TFO submitted a joint five-year business plan in response to the Ministry of Education's request that we outline how we could support the establishment, administration, and coordination of distance education programs in Ontario. The plan is currently under review.

Financial Context

TVO has built a strong record of sound fiscal management. Base government funding has remained at or below the previous year for nine consecutive years.

TVO has reduced the fiscal burden on taxpayers by:

- Prioritizing value
- Growing self-generated revenues
- Driving efficiencies and cost savings

At the same time, with the help of targeted philanthropic gifts, TVO has:

- Expanded its product offering
- Grown its online audience
- Modernized its operations

This has positioned TVO well to continue building capacity and investing in the future.

Strategic Objectives & Plans

Rooted in our strategic pillars, this Multi-Year Plan sets a high bar for TVO, with four broad goals to be achieved over the life of the plan.

1. Digital Learning That Works
2. Building a Digital Organization Where People Thrive in a Changing World
3. In-Depth Current Affairs and Journalism
4. Sound Financial Stewardship

Pillar 1: Digital Learning That Works

We support the transformation of learning inside and outside the classroom through digital technology.

Ontario's prosperity depends on preparing our students to compete on the world stage. TVO's unique intellectual property sits at the intersection of digital technology, evidence-based pedagogy, and Ontario's academic curriculum. We use a rigorous, tested, results-driven approach to deliver products that make a difference and delight students.

We plan to support the transformation of learning inside and outside the classroom through digital technology by:

- Utilizing technology to establish "best-in-class" products and student experiences
- Continuing to build usage of TVO products inside and outside the classroom,
- Leveraging TVOkids' mature market positioning to emphasize development of learning-focused content
- Demonstrating the success of TVO's digital learning products by measuring learning outcomes

We have designed the following TVO digital learning tools to empower students with the foundational knowledge they will need to thrive in a digital global economy.



TVO ILC enables students to earn **credits towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)**, empowering them to realize their personal, career, and life goals.

Achievements to build on

Last fiscal year, over 17,000 Ontarians registered for over 40,000 ILC courses and GED tests.

Objectives and tactics for success

We will continue to evolve the student experience for Ontario and international markets by:

- Introducing the next generation of TVO courses that are optimized for mobile devices; enable equity of access through support of low-bandwidth and offline viewing; support modular, micro-learning, and AI-based adaptive learning; and can be rapidly updated to maintain relevance and effectiveness of learning
- Develop courses for the province-wide online learning mandate using content from TVO ILC courses where appropriate
- Track the academic progress of students using TVO's digital learning products and apply the learnings from the data to improve these products

tvoLearn

When completed in early 2022, TVO Learn will include full 'course packs' in all subject areas for educators, parents and students in grades K-8. The first phase focuses on providing families with curated learning materials, primarily from existing TVO resources, that cover topics in the Math, Science, Language, and Social Studies curriculum.

Objectives and tactics for success

We will continue to build on the progress made to date with TVO Learn by:

- Expanding TVO Learn as the Ministry's digital learning "go to" including producing course packs in support of educators for all K-8 subjects and grades

tvo | in the Classroom

TVO in the Classroom enables educators to discover and incorporate in-depth current affairs, thought-provoking documentaries, and award-winning TVOkids content to enhance in-class learning for students K-12. The search function makes it easy for teachers to design engaging and up-to-date lessons for their students.

Objectives and tactics for success

We will further develop this venture by:

- Promoting TVO in the Classroom to drive utilization of content by educators



Launched in 2018, TVO Mathify is a seamless school-to-home math learning tool that combines interactive learning and live, free 1:1 online math tutoring with an Ontario Certified Teacher for students in grades 6-10. It features an interactive online whiteboard where student and tutor can work on problems together.

Achievements to build on

In the last fiscal year, 26,491 Ontario students reinforced foundational math skills through TVO Mathify by asking more than 141k math questions

Objectives and tactics for success

We plan to:

- Develop a data-sharing protocol with the Ministry that allows TVO to measure learning outcomes
- Leverage our audience development team for a more comprehensive digital acquisition strategy
- Extend TVO Mathify support to home school and private schools for all supported grades (subject to Ministry approval)



Free, creative online games that support the development of foundational K-6 math and STEM skills while fostering positive attitudes towards math.

Achievements to build on

In the last fiscal year, 118,574 Ontario students reinforced foundational math skills by engaging TVO mPower games more than 1.7 million times

Objectives and tactics for success

We will continue to increase usage of and engagement with TVO mPower inside and outside the classroom (students, educators, and parents) through continuous product improvement:

- Strengthening outreach efforts within and outside the education sector to drive TVO mPower adoption.
- Leveraging our audience development team for a more comprehensive digital acquisition strategy.



Award-winning, learning-based children’s programming, games, and interactive content that supports the Ontario curriculum.

Achievements to build on

Over 80% of Ontario children ages 2–11 watch TVOkids advertising-free every year (on television, online and on YouTube).

Objectives and tactics for success

We will build online audiences for TVOkids by:

- Emphasizing “learning first” content as TVOkids’ niche in both co-pro and acquisition efforts
- Continuing to support kids’ viewership on broadcast, tvokids.com, and YouTube, and embrace “on demand” content distribution philosophy on all platforms

Pillar 2: Building a Digital Organization

We are building a digital organization where people thrive in a changing world, and where employees feel there are no barriers or limitations to where they can contribute and to what they can achieve.

As we continue to build a digital organization where people can thrive, our Best People philosophy is the foundation of our culture. Technological disruption creates a more competitive marketplace for talent. Successful companies are those that adopt flexible ways of working and attract and retain top talent by creating a culture of inclusion and equity. We are all accountable for ensuring TVO's success. TVO's value-based culture is designed to focus the entire organization on pursuing excellence. To achieve this, TVO will:

- 1. Re-invent TVO's 'digital media workflow' – processes and technology for content production, management, and distribution**
 - Develop a “digital first” asset management system to address new formats for social and OTT platforms (i.e., streaming) and to incorporate technology improvements for better speed to market
 - Implement new digital systems that allow for rapid, automated distribution of TVO content onto third party online platforms
- 2. Enhance TVO's capacity for digital creativity and experimentation**
 - Continue to embrace our research mandate by evangelizing and adopting agile principles and a culture of experimentation to build our capacity to adapt quickly and effectively to rapidly evolving market demands
 - Support Ontario's Digital Action Plan by adopting “*common platforms, open formats, shared data, new approaches and internal processes to unpack complex human challenges into small components to be explored, tested, and continuously improved with the users of those services*”
- 3. Focus on growth and development of the critical skills to advance TVO's strategy**
 - Reinforce a values-based culture where diversity of perspectives can spark powerful innovation and learning. We are committed to this by attracting, hiring, and promoting opportunities for all employees and for the full talent pool of Ontarians
 - Focus on identifying emerging leaders and succession planning supported by launching our updated Mentorship program and Annual Talent Review
 - Champion employee engagement through the promotion of ambassadorship for the TVO brand
 - Build flexibility into the workplace with the goal of promoting agility and collaboration to better accommodate a digital organization
 - Marshal data, marketing, and distribution resources with a focus on accelerated audience growth.
- 4. Develop and broaden TVO's brand awareness and perception**

Develop and launch the new TVO Learn brand to:

 - Address current brand challenges associated with TVO learning products (niche awareness, connection to other TVO learning products, limited marketing budgets), and enable more impactful, effective, and efficient marketing
 - Strengthen and promote the link between TVO Learn, our learning mandate and products, and the overall TVO brand
 - Drive awareness and engagement in TVO's full range of products and build pride among the TVO community in the quality products and value for money it provides to Ontarians.

5. Continue to develop new data systems and processes to make TVO a more customer-centric and data-informed organization

- Adopt key customer-centric Performance Agreements, such as Net Promoter Score (NPS) and enhance our customer feedback loops for better insight into experiences
- Continue to develop infrastructure technologies that enable deep collection, protection and interpretation of audience data – in particular, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Business Intelligence (BI), Customer Data Platform (CDP), and analytics tools
- Expand our data literacy program across the breadth of the organization

Pillar 3: In-Depth Current Affairs Journalism

We support citizen engagement through in-depth current affairs journalism from an Ontario perspective.

TVO sets the standard for trusted, in-depth journalism and documentaries that add an Ontario perspective to events and issues. The global disruption in journalism has meant decreased access for Ontarians to in-depth analysis, regional context, and balanced commentary. With our Ontario Hubs and our commitment to amplifying underrepresented local voices, TVO is uniquely positioned to fill a vital role that the private sector does not.



In its 15th year, *The Agenda with Steve Paikin* is TVO's flagship current affairs program, offering balanced, in-depth perspectives on complex issues that matter to Ontarians.



Thanks to the support of generous TVO donors, Ontario Hubs provide balanced, **in-depth local analysis from across the province**. Ontario Hubs bring relevant local context and under-represented perspectives to complex issues that matter to communities across the province.



TVO.org is home to all TVO's current affairs content, providing balanced, in-depth Ontario perspectives on key issues through a wide variety of **articles, videos, podcasts, and more**.



Thought-provoking documentaries that explore current affairs issues and stories that matter through a variety of storytelling styles. In prime-time, **TVO is the number one destination for Ontarians watching documentaries**.



Podcasts are a **growing part of TVO's digital offering**. The #onpoli podcast takes listeners behind the scenes of Ontario politics. *Word Bomb* unpacks the evolution of words, their meanings, and explores the stories that the dictionary doesn't share. *On Docs* explores documentaries and the stories they tell.

Achievements to build on

Last fiscal year, TVO.org achieved 3.1 million article reads, 28.4 million video views (including YouTube and online), and 2.2 million podcast downloads.

Objectives and tactics for success

We aim to grow audiences by pursuing a digital first, omni-platform approach to content creation and exploring new approaches to delivering the current affairs journalism we are known for. To accomplish these objectives, we will:

- 1) Significantly grow the digital audience by expanding editorial content mix and output and optimizing platform delivery**
 - Commit to providing content “on demand” and reaching audiences on the platforms they prefer, including over-the-top (OTT) channels and other third-party platforms
 - Expand content by adding more commentary & analysis and Ontario-focused subject-specific beats (i.e., housing, science & tech, immigration & diversity)
 - Evolve content formats on an ongoing basis, focusing on those that are suited to digital distribution and consumption (i.e., text & video explainers, podcasts, short video series, social media, newsletters, live streaming)
 - Redesign and rebuild TVO.org to better showcase our content and provide the best user experience
- 2) Expand Ontario Hubs to strengthen coverage of underserved communities**
 - Make Hubs a permanent component of coverage to ensure that TVO reflects the communities it serves and remains relevant in all regions of the province
- 3) Explore new approaches to the delivery of in-depth current affairs journalism**
 - Frame overall editorial vision by prioritizing solutions journalism, focusing on issues in ways that define problems, describe the challenges and explore solutions from multiple perspectives)
 - Add new formats – i.e., TVO Debates, TVO Speakers Series – to the content mix
 - Expand live distribution via streaming and off-site events
 - Employ newsletters, content subscriptions, live events, and other audience engagement tools to nurture audience relationships and build user communities
 - Continue to foster partnerships and explore new opportunities to enhance reach, impact, and audience
 - Explore cross-divisional opportunities where journalism and education streams overlap (i.e., TVO arts)
 - Evolve current affairs on the broadcast platform by exploring new programming opportunities, content types, and distribution strategies

Pillar 4: Sound Financial Stewardship

We will be financially sustainable through wise stewardship of funding and a focus on increased self-generated revenues.

As a public service agency, TVO is accountable for how we steward and manage resources. Raising self-generated revenues enables a virtuous cycle where funds raised outside of government funding are invested for the benefit of Ontarians. TVO’s record of financial sustainability has created the capacity for important, laser-targeted investments. To support our goal of increasing self-generated revenues, we have identified the following strategic priorities:

- 1. Broaden TVO’s monetization strategy**
 - Create modular TVO courses to enable the curriculum tailoring necessary to sell curriculum into new market opportunities
 - Bring to market a software as a service (SaaS) offering of TVO’s educator-focused content management systems
 - Expand TVO ILC’s out of province offering to include a teacher-led model
 - Enable subscription and advertising-based monetization on new channels including OTT
 - Develop a version of TVO mPower designed for licensing to customers outside of Ontario

2. Grow ILC revenues via:

- Expanding international partnerships with an increased focus on packaging/bulk purchase and territory up-front commitments to help stabilize our ILC business revenue streams
- Continuing to expand enrolment from private school, post-secondary, and school board partnerships via custom package bundling and turn-key service offerings
- Partnering with TFO to develop and execute on shared opportunities for revenue expansion
- Opening an ancillary revenue model build on offering our services to third parties such as prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) and tutoring through TVO Mathify

3. Drive philanthropy and sponsorship growth by:

- Becoming more fiscally balanced with our fundraising
- Modernizing our digital fundraising program
- Building more robust planned giving and major gift programs
- Developing an education fundraising program
- Capturing younger audiences for TVO that are philanthropically supportive

4. Continue to reduce the cost/revenue gap via:

- Continuing the TVO practice of conducting annual line-by-line reviews of its budget and operations
- Addressing the fundamental economics of the ILC, including the fact that the \$40 student fee for in-province students does not cover the associated costs

Financial Priorities & Plans

Financial Priorities for Investment

TVO has three overriding financial priorities:

1. Increase self-generated revenue

- Self-generated revenue is forecasted to reach \$19.0M or 27.8% of total revenue by Year 3 (\$12.8M or 20.5% in Year 1)
- Self-generated revenue is forecasted to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 16.1% over the three-year period
- ILC revenue is forecasted to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 27.4% over the three-year period
- Philanthropy & sponsorship revenue is forecasted to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 13.3% over the three-year period
- Transmitter revenues have been decreasing in recent years due to the trends in broadcasting away from use of over-the-air transmitters

2. Continue to find savings

- Every year, TVO must find new capacity to offset inflationary pressures including rent, salary increases, insurance, and other contractual obligations (\$0.5M in Year 1)

3. Build our capacity to invest in strategic priorities

TVO's strategic priorities for investment are to:

- Leverage technology to establish "best-in-class" products and student experiences
- Expand Ontario Hubs to cover more underserved regions and fund as a permanent component of TVO budget
- Re-invest in TVO's digital media workflow processes and technology for content production, management, and distribution
- Implement data systems and processes to make TVO a more customer-centric and data informed organization
- Support the growth of self-generated revenue

Financial Plan

TVO continues to emphasize prudent stewardship of public funds and a focus on self-generated revenue. Every year, we find new savings to offset inflationary pressures, and our record of financial sustainability has created the capacity for targeted investments that have kept TVO at the forefront of digital learning.

	Approved Budget	Multi-Year Plan (000's)		
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Provincial Funding Operating Revenues				
EDU Operating and Capital Grants	38,302	38,302	38,302	38,302
OTA funding	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Special Project Funding	120	0	0	0
Total TVO Provincial Funding	39,422	39,302	39,302	39,302
ILC and TVO Mathify				
ILC	6,140	6,140	6,140	6,140
TVO Mathify	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Total ILC & TVO Mathify	10,140	10,140	10,140	10,140
TVO Self-Generated Revenues				
ILC Student Enrolment	4,100	4,650	6,548	8,471
Philanthropy & Sponsorship	6,100	6,483	7,201	8,874
Other TVO Revenue	1,932	1,636	1,644	1,653
Total Self-Generated Revenues	12,132	12,769	15,393	18,998
Total TVO Operating Revenues	64,645	70,858	65,435	68,606
<i>Self-Generated Revenues as a % of Total Operating Revenues</i>	19.7%	20.5%	23.7%	27.8%
Total TVO Operating Expenditures	64,645	70,857	65,435	68,606
Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)	0	0	0	(0)

Notes:

- Revenue of \$1.358M in FY2021-22 attributed to major gift from Barry and Laurie Green Family Charitable Trust and Goldie Feldman is included in Philanthropy & Sponsorship
- Multi-Year Plan projections are based on cash flow accounting, while TVO audited financial statements employ GAAP.

Risk Identification

TVO manages a variety of risks through planned processes. The board of directors is responsible for ensuring that management fulfills its responsibilities for financial reporting and internal controls.