

For Immediate Release: December 21, 2016

**PuSh International Performing Arts Festival  
Awarded Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union Legacy Fund Grant  
For Meet Your New Neighbour Program**

(Vancouver, BC) — The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a grant from the Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union Legacy Fund to launch a new initiative called Meet Your New Neighbour, at the 2016 PuSh Festival, which takes place January 19 to February 7, 2016. The PuSh Festival's Meet Your New Neighbour (MYNN) initiative seeks to engage and enrich new audiences with adventurous contemporary works in the spirit of innovation and dialogue by offering performing arts experiences to new Canadians and refugees.

The PuSh Festival, through various programs including the newly launched MYNN initiative, strives to eliminate financial, cultural and social barriers to the performing arts. The MYNN program pairs new Canadians and refugees with local volunteers and Festival patrons to attend various 2016 PuSh Festival performances together. In addition to matching new Canadians with a local volunteer host, they're provided complimentary tickets and transportation subsidies. The 2016 pilot will wrap after the Festival with a celebratory gathering of participants, hosts and staff.

Through the transformative power of the live performing arts, the MYNN program aims to create personal and cultural connections between new Canadians and volunteer hosts and local artists in order to facilitate their integration into Canadian society and address the social isolation that can be experienced by vulnerable or marginalized groups. It fosters understanding and dialogue between communities, while offering an introduction to Vancouver's lively performing arts offerings and a great night out with new friends.

The PuSh Festival is now recruiting volunteer hosts to accompany refugees and new Canadians to the 2016 PuSh Festival. Deadline to apply is January 10, 2016 at 5pm.  
Apply at <http://pushfestival.ca/festival-events/accessible-push/meet-your-new-neighbour-form/>

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**About the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival**

The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival is Vancouver's signature mid-winter cultural event, taking place over three weeks each January in theatres and venues across the city. The PuSh Festival presents groundbreaking, contemporary works of theatre, dance, music and multimedia by acclaimed local, national and international artists. It draws 30,000 attendees annually.

The 2016 PuSh Festival takes place January 19 to February 7 at venues throughout Vancouver. The 2016 PuSh Festival hosts more than 150 performances and events over 20 days, and features artists from Canada, Australia, England, France, Lebanon and the United States.

**About the Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union Legacy Fund**

The Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union Legacy Fund is comprised of bond members TELUS, Safeway, Kruger Products (Scott Paper), Pacific Newspaper Group (*Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*), and their affiliated companies and unions. The Van Tel/Safeway Credit Union Legacy Fund administered by Vancity Community Foundation.