



Gifts to The Future King's Campaign Create New Initiatives in Scripted Storytelling and Podcasting at King's

Two donor gifts provide further investment in both emerging and established forms of storytelling, positioning King's School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing at the forefront of media education in Canada, and equipping students with the skills and opportunities to shape the stories of our nation.

For immediate release

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The University of King's College is expanding its offerings thanks to two significant donor gifts that support the launch of a new **Master of Fine Arts in Scripted Storytelling** and the creation of a **Centre for Excellence in Podcasting**. Together, these initiatives will grow the [School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing](#)'s capacity to train the next generation of storytellers across emerging platforms and formats while fostering a more diverse range of voices in Canadian media.

Funding for these initiatives was provided by donations to the university's current [Welcoming: The Future King's campaign](#), which is on track to meet its goal of raising \$15 million by June 2026. These recent gifts help to fulfil a key campaign goal seeking to expand and diversify the educational experience through curriculum and program expansion.

New MFA in Scripted Storytelling

A generous anonymous gift of \$250,000 has seeded a new MFA in Scripted Storytelling, with a target launch in the 2027/28 academic year, pending approval from the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC).

Building on the success of King's MFA programs in Creative Nonfiction and Fiction, the new degree will initially support students developing film scripts and television pilots, and soon expand to include other forms of storytelling, including oral storytelling traditions.

The new MFA program will also offer an opportunity for fiction and creative nonfiction writers to learn how to adapt their work for film or television. "Book adaptations have exploded over the last few years," says [Director of Writing & Publishing Gillian Turnbull](#) who is leading the new program. "Learning how to do that is a really important way for writers to get their names known."

Turnbull is also looking forward to supporting writers seeking to learn the craft of videogame scripting. Both the gaming and film industries are fast-growing sectors in Nova Scotia—and this new program was developed in close partnership with the local film industry.

“We’ve been proud to support the development of the Scripted Storytelling MFA at King’s,” says [Laura Mackenzie, Executive Director, Screen Nova Scotia](#). “Programs like this are essential to building a sustainable screen industry in Nova Scotia. By equipping writers with the skills, experience and industry connections they need to succeed, King’s is helping to strengthen our talent pipeline and ensure that more Nova Scotia stories are created, produced and shared on a global stage.”

Centre for Excellence in Podcasting

A gift of \$130,000 from Rodney Ziegler, in memory of his late wife Gretchen (Pierce) Ziegler, will establish the Centre for Excellence in Podcasting at King’s. Gretchen Ziegler was a King’s alum and long-time newspaper journalist who is remembered for her passion for storytelling. “Gretchen would have loved this platform and would have been in her element using it to critique arts, drama and politics,” says Ziegler. While she was only able to complete one year at King’s, Ziegler described her time at the university as “transformational.”

The centre will allow the university to expand its already in-demand podcast offerings to include new certificate and micro-credential initiatives. Funding will also enhance existing production facilities, including new video capabilities—an increasingly essential skillset in today’s evolving media landscape.

It will be led by award-winning audio producer, journalist and author [Assistant Professor Pauline Dakin](#), whose CBC podcast [Run, Hide, Repeat](#), adapted from her first nonfiction [book](#), has reached more than one million downloads, was named one of Amazon’s top podcasts of 2022 and was honoured with a prestigious New York Festivals award in 2023.

“Podcasting is no longer the new kid on the block. It’s a maturing medium,” says Dakin. While the estimated existing five million podcasts prove that anyone can make a podcast, not everyone can make a good one, she adds. At the centre, students will gain hands-on experience in writing, recording, producing, editing, sound design and audience development.

Expanding Access and Representation

Both new initiatives reflect King’s commitment to broadening participation in storytelling and supporting equity-deserving communities. The Scripted Storytelling Program will grow to encourage many forms of storytelling, including oral traditions. “This will invite people from historically marginalized groups here in Nova Scotia and Canada to come into the program and practice their traditions,” says Turnbull.

Podcasting has already opened new pathways for underrepresented voices. “It’s a more diverse platform for both audiences and creators,” says Dakin. “It offers freedom and accessibility that traditional media hasn’t always provided.”

About Welcoming: The Future King’s Campaign

Culminating in June 2026, this \$15-million campaign seeks to open doors for aspiring students from all economic and cultural backgrounds, of all genders, races and abilities.

Campaign funding priorities are to empower student success and access, expand and diversify the educational experience and enhance cultural life at King’s. Through this work, and the help of donors, King’s academic learning and community will be strengthened and enriched in all its dimensions.

[Welcoming: The Future King’s](#)

About the University of King's College

Established in 1789, King's College is Canada's oldest chartered university and is associated with Dalhousie University. A small and extraordinarily lively academic community located in Halifax (Kjipuktuk), Nova Scotia, King's is known nationally and internationally for its highly acclaimed interdisciplinary programs in the humanities, including its renowned Foundation Year Program, its professional programs in journalism and its fine arts programs in creative writing.
ukings.ca

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