

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Sundar Prize Expands Community Impact with New Youth-Focused Luminaries Program

Delta, BC – September 29, 2025 – The Sundar Prize Film Festival proudly launched its new Luminaries Program on September 29, 2025, at the North Delta Centre for the Arts as part of BC Culture Days. Both the Sundar Prize and the Luminaries Program are initiatives of Sher Vancouver, a registered charity that has served the community for nearly 18 years.

The launch featured film screenings, panel discussions, and networking opportunities that brought together filmmakers, community members, and emerging storytellers. Elder Ruth Adams of the Tsawwassen First Nation opened the event with powerful and moving remarks in honour of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Despite a rainy Monday afternoon, about 45 people attended the drop-in session, which ran from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Screenings included films and trailers by a diverse slate of filmmakers, all of whom joined the panels in person:

- Emergence: Out of the Shadows – Directed by Vinay Giridhar, produced by Alex Sangha
- Love's Age – Directed by Vinay Giridhar
- King Covid – Directed by Karen Wong of event partner Moving Images Distribution
- It's a Boy – Directed by Caid Dow
- Chaturanga – Directed by Sidartha Murjani
- Velvet Secrets – Directed by Shanthini Balasubramanian
- Warmest Regards, E – Directed by Shireen Dalbey and Tina Nowarre, produced by Ariel Suzuki

A post-screening Q&A was followed by a lively networking reception in the lobby, complete with refreshments including sparkling mango and lychee drinks, samosas, pizza, croissants, and fresh fruit and vegetable platters. Guests also enjoyed door prizes such as books, chocolates, gift cards, and VIP All-Access Passes to the upcoming 2026 Sundar Prize Film Festival (April 23–26, 2026, at the North Delta Centre for the Arts and Landmark Cinemas Guildford in Surrey).

A Platform for the Next Generation

The Luminaries Program is designed to support youth and students (16+) by creating meaningful pathways into social justice filmmaking and activism. Open to participants of all backgrounds and experiences, the program emphasizes accessibility, inclusion, and community building.

Key program initiatives include:

- BC Student Film Showcase
- Filmmaker Mentorship Program
- Youth Jury Program
- Storyteller's Contest (submissions open until October 28, 2025)
- Equipment Program
- Open Mic Pitch Sessions
- Industry Networking Reception
- KDocsFF Emerging Filmmaker Residency at KPU
- Panel Discussions
- Volunteer Program
- Opportunities to win prizes at the Sundar Prize Film Festival

The Storyteller's Contest, a highlight of the launch, invites emerging voices to share stories of care, justice, and resilience. Winners will receive cash prizes and mentorship opportunities. More details can be found at sundarprize.com/storytellers-contest.

"Our vision with the Luminaries Program is to empower the next generation of filmmakers and activists by giving them tools, mentorship, and community to tell stories that matter," said Alex Sangha, Co-Founder of the Sundar Prize Film Festival and Founder of Sher Vancouver. "Storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to build empathy and inspire social change. Through Luminaries, we are investing in youth who will become tomorrow's cultural leaders and justice advocates."

Looking Ahead

With the success of its first launch, the Sundar Prize Film Festival plans to host future Luminaries events on weekends to ensure even greater community participation.

For more information about the Luminaries Program, the Storyteller's Contest, or the upcoming 2026 Sundar Prize Film Festival, please visit www.sundarprize.com.

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