



Never stop learning

## **From hallway medicine to pipeline politics, Season 4 of TVO Original series *Political Blind Date* dives deep into the issues that matter most, beginning January 19, 2021**

Toronto, Jan. 5, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Season 4 of the ground-breaking TVO Original series ***Political Blind Date*** returns **Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 9 p.m. ET** on TVO, [tvo.org](https://www.tvo.org), and the [TVO YouTube channel](#). Produced by Open Door Co. and Nomad Films, in association with TVO, this season shines a spotlight on hotly debated issues facing all Canadians in a pre- and post-COVID 19 world: hospital capacity, the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion, the safety of Great Lakes water, threats to migrant labourers, religious symbols in Quebec's public spaces, and protection of Ontario's green spaces.

"This fourth season of *Political Blind Date* promises to delight and challenge viewers with meaningful discussion and shared experiences that bring to light the issues we all face today," said John Ferri, VP Current Affairs and Documentaries, TVO. "During these unprecedented times, there are no easy answers. Solutions can only be found when we pull together as a society to openly debate and explore the best alternatives; and *Political Blind Date* serves as a catalyst for this to happen."

"It's clear that this series continues to strike a chord with Ontarians and Canadians, and in times of such uncertainty, we are grateful to be exploring another host of relevant issues that matter to our viewers," said Tom Powers, Creator and Executive Producer. "The magic in this is the human connection," added Mark Johnston, Executive Producer, Director, and Writer. "It's a unique opportunity to see politicians come out from behind their desks and go beyond the partisan sound bites in order to relate to each other as people." Producer and Executive Producer Amanda Handy noted, "This is not so much a show about politics as it is a show about understanding each other and doing so through respectful debate."

Each of the six half-hour installments matches two politicians - each with a different point of view on an important issue affecting Canadians - and sends them out into the community on a "date." Through meaningful conversation and an effort to find common ground, each politician introduces the other to interesting people and places that best bring to life his or her side of the debate.

Season 4 of TVO Original *Political Blind Date* includes the following episodes, airing weekly:

### **January 19 – Hallway Medicine**

**Sara Singh**, NDP MPP and Deputy Party Leader (**Brampton Centre, ON**), and **Natalia Kusendova**, Conservative MPP and emergency room nurse (**Mississauga Centre, ON**), kick off the season by diving into discussion concerning the challenges of hospital capacity, bed shortages, and health program cuts in Ontario, in a pre- and post-COVID climate. Will hospital

capacity and services be overtaxed again and are the Ontario government's plans to transform much needed health services going to be enough?

### **January 26 – Pipeline Politics**

**Elizabeth May**, Green Party MP and Former Party Leader (**Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.**) and **Cathy McLeod**, Conservative MP and Shadow Minister for Crown-Indigenous Relations (**Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo, B.C.**) unwrap the pros and cons of the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion and its impact on Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities across British Columbia. What does the building of a second parallel pipeline mean for those living along its route?

### **February 2 – Clean Water**

**Karen Weaver**, former Mayor of **Flint, Michigan** (2015-2019) and **Mitch Twolan**, Mayor of **Huron-Kinloss, ON** explore how to ensure clean water for the nearly 40 million Canadians and Americans who live around the Great Lakes. They debate the Flint Water Crisis and the potential building of nuclear waste repositories near the Lake Huron shoreline in Ontario. Can politicians on both sides of the border truly listen for the future of Great Lakes water?

### **February 9 – Migrant Labour**

**Taras Natyshak**, NDP MPP (**Essex, ON**) and **Dave Epp**, Conservative MP (**Chatham-Kent-Leamington, ON**) debate potential solutions to the problems that face the migrant labour population in Southwestern Ontario, where workers have been exposed to COVID-19 in living conditions that some critics call inhumane. Can politicians share empathy for both foreign workers *and* Canadian farmers to find real solutions?

### **February 16 – Religious Symbols**

**Michael Coteau**, Liberal MPP (**Don Valley East, ON**) and **Christopher Skeete**, Coalition Avenir Québec MLA (**Sainte-Rose, Québec**) face off about Bill 21, the law in Québec that bans public servants (eg. judges, police officers, teachers) from wearing religious symbols while carrying out their duties. Is Bill 21 a human rights infringement or is it a continuation of Quebec's evolution as a secular society free of religion in public life?

### **February 23 – Cities and the Environment**

**Andrea Khanjin**, Conservative MPP and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (**Barrie-Innisfil, ON**) and **Jennifer McKelvie**, Toronto City Councillor (**Scarborough-Rouge Park, ON**) review the Ontario government's environmental record and discuss what needs to be done to preserve green spaces in Toronto and across Ontario. Can governments work together to find the right balance between economic growth and responsible environmental stewardship?

*Political Blind Date* is produced by Open Door Co. and Nomad Films, in association with TVO. Creator and Executive Producer is Tom Powers of Open Door Co., alongside Executive Producer, Writer, and Director Mark Johnston and Executive and Series Producer Amanda Handy of Nomad Films. From TVO, Jane Jankovic is Executive Producer of Documentaries, Linda Fong is Independent Production Officer, and John Ferri is Vice President of Current Affairs and Documentaries.

**6 x 28 min episodes** broadcast each Tuesday at 9 p.m. ET, beginning January 19.

### About TVO

Since 1970, TVO has existed to ignite the potential in everyone through the power of learning. Through impactful digital education products, in-depth current affairs, thought-provoking TVO Original documentaries, and award-winning TVOkids content, we prepare Ontarians for success in school and life. TVO's ongoing evolution as a modern digital learning and media organization prepares us to serve Ontarians for generations to come. TVO is funded primarily by the Province of Ontario, and is a registered charity supported by thousands of sponsors and donors. For more information, visit [tvo.org](http://tvo.org) and [tvokids.com](http://tvokids.com).

### Where to find TVO

On air:	Online:	
Cable Ch. 2 (check local listings)	<a href="http://tvo.org">tvo.org</a>	<a href="#">Apple App Store</a>
Rogers channel 2	<a href="http://tvokids.com">tvokids.com</a>	<a href="#">Google Play</a>
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Shaw Direct HD 39		
Shaw Direct SD 353	<a href="#">YouTube</a>	

### About Open Door Co.

Open Door Co. is in the business of producing, distributing and acquiring "Content That Matters" for broadcasters that include HBO, A&E, Sundance, CBC/Doc, TVO, Bell Media, Corus/Shaw, SVT, SBS, NHK and Discovery, among others. Credits include TVO Original Margin of Error, feature documentary Cracked Not Broken for HBO, Black Nation for SVT, Pure Intentions for CBC *documentary* and docuseries Intervention Canada (67x1) for A&E and Blue Ant Media. Visit: [OpenDoorCo.com](http://OpenDoorCo.com).

### About Nomad Films

Nomad Films develops and produces documentary programming for film and television that focuses on a wide range of compelling stories about social and political change, science, the environment, and the arts. We are passionate about social-political films. Known for its international treaty co-production work, Nomad has successfully produced films such as the award-winning In the Shadow of a Saint (CBC, BBC, IKON, and SBS Australia). Director/Writer/Executive Producer Mark Johnston is the Founder of Nomad Films which is run by his partner Amanda Handy. Thirty years in the documentary business, Mark and Amanda have worked in a producer or director capacity on over ninety films. Visit [NomadFilms.ca](http://NomadFilms.ca).

### Social Media

Facebook:

- [Facebook.com/PoliticalBlindDate](https://www.facebook.com/PoliticalBlindDate)
- [Facebook.com/TVODocs](https://www.facebook.com/TVODocs)

Twitter:

- [@Political\\_BD](#)
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Instagram:

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Hashtag:

- [#DebateWithoutHate](#)

## **Media Contacts**

Stephanie Perron  
BAE Communications  
[steph@baecommunications.ca](mailto:steph@baecommunications.ca)  
647-278-6799

Claire Ferris  
Audience Development Specialist, TVO  
[cferris@tvo.org](mailto:cferris@tvo.org)