

Our report to you.

*The Tyee's 2020
Year in Review*

Numbers, growth, collaboration, action,
awards, finances and support. 2020



The Tyee's 2020 *Year in Review*

How do we even sum up 2020? This was the year when all assumptions about how we live, work, and relate to each other were thrown out the window.

For news media, 2020 raised the bar high. Day after day, the quality of information reported and shared could be a matter of life and death.

When the pandemic struck, we at The Tyee faced challenges. We needed to quickly adapt our operations to COVID-safe protocols to protect our team. And we had to shift the focus of our reporting and increase the volume of stories to match the urgency of the new reality.

We're happy to report that, with the support of our readers, we were able to step up.

Here, in a nutshell, is how The Tyee works: we publish original, in-depth articles five days a week, covering stories that other media miss and showcasing voices you won't hear anywhere else.

We pay everyone involved. We hope, therefore, that what we offer is valuable enough to readers that they'll chip in a bit of money each month so that we can keep doing it. Whatever money we receive, we invest all of it into making more impactful journalism. This support from a small percentage of our readers means we can pay our talented journalists to do their thing, and we can keep our articles free for everyone to read, without a paywall.

Here's what reader support enabled us to accomplish in 2020.

The Tyee's 2020 – *by the numbers*

1,459

STORIES PUBLISHED
(UP FROM 936 IN 2019)

8 M.

SITE VISITORS
(UP 42 PER CENT FROM 2019)

1

GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION
SPARKED BY TYEE REPORTING

5

AWARDS
WON

5

NEW STAFF MEMBERS
AT THE TYEE

6

EARLY-CAREER JOURNALISTS WHO
RECEIVED TRAINING & MENTORSHIP
IN OUR NEWSROOM

58%

INCREASE IN REVENUE FROM
THE TYEE BUILDER PROGRAM

Our team grew.

The Tyee welcomed three new reporters covering new beats in 2020.

Jen St. Denis covers the Vancouver's Downtown Eastside community.

Moira Wyton covers health in B.C. And thanks to reader contributions, **Amanda Follett Hosgood** covers northern B.C.

Olamide Olaniyan joined The Tyee as our editorial assistant in 2019 and has moved into a new role as associate editor.

To help the machine keep running smoothly, we also welcomed **Tara Campbell** as our home page editor and lead copy editor, and **Sarah Krichel** as our new social media manager.



Jen St. Denis



Moira Wyton by Elizabeth Wang



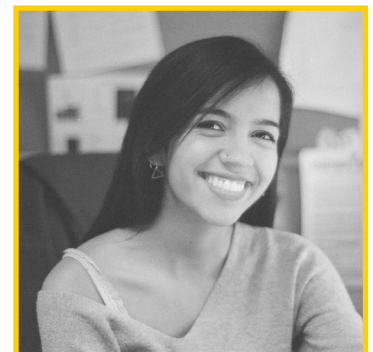
Amanda Follett Hosgood



Olamide Olaniyan



Tara Campbell



Sarah Krichel by Carl Solis

The Tyee's Downtown Eastside and health reporters are supported through the Local Journalism Initiative, a program funded by the Government of Canada.

Canada

We collaborated *with you and others.*

Beautiful things happen when we work together. This year, we collaborated with other journalism organizations and our readers to create something special.

WE ARE NOT DIVIDED

The Tyee partnered with the solutions journalism site Reasons to be Cheerful on a project called We Are Not Divided to highlight unlikely alliances working towards positive solutions to serious issues. [Check it out.](#)

COVID-19 EXPLAINER VIDEOS

We worked with Vancouver-based Avo Media to produce a series of explainer videos on the science behind COVID-19 treatments, decision-making, and projections, which earned a nomination at B.C.'s Webster Awards. [Watch all of the videos here.](#)

EMERGING INDIGENOUS JOURNALIST PROGRAM

For the fourth year in a row, we partnered with Journalists for Human Rights to provide a paid fellowship for an emerging Indigenous reporter. This fellowship is made possible by funding provided by JHR and is matched through The Tyee by an anonymous donor from a first-generation Chinese-Canadian family in Vancouver who has been grateful to be living and working on unceded Coast Salish territory for the past five decades.

INDIE MEDIA, ASSEMBLE!

We're proud to be a founding member of Canada's fresh new association for independent media. [Press Forward](#) brings together innovative independent media organizations and will work collaboratively to advance this growing and important sector.

COMMUNITY ART PROJECTS

Everyone needs a break from all the doom and gloom. That's why we initiated two fun community art projects on The Tyee this year. We asked readers to draw us [a map of their pandemic routines](#) and [submit their bubble portraits](#), and the results took our breath away.

HAKAI MAGAZINE PANDEMIC COVERAGE

When the pandemic hit, The Tyee partnered with Hakai Magazine, the Victoria-based, highly-awarded science journalism site, to provide wider coverage of COVID-19, running many of their stories weekly through the spring. We continue to partner with Hakai Magazine's weekly roundup of the latest COVID-19 related findings in science journals by [Brian Owens](#). How did The Tyee land such a fortunate partnership? You might say Hakai Magazine is our sibling publication, as we share [funding stewards](#) in Eric Peterson and Christina Munck.

COVID-19: FROM CANADA TO GUATEMALA

In the interest of lifting our eyes beyond how the coronavirus was affecting life in B.C. and Canada, The Tyee partnered with the health NGO TulaSalud to report on how the pandemic was affecting Guatemala, a nation with far fewer resources. TulaSalud is a B.C.-based charity funded by Eric Peterson and Christina Munck that provided invaluable connections on the ground in Guatemala and key context. The resulting four-part series is [here](#).

Our journalism *made things happen.*

We know on an intuitive level that journalism makes an impact, but we've gotten more serious about tracking such instances.

We take note when an article gets picked up and expanded on by other media, starts an important conversation, or apparently prompts someone in power to take action. Here are just some of the impacts we've tracked this year.

The federal government launched an investigation after The Tyee's Bryan Carney broke the story of Project Wide Awake, an RCMP advanced web-monitoring program. After multiple reports, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada initiated its probe of the program.

Health Canada okayed a treatment option for depression. After five months of inaction on applications to allow therapists to use psilocybin as part of their training to work with patients, the government said yes two weeks after Curt Petrovich wrote about the issue.

Residents in Canada's poorest neighbourhood are receiving their mail again. After The Tyee's Jen St. Denis wrote about Downtown Eastside residents not getting their mail due to COVID-19 policies, Canada Post reinstated their service.

A new temporary homeless solution is on Vancouver city hall's radar. After we published a series of articles exploring the idea of building tiny homes to help address the city's housing crisis, the idea gained traction with city council.

More accessible public restrooms are in the works. A Vancouver city councillor put forward a motion calling for them, citing The Tyee's story by Christopher Cheung.

B.C.'s government paid attention to First Nations pleas. Tyee health reporter Moira Wyton was working on a story about the province's failure to respond, after six weeks, to a request for help from coastal First Nations and municipalities in preventing the spread of COVID-19. The government responded to her media inquiry right before deadline to share that they had scheduled a meeting for the following week.

Health authorities improved communication. Jen St. Denis wrote about a COVID-19 exposure in the West Pub in the Downtown Eastside, and how residents were frustrated that they hadn't received any notifications about the exposure from Vancouver Coastal Health. Following the publication of the article, the health authority added the exposure and several other "low-risk" exposure events to their website.

Alberta Premier Jason Kenney reads us. That became apparent when a local Calgary reporter asked Kenney at a press conference if he was ready to explore building an economy on renewable energy. "Sounds like you're reporting for The Tyee," he told the radio journalist (who wasn't).

Andrew Nikiforuk's reporting and analysis attracts global attention. Already a recognized expert for having authored two books on pandemics, The Tyee's contributing editor Andrew Nikiforuk was ideally situated to cover the arrival of COVID-19 and all of its implications. From March on, he has delivered a relentless tour de force, ranging from reports on outbreaks in Alberta meat packing plants to analysis of the promise and perils of vaccines, to comparisons of how nations around the world were tackling public safety. His pieces taken together received upwards of a million page views and travelled far and wide. Euronews, the largest news network in Europe, requested an interview.

The Tyee spoke to Europe. Euronews, Europe's most-watched news channel, invited Tyee editor David Beers to speak on air about our pandemic coverage related to vaccines.

The governments of B.C. and Vancouver will collect race-based health data. The commitments came after Moira Wyton reported on the way such information is useful and lacking.

Tenants won't be kicked out, their living conditions will improve. After Jen St. Denis observed an attempted eviction and her reporting alerted the City of Vancouver about the room crammed with bunkbeds, the landlord came to an agreement, asked for less rent and agreed to remove one of the beds.

The world was able to watch. When the RCMP moved to arrest Wet'suwet'en land defenders from their land over the construction of the Coastal GasLink pipeline, Tyee reporter Amanda Follett Hosgood was one of the few journalists embedded in the camps, filing daily reports and photos as the standoff continued.

We brought more diversity to our pages. Part of our mission is to showcase voices you wouldn't hear elsewhere, and it's important to publish stories written by or featuring people that reflect the diversity of our communities.

For the past two years our team has been tracking the diversity of writers and sources in Tyee stories. This includes people underrepresented in media including, but not limited to, women, Indigenous people, Black people, people of colour, people of different sexual orientations and people with disabilities. It's not a perfect measure, but it offers our editorial team a guide to pursuing perspectives we are missing.

Here's a glimpse at our numbers. We began in January 2019 with a byline diversity of 39 per cent and it's been steadily increasing since. Our strongest month was July 2020 at 70 per cent.

In 2021, we commit to getting more granular with our data and continuing to diversify The Tyee at all levels.

Our work was *awarded recognition.*

2020 DIGITAL PUBLISHING AWARDS



Gold for General Excellence
– *Small Publication*

Gold for Best Editorial Newsletter
– *The Run*



Silver for Best Column
– *Dorothy Woodend*

2020 MAX WYMAN AWARD FOR CULTURAL COMMENTARY

Dorothy Woodend
Emerging Writer Fellowship
– *Paloma Pacheco*

2020 WEBSTER AWARDS



City Mike Award (Commentator of the Year)
– *Andrew Nikiforuk*

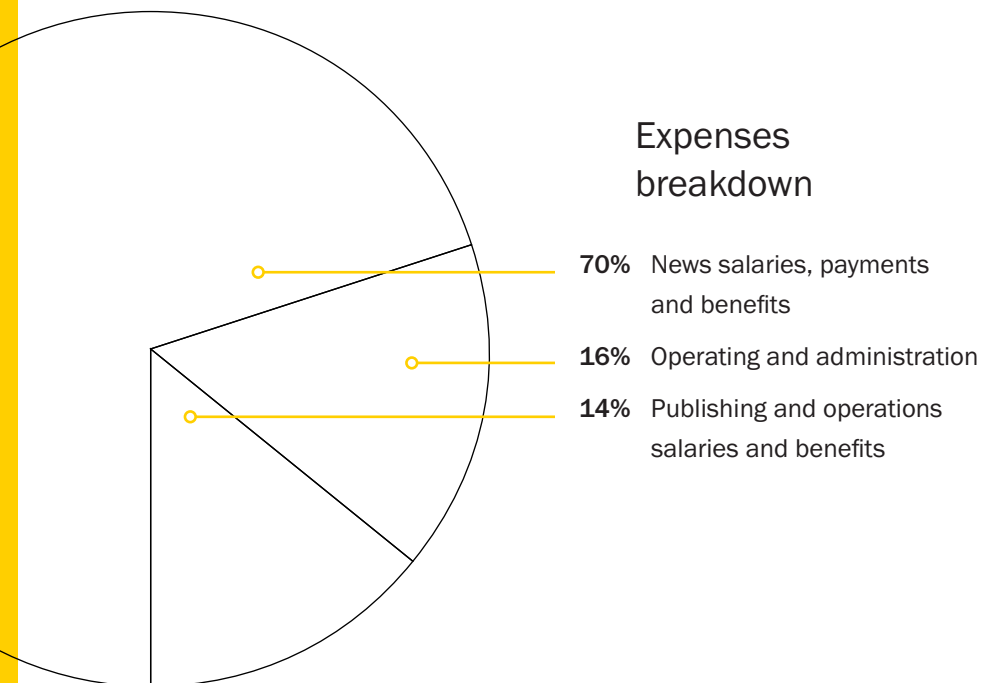
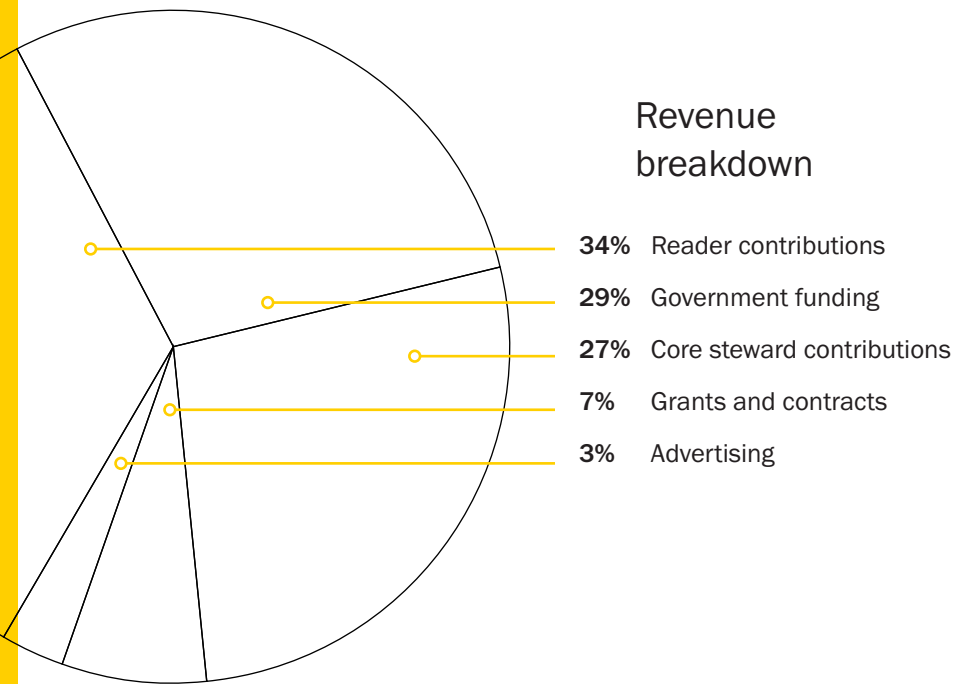
Here are The Tyee's *financial facts.*

We truly could not have done all of the above without the support of thousands of readers who chip in to our reporting fund each month, or give occasional one-time contributions.

Our model is super simple: We have a core steward who provides core funding to our operations. We make a small amount from advertising, renting out desks in our office, and contracts for special projects with funders who want to support solutions journalism projects.* This year, we were also able to access some new government funding for journalism. And the rest, around **34 per cent** of our budget, comes from readers.

Going forward, it's our vision to grow our readership support to make up more than half of our budget. This will set us on a sustainable path and ensure the long-term success of the publication.

In 2020, over **6,500 people** supported The Tyee, for a total of **\$553,000**. This represents a **58 per cent** increase from the same period last year.



Thanks to all of our supporters, readers, reporters, and lovers of independent media.

* The Tyee occasionally works with partners to create in-depth solutions journalism series. Partners must agree to give The Tyee complete editorial independence and are not involved in the editing process. This year, The Tyee worked with SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement to produce these **two series** on housing. This year we accessed support from the Government of Canada through the Local Journalism Initiative for two reporting positions, and through the Canada Periodical Fund Special Measures for Journalism program. In addition, we accessed funds for COVID-19 reporting from the Facebook Journalism Project and the Google News Initiative.

For the fourth year in a row (as mentioned above), we partnered with Journalists for Human Rights to provide a paid fellowship for an emerging Indigenous reporter. This work was supported by a contract with Journalists for Human Rights and a matching donation from an anonymous donor.

The Tyee has received designation as a Qualified Canadian Journalism Organization from the Canada Revenue Agency, which means we will be able to access a refundable labour tax credit for part of our editorial salaries going forward.

This team depends on *your support.*

Thank you!

Robyn Smith
Editor-in-Chief

Jeanette Ageson
Publisher

David Beers
Editor for Initiatives

Paul Willcocks
News and Politics Editor

Olamide Olaniyan
Associate Editor

Dorothy Woodend
Culture Editor

Andrew MacLeod
Legislative Bureau Chief

Katie Hyslop
Reporter

Christopher Cheung
Reporter

Jen St. Denis
Reporter

Moira Wyton
Reporter

Amanda Follett Hosgood
Reporter

Bryan Carney
Director of Web Production/Reporter

Em Cooper
Outreach Manager

Tara Campbell
Home Page Editor and Style Guide Head

Sarah Krichel
Social Media Manager

Marianne Bos
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Andrew Nikiforuk
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Contributing Editor

Michael Harris
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Steve Burgess
Contributing Editor

Geoff Dembicki
Climate Reporter

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