



EUROPEAN
FILM ACADEMY

Press release

THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN FILM, CO-CREATED BY YOUNG PEOPLE

The European Film Academy unveiled an ambitious new programme to engage teenagers in European films, at the Cannes Film Festival today. **The European Film Club** is being genuinely co-created by young people across Europe and will be tested in 20 European countries this year before a full roll out across the continent in 2023.

Funded by Creative Europe MEDIA, European Film Club will be a film platform and film club network across the continent for young people to come together to watch and discuss European films and make their own. European Film Club will build a diverse catalogue of films chosen by young people and build a love of European film for the next generation.

Young people currently find it difficult to access European films; with a young audience survey (see Editor's Notes for more details) revealing that 84% would like to watch more European films, and 94% wanting the industry to make it easier for them to watch. The European Film Club programme will answer this call, enabling viewing of films from different cultures and nationalities, on a variety of platforms from a bespoke website through to schools, cinemas and festivals. In the same survey 79% of young people think that European cinema is an important way of creating a sense of European identity.

The important initiative starts in June 2022 and involves 38 partners from 30 countries including national film centres/institutes in Netherlands, Iceland, Slovenia, UK, Hungary, Lithuania and North Macedonia, film academies in Portugal and Austria, high profile film festivals in Poland, Kosovo, Norway, Greece, Romania, Czech Republic, Belgium, Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Italy, Switzerland and Croatia (including Giffoni, Zagreb, Transilvania and Olympia) as well as a film university, national museum of cinema, film commission, film agency and children's film and cultural organisations.

The project is an important initiative for the European Film Academy and its Director, Matthijs Wouter Knol, had this to say:

[“Films provide an insight into the lives of others, into different cultures and what it means to be European. Building a love of European film is not just an investment in the future of the film industry but into young people's cultural futures. The Academy is developing a range of innovative initiatives to champion European film and filmmakers and the European Film Club builds on our 11-year Young Audience Award project to create year-round engagement in European film to develop future audiences for European film.”](#)

The European Film Academy is co-creating the European Film Club programme with young people, working with its Youth Council of 13 members from Romania, Croatia, Lithuania, Italy, Spain, Slovenia, Portugal, UK, Sweden, Poland, Bosnia & Herzegovina. The Youth Council harnesses the input from a 39 young person Consultation Group from 23 countries.

Some of the young people involved have been working to develop the project for a year and a half and had this to say:

“What you watch as a kid actually gets in on how you grow up and what person you become...I think classics are important. The kids have to have some culture. I think every kid has to see classics, obviously for their age, of course... they will be really necessary to watch films that make you think, films that make you question the big things. And also films with values, I think it really matters what you show the kids. And films with no discrimination, where all the communities are valued, where black people matter... We are kind of responsible about what that kid is going to be in the future with that film. I think movies have the power of making a change in everybody.” Thomas, Spain, Youth Council member

“I would choose movies that are really meaningful and really high quality ones that will develop children's mind and their critical thinking.” Anja, Montenegro

“I think movies are very important for young people because movies convey emotions like nothing else.” Lukas, Austria

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Editor's Notes:

The European Film Club will create a pan-European network of film clubs co-created by young people that will:

- develop a year-round engagement in film for participants in the European Film Academy's Young Audience Award building to the awards
- develop a collection of films chosen by and for young people including classics of European cinema and Young Audience Award winners
- build on European Film Academy's platform to develop a white label version to host and coordinate online viewing as well as stream and download films for live screenings
- develop the platform and other tools to support the running of film clubs, by youth organisations, teachers, and young people themselves
- share what it means to be European and celebrate its diverse expressions through film
- enable viewing of films from different cultures and nationalities
- encourage international exchange and discussion of films
- support learning about film and young people's filmmaking

Other quotes of young people:

“I think we need to have more movies about other cultures, to learn about them, because it's really important, to talk about it and to educate students about other cultures.” Gabija, Lithuania

“It could lead to much more movies about our culture and our countries” Matija, Montenegro

“Biggest thing I've learnt from a movie is to be yourself, don't act like someone else, we are all different, we are all unique, so what's the point in trying to copy someone else. That was my biggest lesson from a movie, it was three years ago but I still remember it.” Ifigenia, Greece

“Having diversity is awesome. The more we see films, the more we live experiences that help us improve as human beings. I think the most important films are the classic ones.” Maria, Spain

“Movies can be used in various ways because movies tackle many topics which means many lessons and they are a form of art, they are a portrait of humanity. A movie can teach many interesting topics and morals in a way that is easier for us to understand and be interested in.” Alkis-George, Greece

The Young Audience Survey carried out by the European Film Academy and its partners in September 2021 featured 340 teenage respondents, from 25 countries and the main findings include:

- 84% would like to watch more European films
- 94% would like the film industry to make it easier to watch European films
- 91% do not attend a film club
- 68% would like to join the European Film Club
- 83% are interested in learning to make their own films

European Film Club Partners include:

- Academia Portuguesa de Cinema (Portugal)
- Austrian Film Academy (Austria)
- British Film Institute
- Boiler NGO & Visegrad Film Forum (Slovakia)
- Children's Art Centre Poznań AleKino! (Poland)
- Circuito Cinema Scuole (Italy)
- DaBUF – The Association of Danish Filmclubs for Children & Youth
- Doku Fest – International Documentary and Short Film Festival (Kosovo)
- Film.GL Greenland Film Makers
- Filmoteca de la Generalitat de Catalunya (Spain)
- Filmuniversität Babelsberg Konrad Wolf (Germany)
- Free Zone Film Festival (Serbia)
- Fondazione Culturale Niels Stensen (Italy)
- Giffoni Film Festival (Italy)
- Icelandic Film Centre
- JEF vzw (Belgium)
- JUNIORFEST International Film Festival for Children and Youth (Czech Republic)
- KIDS Regio & German Children's Media Foundation Golden Sparrow
- Kino Nowe Horyzonty (Poland)

- Kristiansand International Children's Film Festival (Norway)
- Krutón z.s. (Czech Republic)
- Lithuanian Film Centre under the Ministry of Culture
- Museo Nazionale del Cinema Torino (Italy)
- National Film Institute Hungary
- North Macedonia Film Agency
- Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People (Greece)
- Otok Institute (Slovenia)
- Podgorica Film Festival (Montenegro)
- Podkarpackie Film Commission (Poland)
- Sarajevo Film Festival & Kino Meeting Point (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Spazju Kreattiv & Creative Europe Desk Malta
- Taoba Youth Film Festival & Culture and Education Foundation (Georgia)
- Transilvania Film Festival Association (Romania)
- Vision Kino (Germany)
- Yapimlab (Turkey)
- Young Audience Award Suisse
- Zagreb Film Festival (Croatia)
- Zoomz – Festival for Children and Youth Film (Switzerland)

The European Film Academy

Founded in 1988, the European Film Academy now unites 4,100 European film professionals with the common aim of promoting Europe's film culture. Throughout the year, the European Film Academy initiates and participates in a series of activities dealing with film politics as well as economic, artistic, and training aspects. The programme includes conferences, seminars and workshops, and a common goal is to build a bridge between creativity and the industry. Some of the European Film Academy's events have already become an institution for encounters within the European film community

The Academy's highest profile activity is the annual European Film Awards, honoring the greatest achievements in European cinema. Streamed and broadcast live every December, the awards are presented for 26 categories. The Academy has over more than a decade produced the Young Audience Award annually for the best European film for a 12-14 year old age group.

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