

**1<sup>st</sup> September, 2020**

## **Why Film Festivals Matter?**

### **Call to policy-makers from 41 international film festivals and trade associations**

The film industry has been severely hit by Covid-19 with film shooting interrupted, film distribution frozen and cinemas closed. International Film Festivals across the globe have been also strongly impacted by the current crisis.

Since March, spring festivals have been obliged to cancel or postpone their 2020 editions, while the festivals due to be held later in the year have to play it by ear. Uncertainties, delays and extra costs caused by Covid-19 have created severe challenges for the festivals ecosystem's sustainability. For those that will be able to take place physically, the likely reduced attendance resulting both from the sanitary measures to be set up and the difficulty in travelling will have a cost.

International film festivals are not only important contributors to the cultural, economic and social development of the territories where they are established, but they are also an essential link in the film industry chain, as they offer international outreach for films, distribution deals opportunities, reviews in the press and audience attention.

This significant economic weight of international film festivals needs to be preserved with dedicated measures and a firm commitment from local, national and regional decision-makers in accompanying festivals' Covid-related transition - whether they can or cannot operate in 2020 - and their future operations from 2021 onwards.

Signatories are international film festivals as well as trade organisations and unions representing the film industry, including FIAPF representing film producers worldwide and acting as the regulator for international film festivals that gathers 45 festivals from 29 countries over the five continents.

### **Why the film festivals' ecosystem must be supported to mitigate the Covid effects?**

>> Film Festivals matter for their cultural contribution to the local development<sup>1</sup>:

- 4.5 million admissions in 2017
- Nearly 1700 films had their world premiere in an accredited festival in 2017
- The accredited festivals record a cumulative total of 32,000 press badges in 2017

>> Film Festivals matter for their contribution to local economies and workforces:

- Important benefits for the HoReCa sector<sup>2</sup>
- A significant number of local jobs created each year<sup>3</sup>

### **What is needed?**

Where such measures have not been already decided, signatories call national authorities and regional institutions across the globe, including in the European Union, for immediate relief measures for 2020 operations and an exceptional post-Covid strategy for international film festivals to safeguard the existing film festivals ecosystem at national, regional and global level.

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<sup>1</sup> Data from the [2018 FIAPF Directory of International Film Festivals](#)

<sup>2</sup> Hotel, Restaurant and Cafe sector. For example, Berlin International Film Festival and Toronto international Film Festival generate [EUR 100 million](#) and [CAD 189 million](#) in hotels, restaurants and shops respectively in 2013. Cannes Film Festival brings in nearly [EUR 200 million](#) in the local economy.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Cannes Film Festival counted 2.000 jobs in 2016 ([Op. Cit. Le Figaro 2017/05/29](#)) and Toronto International Film Festival counted 2.295 jobs in 2013 ([Op. Cit. CBC 2013/09/07](#)).

**Signatories (sorted by country, in alphabetical order):**

Argentina

**Mar del Plata International Film Festival<sup>4</sup>**

Australia

**Sydney Film Festival**

Austria

**Kitzbuehel Film Festival**

**Viennale**

Belarus

**Minsk International Film Festival – Listapad**

Bulgaria

**Sofia International Film Festival**

Canada

**Toronto International Film Festival**

Colombia

**Festival Internacional de Cine de Cartagena de Indias**

Dominican Republic

**Festival de Cine Global Dominicano**

Egypt

**Cairo International Film Festival**

Estonia

**Tallinn Black Nights International Film Festival**

Finland

**Tampere Film Festival**

France

**Festival de Cannes**

Germany

**Berlinale - Berlin International Film Festival**

**International Short Film Festival Oberhausen**

India

**International Film Festival of India, Goa**

**International Film Festival of Kerala**

**Kolkata International Film Festival**

Italy

**Noir In Festival (Como, Milano)**

**Rome Film Fest**

**Torino Film Festival**

**Biennale Cinema - Venice Film Festival**

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<sup>4</sup> Organized by INCAA

Japan

**Tokyo International Film Festival**

Kazakhstan

**Eurasia International Film Festival (Nur-Sultan City)**

People's Republic of China

**Shanghai International Film Festival**

Poland

**Krakow Film Festival**

**Warsaw Film Festival**

Portugal

**MotelX – Lisbon International Horror Film Festival**

Romania

**Transilvania International Film Festival (Cluj)**

Russian Federation

**Message To Man International Film Festival (Saint Petersburg)**

**Moscow International Film Festival**

South Korea

**Busan International Film Festival**

Spain

**Cinema Jove (Valencia)**

**Gijon International Film Festival**

**San Sebastian International Film Festival**

**Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalunya**

**Zinebi - International Festival of Documentary and Short Film of Bilbao**

Switzerland

**Locarno Film Festival**

Turkey

**Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival**

**Istanbul Film Festival**

Ukraine

**Molodist – Kyiv International Film Festival**

#### **Co-signatories:**

**FERA:** The Federation of European Film Directors (FERA), founded in 1980, represents film and TV directors at European level, with 47 directors' associations as members from 35 countries. We speak for more than 20,000 European screen directors, representing their cultural, creative and economic interests.

**FIA:** The International Federation of Actors represents performers' trade unions, guilds and professional associations in about 70 countries. In a connected world of content and entertainment,

it stands for fair social, economic and moral rights for performers working in all recorded media and live theatre.

**FIAD:** The International Federation of Film Distributors' Associations gathers national organisations of film distribution companies and therefore covering the entire range of companies: small and medium-sized companies specialized in art house films, as well as larger companies focused on mainstream films. FIAD's members operate in 14 countries where they cover 90 to 100 percent of the theatrical market.

**FIAPF** (International Federation of Film Producers Associations) represents the film producers worldwide, gathering 34 national producers organizations from 27 countries across the globe. FIAPF aims to defend the creative, legal and regulatory interests of the Film Production sector worldwide. FIAPF also carries out the **FIAPF Accreditation Programme for International Film Festivals**, which brings together 45 International Film Festivals from 29 countries on the five continents. The FIAPF accreditation programme is a trust contract between festivals and producers, which guarantees that festivals' operations meet the highest quality standards and the selected films benefit from the best possible promotion and visibility.

**FSE:** The Federation of Screenwriters in Europe is a network of national and regional associations, guilds and unions of writers for the screen in Europe, created in June 2001. It comprises 26 members from 21 countries, representing more than 7,500 screenwriters in Europe.

**IVF:** The members of the International Video Federation are associations representing businesses active in all segments of the film and audiovisual sector in Europe. Their activities include the development, production, and distribution of films and audiovisual content as well as their publication on digital physical carriers and via all forms of authorised and legal online distribution channels (TVOD, SVOD, AVOD).

**UNI MEI:** The Media, Entertainment & Arts Sector of UNI Global Union represents 170 national unions & guilds affiliating more than 450 000 creators, technicians and other workers in the media, entertainment and arts world-wide.

**UNIC:** The Union Internationale des Cinémas/International Union of Cinemas represents the interests of cinema trade associations and cinema operators covering 38 countries in Europe and neighbouring region.