

Sunny Side of the Doc 2021 set to maximize its international opportunities as a fully digital marketplace

The 32nd edition of the international marketplace for documentary and narrative experiences is now rolling most of its activities online from 21st to 24th June 2021. The organisers aim to boost business opportunities and international exchange for all established and emerging industry professionals.

La Rochelle, 8th April 2021 - Each year, creatives, producers, distributors, buyers and sales agents from around the world converge at Sunny Side of the Doc's dedicated market for the co-production, buying and selling of documentary proposals and completed projects.

Efforts to maintain and develop a hybrid edition – both live La Rochelle from 21st to 24th June 2021 and accessible online – have been shelved very recently. The French government's handling of the health crisis and the acceleration of the current mass vaccination programme has directly impacted our event logistics, as the French Ministry of Health has requisitioned the use of the main exhibition hall in the Espace Encan, which has been our main venue since 2006.

In order to preserve its international reach, the marketplace's 32nd edition will concentrate its activities online. Industry professionals with an Online Pass can look forward to highly curated pitching sessions, access to decision makers who greenlight projects, targeted networking meetings and a comprehensive four-day conference programme that unlocks the transformative potential of storytelling in the streaming era.

*"Building on the remarkable success of the 2020 Connected Edition that led to new deals and Global Pitch that helped impactful stories get off the ground, we remain absolutely committed to **#StoryTellingMatters** and will run a 2021 online marketplace through an expanded and optimised digital platform", says Mathieu Béjot, Director of the Strategy and Development of the annual gathering.*

"We want to believe in a better future, one carried by the optimism which lends its name to Sunny Side of the Doc. So we're leaving the door open to invite the international documentary community to join us back to the docks in June for a more informal get-together if the situation improves by then. We are very much looking forward to celebrating the reopening of France's cultural institutions on mid-May and meeting audiences again in the cultural venues of La Rochelle that will host the immersive exhibition of PiXii Festival's 5th edition."

The upgraded digital space will provide a focus on the virtual presence of partners, exhibitors and delegations of international producers. A screening library hosted by ProgramBuyer and a XR media library deployed by LucidWeb will spark both Sunny Side of the Doc and PiXii Festival communities with original ideas (1,360 projects and programmes registered in 2020), new and under-represented talents from across the globe.

A new rate structure will be introduced on the [official website](#) as of 8th April 2021, with pitch submissions still available at €90 and PiXii entries at €40 until the closure date of all calls on 22nd April 2021.

At the same time, Sunny Side of the Doc presents the key visual for this year's edition, in which Studio Helm's Scott Roberts has created an iconic and fun identity which brings together a diverse range of people with a shared passion for documentary and digital storytelling. In ancient times, the oral tradition of storytelling was done in front of a campfire. The identity is an abstracted and contemporised depiction of campfire embers, shooting high into the air, burning bright and illuminating all before them.

"Documentary filmmaking is, after all, the art of shining a light on stories that deserve the world's attention. It ignites people's thirst for knowledge, and fuels their curiosity" he concluded.



What to expect:

- **Unique funding opportunities** for the most exciting 42 non-fiction concepts to be pitched online to 300+ top-level international decision makers: commissioning editors from broadcasters and platforms, foundations, funders, sales agents and cultural institutions.
- **2021 digital guides to Documentary Buyers and Sellers.**
- **An excellent producer-to-broadcaster ratio**, that fosters an invaluable networking and deal-making environment.
- **Interactive lineups and showcases** by France Télévisions, Arte, NHK, China Pavillion, Canal +, TF1...
- **Expanded Meet the Executives sessions** featuring Disney+/National Geographic, discovery+, PBS, Sundance Institute, Redford Center and even Ford Foundation...
- **Two Talent Hubs** shining a spotlight on new voices from Central and Eastern Europe and untold stories by women nonfiction filmmakers.
- **Digital Crossroads**, [a series of online industry meetings](#) developed in partnership with the French Institute in order to encourage bilateral collaborations, to spur the development of coproductions, to facilitate the export of French immersive works and to enable these creative and cultural industries to access new international markets.

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