



Call for projects 2025 Pitching sessions

Having your documentary project selected in one of the seven Sunny Side of the Doc pitch sessions increases your chances of finding the right partners, both financial and editorial: channels, platforms, foundations, distributors, international co-producers. If you have a project in development or production with strong international potential, join us in La Rochelle from June 23 to 26, 2025.

**[Submissions opening: Tuesday, December 17th, 2024]
[Submissions closure: Tuesday, March 25th, 2025, 12pm CET]**

WHY PITCHING AT SUNNY SIDE OF THE DOC?

Every year, **Sunny Side of the Doc** brings together the international documentary film community in all its forms for an unmissable 4-day event. Sunny Side attracts over 2,200 participants from more than 70 countries and aims to support the financing and international co-production of projects, as well as the distribution of completed programs.

With over 300 leading international decision-makers in attendance, representing major broadcasters, streamers, foundations, distributors, buyers... looking for strong stories, Sunny Side of the Doc pitch sessions are the opportunity to finance your project and get valuable feedback. Take a look at the list of [decision-makers attending 2024 edition](#).

Once your project has been selected, you'll have access to qualified professionals and mentoring from industry experts to help you prepare your pitch in the best possible conditions. At the end of the pitch, you'll benefit from face-to-face meetings with the decision makers present at the pitch session.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

In an ultra-polarized world, documentaries offer a way out. It allows us to tell powerful, uplifting stories that bring us together around universal social issues.

For this 36th edition, all the themes represented at Sunny Side of the Doc, whatever the format, these are the stories we're looking for. Stories that can bring together diverse audiences, on every continent, on our most pressing global issues.

Narratives need to be varied, to satisfy different audiences on different media. They must be able to reach these audiences, whatever their age or social class, and be inclusive in both content and production teams.

For each pitch session, a jury of international professionals selects the most ambitious projects. For all the categories presented below, the potential for international co-production is a key element for each project. For the teams selected, this is the assurance that their projects will find committed partners among our decision-makers.

An increasing number of documentaries fall into several genres, and the positioning of certain sub-genres can be the subject of lengthy debate. If you're in any doubt about which category to include your project in, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

7 pitching sessions

Science

The aim is to gain a better understanding of the world through science. Projects may deal with medicine, new technologies or the environment, explaining the state of our planet and the challenges of ecological transition.

They can also deal with new archaeological, space and biological discoveries. These projects offer a new vision of the world, deconstructing received ideas by providing irrefutable scientific evidence.

Astonishing in essence, they incorporate filmed images, animations, computer-generated images and interviews with scientists.

History

We're looking for projects that decode history to better understand our societies today. How the events of the 19th and 20th centuries and ancient civilizations have shaped the world today.

Beyond the events themselves, who are the illustrious personalities who have left their mark on history, and who are the often-forgotten women who have shaken up the destiny of humanity?

Archives, newly rediscovered images, fictionalized images, animations – all narrative modes are welcome. These projects help us to deepen our collective knowledge on an international scale.

Arts & Entertainment

This session is open to all projects dealing with art in general, from classical art to contemporary creation, pop culture and the underground.

Projects that take us into all fields of the visual arts, from literature, cinema, architecture, design, photography and painting to theater and the performing arts. We have no historical prerequisites.

Biopics travel well as long as they feature world-renowned artists. Universality is key.

Nature & Environment

We are open to a wide range of subjects, from the study of the natural world, its ecosystems and wildlife, to the impact of human activities on the environment and what we can do to combat climate change. Beyond the theme itself, narratives can be varied: incorporating indigenous human communities who live in symbiosis with their environment, engaging the audience in adventure film narratives, discoveries for greater diversity.

Current Affairs & Investigation

We look for documentaries that explore complex issues, topics or events in depth, bringing to light untold stories, uncovering information that has been hidden, overlooked or suppressed, and challenging the status quo and dominant narratives.

We expect projects to be characterized by rigorous research, in-depth analysis, compelling evidence and nuanced storytelling.

We are open to all topics that have social, economic, technological, environmental or political relevance and that can resonate internationally.

New Voices

The aim of this session is to introduce new talent (1st or 2nd film) to the international market and give them the visibility they deserve.

It is exclusively dedicated to directors / filmmakers / content creators whose first or second documentary film is over 50' (or series).

All themes are accepted, the stories are strong and inspiring, the issues are universal and inclusive, and all forms are welcome as long as they are powerful.

Impact Campaigns

Documentary is a powerful tool for change. Is the subject of your film highly social, political, environmental or offers a new vision that you want to share in order to raise awareness and trigger social change? This pitch session is looking for that kind of activism. This session is specifically set up to develop and fund impact campaigns, not film production. This pitch session will present 6 impact campaign projects to an audience of impact specialists and funders.

Whether your film project is in development, production or even finalization, what matters here is that you build an impact campaign around it. How do you finance it, with whom and for what result?

This session is specifically designed to develop and finance impact campaigns, not film production. Please note that, in the submission form, **the budget and provisional financing plan must relate to the impact campaign only.**

Eligible projects

- All talents, established or otherwise, can submit their projects: directors, producers, authors;
- Projects must be at an advanced stage of development. We do not encourage projects that have finished shooting or are in post-production;
- Projects must benefit from the financial commitment of at least one third-party partner (broadcaster, platform, commercial agent, support fund, foundation, crowdfunding, museum, brand, etc.). Confirmed proof of participation from one of the partners (Letter of Commitment or “LOC”) is required;
- The formats expected in our 7 pitch sessions: unitaries, feature films, series, etc;
- Applications from all countries are welcome.

Project evaluation

Projects will be evaluated and selected by a jury of industry professionals on the basis of the following criteria:

- Strength and originality of story and narrative;
- Relevance and potential for international co-production;
- Financial feasibility.
- Without being a prerequisite, other elements will be taken into consideration, such as an impact strategy or eco-design certification.

**If you have any question about your eligibility,
do not hesitate to contact us before submitting:
programming@sunnysideofthedoc.com**

PITCHING JOURNEY

By submitting your project to Sunny Side of the Doc's pitch sessions, you become part of a real support program.

Before Sunny Side of the Doc

- **SELECTION**
6 projects will be selected in each of the **7 pitch sessions**.
- **COMMITMENT**
Selected projects must agree to:
 - register for Sunny Side of the Doc (if you only bought a Pitch submission, you will be required to buy your Market Pass);
 - follow the whole Pitching Journey.

- **MENTORING**

Once selected, each of the 42 projects will be offered mentoring sessions with industry experts. These mentoring sessions enable the selected teams to benefit from invaluable advice on video-pitch preparation, stage appearances and one-to-one meetings. These mentors will accompany you before and after your appearance at Sunny Side of the Doc to maximize your chances of finding partners. Please note that the video pitch must be sent to us by **June 5, 2025** at the latest.

During Sunny Side of the Doc

- **PROJECT'S PRESENTATION**

- A 5-minute pre-recorded video pitch (including your trailer), broadcast during the session.
- a 2-minute live presentation, ideally focusing on production issues (stage of production, financing obtained and sought, expectations of the pitch, etc.). The mentoring provided by Sunny Side of the Doc will help you fine-tune your presentation.
- And finally, a 7-minute question-and-answer session with international decision-makers on site, led by moderators from the industry.

- **TAILORED INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS**

At least three tailored one-to-one meetings with Decision Makers will be organized according to your wishlist to get straight into creative and financial discussions.

- **AWARDS**

- A jury of documentary experts will select the best projects presented in each pitch session. **The seven winners will receive a cash prize** funded by the respective session sponsors: €3,000 for the Specialist Factual categories and €2,000 for the two others ones (New Voices and Impact Campaigns).
- Other special prizes and invitations to festivals may also be awarded by our professional partners.

- **PUBLICATION**

Information on selected projects will be published in the Sunny Side of the Doc resources available to buyers and registered participants, including the Official Selections Guide. Although you may check and update this information, please ensure that it is accurate at the time of application.

After Sunny Side of the Doc

PROJECTS OBSERVATORY

- Sunny Side of the Doc's commitment goes far beyond the pitch. We wish to support the development of your project all the way to its international distribution. The Projects Observatory allows our organization to monitor your progress and share your achievements with the international documentary community.
- Selected projects will comply with Sunny Side of the Doc's requests for information and for including its credit and logo where needed.

HOW TO SUBMIT?

Submissions opening: Tuesday, December 17th, 2024
Closing date for submissions: **Tuesday, March 25th, 2025, 12pm CET**

The entire application process takes place **via an online form and must be completed *in English only***.
The application fee is €90. This covers the costs of managing, reading and selecting the application.

To submit a project to Sunny Side of the do, you should choose between 2 options:

- 1- Buy your **MarketPass** first, at the *early bird rate* before February 28th, 2025, and then, via the event platform, submit your project with the **"Pitch submission"** purchase option.
- 2- Submit your project first with the **"Pitch submission"**, then purchase your Market Pass for the 4-day Market.

To submit your project, you will be required to provide and upload the following elements:

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- Original title [*not mandatory*]
- English title
- Pitch category
- Thematics / Subgenres
- Director's name(s), bio (max. 400 characters incl. spaces) & filmography (maximum 3 titles) [*not mandatory*]
- Is this project the 1st or 2nd film of the director?
- Production company profile (max. 300 characters incl. spaces)
- Producer's name(s) & bio (max. 400 characters incl. spaces)
- Is this project the 1st or 2nd film of the producer?
- Co-producer(s) if any & country

- Main contact for the project
- Artistic team *[not mandatory]*
- Technical team *[not mandatory]*
- Partners (Public or private funds & Institutions) (600 characters, spaces included) *[not mandatory]*
- Broadcaster(s) & Platform(s) if any & Country (600 characters, spaces included) *[not mandatory]*
- International sales agents (if any) & Country (600 characters, spaces included) *[not mandatory]*
- What are you looking for? *e.g. financing, distribution, etc.*
- Final estimated budget, Secured financing & Financing sought (in euros)

2. PROJECT

- Logline (350 characters, spaces included)
- Short synopsis (800 characters, spaces included)
- Short treatment (2500 characters, spaces included)
- Link to your trailer **[English or english subtitles, 4mins max., Vimeo preferred. Make sure your video is in free access and downloadable]** OR any other alternative visual support [PDF] which best illustrates your project - *e.g. Moodboard, Marketing presentation.*
- Industry event(s) your project would have been previously pitched? If yes, where and when?
- Does your project need a total media blackout for security reasons? (your project will appear on our website in case of selection and will be available to all participants in our online catalog) For confidentiality or security issues, you may decide that your trailer should not be displayed with all the participants before, during or after the event.
- Sustainable strategy: what actions did you implement to make your documentary sustainable & green? (600 characters, spaces included) *[not mandatory]*
- Impact strategy: What actions did you implement to make your documentary impactful: social media campaigns, partnering with NGOs, etc.? (600 characters, spaces included) *[not mandatory]*
- Diversity, Parity & Inclusion strategy: What actions did you implement to ensure diversity, parity & inclusion in front & behind the camera? (600 characters, spaces included) *[not mandatory]*

3. TECHNICAL SPECIFICITIES

- Beginning of Shooting
- Expected time of completion
- Is your project in post-production?
- Shooting format(s) - *e.g. 4K, FHD, Web / Social Media*
- Deliverable format(s) - *e.g. Feature length, Series*
- Language(s)
- Duration(s)

4. ATTACHMENTS

- HD visual **[Still or poster in landscape format, 10MB max., without text on it]**
- Budget & financing plan **[1 single PDF file, 10MB max.]**
- Letter(s) of Commitment from a third party **(a letter from a private or public entity who's investing in your project with coproduction, in-kind or money.) [1 single PDF file, 10MB max.]**
- Additional information you want to share with the selection committee (biographies of directors, moodboard, etc.) **[1 single PDF file, 10MB max.]**

5. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR PROJECTS SUBMITTING TO THE IMPACT CAMPAIGN PITCH

SESSION > Please fill in these questions in a PDF document and upload it in the "Attachments" tab

> "Impact specific questions"

- Why do you plan an impact campaign?
- What are the key messages to your film, what issue are you addressing?
- What are your impact goals, what change do you want to see?
- Who is your target audience?
- What would success look like?
- Budget estimate for the impact campaign
- Do you already have a partner, Impact producer / NGO / Foundation on board? If yes, please specify. · If applicable, contact details of your Impact producer
- Who would be your ideal partner?

Should you have any questions about your project's submission, please contact:

projects@sunnysideofthedoc.com.

For more information visit:

[call for projects SSD25 - Sunny Side Of The Doc](#)

ABOUT SUNNY SIDE OF THE DOC

Sunny Side of the Doc is the international community and marketplace dedicated to linear and non-linear documentary. Every June, a specific event brings together decision makers, producers, filmmakers, sales agents and funders to support the international financing of documentary projects and the circulation of completed programs. The 4-day market offers unique creative, business and networking opportunities for the 2,200+ participants from 60 countries through a mix of high-level pitching sessions, panels on the latest industry trends and an exhibition hall. The 36th Sunny Side of the Doc will be held in La Rochelle from June 23-26, 2025.

Doc Services, the organising company of Sunny Side of the Doc, is a member of 1% for the Planet.

<https://www.sunnysideofthedoc.com>