



PRESS RELEASE

SUNNY SIDE OF THE DOC 2025: A SHIFTING EDITION CHARTING NEW ROUTES TO STORYTELLING

**Award Winners from seven pitch sessions announced
Sunny Side enters a new phase ahead of 2026**

La Rochelle, June 26, 2025 - [Sunny Side of the Doc](#), the international professional market dedicated to linear and non-linear documentary content, concludes its 36th edition today (June 23-26, La Rochelle, France) and announces the winners of the seven pitch sessions.

Over four days, the market gathered **2100 participants from 60 countries, over 1000 companies, 85 exhibitors, and 260 international decision-makers** including major broadcasters, streamers, foundations, distributors, financiers, and museums from around the world. This year's edition saw a strong international presence, with **32 notable delegations** from Africa, China, Brazil, Canada, and Spain. Archives companies were also in the spotlight, with a significant number of archival content exhibitors actively engaging in market discussions and activities.

This year also saw a **significant increase in broadcaster engagement**, with a strengthened presence from key players such as the **BBC, Channel 4, Mediaset, National Geographic, TG4 (Ireland), and RTP (Portugal)**, as well as long-standing North American partner **PBS**. Notably, **buyers from India (IN10 Media) and Brazil (Globoplay)** joined the event for the first time, further expanding the market's international reach.

Aurélie Reman, Managing Director, Sunny Side of the Doc, says: *"This 2025 edition exceeded all expectations. Guided by our new advisory board, we delivered a forward-thinking programme that mirrors our industry's pivots and the funding challenges we all face. We moved beyond traditional networking to create a platform for reimagining cross-border storytelling and collaboration. In today's shifting media landscape, our documentary community's passion, activism and agility drive everything we do and elevate the Sunny Side of the Doc's international impact. I remain committed to amplifying their authentic voices and fostering new pathways for documentary success across all markets. More than ever, every kind of support is vital to keeping our industry resilient and ambitious."*

This year's edition also brought focus to Brazil, in the context of the France–Brazil Season 2025, celebrating 200 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries. This growing engagement with Brazil was clearly illustrated over the last four days with the launch of the third call for projects of **Global Doc**, marked by the arrival of a new partner: **TV Brasil – Empresa Brasil de Comunicação**. Launched at Sunny Side of the Doc in 2019, this network was established to unite public broadcasters from around the world behind ambitious, collaborative documentary initiatives. Its existing members include **France Télévisions, ZDF, NHK, PBS, CBC, SVT, Channel 4, RAI, ORF, and ABC Australia**, and now, with the addition of **TV Brasil**, the initiative extends its reach into Latin America, reinforcing a shared commitment to international cooperation in public media.

Caroline Behar, Deputy Director of International Co-Productions and Documentary Acquisitions, France Télévisions, and Member of EBU, comments: *"Sunny Side of the Doc offers a unique place for reflection, collaboration and trust. It is the key event for international co-productions. Our international partners are always pleased to come together in La Rochelle, a one-of-a-kind market that combines warm encounters with true ambition for the projects being presented. In today's climate, the Global Doc alliance - which brings together 11 public broadcasters - is more relevant than ever: it enables creative and financial forces to unite and bring ambitious works to life. Sunny Side supports and amplifies this collective momentum, in service of all projects."*

For the first time, the market was articulated around two thematic submits: the **Innovation Summit** and the **Archives Summit**, each offering dedicated sessions and showcases that reflected the evolving practices and ambitions of the documentary industry.

The programme gave pride of place to **creative disruption and new formats**, with highlights including **three** standout **keynotes** from leading figures: **Dawn Porter** (Director at *Trilogy Films*), **David Defendi** (President, *Genaro Studio*), and **Antonia Pellegrino** (Content and Programming Director, *Empresa Brasil de Comunicação*).

Another key moment of this edition was the session **The Big Pivot: Digital-First Documentaries**, which explored the rise of the “digital first” model as YouTube cements its place as a major platform for documentaries. In a context of increasing pressure on commissioning budgets, speakers discussed the opportunities and limitations of this model within an industry undergoing rapid transformation. Moderated by **Damon Wise** (Deadline), the session featured insights from **Alex Hryniewicz** (Little Dot Studios) and **Bryony Hopkins** (Strong Watch Studios).

Programming also featured rich opportunities for industry connections and insights. The new initiative **Meet the Buyers & Commissioners sessions** offered privileged access to top international executives from broadcasters including **Channel 4**, **National Geographic**, **BBC**, and **Globoplay**. The presentation of French and international editorial strategies brought together major players such as **France Télévisions**, **ARTE**, **TF1**, **Canal+**, **RMC Découverte**, **RMC Story**, **M6**, and **NHK**, Japan's public broadcaster. These sessions also featured the **launch of NOVO19**, a brand-new French channel.

The seven pitch sessions, always highly anticipated and a true opportunity for international co-production, gathered a large number of professionals impressed by the quality and boldness of this year's projects. Find the complete list of the **2025 Pitch Sessions winners** below.

New Routes Continue in 2026

Building on the success of this year's edition, 2026 will see the continuation of this shifting edition with the **second edition of the LatAm Content Meeting** (13 to 15 April). The event is sponsored by Spcine and the São Paulo City Hall, through the Municipal Secretariat of Culture and Creative Economy, the Municipal Secretariat of Economic Development and Labor.

This initiative reaffirms Sunny Side's commitment to creating meaningful, long-term bridges between **Europe and new territories**. Strengthening the links between producers and decision-makers across these regions will remain a central objective, with a strong focus on **amplifying emerging voices** and nurturing **bold, cross-cultural storytelling** that reflects today's global realities.

Aurélie Reman, says: *"The collaboration between Sunny Side of the Doc and LatAm Content Meeting, represents a new model for international cooperation. Our pitch sessions have consistently fostered genuine partnerships across continents. For the 2026 in São Paulo, our ambition is clear: to move beyond traditional co-production models and create equitable collaborations rooted in mutual respect and creative exchange. With Europe as a key hub for funding and distribution, and Brazil's institutional commitment through SPCine, we're co-building a platform where Latin American voices don't just participate – they are an integral part of the future of documentary storytelling. We would be delighted to welcome even more of them to Sunny Side of the Doc 2026."*

The **Sunny Academy** stands at the center of this strategic dynamic, establishing itself as an effective tool for skills development and mentorship focused on international market access and navigation. With its successful debut in 2025, featuring our **first cohort of creators selected from international delegations** (Nigeria, Saudi Arabia), **European training programs** (Ex Oriente Series, Frames Festival Residency), **Sunny Side Prizes** (LatAm Content Meeting), and **regional competitions** (Grand Est "Pose ton doc"), we've built the foundation for a transformative support network that bridges local talent with global opportunities. In 2026, the Academy will expand its capacity to guide new voices toward international success and sustainable cross-border storytelling.

The 37th edition of Sunny Side of the Doc will take place from 22 to 25 June 2026 in La Rochelle.

Upcoming Sunny Side of the Doc events:

Pitch sessions @LatAm Content Market, April 13-15, 2026, São Paulo

Sunny Side of the Doc, 37th edition June 22-25, 2026, La Rochelle

View and download the best photos from the Sunny Side of the Doc 2025 album [HERE](#)

Full album available [HERE](#)

Visit the [press area](#) for more information on the past edition.

Award Winners | Pitch Sessions

Best Science Pitch | Sponsored by ZDF Studios

Heart, produced by Millstream Productions (Australia), Green Marble Productions (Australia) and directed by Gloor ALANEO.

Best New Voices Pitch | Sponsored by Al Jazeera Documentary Channel & AJB DOC Film Festival

Restless Farewell, produced by Shanghai Media Group (China) and directed by Nan YANG and Peiyun HE.

Best Current Affairs & Investigation Pitch | Sponsored by RTBF

In Front of Us, produced by Bars Media (Armenia), Associate Directors (Belgium) and directed by Inna SAHAKYAN.

Best Impact Campaigns Pitch

Mama, produced by Eterea (Ecuador) and directed by Ana Cristina BENÍTEZ.

Best Arts & Entertainment Pitch

Leonard Cohen: behind the iron curtain, produced by Nomad Films Inc. (Canada), Fireglory Pictures GmbH (Germany), Silver Frame (Poland) and directed by Eric BEDNARSKI.

Best Nature & Environment Pitch | Sponsored by Love Nature & Blue Ant Studios

Kingdom of the Crocodile produced by Wild Pacific Media (Australia) and directed by Nick ROBINSON.

Best History Pitch | Sponsored by PBS Distribution

The Letelier File, produced by La Ventana Cine (Chile) and directed by Rafael VALDEAVELLANO, Carola FUENTES

Award Winners | Special Prizes

AIDC Award

Taalim, produced by Paper Planes Pictures Pvt Ltd. (India) and directed by Vaibhav JADHAV.

Pitch the Doc Award

Taalim, produced by Paper Planes Pictures Pvt Ltd. (India) and directed by Vaibhav JADHAV.

Student Choice Award

The Other Gaza, produced by Sard Films Ab (Sweden) and directed by Wafa JAMIL ESPVALL.

IMZ Award

Leonard Cohen: behind the iron curtain, produced by Nomad Films Inc. (Canada), Fireglory Pictures GmbH (Germany), Silver Frame (Poland) and directed by Eric BEDNARSKI.

The Roch Bozino Engagement Award

In Front of Us, produced by Bars Media (Armenia), Associate Directors (Belgium) and directed by Inna SAHAKYAN.

AJD Industry Days Award

Tutankhamen, Royal Garden: Replanted, produced by Masr Media Production (Egypt), Soura (United States of America) and directed by Ahmed HUSSEIN.

BIM Award

Mama, produced by Eterea (Ecuador) and directed by Ana Cristina BENÍTEZ.

Institute of Documentary Film Award

In Front of Us, produced by Bars Media (Armenia), Associate Directors (Belgium) and directed by Inna SAHAKYAN.

DocEdge Award

Restless Farewell, produced by Shanghai Media Group (China) and directed by Nan YANG and Peiyun HE.

Movies That Matter Award

Miss Albinos, produced by Petites Poupees Production (France) and directed by Cynthia PINET.

Lionel Guenoun Prize by Will Production

The Letelier File, produced by La Ventana Cine (Chile) and directed by Rafael VALDEAVELLANO, Carola FUENTES

The XRoam Immersive Award

Zefar, produced by L'Equipe (Canada) and directed by Sara NACER, Colas WOHLAERT.

The End Award

The Other Gaza, produced by Sard Films Ab (Sweden) and directed by Wafa JAMIL ESPVALL.

Notes to editors:

[**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 2,000+ participants from 60 countries through a mix of high-level pitching sessions, panels on the latest industry trends and an exhibition hall.

The 37th Sunny Side of the Doc will take place in La Rochelle from June 22-25, 2026.

Doc Services, the organiser of Sunny side of the Doc, is a member of 1% for the Planet as well as of the SDG Media Compact.

Press Contact:
FAMA VOLAT
Philippe Le Gall
[**plegall@fama-volat.com**](mailto:plegall@fama-volat.com)
+33 (0)6 62 38 20 56