



PRESS RELEASE

**SUNNY SIDE OF THE DOC
REVEALS ITS 2025 OFFICIAL SELECTION**
New Voices, New Visions for Storytelling the World



*© Children of Honey – Directed by Jigar GANATRA
Produced by Storyboard Studios (United Kingdom), African School of Storytelling (Tanzania)*

La Rochelle, 6 May 2025 – [Sunny Side of the Doc](#), the international community and marketplace dedicated to linear and non-linear documentaries, today reveals the **42 projects that make up the official selection for its 36th edition** (23–26 June 2025, La Rochelle, France).

The international co-production stakes are high at the eagerly anticipated pitch sessions. These sessions will take place during the marketplace in front of more than **250 high-level international decision-makers**, including major broadcasters, streamers, foundations, distributors, buyers and other investors looking for stories with the biggest impact.

Launched last December, this year's call for projects once again mobilised the international community, with **328 documentary submissions** – a stable figure for the third consecutive year, following the strong rebound in 2022 – **from 56 countries, including 15 new countries** (vs. 2024) such as Algeria, DRC, Ethiopia, Morocco, or Colombia. Another notable trend is the growing emergence of new talent: since the creation of the “New Voices” category in 2023, half of all submissions have been first or second films, and the category now accounts for 24% of submissions. It is also worth noting that over **50% of the projects selected are produced by women**.

"This 2025 selection does more than simply reflect the state of global documentary filmmaking – it drives its transformations, responds to broadcasters' expectations, and stands out through its eclecticism" explains Aurélie Reman, managing director of Sunny Side of the Doc. "Facing new coproduction dynamics, the 42 selected projects from 22 different countries offer a remarkable panorama of pitches that deeply resonate with our times – while exploring bold narrative formats. In line with our theme 'New Routes to Storytelling', I am thrilled to showcase these authentic stories that combine truth, creativity, and financial feasibility, while highlighting on the international stage the talents who have the capacity to shape a more inclusive and sustainable future for our industry."

Over four days in June, the **42 selected projects** will have the privilege of competing for the Best Pitch Prize. The projects will be pitched across seven thematic sessions, supported by key industry partners including PBS Distribution, Blue Ant Media & Love Nature, RTBF, Al Jazeera Documentary & AJB DOC, and ZDF Studios. Each selected project receives a cash reward based on the available sponsorship.

All project holders will receive support throughout the process, ranging from mentoring with industry experts to exclusive access to a qualified and diverse professional audience. In this way, all efforts are made to increase and foster fruitful financial and creative co-production opportunities for these talents of tomorrow.

In parallel, Sunny Side of the Doc is also announcing the **six selected projects** for the **Sunny Innovation Lab**, a unique training programme dedicated to non-linear documentary formats such as podcasts, VR, AR, immersive installations, AI, and video games. The programme offers tailored mentoring, expert insights, and personalised guidance to help creators refine their projects and prepare for international exposure.

Winners in each category will be announced the day after their pitch session, during the daily **Awards Café** in the Meeting Area – a new opportunity for press and participants to connect with the project leaders in a dedicated and convivial setting.

On the following pages, discover the 42 projects in the #SSD25 official selection as well as the 6 Sunny Innovation Lab projects

For more information on Sunny Side of the Doc 2025 and media accreditation requests, [visit our online Press Room](#) and consult the 36th edition Press File.

[#SSD25 Media Kit](#)

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 2,200+ 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 organiser of Sunny side of the Doc, is a member of 1% for the Planet.

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#SSD25 OFFICIAL SELECTION

CURRENT AFFAIRS & INVESTIGATION



GREENLAND, THE ICY ELDORADO

Produced by: TEMPS NOIR (France)

Directed by: Jean-Yves CAUCHARD, Vivien MELTZ

Logline: Greenland has become a major geopolitical issue between the United States, Europe, Russia, and China due to its geographical location and mineral resources. Its geopolitical destiny will have significant ecological consequences for the entire planet. What choice will the people of Greenland make?



IN FRONT OF US

Produced by: BARS MEDIA (Armenia), ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS (Belgium)

Directed by: Inna SAHAKYAN

Logline: When Lala's sister is murdered by a genocidal regime, an experienced international judge asks her to become the key witness in a grueling criminal case. Two women from different worlds unite to bring the perpetrators before the International Criminal Court.



MATHARE FATHERS

Produced by: NORDIC EYE PRODUCTIONS (Sweden), MORGANE PRODUCTION (France)

Directed by: Mattias GROSIN, Iyanu OMOBOYE

Logline: Mathare Fathers is a film about three single fathers and their children in the Mathare shantytown of Nairobi, striving to change their fate against all odds. Corrupt police, poverty, and the ever-present temptation to revert to old habits lurk around every corner, yet the dream of a better life remains steadfast.



POINT OF NO RETURN: ISRAEL AT THE CROSSROADS OF DEMOCRACY

Produced by: CORNERS (Israel), YAMI 2 (France), TAL INBAR (Israel)

Directed by: Tal INBAR, Amit FARBMAN

Logline: As Israel teeters on the edge of authoritarianism, former IDF General Yair Golan risks everything to challenge Netanyahu's corrupt rule. Facing persecution and threats, he becomes a symbol of resistance, fighting for democracy, a two-state solution, and an end to the war—both with the Palestinians and within Israeli society.



WOMEN AND WAR

Produced by: TELEMAR (Poland)

Directed by: Elwira NIEWIERA, Piotr ROSOŁOWSKI

Logline: Three Ukrainian women — Yulia, Irina, and Olena — who survived captivity, torture, and sexual violence, undergo therapy for war trauma. Through their courageous struggle to heal, the film shows a powerful female perspective on resilience, inner strength, and the determination to reclaim their lives from the lasting scars of war.



HOMELAND SECURITY

Produced by: ENERO FILMS (Spain)

Directed by: Victor LUENGO, Virginia DIAZ

Logline: In Europe, the migration crisis is no longer a humanitarian issue, but a military one. The world knows who the losers are in this crisis, but... do we know who the winners are?

NATURE & ENVIRONMENT



ELERAI OUR LAND

Produced by: WILDLIFEDIRECT (Kenya)

Directed by: Paula KAHUMBU

Logline: The Maasai have lived in harmony with wildlife for generations. But modern pressures threaten their lands and traditions. Young leader Marapash fights to protect his ancestral home as conflict grows, risking the future of the Maasai people and the elephants they live alongside.



KINGDOM OF THE CROCODILE

Produced by: WILD PACIFIC MEDIA (Australia)

Directed by: Nick ROBINSON

Logline: Over the course of a year on a wild Australian river, three saltwater crocodiles battle to endure the extreme seasons, protect their young and dominate a kingdom of their own. This high-drama natural history series offers a never-before-seen window into the hidden lives of the world's largest reptile.



ON THE WAY

Produced by: KIJORA FILM (Poland), BELLOTA FILMS (France), CINEDOKKE (Switzerland)

Directed by: Natalia DOŁGOWSKA

Logline: In the serene beauty of Tatra mountains, an asphalt road leads to a picture-perfect but overcrowded lake. Everyday thousands of tourists walk the same narrow path as if on a pilgrimage. How far away can you be from nature by trying to be in the middle of it?

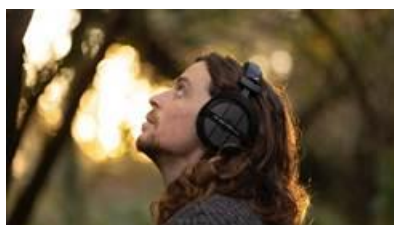


SOUTH POLE EXPLORERS

Produced by: OXITOCINE (Chile)

Directed by: Jota LOYOLA

Logline: The South Pole is the most breathtaking, exotic, and mysterious place on the planet. Protecting it must be humanity's top priority to navigate the profound changes our planet is undergoing. Following expeditions by international teams of researchers, environmental activists, and explorers, this series uncovers the frontlines of climate research.



WHITETHROAT

Produced by: TRUE FILMS (Ireland)

Directed by: Kathleen HARRIS

Logline: Joined by his young family, extraordinary ornithologist Seán Ronayne tracks the migration of Ireland's whitethroat across Europe and North Africa, an epic journey that reveals just how interconnected we all are.



RISE FROM THE ASHES

Produced by: ROTATING PLANET PRODUCTIONS (Canada)

Directed by: Ari A. COHEN

Logline: As forest fires become bigger, hotter and more frequent, we investigate the loss, harrowing tales of survival and incredible resiliency of wildlife in the Boreal Forest.

SCIENCE

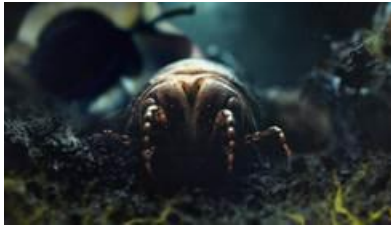


CAN WE STOP THE ICE? *(Working Title)*

Produced by: WINDFALL FILMS (United Kingdom), PBS/WGBH/NOVA (United States of America)

Directed by: Jamie LOCHEAD

Logline: Scientists venture onto the ice in the Arctic and Antarctica – including to the infamous Thwaites "Doomsday" Glacier – to investigate what, if anything, can be done to stop polar ice sheets from collapsing and catastrophically rising sea levels around the globe.



COMPOST, THE HIDDEN TREASURE OF OUR WASTE

Produced by: CAPA PRESSE (France)

Directed by: Guilhem TOUZERY

Logline: Discover a gangrenous landscape of rot inhabited by giant, nightmarish monsters. Woodlice, centipedes, earwigs, pseudo scorpions, spiders, ants, slugs and vast armies of bacteria and fungi, multiplying at frenetic speeds, devouring everything in their path. But this repugnant, rancid world is also the scene of a fascinating transformation.



HEART

Produced by: MILLSTREAM PRODUCTIONS, GREEN MARBLE PRODUCTIONS (Australia)

Directed by: Gloor ALANEO

Logline: HEART is a premium international science documentary available as 1x90' and 1x52' versions. With exclusive access, HEART follows one of the most challenging and far-reaching medical breakthroughs of all time. An intensely human drama that charts the decades long science quest to create something seemingly impossible...

...A MACHINE HEART.



THE ALEXANDRIA LIGHTHOUSE: HUMANITY'S FIRST SKYSCRAPER

Produced by: GEDEON PROGRAMMES (France)

Directed by: Laurence THIRIAT

Logline: In Spring 2025, the PHAROS Project will gather in the harbour of Alexandria scientists, archeologists and researchers, to unravel the last secrets of the iconic lighthouse. Dassault Systeme joins the project providing scientists with the most accurate 3D reconstruction of the monument to his day, thanks to its latest modeling softwares powered AI.



TUTANKHAMEN, ROYAL GARDEN: REPLANTED

Produced by: MASR MEDIA PRODUCTION (Egypt), SOURA (United States of America)

Directed by: Ahmed HUSSEIN

Logline: Follow the exciting journey of reviving millennia-old seeds from Tutankhamen's 'trash' boxes found in his tomb into a real royal garden, through an intriguing combination of science, art and history.



UNVEILING THE COSMOS

Produced by: CABALA PRODUCCIONES (Chile), CABALA FILMS SL (Spain), HR (Germany), BILDERFEST GMBH (Germany)

Directed by: Gonzalo ARGANDONA

Logline: Beginning in September 2025, the Vera C. Rubin Observatory will map the entire night sky at an unprecedented speed, capturing changes nearly in real-time. Astronomers around the globe expect discoveries about supernovae, dark matter, and dark energy. Will the new telescope challenge or even transform our understanding of the cosmos?

HISTORY



ATOMIC PARADISE

Produced by: SAM CONTENT (Australia)

Directed by: John HARVEY

Logline: Atomic Paradise is a powerful theatrical documentary experience using archive and testimony which reframes the atomic bomb testing program of the Pacific region through a First Nations lens in a new and prophetic light.



THIS IS HOW I REMEMBER IT

Produced by: HEYMANN BROTHERS FILMS (Israel)

Directed by: Tomer HEYMANN, Nadan PINES

Logline: An immersive and experimental virtual journey into the life of 98-year-old Auschwitz survivor, Shimon Rothschild.



NOVEMBER 13: THESE VOICES THAT UNITE US

Produced by: INA (France)

Directed by: Valérie MANNS

Logline: Based on exclusive testimonies from the victims of the November 13 attacks, this film captures the intimate shock they endured and their path to rebuilding their lives a decade later. By intertwining these individual accounts, this choral narrative will become the foundation of the collective memory of the 2015 attacks.

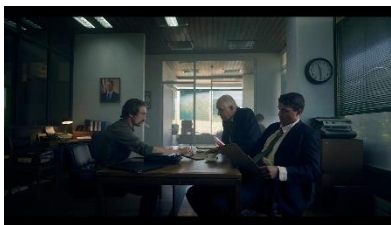


THE LAST DAYS OF KABUL

Produced by: LOOKSfilm (Germany)

Directed by: Lucio MOLLICA, Bence MÁTÉ

Logline: Twenty years in the life of a torn nation. A story of war, democracy and broken promises.
Why was Afghanistan lost?



THE LETELIER FILE

Produced by: LA VENTANA CINE (Chile)

Directed by: Rafael VALDEAVELLANO, Carola FUENTES

Logline: The Letelier File unveils the hidden network of spies, secret agents, and covert operations behind the explosive 1976 car-bomb assassination of Chilean diplomat Orlando Letelier in Washington D.C.'s Embassy Row—exposing an international diplomatic scandal whose full story emerges today, as the 50th-anniversary approaches.



GERALD BULL: TRUTH IS A WEAPON

Produced by: PICBOIS PRODUCTIONS (Canada)

Directed by: Mathieu FOURNIER

Logline: TRUTH IS A WEAPON takes a critical look at the military industry, telling the story of gun inventor Gerald Bull. Shunned for illegal arms sales, the controversial engineer was murdered in 1990. For the first time, his family shares their personal archives, giving us access to his side of the story.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



BETTER THAN GOLD

Produced by: KRATER FILMS (Belgium), DOKMOBILE (Switzerland), TOMTIT FILM (Netherlands), NEED PRODUCTIONS (Belgium)

Directed by: Leen MICHELIS

Logline: Our main character is a matchbox—a priceless piece of art. Knowing this, would you burn it? It begs for it. We explore the art market's backstage, from steel vaults to cold wallets, speaking to artists, collectors, and even the art itself about the tensions this desire creates. We listen, wonder, and wait—until someone strikes the match.



GHETTO CLASSIC

Produced by: DYNAMO FILM (Poland), WKND (Spain)

Directed by: Katia PRIWIEZIENCW

Logline: In Nairobi's biggest slum, fifteen-year-old James fights for a career in ballet, trained by Joanna — a retired Polish ballerina at the Ghetto Classics foundation. Guided by a determined mentor, he battles impossible odds as we follow him across continents – from Africa to USA, Europe and Canada. A story of harsh reality and beauty of art.



KING ANNIE

Produced by: INDIE FILM BERGEN (Norway), POLYGRAF (Finland)

Directed by: Benjamin Garcia LANGELAND

Logline: Annie, a queer small town person moves to the big city and finds a newly formed Drag house. Drag Queens rule the stage, and Annie's Rock and Roll-Drag King-Alter Ego; Maple Thorpe, will have to challenge the culture in order to conquer the World of Drag.



LEONARD COHEN: BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

Produced by: NOMAD FILMS INC. (Canada), FIREGLORY PICTURES GMBH (Germany), SILVER FRAME (Poland)

Directed by: Eric BEDNARSKI

Logline: A feature-length documentary film about legendary singer and poet Leonard Cohen's ground-breaking tour of Poland in 1985, how his music inspired a generation of Poles struggling to end the rule of the Soviet Union, and all told through never-before-seen stock footage and unparalleled access to those who were there.



LIFE THROUGH A LENS

Produced by: THE MOTOR MOVING PICTURES (Sweden)

Directed by: Andreas EIDHAGEN

Logline: Life Through a Lens unravels the power of a single image to shape lives and sway politics for decades, while unveiling the hidden truths behind Lennart Nilsson's iconic photographs—delving into the delicate balance of art, science, and the ethical dilemmas that bind them.



THE QUIET ONE

Produced by: RISE AND SHINE FILMS (PTY) LTD. (South Africa), FLOR (United States of America)

Directed by: Meg RICKARDS

Logline: In post-apartheid South Africa, Oscar Gutierrez—a Guatemalan-born photojournalist—finds purpose and presence in bearing witness to a nation's rebirth, even as the silent ache for Hawke, the son he left behind in America, guides him on a parallel journey through exile, memory, and longing for reconnection and belonging.

IMPACT CAMPAIGNS



CHESS BEHIND BARS

Produced by: LA BELLE FILM GMBH (Switzerland), FOLK FILM (Norway), DIRK MANTHEY FILM (Germany), BASALT FILM (Netherlands)

Directed by: Ivo ZEN

Logline: Through the game of chess, we are introduced to various inmates and prisons around the globe who compete nationally and internationally. With each move, they search for strategies to move beyond their past and recapture their future.



CHILDREN OF HONEY

Produced by: STORYBOARD STUDIOS (United-Kingdom), AFRICAN SCHOOL OF STORYTELLING (AFRISOS) (Tanzania)

Directed by: Jigar GANATRA

Logline: Three young friends, deeply connected to nature, must redefine their identity as their traditional way of life is pushed to the brink. A story told by the Hadzabe hunter-gatherers themselves, will immerse us in a pivotal moment of their 50.000 year old history at a crossroads between old and new.



INVISIBLE BIRDS

Produced by: CADENZA FILMS, O PAR, CAPURI (Brazil)

Directed by: Rafael ANDREONI, Alberto ALVARES

Logline: Invisible Birds is a cinematic, poetic and anthropological journey, deep into the indigenous languages of Brazil. Indigenous stories are living beings, like invisible birds, that are felt through their words, chants and ancestral customs – passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years – and have the power to shape our future.



MAMA

Produced by: ETEREA S.A.S. (Ecuador)

Directed by: Ana Cristina BENÍTEZ

Logline: At 36, Ana faces advanced breast cancer, finding refuge in her camera and family archive as she reflects on healing beyond the body.



MISS ALBINOS

Produced by: PETITES POUPEES PRODUCTION (France)

Directed by: Cynthia PINET

Logline: From exclusion to empowerment: Dive into the first Miss Albino contest in the DRC.



QUEENS OF THE WATER

Produced by: FRAME 22 HUB DE CONTEÚDOS (Brazil)

Directed by: Juliano DE PAULA SANTOS

Logline: Water from a female perspective. In Brazil, home to the largest freshwater reserve, the series explores the connection of Indigenous, quilombola, executive, historian, and scientist women. Traditionally key figures in water-related matters, yet silenced in major decisions. With a sensitive narrative, it balances technology, ancestry, and the poetry.

NEW VOICES



MICHAEL'S GOT TALENT

Produced by: JUSTMARIA, LA BANDITA (Italy)

Directed by: Danny BIANCARDI

Logline: When Italy tries to kick out its hottest new rock star, Michael Spaghetti fires back with electrifying music, unbreakable friendships, and a dream that refuses to be confined by any border.



RESTLESS FAREWELL

Produced by: SHANGAI MEDIA GROUP (China)

Directed by: Nan YANG, Peiyun HE

Logline: Third-generation migrant workers, who were left out of the system, seek a meager salary and fragile friendships. Gen-Z developed their self-awareness on the assembly line and TikTok, approaching the end of their youth. Will they escape from their parents' fate?



TAALIM

Produced by: PAPER PLANES PICTURES Pvt Ltd (India)

Directed by: Vaibhav JADHAV

Logline: In a traditional Indian wrestling academy, an 18-year-old trainee struggles under the weight of his uncle's political ambitions and his guru's rigid ideals of masculinity, as unspoken tensions and quiet desires begin to unsettle the very world he is meant to conform to.



HEIRS OF NO REGRET

Produced by: RIZOMAFILM (Italy), BARUU COLLECTIVE (Kenya), WINDMILL FILM (Netherlands), POPCULT (Italy)

Directed by: Saitabao KAIYARE

Logline: In Nairobi's slums, Shabu Mwangi and the Wajukuu Arts Collective use art to confront corruption, inequality, and generational trauma. As they prepare for global exhibitions and build a future beyond their origins, their journey proves that creativity can ignite change and transform communities.



THE SACRED FEMININE: STORY OF A BETRAYAL

Produced by: URBAIA PRODUCTIONS (France)

Directed by: Nadege JUSTINIANI

Logline: The documentary follows journalist Astrig Agopian as she explores the rising neo-spiritual movement of the "sacred feminine." Through retreats and rituals, she uncovers a world promising women power and healing. Her investigation reveals medical, financial, and psychological abuses, analyzed by experts and victims testimonies.



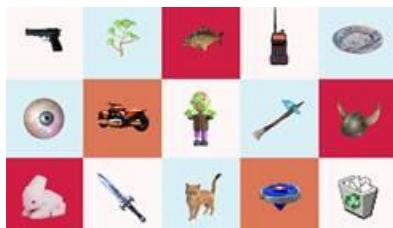
THE OTHER GAZA

Produced by: SARD FILMS AB (Sweden)

Directed by: Wafa Jamil ESPVALL

Logline: An exiled Gazan filmmaker captures her family's fight for survival during genocide, blending intimate home footage with searing war diaries—a testament to Palestinian resilience.

SUNNY INNOVATION LAB



A SANCTUARY OF STUFF

Directed by: Eszter VÁRHIDI, Francesca TREMULO (Danmark, Italy, Hungary)

Experience: Interactive video game

Logline: Characters, vehicles, furniture. Hats, food, street trash cans. Rusty electrical boxes. Guns. A lot of guns. Something finally catches your eye. A digestive system. You don't know it yet, but it'll become the centerpiece of your next "I'll for real finish this one" project.



BECOMING LUCIEN

Creative Studio: MORITURI (France)

Directed by: Lucien PIN

Experience: VR

Logline: A 7-year-old child finds themselves trapped in a void, struggling with an identity that feels wrong. Their future self, twenty years ahead, reaches out through the darkness, guiding them toward understanding and promising a future of transformation—a new name, body, and voice. This is the story of how I became Lucien.



BURN THEM ALL!

Creative Studio: COURT-JUS PRODUCTION (France)

Directed by: Frederic MONTEIL

Experience: Immersive experience

Logline: Through the eyes of Marie, an ordinary woman accused of witchcraft during the Renaissance, experience the injustice, fear and violence of a rigged trial leading to the stake! A drama that crosses time to reveal a chilling truth: even today, women are persecuted and killed in the name of alleged witchcraft.



CHANNELERS

Creative Studio: MONSTER MIND STUDIO (Poland)

Directed by: Jakub WROBLEWSKI

Experience: VR

Logline: Channelers is a VR journey into mysterious phenomena that emerged in Poland between 1970's and 1980's. The user navigates through a maze-like brutalist architecture where concrete corridors of Soviet-era apartment blocks become portals to dreamlike encounters and supernatural events.



SEFAR

Creative Studio: L'ÉQUIPAGE (Canada)

Directed by: Sara NACER

Experience: VR

Logline: In the heart of the Sahara, travelers embark on a VR odyssey through Séfar, the world's largest troglodyte city, where ancient frescoes awaken at their touch. Guided by a Tuareg nomad, they unravel the mysteries of a lost civilization, as colossal figures emerge from stone and the desert whispers its forgotten secrets.



TALES OF EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN

Produced by: SYNAESTHETICA (Germany)

Directed by: Bashira CABBARA, Benedict MIROW

Experience: VR/AR

Logline: A VR experience based on 3 stories from the bestseller book "Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls. Tales of Extraordinary Women." Playful, interactive VR for kids, youths and adults, in combination with 180°-documentaries on the impact of the heroines, that still resonate in today's society.