

**IMPACT IS A DESTINATION.
DISTRIBUTION IS THE MAP.**

Impact
Distribution
Lab



Festivals, Markets and Awards: How to Build the Strategy for the Impactful Film

SPEAKERS

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Regular documentary markets

- ↗ Purpose: to network, to find partners, financing, distributors, festival programmers
- ↗ Relevant at all stages: development, production, post-production
- ↗ Similar submission forms
- ↗ Networking style: more direct; same professional circles

Regular documentary markets

Always talk about your Impact Campaign:
editors, distributors, and sales agents need
to know you're planning one.

VISIBILITY

+ COORDINATION



While in Production

Markets and professional events for impact



PRODUCER MARIAM DAVTYAN AND FILMMAKER INNA SAHAKYAN, PITCHING THEIR IMPACT CAMPAIGN FOR THEIR FILM IN PRODUCTION "IN FRONT OF US".



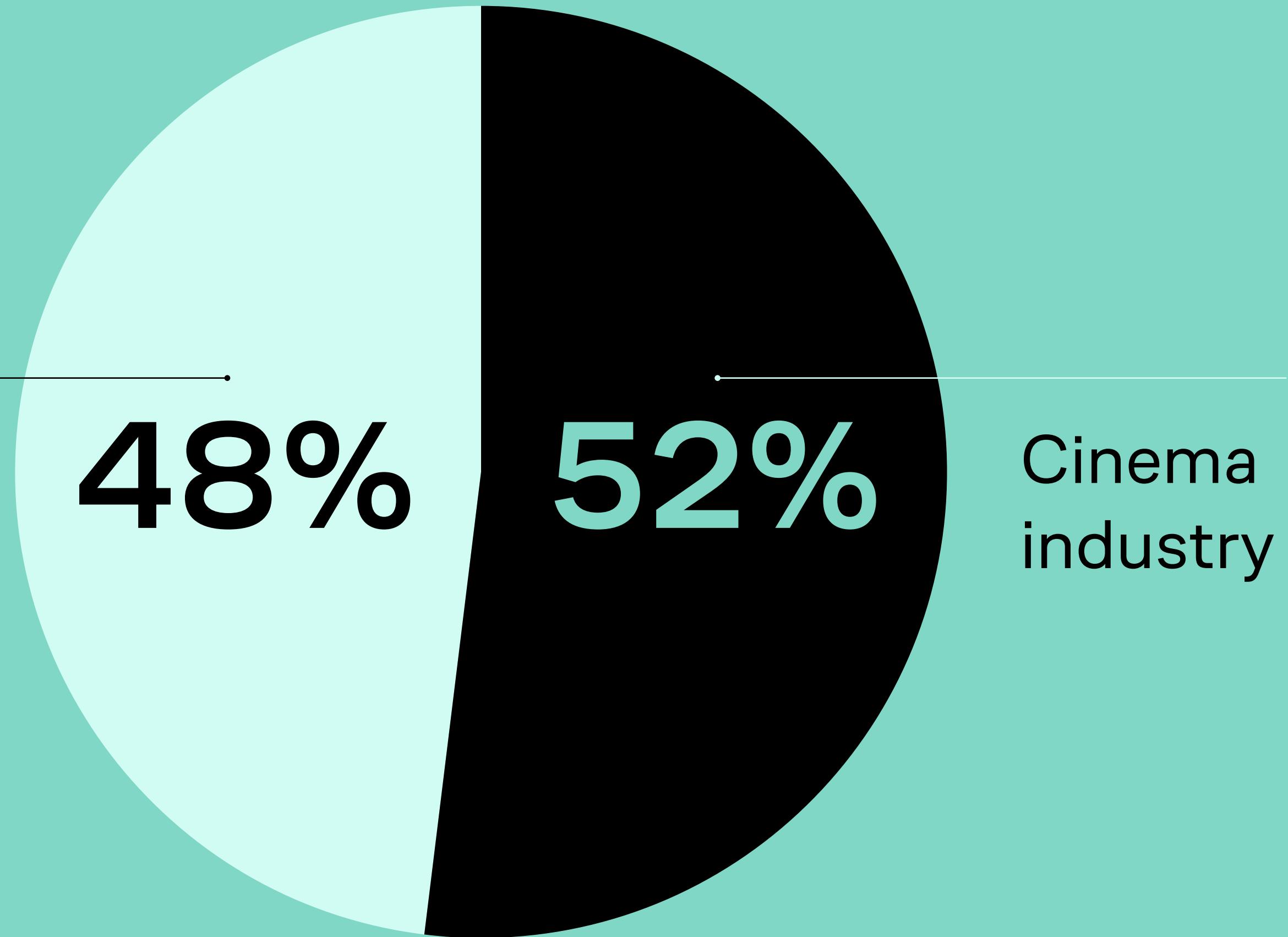
© PIERRE VAN DEN ELSEN / VIA INSTAGRAM (@BARS_MEDIA_STUDIO)

Similar on the surface... but fundamentally different



FIFDH Audience 2024

NGOs,
international
organizations,
philanthropies,
foundations,
etc.

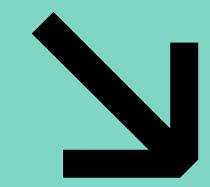


Professional events, focused on impact

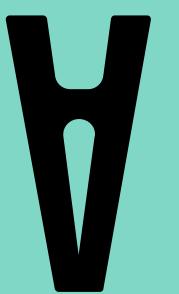
- Fewer in number
- Usually in the frame of a festival
- Focus: impact partnerships, financing for impact
- Best suited for production or post-production stages
- Specific submission forms
- Network: is very different

What You Should Be Ready to Share

- ① What is your film's message?
- ② What should the audience take away?
- ③ What do you want the audience to do?
- ④ What change do you hope your film will create?



**When should you apply for
professional impact events?**



Submission form

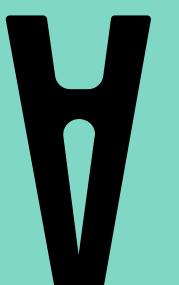
Impact Application Checklist and Guidelines

FILM AND TEAM INFO

- + Logline
- + Story Summary
- + Distribution Plans
- + Key Creative Personnel

IMPACT PLANS

- + Issue Areas
- + Impact Goals
- + Anticipated Challenges
- + Audience
- + Timeline and Activities
- + Partners
- + Accountability and Community care
- + Safety
- + Learning and Insights



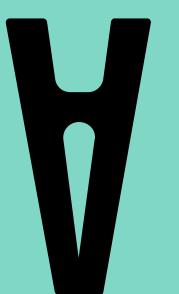
Questions to be ready to answer

- ↗ Why are you the right person to tell this story?
- ↗ What is your relationship with your participants / community?
- ↗ Will the community be at risk? How can you mitigate that?
- ↗ What is your responsibility toward the community you're filming?

FIFDH Impact Days



In 2019 **Laura Longobardi** initiated the Impact Days in the framework of the FIFDH in Geneva. The FIFDH Impact Days is the first industry event entirely dedicated to impact.



Impact Days Main Goals

- ① Promote impact production

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Impact Days Main Goals

②

Build partnerships and secure financing for impact campaigns



ONE ON ONE MEETINGS DURING FIFDH IMPACT DAYS 2025.

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Impact Days Main Goals

③

Promote impact documentaries



PITCHING SESSION AT FIFDH IMPACT DAYS 2025.

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Impact Days Main Goals

④

Foster community building

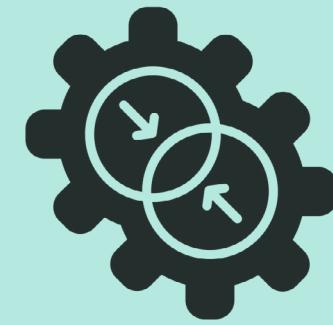


AWARDS CEREMONY AND FAREWELL PARTY AT FIFDH IMPACT DAYS 2025

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Things to Consider

COMBINE



In an ideal world: combine both markets and impact events.

RESEARCH



Do your research: not all markets are the same.

PLAN



Timing: When is it best to apply to each market or event, and how much time can you dedicate to preparing for them?

BUDGET



Make a budget.



Research

Check the websites of the markets and festivals:

- ↗ What projects did they include in previous editions?
- ↗ What narrative styles do they usually prefer?
- ↗ What are the budgets of the projects they select?

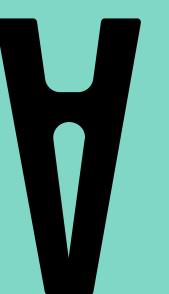
Research

Visions du Réel

They usually pick more artistic, exploratory, poetic documentaries.

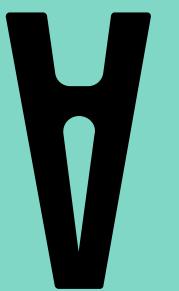
Sunny Side of the Doc

They are more television-oriented.





If your project was not selected, consider going as an observer anyway



Your Impactful Film Is Ready

Festivals



SCREENING AT FIFDH 2024.

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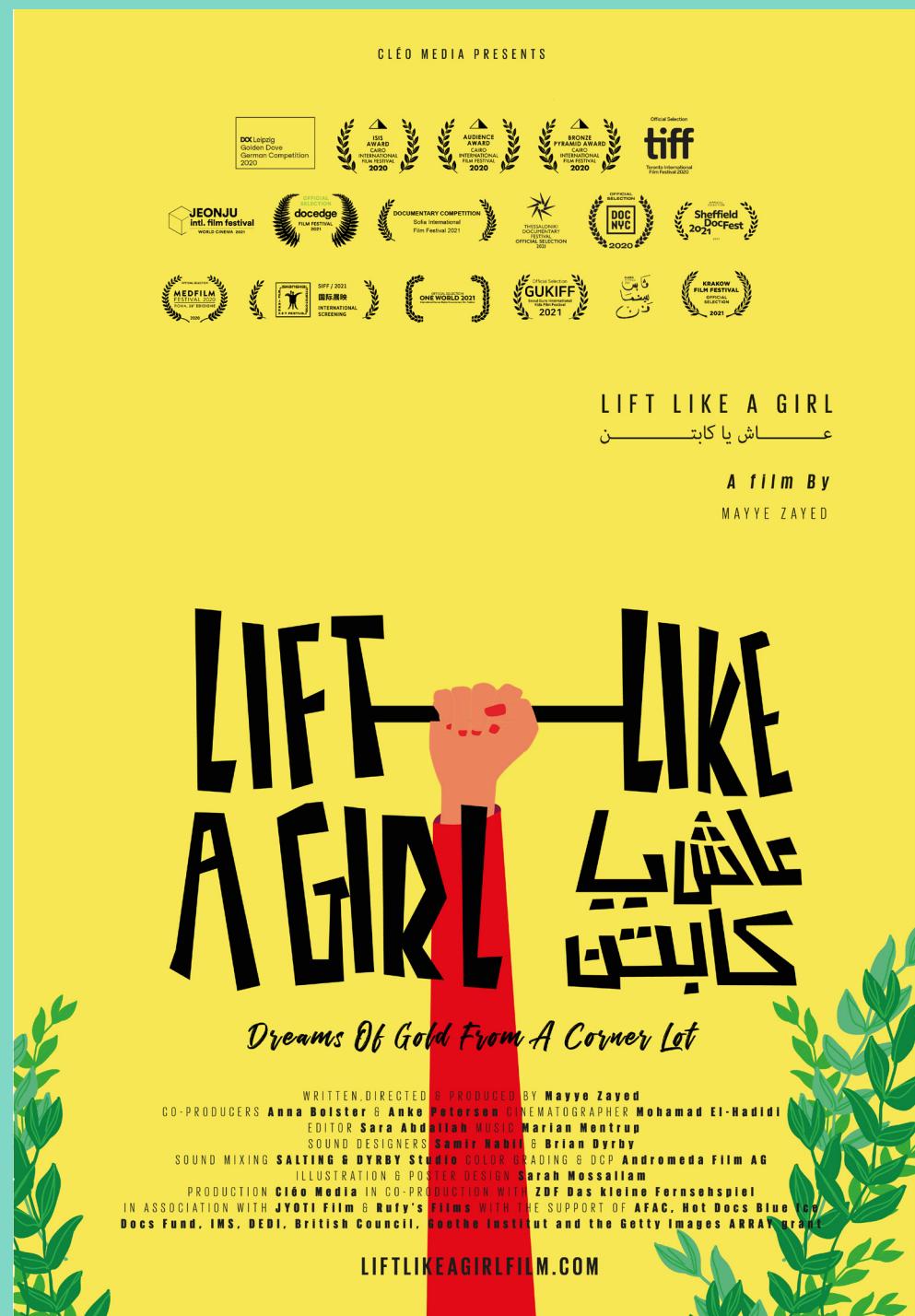
What is my festival strategy meant to accomplish?

- ① Build recognition, press attention, and visibility for the film
- ② Attract potential distributors or sales agents
- ③ Network with fellow filmmakers and industry professionals
- ④ Reach local communities or specific target audiences
- ⑤ Connect with organizations related to the film's themes
- ⑥ Encourage discussion, debate, and engagement around the subject of the film

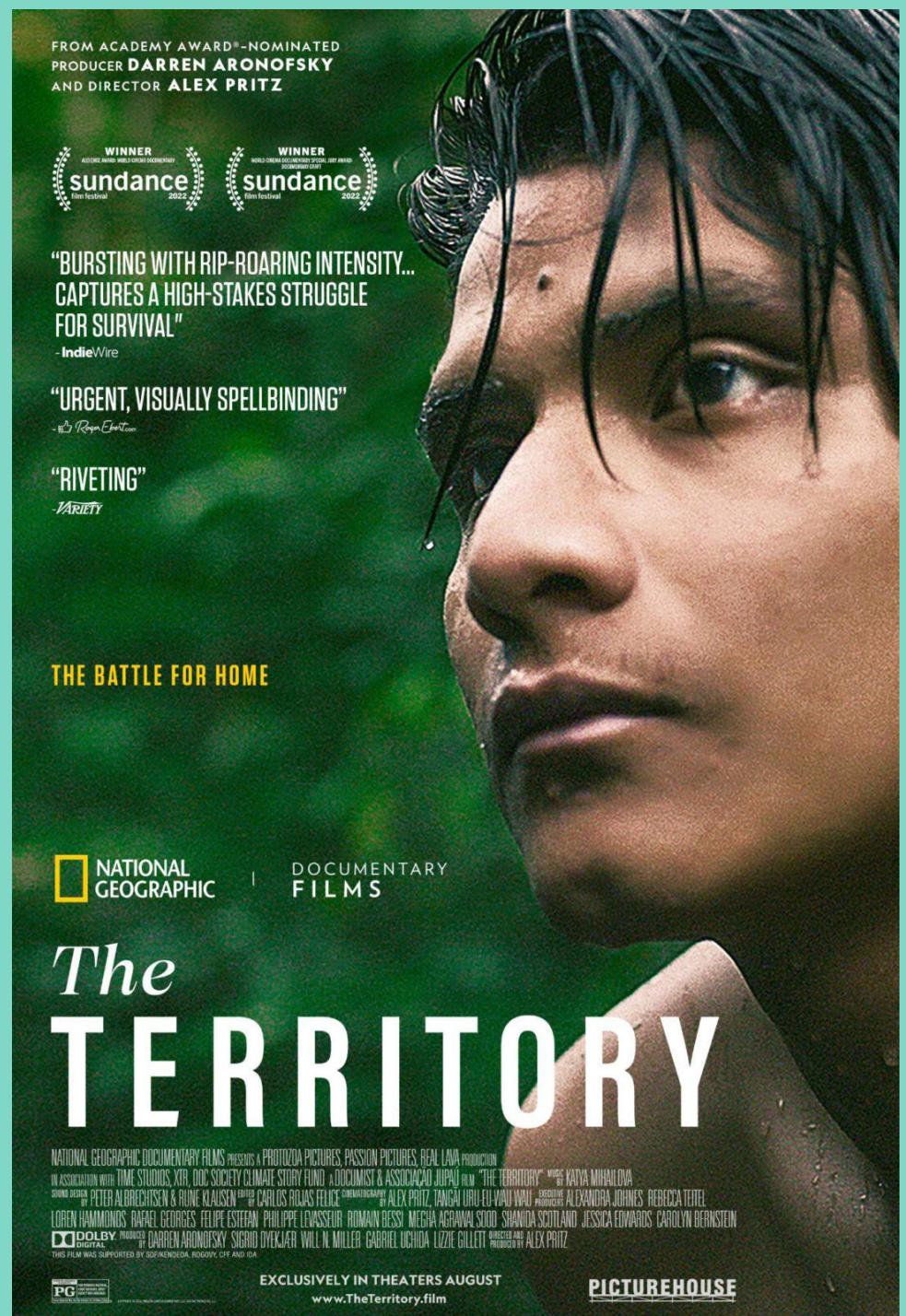


Example 1: A Broad Strategy

Recognition, press and visibility + implementation of some of your impact campaign goals.

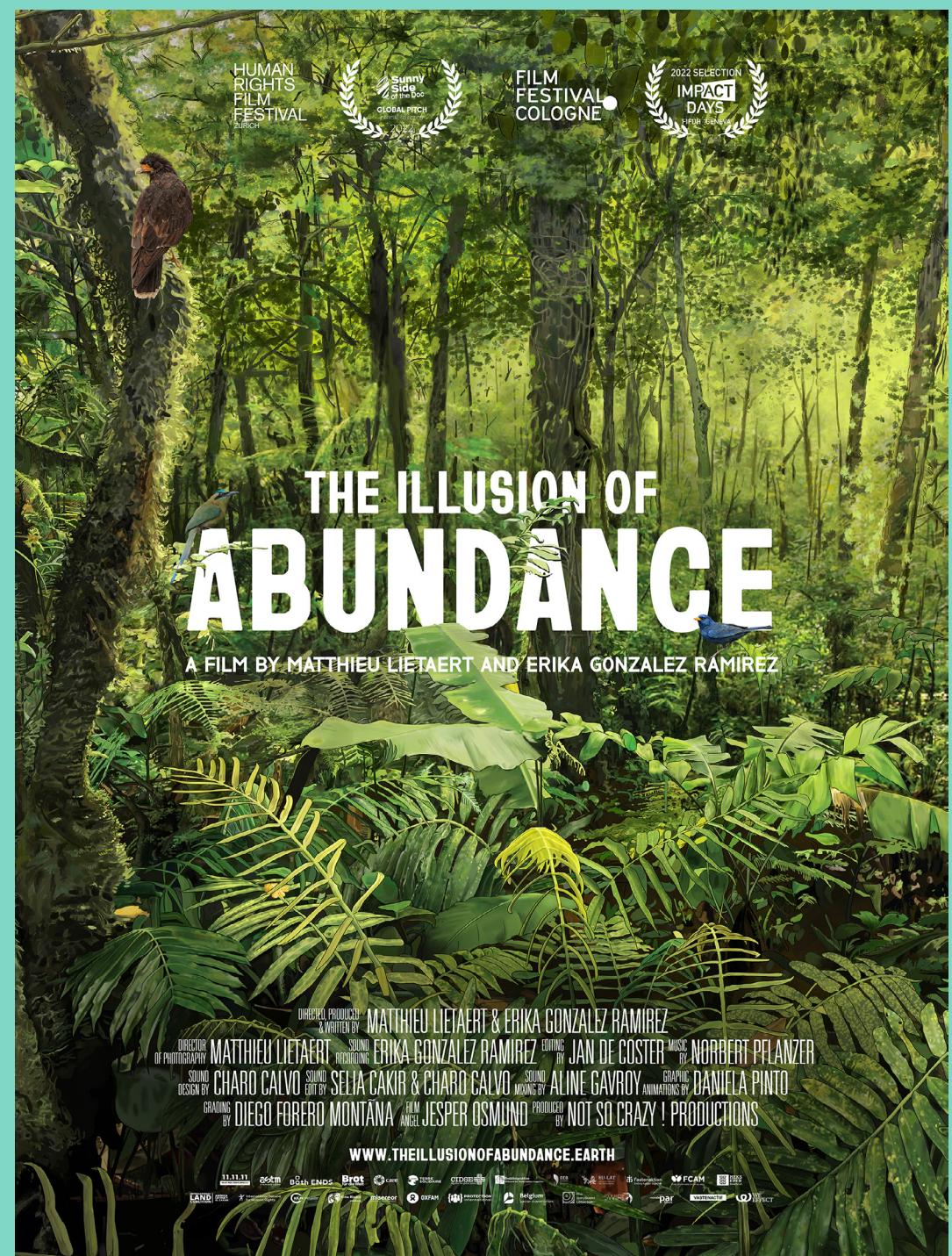


LIFT LIKE A GIRL (2020)
BY MAYYE ZAYED



THE TERRITORY (2022)
BY ALEX PRITZ

Example 2: A Strategy Focused on Social Impact



THE ILLUSION OF ABUNDANCE (2022)
BY ERIKA GONZALEZ AND MATTHIEU LIETAERT



DELIKADO (2022) BY KARL MALAKUNAS

Things to Consider

- ① Dream big, but stay realistic: understand your film and be aware of your available resources
- ② Length of your film
- ③ Have a clear plan, but stay flexible — it will need to adapt and evolve along the way
- ④ Ensure strong coordination between the distribution team and the impact team — alignment is crucial
- ⑤ Create a timeline that considers the urgency and key milestones of your impact campaign, and make sure it connects logically with your distribution strategy
- ⑥ Establish a budget and a financing plan from the start
- ⑦ Other



Take your film further!

Promote it as an awareness-raising and advocacy tool



Reach out to NGOs,
international organisations,
philanthropic organisations



Why can a film be valuable for an organization trying to create change?

- ↗ It tells a story
- ↗ It's easier for a broad audience to understand
- ↗ It centers on a protagonist
- ↗ It evokes emotions and empathy

However, it's not that easy

NGOs and other organisations
will rarely be proactive



How to promote your film to NGOs and international organizations?

- As an awareness-raising tool
- As a tool to engage donors
- As a tool to train staff

What can you get from NGOs and international organizations?

- ↗ Public or private screenings
- ↗ Contacts
- ↗ High-level expertise to better refine your campaign



Lift like a girl

2020
Directed by Mayye Zayed
Produced by Cléo Media, Jyoti Film,
Rufy's Films

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www.khartoummovie.com

Khartoum

2025

Directed by Anas Saeed, Rawia Alhag, Ibrahim Snoopy, Timeea M. Ahmed & Phil Cox

Produced by Native Voice Films, Sudan Film Factory

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Research

- ↗ What is the issue of your film?
- ↗ Where is this issue debated?
- ↗ Who are the stakeholders in that debate?
- ↗ Who are your potential allies?

Develop a clear plan

with clear asks to potential partners

WHAT POTENTIAL PARTNERS ARE LOOKING FOR

What the impact campaign is aiming to achieve

How these goals will be achieved

When they could be achieved

How much will it cost to implement the campaign or to be a partner

WHAT YOU SHOULD PREPARE

Clear impact goals
(as SMART as possible)

A concrete action plan

A timeline

A budget and financing plan



Take your film and message to the international stage



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