Policy Plan
2021-2024
Summary

In recent years, IDFA has grown into an international documentary institute that guides, inspires and shapes opinions. This institute consists of a public festival, a fund, two markets, programs for new media, talent development and education, and an online platform. With the interests of the general public, professionals and educators in mind, the IDFA institute aims to base its selection of documentary films and projects not only on artistic quality, but also on urgency and accessibility, to be an institute where inclusivity and gender equality are driving forces and where all departments are committed to talent development, new media and diversity.

Over the past four years, IDFA has strengthened its position as the largest and most important documentary event in the world. It has experienced steady growth with a record 295,000 visitors in 2019, including 40,000 schoolchildren and almost 3,300 industry professionals. In addition, research shows that IDFA’s activities continue to be highly valued and numerous international coalitions have been forged. The course set four years ago has thus proved successful. By sharpening its artistic quality and increasing diversity, IDFA has been able to reach a wider audience, more professionals and more students.

The documentary genre is more vital than ever, and it is being enjoyed by ever-growing audiences. This is good news for the industry, and certainly for IDFA. Yet, this growth brings certain risks. The documentary is increasingly being regarded as a commercial product for a global audience, and viewer numbers, ticket sales, profits and algorithms are more important than ever. Meanwhile, IDFA aims to highlight documentary films that have an intrinsic, artistic, social and/or personal meaning.

Currently, IDFA’s biggest struggles are the capacity of its current office, securing suitable festival locations, and funding. The rising costs in Amsterdam city center and the internationalization of IDFA require new financial investments. Unfortunately, as the Netherlands Council for Culture rightly pointed out, “IDFA is more dependent on its own income than any other film festival and receives the lowest subsidy per visitor.” As a result, IDFA is financially vulnerable and overly dependent on securing a large number of occasional sponsors and subsidies. This puts the continuity and independence of the organization in jeopardy and too much pressure on the organization itself.

In the coming period, our budget will grow from €7,913,000 in 2021 to €7,973,000 in 2024. For the 2021-2024 period, IDFA is asking for a higher structural subsidy and kindly requests that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science increase its contribution (incl. HGIS) from €921,100 in 2019 to €1,271,100. The Municipality of Amsterdam is requested to increase its contribution from €636,560 in 2020 to €886,560. With both increases, the portion of the structural subsidy for film festivals will be more in balance, and the structural subsidy allocated to IDFA will make up at least 27% of our income, which is essential for the stability of the organization.
**Manifesto**

Major transitions are on the horizon. Climate change has become a climate crisis, political systems around the world are under threat and inequality is on the rise. Citizens have become consumers, and consumers have become commodities. Populists are falsifying facts, companies and corporations are violating privacy, and search engines are fragmenting our collective memory in an age when we so desperately need cohesion. And all these changes raise big questions: Who are we and who is the other? Where do we want to go and how do we get there?

IDFA believes in the power of film. In documentaries that help us understand the world and determine our own place in it. In documentaries that make us think, see and experience things, so that, when the time comes, we’re ready to stand up for others and build better societies that are more democratic, open and humane. The need is urgent, because all these transitions call for more tolerance and debate on the rules of the game. Urban regions, in particular, are becoming increasingly multi-facetted, and now a new kind of commonality has to emerge from the different traditions. IDFA believes in documentaries that contribute to that future.

Documentaries are playing a critical role in the 21st century. Some people are even calling it the golden age of documentary. This is good news, but there are also downsides as well. The documentary is increasingly being viewed as an international commercial product, an easy platform for achieving higher viewer numbers and ticket sales, where profits and algorithms are becoming a main driving factor. IDFA aims to stimulate the national and international documentary industry to strike the right balance between art and commerce and protect values such as creative freedom, innovation, inclusivity and solidarity.

IDFA is also proof that an ever-growing number of people are looking for high-quality, artistic sources of information and reflection. This is why, now more than ever, IDFA stands for documentary film as an art form, for aesthetics, beauty, imagination and inspiration. It also stands for documentaries with a different visual language and structures, for films that depict unknown cultures or are filmed from a non-Western perspective, and for interactive documentaries that are innovative and pioneering.

**Mission**

IDFA aims to bring creative documentaries and audiences together. Therefore, it stimulates the production and distribution of a wide range of documentary films while also developing the demand for them. In this way, IDFA contributes to expanding and improving the international documentary climate, specifically by promoting inclusivity and giving a voice to underrepresented filmmakers.

**Vision**

IDFA believes in the power of documentaries. In creative documentaries that deepen, reveal and inspire. In documentaries that bring people closer together. And in documentaries that stand for change by inspiring people to act.
In this chapter, we will describe our three principles for the selection of documentaries and projects for both the festival and the other programs within the institute, as well as our four points of focus. Then, we will present the festival’s program profile in detail and discuss the tremendous importance of providing context. The chapter ends with a description of our educational activities and programs for national and international documentary professionals.

1.1 Selection criteria
IDFA’s primary focus is the creative documentary film. These are films that depict reality in creative ways and express the filmmaker’s vision. This artistic requirement, along with social urgency and accessibility, is our primary point of departure.

Artistic excellence
In cinematographic documentaries, the filmmaker’s vision and its translation into image, sound and montage are of primary importance. Form and content reinforce each other, and there is an authentic cinematic approach. Filmmakers make artistic choices in the use of cinematic means to express their view on the subject, tell their story, and draw in the viewer. An ideal film is one that leads to the development of the film’s language. IDFA is a meeting place for cinephiles, where professionals and audiences can discuss and learn about different documentary forms and styles.

Social urgency
Creative documentaries offer insight into society, open the viewer’s eyes and stimulate the individual’s critical capacities. IDFA explicitly aims to relate to urgent, social themes through films that reflect on the time and place in which they were created. In other words, IDFA documentaries do not reflect the reality of today or yesterday—that’s what the news and raportage formats are for—but rather the era and context in which they were created. IDFA is an institute that uses documentary films and discussions to portray an era and a cultural state of mind and give meaning to it.

Accessibility
Films shown at film festivals are generally less accessible than those offered at the cinema. At IDFA, this is no different. IDFA films aim to defy expectations. That said, film is also a functional art form, and a film festival needs an audience. One of IDFA’s strengths is that its films reach a wide audience, partly because they are presented in context.

1.2 Four points of focus
In the coming period, IDFA will continue to concentrate on the following four points of focus, both in the festival program and in the other parts of the institute:

Non-western documentaries
IDFA wants to provide a counterweight to the Western dominance in the film industry. It aims to provide space for films created from a non-Western ideological perspective, depict unknown cultures and give a voice to underrepresented filmmakers.

Interactive documentaries
For years, IDFA’s DocLab has provided a permanent home for non-linear interactive documentary projects and the most important digital pioneers in the world. Innovation and interactive documentaries will remain an important focus in the coming period.

Youth documentaries
Youth documentaries hold a special place in IDFA’s programming. With IDFA Junior and Kids & Docs, IDFA reaches a young audience and creates a sustainable relationship with filmmakers and producers of youth documentaries.

Dutch documentaries
Not only does IDFA aim to showcase Dutch documentaries to international audiences, it also strives to provide direction in the education, support and promotion of Dutch talent. Our Dutch Documentary Competition is the annual harvest of the best documentaries from the Netherlands.

1.3 Program profile
The festival has built up a strong program profile over the past thirty years. More than 3,500 documentaries are reviewed each year. In the end, approximately 300 productions are selected for the festival. In addition to the aforementioned principles and points of focus, the festival offers
a sample of different genres: from pamphlet to poetry, investigative journalism to art. Finally, IDFA strives to create a festival that is as inclusive as possible and considers the distribution of countries of production and gender equality matters of great importance. The selected films are divided into three sections:

**Competition programs with premieres**
At the heart of the festival's program are nine competition programs, which feature exclusively premieres. It is partly thanks to these many premieres that the IDFA is so renowned. In these competitions, artistic excellence is the most important criterion. We aim to have every continent represented in every competition and for each one to showcase an equal distribution of films by men and women. Each competition contains no more than 12 films or projects.

**Annual harvest of international talent**
The annual harvest of international documentaries is divided into two sections: Best of Fests and Masters. These programs feature films that have already premiered elsewhere in the world but are so interesting, either cinematographically or content-wise, that IDFA feels the need to share them with its audiences. Another program in this section is Paradocs, which features documentary art and art documentaries.

**Focus programs**
Each year, IDFA presents three extensive Focus Programs, which make connections and offer insights into a specific theme. These are themes with an artistic point of view or a social cause. These programs include recent documentaries and classics. Another Focus Program is Top 10, which invites renowned filmmakers, such as the late Agnès Varda and Patricio Guzman, to select their favorite films. The Focus programs add color to the festival and give films a context.

1.4 The context: The IDFA story
One of IDFA's major added values is that its films and projects are presented in context. This is done by means of discussions with directors and audiences, reflections from experts, and through events and online and print publications. In this way, the film screening experience becomes quite different from the purely passive experience of viewing a filmmaker's work. This context distinguishes an IDFA screening from a regular screening and helps make IDFA the event it strives to be: an arena for screening films and discussing documentary forms and social issues.

**Discussion programs**
IDFA Talks serve to deepen, share knowledge and make backgrounds visible. Over the years, a distinction has been made between discussion programs aimed at the general public and those aimed at professionals, film students and high schoolers.

**Online activities**
One particular point of focus has been the development of content on IDFA's website. This website showcases the IDFA collection, which consists of more than 7,000 documentaries. More than 800 of these films can also be viewed via the website. The recording and live streaming of various events during IDFA remains important in order to be able to offer these films online throughout the year. We expect the new website to significantly increase the current reach of IDFA.tv (56,000 views) in the coming years, thus extending IDFA in a sustainable way and reaching new audiences.

**Events**
IDFA mainly hosts film screenings in movie theaters. But other forms of presentation are possible as well, and non-traditional locations are used to reach new audiences or to offer the current audience a new viewing experience. IDFA also presents exhibitions, installations, live music and theatre in combination with films. DocLab organizes live events at the intersection of documentary, performance and new media.

**Signposts**
Each year, IDFA's programmers identify a number of themes in the selected films that say something about the spirit of the times. IDFA uses these themes as signposts to help the public navigate the more than 300 films and projects offered at the festival. These signposts are used to organize routes, debates and discussions. Each year, they consist of ten themes that can be reduced to three major IDFA stories: people & society, sustainability & innovation, and art & culture.

**IDFA and UvA**
IDFA and the University of Amsterdam (UvA) have joined forces to create a student route during the festival. Students from different disciplines will attend an IDFA performance in the morning, followed by inspiring discussions and case studies in VOX-POP. In the coming periods, IDFA will also seek out collaboration opportunities with other faculties, trade schools and universities.
IDFA Meets
The IDFA Meets program was developed in 2018 to reach Amsterdam young people, ages 19 and older, from all different backgrounds. Throughout the year, the program hosts screenings of high-quality documentaries and discussions at different locations around the city. In 2018 and 2019, nine IDFA Meets events took place off- festival at unique locations, such as Skatepark Noord, De School and the Cluppi indoor soccer stadium in Nieuw West. There were also eleven Meets events during the festival. In the coming years, IDFA Meets will be further developed together with partners such as Resident Advisor, Boiler Room, Red Light Radio, Dipsaus podcast and Alkebulan.

1.5 Education
Watching documentaries provides students with tools to develop into conscious, critical and active citizens—all essential qualities in a media-dominated society. This is why education is such an important aspect of the IDFA institute. Creative documentaries connect well with education. Not only can they be used in art- and culture-related subjects, they can also help spark classroom discussions on social and personal themes. For many young people, a visual source can be much more powerful than a linguistic one. With these educational activities, IDFA is able to reach a large new audience that is both young and diverse.

IDFA's education programs consist of school screenings, workshops and Docschool Online. Target groups include primary and secondary school students, from 6th grade and up, at all different levels of education.

School screenings
IDFA’s primary educational initiative is its series of screenings for schools during the annual festival. Students watch (often for the first time) a documentary on the big screen, meet the director, engage in a post-screening discussion and discuss the film in class using specially designed teaching materials. In recent years, there have also been film screenings in the Bijlmerpark Theater, Podium Mozaiek and elsewhere in the Netherlands, such as in Boxtel and Zwolle. IDFA is committed to expanding this national growth in the coming years, mainly by organizing screenings all year long throughout the region. IDFA assumes that education hubs, such as those in The Hague and Nijmegen, will support this aim.

Workshops and projects
IDFA organises various documentary workshops in which analysis, practice and reflection are the primary focus. These workshops are often carried out in collaboration with partners such as Foam and Animatiebus.

Docschool Online
Since 2015, IDFA has offered Docschool Online, an online channel with more than 100 documentaries, all arranged by theme and age level, that can be viewed and discussed in the classroom via a free account. Many documentaries come with specially developed teaching materials.

IDFA is also an active member of the Amsterdam Film Menu. In collaboration with Mocca, this initiative coordinates the films being shown in Amsterdam with educational programs. In addition, IDFA is a member of the national Film Education Network, in which it is the only structural provider of documentaries.

1.6 Activities for professionals
One of IDFA’s unique features is that it combines a public festival with a large enthusiastic audience with the gathering of more than 3,000 national and international documentary professionals, who all come to Amsterdam to share knowledge, conduct business, network and get inspired. IDFA is an institute with two markets, an Academy for top documentary talents, and a fund for filmmakers from non-western countries. It also offers a special focus on interactive documentaries.

The Forum
The Forum is an international co-financing and co-production marketplace where more than 50 projects are presented to financers and distributors every year. It has grown from a European platform with a focus on television documentaries into a four-day event featuring a global selection of all kinds of high-value documentary projects. It is an opportunity for both linear and new media projects to connect with co-producers, financers, public and commercial broadcasters and (S)VOD platforms.

Docs for Sale
Docs for Sale is an online marketplace offering more than 400 new documentaries that can be watched on demand throughout the year. During the festival, Docs for Sale is housed in Arti et Amicitiae. Here documentaries can be screened while independent producers and sales agents
can network and conduct business with distributors, television buyers and festival programmers.

**IDFAcademy**

IDFAcademy was founded in 2007 for the next generation of filmmakers. Its primary aim is to coach promising talents who have already made one or two films. The IDFAcademy currently consists of a variety of workshops and labs and will be expanded in the coming period with IDFA Fellowships and an IDFAcademy Online.

**The IDFA Bertha Fund**

The IDFA Bertha Fund (IBF), established in 1998, is more relevant than ever. It supports documentary filmmakers from non-Western countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, particularly from countries where independent documentaries are not supported for a variety of reasons. The IBF connects IDFA’s love of documentaries with its mission to share urgent stories with as many viewers as possible. Every year, 750 applications are submitted, of which about 30 are accepted. All IBF-supported films are screened at IDFA. In both 2018 and 2019, the festival’s opening film was supported by the IBF.

**IDFA’s DocLab**

DocLab is an international platform for interactive documentaries in various media and disciplines. It offers both a public-oriented festival program and activities aimed at professionals in the documentary and new media industries. Since 2018, the festival has also functioned as a “living lab” for an international research and development program.
Things are going well for the international documentary film genre. Major festivals such as Cannes, Berlin and Venice are selecting more and more documentary films, and super platforms, such as Netflix, Amazon and Apple, are producing and showing them in growing numbers. The documentary can look forward to a growing audience and will continue to play a vital role in the 21st century. This is all great news, and these developments bring new energy to the genre. However, there are downsides as well. The biggest threat is that the documentary will be increasingly regarded as a commercial product for a global audience. As the documentary genre adapts to the laws and rules of entertainment, commerce and media culture, it’s likely that artistic and experimental documentaries will become even more isolated. The documentary’s socially critical function will also be at risk of disappearing. This is why, now more than ever, IDFA stands for independent documentary films, for documentaries as an art form, for documentaries with a unique visual language or a non-standard structure, for films that show unknown cultures or are filmed from a non-Western perspective, for documentary talent and innovative documentary forms.

The main development in recent years has been the explosion of the industry, which has created a growing gap between large documentary productions with a sizable budget and smaller films with a more modest budget. Netflix, Amazon and HBO are able to allocate mega budgets for blockbuster films. International co-productions are bringing together public broadcasters to create even larger budgets. In their wake, space is freeing up for smaller, regional, independent films, allowing bold visionary voices from all over the world to be heard in the international festival circuit. IDFA operates in all circuits but focuses on creative, high-quality documentary films that deserve to be seen by a large, diverse audience. In addition, IDFA sees itself as a breeding ground for new talent and considers the development of new filmmakers one of its top priorities.

2.1 IDFA compared to other film festivals
When IDFA began in 1988, it was one of the few festivals in the world that was exclusively focused on documentaries. Throughout the course of the 21st century, this has changed with the arrival of similar international documentary festivals. Major film festivals, such as the Berlinale, Venice, Cannes and TIFF (Toronto), are paying increasing attention to documentaries as well. Major blockbuster films are often launched at these leading festivals, because these events draw international press, agents and distributors.

However, most of these festivals are still primarily focused on fiction films (though the American Sundance Festival has established quite a reputation for launching major American documentaries). IDFA, on the other hand, has distinguished itself from these major festivals as a specialist in the documentary genre by devoting its attention exclusively to documentaries and documentary filmmakers. IDFA offers a diverse range of films, cares deeply about innovation, and, despite its considerable size, still feels much more intimate than the top international festivals. In addition, IDFA is increasingly catching the eye of trade publications like Variety, Hollywood Reporter and Screen. IDFA is also the only documentary festival attended by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), the organization behind the Oscars.
IDFA is the largest—but not the only—independent documentary film festival that selects, recognizes and adds value to documentaries. Other European documentary festivals, such as CPH:Dox, Sheffield DocFest and Visions du Réel in Nyon are important as well, as are the more regional documentary festivals in Leipzig and Thessaloniki. Hot Docs in Toronto, considered IDFA’s North American counterpart, is primarily focused on North American films, whereas IDFA strives for a wider distribution of countries.

Compared to the other documentary festivals, IDFA remains the market leader, setting the tone for the introduction and launch of new films and projects (premieres). In addition, IDFA has the widest reach among both industry professionals and the general public and has the strongest promotional power (international film press). Finally, IDFA offers the most international program and a prestigious selection of interactive documentaries via DocLab.

2.2 IDFA’s international policy
IDFA’s international position has become even stronger in the recent period. In addition to its function as a networking platform, IDFA has developed into an institute that provides direction, helps set agendas, and is taken seriously within the film industry. IDFA is an institute that strives to make a positive contribution to the international documentary climate and where talent development (IDFAcademy) and innovation (IDFA DocLab) are top priorities, an institute committed to gender equality and inclusivity. The IBF has played a crucial and successful role in this endeavor. The aim is to translate international, inclusive thinking and action into a local, regional and national event that contributes to a pluralistic community, not just in Amsterdam but around the world.

IDFA cooperates structurally with international trade organizations, such as the International Documentary Association, Documentary Association Europe, LaScam and Europe Distribution. Film institutes, such as those from Argentina, Ukraine, France, Serbia and Mexico, send delegations to IDFA as well. IDFA’s international position has been strengthened through coalitions with the following prestigious partners, all of whom share our principles and ideals:

The Ford Foundation’s Just Films Coalition
In 2017, IDFA was asked to participate in the Ford Foundation’s Just Films Coalition together with the Sundance Film Festival (USA), Tribeca Film Festival (USA), Doc Society (England), In Docs (Indonesia) and Docubox (Kenya).

5050x2020 Pledge for Gender Parity and Inclusion in Film Festivals
In 2019, IDFA became the first documentary festival to sign the 5050x2020 Pledge for Gender Parity and Inclusion in Film Festivals. This initiative has been endorsed by the Cannes, Venice, and Locarno film festivals. The pledge demonstrates a festival’s commitment to increasing gender equality. IDFA also fulfilled this pledge in 2019: 64% of the competition films and 47% of films in the entire festival program were by women filmmakers.

International Coalition of Filmmakers at Risk
In 2018, IDFA initiated the launch of The International Coalition of Filmmakers at Risk, in collaboration with the European Film Academy (EFA) and IFFR. Together, we have created a body aimed at supporting filmmakers threatened with political persecution.

AMPAS
“Thanks to IDFA, better films are being noticed by the Oscars,” read one of the headlines in the Volkskrant on Monday, November 25, 2019. IDFA has strengthened its ties with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Every year, approximately 150 Academy members come to IDFA to view films that they can then nominate for an Academy Award. The Academy’s inclusion policy is very much in line with that of IDFA.

IDFA Talent Awards
IDFA presents Talent Awards at various festivals around the world. Winners are invited to IDFA to showcase and network at the international level. Talent Awards are given in countries such as Cuba, Malaysia, Uruguay, Taiwan, Lebanon, India, Burkina Faso and Latvia.

Diversity
Part of IDFA’s international policy is to make the festival more focused on reaching international audiences than ever before. IDFA employees and representatives attend more than 100 festivals every year—not only the Western festivals like Cannes, Venice, Berlin and Sundance, but also non-Western, local and regional festivals, such as Docedge in India, Fespaco in Burkina Faso, FICG in Mexico, FIDADoc in Morocco and DMZ Docs
in South Korea. Furthermore, IDFA has programming specialists on every continent who visit festivals and carry out research in their region. Every year, IDFA receives approximately 3,500 applications from all over the world.

**CO₂ compensation policy**

As part of its international policy, IDFA will introduce a CO₂ compensation scheme for staff and guests who have to fly to and from IDFA.
3.1 Talent development

As direct commercial values become increasingly important, there is less room for the development of new talent. At the same time, however, fostering young talent is critical for keeping the documentary genre young and dynamic. The IDFAcademy fulfils an important function in the development of new documentary talent. It is specifically focused on developing projects with unique, cinematic qualities for the international market and supporting filmmakers with the potential to become film authors.

Through its various training programs, IDFAcademy guides its filmmakers in their development throughout the year. Every year at IDFA, around 50 documentaries by emerging directors are shown to general audiences and industry professionals.

As the most important documentary institute in the world, IDFA wants to continue to develop the IDFAcademy into the world’s top program for documentary talent. In order to achieve this, we intend to sharpen our selection criteria in the coming period and offer even more tailored guidance. IDFA selects talent from all over the world, but it continues to focus on filmmakers from non-western countries and the Netherlands, new media makers, and women filmmakers. New initiatives include a second IDFAcademy Lab, IDFAcademy Fellowships and the IDFAcademy Online.

IDFA works to align the work of the Netherlands Film and AV Media Development Institute with that of other providers, such as film festivals (IFFR, NFF and Cinekid) and the Netherlands Film Fund, focusing specifically on documentary talent in an international setting.

Various programs offered by IDFAcademy:

- For years, IDFA has organized two long-running workshops for Dutch documentary talent. Within the Film and AV Media Development Institute, we plan to align these workshops and investigate how the most talented participants can be selected for the two international IDFAcademy Labs that IDFA wants to focus specifically.

- During the festival, IDFA offers an annual five-day training program for approximately 100 promising young filmmakers and producers from the Netherlands and abroad.

- Every year, three to five talented filmmakers are selected for the IDFAcademy Fellowships. Each fellow is assigned a coach, and together they devise a customized mentorship program based on a master-apprentice model.

- IDFAcademy Online offers webinars, masterclasses, registrations, interviews and podcasts for young filmmakers to inspire and educate them throughout the year.

- Students from international film schools

In addition to focusing on filmmakers who have already produced one or two films, IDFA also offers programs for students still in film school. The IDFA Film Student Route is a special program offered during the festival that welcomes approximately 150 students from international film schools. The route is operated in cooperation with the Netherlands Film Academy.

3.2 New media

Founded in 2007, IDFA’s DocLab is a curated interdisciplinary platform for interactive documentary art and storytelling. Internationally, DocLab is seen as the premier platform for interactive documentaries, and it plays a pioneering role in the turbulent development of digital storytelling, multimedia journalism, virtual reality, live performance and artificial intelligence. Just as filmmakers like Dziga Vertov and D.W. Griffith discovered how they could shape the language of film over a century ago, DocLab offers a platform for a new generation of filmmakers to invent their own language and experiment with new forms of storytelling and presentation. DocLab offers a public-oriented festival program with exhibitions, live events and a conference, as well as activities aimed at industry professionals, such as the DocLab Forum and DocLab Academy. At the end of 2018, DocLab launched an international research and development program in cooperation with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston.
The past decade was dominated by the growth of the Internet and the rise of interactive media. With the emergence of immersive media (e.g. virtual reality), artificial intelligence and biometric technology, the digital revolution has entered a new phase, which presents new artistic possibilities. However, growing concerns about how technology impacts our behavior and the physical world also means that digital art is becoming increasingly critical and socially relevant. Once an open digital playground, the Internet is transforming into a closed platform for commercial gain and the collection of user data. The critical questioning of technology and the independent artistic development of interactive and immersive media are thus more urgent than ever. In recent years, DocLab has expanded its new media activities across the entire festival. In the coming period, we will focus on the following spearheads:

1. **Developing an artistic research platform for new media**

Creators and cultural organizations that experiment with new media and forms of presentation at a high level are under pressure. At the end of 2018, IDFA launched a unique research and development program in collaboration with MIT aimed at initiating groundbreaking artistic pilots and prototypes of new forms of interactive documentary art. The goal is to foster talent, stimulate new collaborations, experiment with forms of presentation and realize new artistic works. With partners such as National Theatre, Creative XR, Sound and Vision, Het Nieuwe Instituut and MIT, IDFA is in a unique position to create an international research platform in the coming years and to establish itself as a home for independent media art and critical reflection.

2. **Expanding the public programme to include new media**

With DocLab, IDFA confronts and surprises its growing audiences with the artistic possibilities of new technology. But for some audiences, new media is still unknown and inaccessible. In the coming period, DocLab will develop its public function while also staying true to its experimental and artistic character. DocLab will position itself more strongly as the most cutting-edge festival programme in the world and experiment with innovative forms of screening and partnerships aimed at reaching a larger, more diverse audience. While we have identified various possibilities for successful partnerships and satellite locations (from ARTIS and Lil Amsterdam to MoMA), one of our main challenges is to find a sustainable, central festival location for DocLab.

### 3.3 Diversity and inclusivity

With the support of the IDFA Bertha Fund, IDFA is able to present a highly diverse programme year after year. But the times demand more. Certain people are more at risk of being sidelined than ever and previously unheard voices are demanding more space. IDFA provides that space. By continuing to focus on inclusivity and gender equality, we aim to expose the general public and industry professionals to polyphonic perspectives, familiarize them with the unknown and provide context. IDFA believes that diverse perspectives and an inclusive approach will not only enrich the genre but also lead to higher-quality forms of information and reflection for everyone.

#### Program

Through quantitative research, IDFA has gained insight into how diverse its programming has been to date. The diversity of our program policy is tested and monitored annually. In order to achieve a more diverse and inclusive programme, we’ve broadened our research scope. Our programming specialists actively seek out “other” film cultures by visiting festivals in non-Western countries, broadening our network and intensifying contacts in new regions. We have also diversified our scout network and given our scouts a role in the contextualization of films during the IDFA festival. During the last period, the proportion of non-Western films rose from 25% to 40%. The aim for the coming period is to maintain this percentage and to increase it where possible. In 2019, 50% of the filmmakers featured at the festival were women, and this is now our annual target.

#### Professionals

IDFA is a leader in the international documentary industry and, as such, is able to focus on diversity. Diversity is achieved on all fronts in The Forum, Docs for Sale and IDFAcademy. Not only do we seek to diversify our films and projects, we also strive for diversity among the professionals and organizations we work with, including producers, financiers, television channels, film and new media makers and tutors. The same goes for participants, talk show hosts and jury members. In 2019, 30% of IDFA’s professional guests were from non-Western countries. Our goal is to increase this proportion in the coming years.

#### Organization

IDFA strives for diversity and inclusivity within its own organization as well. Over the past period, the IDFA Board, staff, selection committees and scout team have been composed in a more varied way.
There is an HR Manager working 0.85 FTE who oversees inclusivity and employee welfare. When job vacancies arise, we actively consider the organization’s diversity in the hiring process. To this end, we have received guidance on the inclusivity of our job vacancy texts and developed a guide for the use of inclusive language. We also work with an introduction program for new employees. A survey was carried out in 2019 to map the diversity of the festival team and find out whether employees feel involved, welcome and safe. Based on the results of this survey, we will identify areas of focus for the coming period, such as recruitment targets or adjustments to the introduction program.

**Partners and audiences**

IDFA works closely with numerous Amsterdam institutions to not only ensure that the festival is well distributed throughout the city but also to reach a younger and more culturally diverse audience. Our collaborations with the Bijlmerpark Theater, Podium Mozaïek, Tolhuistuin and Meervaart, among others, will be continued in the coming years. In addition, we’ve started a new project: IDFA Meets. With this project, IDFA aims to reach a young, culturally diverse audience in the suburbs of Amsterdam through collaborations with guest programmers and partner organizations, such as Skatepark Noord, De School and the Cluppi indoor soccer stadium in Nieuw West. In 2018 and 2019, 20 events were organized for almost 3,000 young people. New locations include OSCAM in Amsterdam Zuid Oost, New Metropolis in Amsterdam Zuid Oost and Nieuw West, and Sexyland in Amsterdam Noord. Finally, IDFA reaches more than 40,000 students through its school screenings. The goal is to increase this reach to at least 50,000 young people.
Part 4: IDFA in action

4.1 Organization
In order to empower the institute with a single vision and streamline functions and tasks, the two foundations, IDFA and the IDFA Bertha Fund, will be administratively transformed into a single personnel union, under one management and one Board. The Boards of IDFA and IBF will be merged. The chairman of the Board, Derk Sauer, will retire and will be succeeded by Marry de Gaay Fortman.

During the last period, new Board and management regulations were drawn up, the Articles of Association were renewed, and the Board carried out a self-evaluation. In the coming period, new Board members will be selected based on expertise and diversity, and the Board will examine the possibility of transforming into a Supervisory Board.

Important institutional spearheads include the sharpening of the artistic quality, internationalization and diversification of the festival's program. All goals will be quantified and monitored. Finally, maintaining audience numbers and steadily increasing income, will remain important and necessary objectives. To achieve this, IDFA will use all funding options available and monitor whether its financiers are in line with IDFA's social objectives.

Within the organization, IDFA's social vision, mission and goals are jointly defined and disseminated. In order to safeguard our goals internally and embed them within the organization, management tasks are divided between an artistic director and a general director. The artistic director is appointed for a period of four years (with a possible extension), whereas the general director monitors the longer policy lines. The arrival of the new creative director, Orwa Nyrabia, has not only strengthened IDFA's creative impact but also given the organization an even more global look.

Like management, the organization is divided into two branches as well: creative departments and support departments. The head of each department is responsible for developing an annual plan based on the policy plan and reports to management. Even on the Board, portfolios are defined along creative and organizational lines as well.

The International Advisory Board will be reformed in the coming period under the leadership of former Board chairman Derk Sauer. This Advisory Board will continue to review our policy internationally, and new members with a specific knowledge and skills to complement those already present on the Board will be recruited.

4.2 Employee policy
In addition to our permanent staff (24.12 FTE for 28 positions), we also hire extra support in the months leading up to the festival. This includes temporary employees (13.90 FTE for 31 positions), freelancers and independent contractors (7.88 FTE for 125 assignments), 13 trainees and 604 volunteers. The internationalization of the work floor is becoming increasingly important. The IDFA team is fluid in size. The HR policy is aimed at recruiting a strong team each year and creating working conditions in which everyone can excel and contribute to IDFA's activities from different angles so that we can be more attractive and accessible to a wide audience and a diverse group of international professionals.

To support inclusivity, a protocol has been drawn up for addressing undesirable forms of behavior, such as sexual harassment, abuse, aggression, violence, discrimination and bullying. The IDFA organization has a designated confidential counsellor, and we are also affiliated with the central contact point for undesirable behavior in the performing arts, film and television sector, Mores. online, where independent counsellors are available for advice and guidance.

The fair practice code is applied in IDFA's HR policy. In addition to establishing fair financial rewards and transparency, this code involves the team in the development of the organization (policy plan and annual plans) and supports the retention of knowledge by making professional relationships more sustainable, establishing work processes and evaluating with employees.

In addition to the focus on diversity and inclusivity already described, we also support the training and development of employees. In recent years, our employee-education budgets have been spent on training in public speaking, conducting job interviews, language courses, absenteeism policy and time management. These services are
generally provided by freelancers and independent contractors.

Interns are another important part of our organization, and we aim to be a valuable addition to their education. IDFA volunteers are unpaid but not without obligation. Our volunteer policy explains what volunteers and IDFA can expect from each other. Interns and volunteers offer an enthusiastic and fresh look at our organization, contributing to the further development of our activities.

Salaries at IDFA are based on a system developed by KPMG in 2005, which includes scales and periodicals adjusted annually for inflation. In 2015, this was adapted to a generic pay scale that is benchmarked on a regular basis. Permanent and temporary contract staff can participate in our pension scheme and are covered by absence insurance. The pay scale also serves as a basis for freelancers, whose gross salaries are increased to accommodate holiday allowance and social security contributions. As a result of market forces, we may need to occasionally deviate from these standards, especially if certain expertise has to be hired in. IDFA reimburses transportation costs for independent contractors, freelancers, interns and volunteers. Our pursuit of a sustainable and transparent personnel policy, with room for development and annual rewards for good performance, is under pressure due to insufficient structural funding.

4.3 Target groups

One of IDFA's key targets is the national public. Festivalgoers from within the Netherlands tend to be highly educated. A significant percentage visited IDFA more than five times in 2019 (40%). There is also healthy growth among new audiences (18%). Interest from the under-35 age group has remained the same over the past decade (16%), and interest from the 55-64 age group has risen from 23% to 29%. Interest among the 65+ age group also rose from 19% to 25%. Finally, the ratio of Amsterdam residents to non-Amsterdam residents remained stable at 60/40%, but the study did not include the 30,000 visitors to the nationwide tour of The Best of IDFA. Separate audience research was conducted for the IDFA Meets screenings. Here, the age ratios are very different: no less than 50% are under 34 years of age, and 70% are under 44 years of age. In addition, 58% of the IDFA Meets visitors have a Dutch cultural background; at IDFA in general this is 87%.

Another key target group consists of national and international documentary professionals, with special attention for Dutch filmmakers, female filmmakers, filmmakers from non-Western countries and new media makers. Other professionals include producers, sales agents, theater distributors, film fund employees, representatives from the television industry, festival curators and members of the press. In 2019, 43% of professional visitors had attended IDFA at least once before, 28% of which had attended more than 5 times. In 2018, a record number of 3,410 industry professionals visited IDFA. Our goal is to welcome 3,000 to 3,500 industry professionals each year.

Public reach

From 2013 to 2016, IDFA has grown from 234,503 to 276,969 visitors. In 2017, IDFA received 285,000 visitors; in 2018, the number of visitors remained virtually unchanged, but in 2019, the number of visitors rose again to 295,000. The slight stagnation was mainly due to a lack of seating capacity.

Visitor numbers continue to rise significantly throughout the year, as does the number of online viewers. Each year, 40,000 people watch films on the IDFA website. A new collaboration with the Dutch Broadcast Foundation (NPO), which ensures that four festival documentaries are shown on television during the festival, has also increased IDFA’s reach tremendously. More than 1,000,000 people watched these IDFA documentaries on television. While IDFA will continue to focus on its current audiences, it will also focus on reaching young people and more diverse audiences. In addition, it will seek out new collaborations throughout Amsterdam and the region.

Accessibility

IDFA wants the festival to be as accessible as possible for people with a physical or mental disability. In early 2019, research was conducted into the festival’s accessibility for people with a handicap. Various opportunities and points for improvement were mapped out.

School outreach

IDFA’s educational programming consists of school screenings at the cinema, workshops and an online channel with documentaries for the classroom. Target groups are primary school students in grades 6 and up and all levels of high school. In the last period, our reach increased from 11,858 school-age students in 2013 to 32,857 in 2016. By 2019, we were reaching up-
wards of 40,000 students. Our goal for the 2021-2024 period is to reach 50,000 school-age students. (In its performance figures, IDFA considers the Docschool Online screenings as part of its school outreach). Not only does school outreach lower the average age of the IDFA visitor, it also increases cultural diversity.

4.4 Locations and partnerships

Over the years, IDFA has grown from a compact festival on the Leidseplein into a city-wide event with three centres. In the Muntplein area, our partners are Pathé Tuschinski, De Munt, the Kleine Komedie, Carré, Planetarium Artis, De Brakke Grond, the Compagnie theater and Art et Amiciae. A second cluster is located on and around Leidseplein with locations such as ITA, De Balie, De Melkweg, DeLaMar and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. The third cluster is around the banks of the IJ River with the Eye Filmmuseum, Tolhuistuin, Pakhuis De Zwijger, Lil Amsterdam and the Amsterdam Public Library. In addition, IDFA is spread throughout other parts of the city at Podium Mozaïek, the Bijlmerpark Theater, Rialto, Kriterion and Het Ketelhuis. These less-central locations provide IDFA with a presence in the city’s suburbs and allow us to work with partner organizations to show documentaries in more diverse contexts. Outside Amsterdam, IDFA activities take place at Lux Nijmegen, the Groninger Forum and LantarenVenster in Rotterdam. After the festival, prize-winning films are featured in more than 60 theaters around the country during The Best of IDFA on Tour. In the current period, IDFA has grown from 125,000 to 295,000 visitors in 2019.

In the 2021-2024 period, our aim is to strengthen and, where possible, expand these partnerships. In urban regions, enthusiastic locations are already signing up for the Best of IDFA on Tour (e.g. in Alkmaar, Almere, Amstelveen, Bergen, Bussum, Diemen, Haarlem and Zaandam); these locations offer us a starting point for reaching audiences in a wider region. The IDFA Meets program goes even deeper into local communities in search of younger and/or more diverse audiences with the help of local partners, such as Skatepark Noord, De School and Cluppi indoor soccer stadium in Nieuw West. New locations include OSCAM in Amsterdam Zuid Oost, New Metropolis in Amsterdam Zuid Oost and Nieuw West and Sexyland in Amsterdam Noord.

For our programs for industry professionals, it is important for IDFA to have a cluster of central locations that can accommodate our 3,500 profession-
and convert these leads into ticket buyers, which can, in turn, be converted into repeat visitors and finally into loyal visitors. Data-driven communication will play an increasingly important role in the coming period, allowing us to actively respond to the interests, preferences and needs of various target groups.

However, communication alone is not enough to achieve our goal of reaching a young, culturally diverse target groups. To achieve this, we rely on partnerships with organizations like the Bijlmerpark Theater and Podium Mozaïek. In addition, the IDFA Meets program engages social media ambassadors and influencers to help reach select target groups. DocLab is also focusing more intensively on reaching younger audiences, with live events at unique locations around the city. In addition to CJP and Vice, new collaborations have been started with Cineville, the University of Amsterdam and Blendle, among others.

Publicity and media outlets
IDFA’s primary means of communication throughout the year is its website, which was renewed in 2017. Central to the website is the IDFA collection: an archive of information about more than 7,000 films that IDFA has shown over the past 32 years. Nearly 800 films and projects can be viewed on the website for free or for a fee. Since the launch of the new site, the number of visits has grown by 28% to 971,558 unique visitors in 2019. Online reach is increasing every year.

Segmented mailings are another way that IDFA attracts growing target groups. The number of recipients increased from 28,000 in 2015 to 63,000 in 2019. The number of IDFA followers on social media is increasing as well, and followers are becoming more active. IDFA reaches 86,000 people on Facebook, 50,000 on Twitter and 13,800 on Instagram. The IDFA App is being increasingly used as well (9,500 downloads).

We also rely on more traditional forms of media, particularly in the weeks leading up to and during the festival. Our program magazine for the general public has a circulation of 265,000, and the program guide for professionals has a circulation of 3,500. These materials ensure visibility before and during the festival, both online and in the city.

In addition to our own media coverage and paid advertising, the festival relies on ‘earned’ publicity generated by collaborations with national and international media partners such as the Volkskrant, the Groene Amsterdamer, the VPRO, the Dutch Broadcast Foundation, Vice, Blendle and the renowned international film platform, Variety.

Finally, free publicity in the national, regional and international press plays a major role in communication. In recent years, IDFA's international popularity has grown enormously thanks to worldwide press, not only in North America and Western Europe, but also from Asia, South America, Africa and Arab countries.

4.6 Funding
IDFA has a mix of funding sources and is supported by a structural subsidy from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Municipality of Amsterdam. In addition, we are supported by various national and international funds, both public and private. IDFA also applies for various European subsidies. The international business community is one of our main targets for sponsorship projects and programs. IDFA also focuses on private donations from loyal supporters (e.g. Dikke Vrienden) and patrons. Finally, IDFA generates income from ticket sales and workshops.

2017–2020 period
In the 2017-2020 period, IDFA's budget has increased from €5,947,000 to €7,392,000. The total structural subsidy from the Municipality of Amsterdam and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for this period has been on average, €1,527,000, which is approximately 23% of our budget. Our own income has increased from €3,832,000 to €4,876,000, largely thanks to a contribution from the Ford Foundation of $750,000 USD per year for the 2018-2021 period. Our costs are also rising due to higher costs for DocLab, talent development, festival production and locations, as well as to the overall strengthening of the internal organization. In 2022, we will lose part of the funding provided by the Ford Foundation. In anticipation of this, IDFA has applied for funding from the Dutch Postcode Lottery starting in 2020. If awarded, half of this contribution will go to IBF activities.

2021–2024 period
Recently, the Council of Culture pointed out that the allocation of structural subsidies for film festivals seems to be skewed. As the Council rightly pointed out, “IDFA is more dependent on its own income than any other film festival and receives the lowest subsidy per visitor.” In
their reports, both the Council for Culture and the Amsterdam Arts Council committee recommended an increase of IDFA's structural subsidy by over €200,000 and €150,000 respectively. This would increase our structural subsidy and restore proportions. For various reasons, both the Minister and the alderman decided otherwise. As a result, the skewed growth among film festivals has increased, and IDFA's share in structural subsidies has been further reduced to only 21% in 2020. This means that not only will IDFA's sources of funding remain out of balance, we are even more dependent on revenue and incidental contributions from sponsors and subsidizers, who often come with their own agendas. This endangers IDFA's independence and continuity, creates uncertainty and puts pressure on the organization.

In light of these developments, IDFA kindly requests that the Municipality of Amsterdam increase its contribution from €636,560 in 2020 to €886,560. We also request that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science increase its structural contribution (including HGIS) from €921,100 in 2019 to €1,271,100. With both increases, the distribution of structural subsidies among film festivals will be more equal, and these subsidies will make up 27% of IDFA's income.

Expenditure
In the coming period, IDFA expects its budget to increase, from €6,642,000 in 2018 to €7,913,000 in 2021 to €7,973,000 in 2024. Compared to the 2017-2020 period, IDFA plans to use the coming period to invest primarily in talent development (IDFAcademy), innovation (DocLab) and diversity (IBF). We will also solve our pressing location and housing problems (€110,000). Finally, it is necessary to increase our general reserve to 5% of the budget.

Income
In the last period, ticket prices have increased from €10.50 to €11.50. The number of visitors has increased as well. However, due to the rise in the VAT rate, these increases have not led to additional income. In the coming period, there is still room for an increase in ticket prices to €12.00. Compared to 2018, IDFA expects the contributions from its own funding sources to increase thanks to more IDFA Club members and Dikke Vrienden, support for two new funds, an increase in the contribution of one of our current funding sources, and the expectation that our application to the National Postcode Lottery will be accepted. From 2022 onwards, however, the Ford Foundation's contribution will decrease, as will the BankGiro Lottery's. Incidental subsidies will increase thanks to extra funding from Creative Europe and an increase in the Netherlands Enterprise Agency allowance.