

DOK Co-Pro Market 2025 Selects 35 Projects

Projects explore pressing realities, journeys of identity, and vanishing worlds.



DOK Co-Pro Market 2025 | Project Selection

The 21st edition of the DOK Co-Pro Market welcomes 35 documentary projects from across 34 countries, seeking to connect with new international financing and co-production partners. Women (co)-directors hold a prominent presence in the lineup, comprising 60 percent of the selection. This year also sees a continued rise in the number of entries, totalling 391 projects.

The selection features a number of projects that traverse the nuanced terrain of identity and self-discovery, lensing characters that shed gendered, sexual, and social expectations. Zijian Zeng's author-driven "Anything But Love" delves into his quest for intimacy as a queer man in China, drawing from staged moments, memories, and imagined scenes. Following the poetic-radical utopia "Life is Not a Competition, But I'm Winning" (Venice Critics' Week 2023), Julia Fuhr Mann continues to push gender boundaries in the buoyant "Cheers to Our Lovely Life" (PINKY SWEAR FILM at DOK Co-Pro Market 2024 with "From Here"), adopting a hybrid approach that uses fictional elements and professional actors alongside real life persons (artist Sandra Knecht and novelist Kim de l'Horizon) to trace the journey of four queer women on a road trip as they cast off their familial baggage and normative roles. In "nava mamă", helmer Ana Vijdea ("Blue") offers a portrait of a trans teenager who carves out a space of gentleness in his native Romanian village, scarred by abuse and violence. Centring on her aunts, Ayşin and Asli, whose secret relationship spanned decades, Hazal Hanquet's "My Aunties" explores queer life in Turkey and love that crosses lines, all set against shifting political and social landscapes.

Water emerges in several projects in the lineup, serving both as metaphor for change and as a peril to life itself. Set in the Libyan city of Derna in the aftermath of a massive flood that swept away entire areas, Hussein Eddeb's "The Birth of Derna" observes how climate change alters people's lives and the natural world alike. Carlos Yuri Ceuninck's "Gongon" (DOK Preview International 2022 with "Omi Nobu") witnesses the transformation of a fishermen's village on a Cabo Verde island as dunes vanish and fish

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stocks dwindle, through the story of 90-year-old Titoy, whom the youths call 'GPS' for his ancestral knowledge of fishing routes. The anguish of disappearing worlds is also at the heart of Tommaso Barbetta and Setsuya Kakinuma's "Welcome to Our Bathhouse" (double tommy, Ina Fichman/Intuitive Pictures), which zeroes in on one of Tokyo's oldest bathhouses, a once-vital gathering place for working-class communities. "See You Soon" (WT) by Martin Prinoth (DOK Leipzig 2017 with "The Fifth Point of the Compass") and Martina Mähknecht (produced by Anke Petersen/Jyoti Film) reveals how global forces shape personal fates, following a duo of seafarers aboard a German container ship.

Pressing social and political issues continue to resonate across a number of titles. A poetic, politically urgent documentary from Georgia "Of the Trees Unmoved" by US-based Georgian filmmaker Nino Benashvili maps cycles of resistance in her homeland, blending vérité protest footage, materials from the 2008 war, family archives, and personal memories. Meanwhile, Jeanne Nouchi's succinctly titled "Anatolia" follows a Turkish farmer's quest for hidden Armenian treasure. This search becomes a lens revealing the lingering tragedy, as seen by those who still inhabit the land once shared with Armenians and who carry the weight of its past. With "Speak, Image Speak", Pary El-Qalqili explores a counter-memory of Palestinian history in Germany, negating what she described as "visual fantasies" that were imposed on people and have contributed to their dispossession. Finally, departing thematically, Zhanana Kurmasheva's (CPH:DOX 2025 with debut feature "We Live Here") "The Story of My Shirt" chronicles a shirt's journey, where the garment is cast as a protagonist: from its arduous birth on the cotton fields of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to its ultimate death in Chile's Atacama Desert.

This year's selection also showcases compelling animated documentary projects: Patricio Plaza's incisive "Black Diaries" about Irish-born diplomat Roger Casement, and Elsa Perry's family-centred investigation "Summer of '46". Archival projects are also present, ranging from documentaries that use them as material, such as Magdalena Szymkow's "The Chef Suffragette" and Tereza Bernátková's "Sisters" (MasterFilm at Cannes 2025 with "Caravan"), to works that interrogate and reimagine archives, such as Tiziana Panizza's "Fossil Matter" and Giuliano Franco Ochipinti's "That Soul Stealing Device".

The selection comprises five promising projects that the DOK Industry team scouted at trusted partner training initiatives and film markets: Roman Bondarchuk and Vadym Ilkov's "Recovery", Martyna Wróbel and Anna Biernacik's "Her Name Is Fields", Gal Rosenbluth's "It Is What It Is", Sara Stijović's "The 13th Fish", and Basma Rikoui's "Akal".

The 21st edition continues to see immense international interest from beyond the European borders, welcoming 4 projects from the Americas, 6 from Asia, and 3 from Africa. The lineup also includes projects from countries that are typically less represented in the international film arena, such as Kazakhstan, Benin, Cape Verde, and Paraguay.

The DOK Co-Pro Market 2025 is set to take place from 27 October to 28 October in Leipzig, with complementary online meetings on 4-5 November. This year, a total of five awards will be presented at the DOK Co-Pro Market. In addition to the Unifrance Doc Award and the Saxon Award for the Best Documentary Project by a Female Director, the projects will be recognised with the IMAGO Archive Award, the Jacob Burns Film Center Residency Award, and the No Nation Films Fellowship Award.

Press Release
11 September 2025

page 2 of 4

This year's selection process was carried out by Karim Aitouna (producer at Haut les Mains Productions), Caroline Kirberg (producer at pong film), and Maria Vera (festival distributor and sales agent, and founder of Kino Rebelde), with Brigid O'Shea (director of DAE and consultant), Carmina Orozco López (DOK Delegations and Special Programmes coordinator), Babette Dieu (DOK Co-Pro Market coordinator), and Nadja Tennstedt (director of DOK Industry).

Press Release
11 September 2025

page 3 of 4

Overview of Selected 35 Projects:

- **The 13th Fish** | Director: Sara Stijovic | Montenegro, Kosovo | Tiny Sofa, Kot Production
- **Akal** | Director: Basma Rkioui | Morocco, France | Kasbah Films, Massala Production
- **Anatolia** | Director: Jeanne Nouchi | France | MB17 Films
- **Anything but Love** | Director: Zijian Zeng | China | Shanghai Old Tid Culture Communication
- **Between Three Waters** | Director: Olivia Yao | Benin, South Africa | FMEDIA, STEPS
- **The Birth of Derna** | Director: Hussein Eddeb | Norway, Libya, Qatar | Integral Film, Aramit Company, Al Jazeera Documentary
- **Black Diaries** | Director: Patricio Plaza | Argentina, Germany | Ojo Raro, Osa Estudio, Bridgelight Pictures
- **Brigitte, for Instance** | Director: Jan Eilhardt | Germany | Eilhardt Productions, Freischwimmer Film
- **Cheers to Our Lovely Life** | Director: Julia Fuhr Mann | Germany | PINKY SWEAR FILM
- **The Chef Suffragette** | Director: Magdalena Szymków | Poland, Slovakia | Raban, Kerekes Film
- **Dylan McKay** | Director: Ana Lungu | Romania | 4 Proof Film, Microscop Film
- **Edition 96** | Director: Ahmad Naboulsi | Lebanon | OOBconcept
- **Fossil Matter** | Director: Tiziana Panizza | Chile | Solita Producciones, Panal Producciones, Errante Producciones
- **Gongon** | Director: Carlos Yuri Ceuninck | Cape Verde | Korikaxoru Films
- **Her Name Is Fields** | Directors: Anna Biernacik, Martyna Wróbel | Poland, Germany | Mozaika Films, Tondowski Films
- **In Transition (WT)** | Director: Ole Jacobs | Germany | Film Five
- **It Is What It Is** | Director: Gal Rosenbluth | Israel, Germany | uvs films, beetz brothers film production
- **The Measure of Love** | Director: Mauricio Cuffaro | Spain, Romania | Apnea Films, Aquí y Allí Films, Avanpost
- **My Aunties** | Director: Hazal Hanquet | Turkey, France | istos film, Little Big Story
- **nava mamă** | Director: Ana Vijdea | Romania, France | Remora Films, Saga Film, Les Steppes Productions
- **No Road to Panjal** | Director: Syed Jazib Ali | Netherlands | Mudland Studio
- **Of the Trees Unmoved** | Director: Nino Benashvili | Georgia, USA | Independent
- **Old Rocks** | Director: Nicola Pietromarchi | Italy | Studio x01
- **Recovery** | Director: Roman Bondarchuk, Vadym Ilkov | Ukraine, France | Moon Man, Hutong Productions
- **See You Soon (WT)** | Director: Martina Mahlknecht, Martin Prinoth | Germany | Jyoti Film
- **Sense and Sensibility** | Director: Hanna Nordenswan | Finland | Zone2 Pictures

- **Sisters** | Director: Tereza Bernátková | Czech Republic, France, Slovakia | MasterFilm, Bachibouzouk & Les Poissons Volants, Kerekes Film
- **Speak Image, Speak** | Director: Pary El-Qalqili | Germany | SEERA Films
- **The Story of My Shirt** | Director: Zhanana Kurmasheva | Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan | Plan B, Cinerama Entertainment
- **Succession (WT)** | Director: Yi Chen | USA, India | C35 Films, Repartee Films, Drung Films
- **Summer of '46** | Director: Elsa Perry | France | Wendigo Films
- **That Soul Stealing Device** | Director: Giuliano Franco Ochipinti | Paraguay | Juanjo Pereira
- **To Cross a River** | Director: Jin Jiang | France | Hutong Productions
- **Welcome to Our Bathhouse** | Directors: Tommaso Barbetta, Setsuya Kakinuma | Japan, Canada | double tommy, Intuitive Pictures
- **Youth** | Director: Daria Zhuravel | Ukraine, France | Contemporary Ukrainian Cinema, Les 48° Rugissants

Press Release
11 September 2025

page 4 of 4

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