



For immediate release:
European cinema innovation project "CINNOVATE" secures EU investment

Cologne – 21th June 2021: European cinema innovation project CINNOVATE (working title) today announced the securing of EU investment into a brand-new digital platform, which will enable local cinemas to complement the theatrical experience with a palette of new digital audience engagement and content features. The high-profile partnership gathers four of Europe's leading arthouse cinema networks – Folkets Hus och Parker, Folkets Bio (both from Sweden), Access Cinema (Ireland) and Art kino mreža Slovenije (Slovenia) – that together count 308 screens in three territories and will be coordinated by Cologne-based VOD and digital distribution experts Rushlake Media and independent consultant Jan Runge. Additional content and network partners are the Event Cinema Association (United Kingdom), Spielfabrique (Germany) and IMZ International Music + Media Centre (Austria).

Project CINNOVATE (working title) has secured € 380.000 funding through the European Union programme "Cinemas as Innovation Hubs for Local Communities". At the heart of the project is an innovative digital content and audience engagement platform that offers experiences in five interconnected areas:

- Cinema-powered VOD
- Event Cinema offers online
- Gaming and VR in cinemas
- Jukebox Cinema/ crowdsourcing
- Virtual film literacy offers

All digital features of the platform, which builds on the successfully operating service "Kino on Demand" in Germany, are designed to re-engage with existing and new film fans in order to bring them back to the cinema – a much needed objective after the devastating impacts that the COVID-crisis has had and continues to have on cinema admissions across Europe.

Representatives of the project partnership comment on winning EU support:

Philipp Hoffmann, MD and founder of Rushlake Media:

"The last 16 months have shown how valuable cinemas are as places of culture and experience. But they can also be places of great innovation. Together with our renowned partners from six European countries and based on our powerful KINO ON DEMAND platform and the successful track record in German-speaking territories, we are looking forward to realizing this project with the support of the EU in the framework of CINNOVATE."

Maeve Cooke, Managing Director of the access CINEMA network in Ireland:

"Providing access to a wider range of cinema as a shared, cultural experience for people in their local communities has always been at the core of our work. This past year has, of course, been extremely challenging for both our network and the industry in general, but it has also resulted

in cinemas trying new ideas and experimenting in very creative ways. Being part of CINNOVATE will allow us to complement and strengthen our network's traditional working model by using emerging innovations to reconnect with existing cinema audiences, whilst also reaching new audiences of all ages. We are also delighted to have the opportunity to work directly with other European cinema networks, which will allow us to share and learn from each other's experiences, as well as with the expert partners who will help us to build new activities in event cinema, VR and gaming."

Calle Nathanson, CEO, Folkets Hus och Parker

"The Cinnovate project is a great opportunity for Folkets Hus och Parker to improve our cinemas, together with some of the most innovative exhibitor colleagues in Sweden and Europe. We look forward to develop new marketing strategies and audience development skills, in order to increase the circulation of European films in cinemas and online."

Jure Matičič, Art kino mreža Slovenije:

"A cinema is always more than a cinema in our network, so exploring different ways of introducing alternative content, programming and tech solutions with our colleagues from across the continent will not only be a challenging, but a fun task."

Petter Forkstam, President, Folkets Bio:

"In this pandemic our cinemas have to find innovate ways to reach audiences. To be part of CINNOVATE we can develop new collaborations between European countries and partners to better understand how after the pandemic our audiences can access and find their way back to their local arthouse cinema."

Katharina Jeschke, Secretary General of the IMZ International Music + Media Centre:

The IMZ, which is the international business network dedicated to the promotion of the performing arts through audiovisual media for already 60 years, is honored to join CINNOVATE as network partner! With our 150 members we are looking forward to be part of this digital and innovative project, that will enrich and strength the performing arts film sector + brings alternative content to new audiences."

Grainne Peat, Managing Director of the Event Cinema Association:

„The Event Cinema Association is a honoured to be a project partner in this exciting pan-European funding project. Over the last 15 months we have seen a significance increase in the engagement and programming of event cinema (alternative) content both online and in cinemas. This funding provides a great opportunity for us to further develop and indeed attract new audiences across Europe as the interest and offering of event cinema content continues to grow."

Odile Limpach, Co-founder, SpielFabrique:

"During the last few years, cinemas have suffered a lot from the emergence of new digital platforms, as well as other entertainment activities such as video games. Young target groups have left out the movie theaters in favor of Netflix or their smartphones. Though, we believe that cinemas could catch up with these age groups, by reinventing themselves, using innovative

offers. Nowadays, the video game industry covers a large scope of product and services, satisfying all profiles. In particular, cinemas could use the rise of Virtual Reality to offer immersive experiences or take advantage of the attractiveness of esport (ie. competitive gaming) to propose a new viewer experience."

Jan Runge, Director, Jan Runge Consulting:

"I'm hugely excited to be working with this high-profile group of arthouse cinemas and industry experts to explore how we can (re)engage with audiences in new and innovative ways. Don't hesitate to reach out to us if you would like to learn more about the solutions we develop."

Please direct any inquiries to:

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