

Global Science Film Festival

25.-26.10.2025

Kino REX Bern

Friday

24.10.25

10:00 • School Program: Wider than the Sky

Saturday

25.10.25

13:30 • Lupi Nostri–Unsere Wölfe

15:45 • Apple Cider Vinegar

18:00 • De Menor–Underage

20:00 • Gen_

• Apéro & Party*

Sunday

26.10.25

12:00 • Messengers

• Lwanzo–Cobalt

14:00 • Soldaten des Lichts–Soldiers of Light

16:30 • Listy z Wilczej–Letters from Wolf Street

19:00 • Short Film Night

• Re-entry

• Co když kamínky dojdou?

– What If We Run out of Stones?

• A Body Called Life

• Niederurnen, GL

• Selection Films

– Filmmaking-Marathon

• Apéro & Party*

Rector's Greeting

Film is a powerful and democratic medium capable of reaching diverse groups and highlighting the relevance of science to global challenges. The University of Bern is proud to co-host this festival and contribute to building bridges between scientific and non-scientific communities.

As well as offering the opportunity to tell scientific stories and communicate the mechanisms of scientific work, the festival sensitizes a broad audience to scientific topics through visual approaches. The festival's growth in recent years demonstrates how people, institutions and communities can be connected through watching and discussing films together. It has thus become a unique forum that combines science and society.

Virginia Richter
Rector, University of Bern



Festival Directors' Welcome

The Global Science Film Festival brings together contemporary world events, artistic storytelling and scientific inquiry on the cinema screen. The festival shows current international films of various genres that combine social developments with current scientific debates. Following the film screenings, the topics and narrative forms are explored in-depth, through moderated discussions between the audience, filmmakers and researchers.

The festival, first held in Zurich in 2017, and soon afterwards established in Bern, places a special focus on unconventional cinematic narrative techniques. Current film productions offer diverse and critical perspectives on the pressing social, political and ecological issues of a globalized world. This year, alongside topics such as the measurability of elementary particles, the extraction of metallic raw materials and wolf populations, the festival also showcases stories from overlooked areas of science, including conspiracy theories, queer bodies, asbestos workers and kidney stones. Each film is followed by a discussion with the filmmakers and scientists, while the program also includes in-depth workshops and dedicated sessions for schoolchildren.

Susan Thieme, Professor of Critical Sustainability Studies, and Mirko Winkel, artist and coordinator of the mLAB at the University of Bern's Institute of Geography, oversee the program in Bern, while biologist and filmmaker Samer Angelone leads the festival's additional editions across Switzerland.

Susan Thieme,
Mirko Winkel and
Samer Angelone





Fri. 24.10.

10:00

82 min.

Wider than the Sky

Switzerland, Italy, 2025

English with German subtitles

Director: Valerio Jalongo

EN Is a collective use of artificial intelligence to shape a positive future for humanity possible? "Wider than the Sky" introduces world-renowned artists, dancers, and scientists who explore the many branches and human dimensions of AI, reflecting on how creativity and consciousness might evolve in dialogue with these technologies.

DE Wie könnten wir künstliche Intelligenz gemeinsam nutzen, um eine positive Zukunft für die Menschheit zu gestalten? „Wider than the Sky“ stellt international renommierte Künstler:innen, Tänzer:innen und Wissenschaftler:innen vor, die die vielen Zweige und menschlichen Dimensionen der KI erkunden und darüber nachdenken, wie sich Kreativität und Bewusstsein im Dialog mit diesen Technologien weiterentwickeln könnten.

• Event for school classes only •



Valerio Jalongo is an Italian-Swiss film director and screenwriter. He studied philosophy at the University of Rome "La Sapienza" and film at the Gaumont Film School and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. His documentary DreamCity (1988) received the De Sica Award, followed by his first feature film Messaggi quasi segreti (1997).



Sat. 25.10.

13:30

82 min.

Lupi Nostri – Our Wolves

Italy, Spain, Switzerland, 2025

In Italian and Spanish with English subtitles

Director: Samer Angelone

EN In a polarized Italy, where wolf advocates and opponents clash, a professor has dedicated the last years of his academic career attempting to mediate between protecting sheep and protecting wolves – whose behavior he studies. The film brings viewers astonishingly close to both the animals and the people whose lives intersect with them through sheep farming, gamekeeping, research or hunting.

DE In einem polarisierten Italien, in dem sich Wolfsbefürworter*innen und -gegner*innen gegenüberstehen, widmet ein Professor die letzten Jahre seiner universitären Laufbahn dem Versuch, zwischen der Rettung der Schafe und dem Schutz der Wölfe zu vermitteln – deren Verhalten er erforscht. Dieser Film kommt den Tieren und den Menschen, die über Schäfferei, Wildhut, Forschung oder Jagd mit ihnen verbunden sind, erstaunlich nah.

Followed by a discussion with the director and researchers on species conservation and the perception of wilderness. With Stijn Verschueren, conservation biologist at the Institute of Ecology and Evolution, University of Bern. Moderation by Payal Parekh, environmental scientist and activist.



Samer Angelone is a Swiss-Italian-Syrian filmmaker with a PhD in film studies and biology. The founder of the Global Science Film Festival celebrates his directorial debut with "Lupi Nostri – Our Wolves".



Sat. 25.10.

15:45

80 min.

Apple Cider Vinegar

Belgium, Netherlands, 2024

In English, Arabic & Portuguese with English subtitles

Director: Sofie Benoot

EN A kidney stone travels from England via Palestine to Cape Verde: in this essayistic film, Sofie Benoot links geological processes with body awareness, work and memory. The narrative voice of Welsh actress Siân Phillips, who has shaped nature documentaries as a narrator for decades, accompanies this poetic search for traces across landscapes, people and material relics of our planet.

DE Ein Nierenstein führt von England über Palästina bis auf die Kapverden: In diesem essayistischen Film verknüpft Sofie Benoot geologische Prozesse mit Körperwahrnehmung, Arbeit und Erinnerung. Die Erzählstimme der walisischen Schauspielerin Siân Phillips, die als Sprecherin über Jahrzehnte Naturdokumentationen prägte, begleitet diese poetische Spurensuche über Landschaften, Menschen und materielle Relikte unseres Planeten.

Followed by a discussion on the philosophy of tracing clues and origins – and their depiction in film – with the director and researchers Michaela Schäuble, Professor of Media Anthropology, University of Bern & Claus Beisbart, Professor of Philosophy of Science, University of Bern.



Sofie Benoot is a Brussels-based filmmaker and lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts. Her films combine documentary narrative forms to create patchwork-like narratives. Her film "Victoria" (2020) received the Caligari Film Prize at the Berlinale.



Sat. 25.10.

18:00

69 min. (2 episodes)

De Menor – Underage

Brazil, 2025

Swiss Premiere

In Portuguese with English subtitles

Director: Caru Alves de Souza

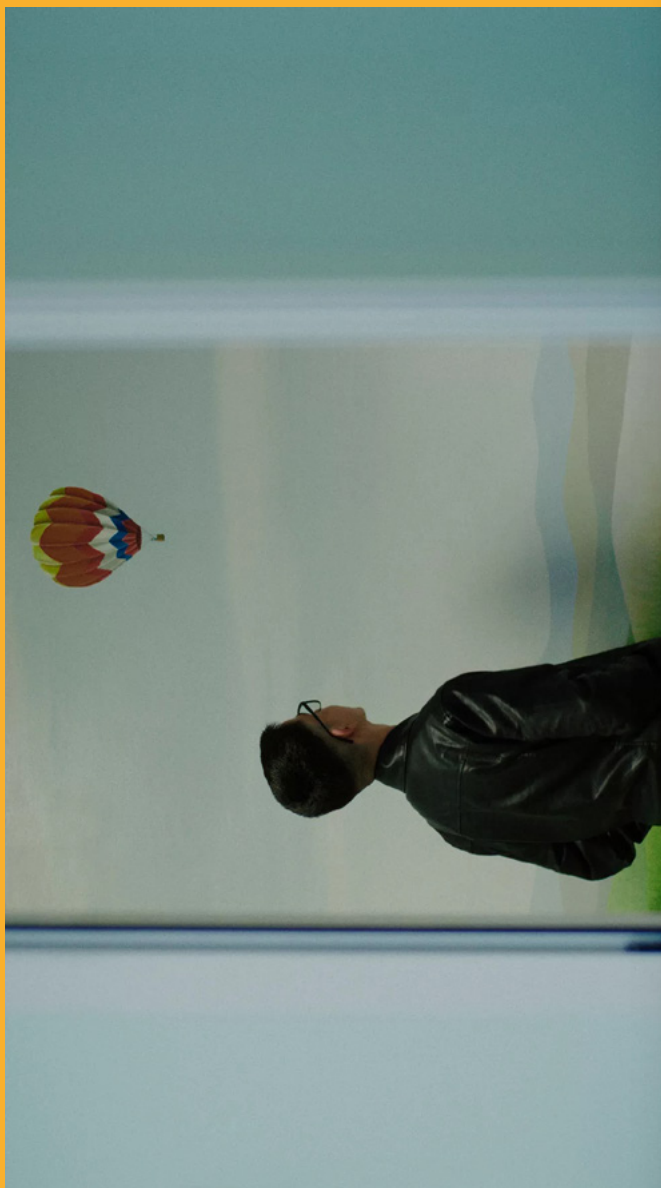
EN This fictional television series reveals the deep-rooted inequality of the Brazilian justice system. Six young people re-enact real hearings of their peers who are facing criminal charges, on a stage that transforms into a musical, podcast or talk show. The result is a multi-voiced space of possibility – both an indictment and a mirror of a reality made strikingly transparent through staging.

DE Diese fiktionale Fernsehserie zeigt, wie tief Ungleichheit im brasilianischen Justizsystem verankert ist. Sechs Jugendliche spielen reale Anhörungen von strafrechtlich verfolgten Gleichaltrigen nach – auf einer Bühne, die sich in Musical, Podcast oder Talkshow verwandelt. So entsteht ein vielstimmiger Möglichkeitsraum: als Anklage und als Spiegel einer Realität, die durch Inszenierung durchlässig wird.

Followed by a discussion on structural discrimination in the legal system and the potential for social transformation among young people in the legal system with director Caru Alves de Souza, actress Taciana Bastos, and Martino Mona, Professor of Criminal Law and Legal Philosophy. Moderated by Maia Gusberti, artist and researcher.



Caru Alves de Souza is a Brazilian director and screenwriter. Her films have won her the Best Film Award at the Festival do Rio and the Grand Prize of the International Jury in the Generation 14plus section at the Berlinale, among other awards. Her series "De Menor" also celebrated its world premiere there.



Sat. 25.10.

20:00

104 min.

Gen_

France, Italy, Switzerland, 2025

In Italian with English subtitles

Director: Gianluca Matarrese

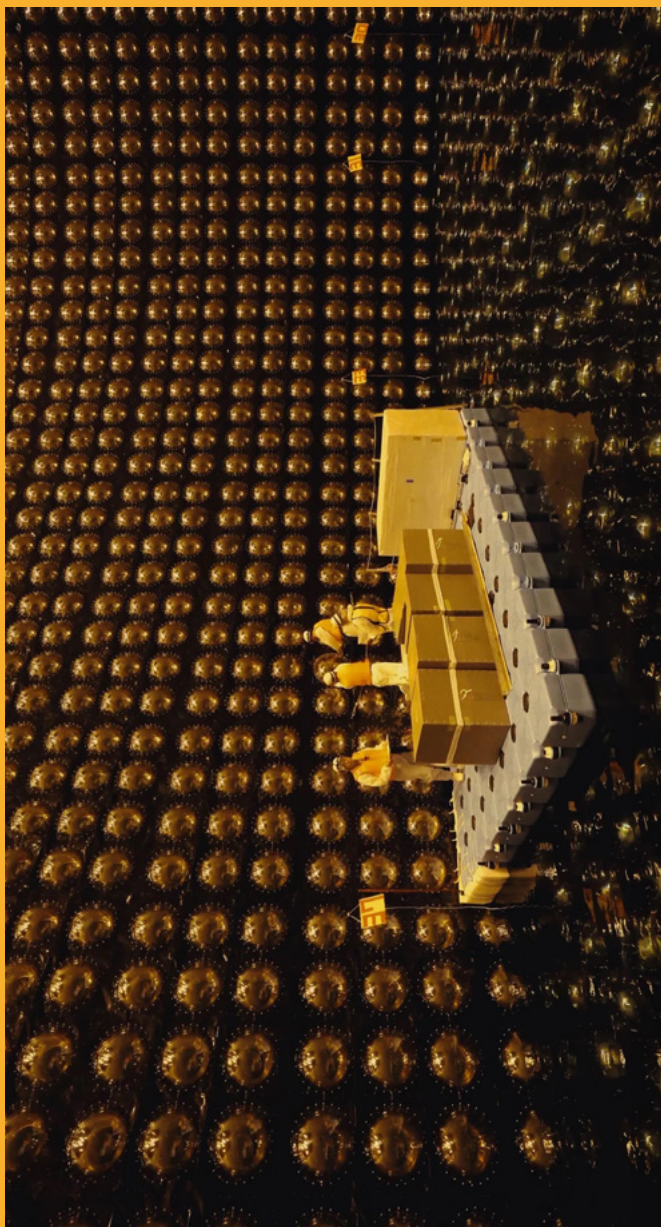
EN Against the backdrop of increasingly restrictive legal conditions in Italy, the film depicts the everyday life of the unconventional Dr. Maurizio Bini, who is about to retire from a public hospital in Milan. There, he assists couples who wish to have children with artificial insemination and supports people undergoing gender reassignment surgery.

DE Unter zunehmend restriktiven gesetzlichen Bedingungen in Italien zeigt der Film den Alltag des unkonventionellen und bald in Ruhestand gehenden Dr. Maurizio Bini in einem öffentlichen Krankenhaus in Mailand. Dort begleitet er Paare mit Kinderwunsch bei der künstlichen Befruchtung und unterstützt Menschen bei ihrer geschlechtsangleichenden medizinischen Transition.

Followed by a discussion with director Gianluca Matarrese and Julia Rehsmann, medical anthropologist, Bern University of Applied Science, on ethical and political challenges as well as generational change in healthcare. Moderated by Laura Perler, social and cultural geographer, University of Bern.



Gianluca Matarrese is an Italian director. He studied cinema, theatre and film history. He received the Queer Lion at the Venice Biennale in 2021 for his film *La dernière séance*. "Gen_" premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2025.



Sun. 26.10.

12:00

45 min.

Messengers

Canada, 2025

In English without subtitles

Director: Jeffrey Zablodny

EN Deep beneath the Earth's surface, "Messengers" follows scientists to remote laboratories in Canada, Japan and Antarctica – places few ever get to see. There, they study fleeting elementary particles in their quest to grasp the vastness of the universe. A poetic journey through matter, time and cosmic wonder.

DE Tief unter der Erdoberfläche begleitet „Messengers“ Wissenschaftler*innen in entlegene Labors in Kanada, Japan und der Antarktis – Orte, die sonst kaum jemand je zu Gesicht bekommt. Dort erforschen sie flüchtige Elementarteilchen, um das unermesslich Grosse zu verstehen. Eine poetische Reise durch Materie, Zeit und kosmisches Staunen.

Followed by a discussion on the visualization of matter and the poetry of elementary particles with filmmaker Jeffrey Zablodny. Moderated by Michelle Lee Galloway, senior researcher at the Astronomical Institute, University of Bern



Toronto-based director Jeffrey Zablodny combines visual abstraction, sound design and documentary research to create cinematic spaces in which scientific knowledge and sensory experience intertwine. His films have been screened at the Toronto International Film Festival, Visions du Réel in Nyon, DOK Leipzig and the Vancouver VIFF, among others.



Sun. 26.10.

12:00

31 min.

Lwanzo – Cobalt

DR Congo, 2025

Swiss Premiere

In Swahili and French with English subtitles

Director: Petna Ndaliko Katondolo

EN In the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo, artisanal mining companies extract cobalt using traditional methods – in resistance to multinational corporations and in response to the colonial continuities of global supply chains. "Lwanzo" also refers to the cultural, spiritual and social aspects of mining and speaks about self-determination, dignity and the question: Who has the right to live off their own country's resources?

DE Im Süden der DR Kongo fördern handwerkliche Bergbaubetriebe Kobalt mit traditionellen Methoden – im Widerstand gegen multinationale Konzerne und als Antwort auf koloniale Kontinuitäten globaler Lieferketten. „Lwanzo“ verweist zugleich auf kulturelle, spirituelle und soziale Aspekte des Bergbaus und erzählt von Selbstbestimmung, Würde und der Frage: Wer hat das Recht, von den Ressourcen des eigenen Landes zu leben?

Followed by a discussion with the producer of the film, Maurice Carney, about critical counter-narratives on the extraction and marketing of globally traded raw materials. Moderated by Elisabeth Bürgi Bonanomi, Professor with a focus on Law and Sustainability, Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), University of Bern.



Petna Ndaliko Katondolo is a filmmaker, activist and educator from Goma, DR Congo. In his cinematic work, he combines decolonial Afrofuturism with political engagement and participatory aesthetics. He founded "Yolé!Africa" and "Maideni" – two initiatives that empower young people in particular to bring about cultural and ecological transformation.



Sun. 26.10.

14:00

108 min.

Soldaten des Lichts –Soldiers of Light

Germany, 2025

In German with English subtitles

Directors: Johannes Büttner & Julian Vogel

EN The film follows a vegan influencer from Frankfurt who links healing promises, dietary supplements and conspiracy theories with Reich Citizens' (Reichsbürger) ideology. He closely observes his inner circle – including Timo, who suffers from mental illness, and "Peter I," the self-proclaimed king of the now-banned so-called "Kingdom of Germany" ("Königreich Deutschland"). A precise portrait emerges of a milieu navigating a search for meaning, a slipping grasp on reality, and a negotiation of alternative world views and skepticism toward science.

DE Der Film folgt einem veganen Influencer aus Frankfurt, der Heilversprechen, Nahrungsergänzungsmittel und Verschwörungserzählungen mit Reichsbürger-Ideologie verknüpft. Nah beobachtet er seinen engsten Kreis – darunter den psychisch erkrankten Timo und „Peter I.“, den selbsternannten König des inzwischen verbotenen „Königreichs Deutschland“. Ein präzises Porträt eines Milieus, das zwischen Sinnsuche und Realitätsverlust auch alternative Weltbilder und Wissenschaftsskepsis verhandelt.

Followed by a discussion on the role of conspiracy theories in times of disorientation, crisis and loss with filmmaker Julian Vogel and Stefanie Mahrer, Professor of Swiss and Modern History, University of Bern. Moderated by Chiara Valli, Postdoctoral Researcher in Communication Sciences, University of Bern.

Julian Vogel (Frankfurt) is a documentary filmmaker and author who has won awards including the German Television Award and the Grimme Prize for his trilogy "Einzeltäter" (Lone Perpetrators).

Johannes Büttner (Berlin/Amsterdam) creates interdisciplinary installations, films and performances, most recently at the Istanbul Biennial. "Soldiers of Light" is their first joint feature-length production.





Sun. 26.10.

16:30

97 min.

Listy z Wilczej – Letters from Wolf Street

Poland, Germany, 2025

In Polish with English and German subtitles

Director: Arjun Talwar

Screenplay: Arjun Talwar, Bigna Tomschin

EN A street in Warsaw becomes a projection screen for questions of belonging, memory and social change: Arjun Talwar, himself a migrant and filmmaker, portrays his neighborhood with subtle humor and an analytical eye, where personal stories collide with the political tensions in today's Poland. The result is a multi-layered self-portrait in the midst of a Europe in upheaval.

DE Ein Warschauer Strassenzug wird zur Projektionsfläche für Fragen nach Zugehörigkeit, Erinnerung und gesellschaftlichem Wandel: Arjun Talwar, selbst Migrant und Filmemacher, porträtiert mit feinem Humor und analytischem Blick seine Nachbarschaft, in der persönliche Geschichten auf die politischen Spannungen im heutigen Polen treffen. Entstanden ist ein vielschichtiges Selbstporträt inmitten eines Europas im Umbruch.

Followed by a discussion with director Arjun Talwar, co-editor Bigna Tomschin and Charles Heller, SNSF Professor at the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bern on radical political shifts in Europe – on the imagination of home and its significance in everyday life.

Director Arjun Talwar (Warsaw) grew up in Delhi and studied mathematics before studying cinematography at the Łódź Film School.

Bigna Tomschin (Zurich) studied film at the Zurich University of the Arts and worked as the editor and co-author of the film.



Together they created the two feature films – “The Donkey Was Called Geronimo” and “Letters from Wolf Street” – which premiered at the Berlinale and received a nomination for the Documentary Film Award.



Sun. 26.10.

19:00

86 min. in total

Short Film Night

This year's Short Film Night will feature short films from various genres, followed by discussions with the filmmakers.

Moderated by Mirko Winkel, artist & co-lead mLAB, University of Bern and Susan Thieme, Professor of Geography and Critical Sustainability Studies and co-lead mLAB, University of Bern

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16 min.

Re-Entry

USA, 2024

English

Director: Ariel Mahler

Decades after the loss of a research probe, a trans NASA engineer rediscovers her old mission and finds herself torn between returning and starting afresh.

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...

6 min.

Co když kamínky dojdou? – What If We Run Out of Stones?

Czechia, 2025

In Czech with English subtitles

Director: Nora Štrbová

A humorous essay in which seemingly inanimate stones are given a voice of their own.



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15 min.

A Body Called Life

USA, 2024

In English with English subtitles

Director: Spencer MacDonald

A young person withdraws, explores the microscopic world and develops a tender relationship with almost invisible creatures.

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...

18 min.

Niederurnen, GL

Switzerland, 2025

In Italian and English with English subtitles

Director: Anna Joos

The film tells the story of a Swiss valley where the lingering traces of a forgotten asbestos factory live on – revealed through archival images and reports of lost hopes and denied rights.

Selection Films

Filmmaking-Marathon

The Filmmaking-Marathon presents short films by professional filmmakers alongside works created during the Swiss Science Film Academy's filmmaking marathon – a multi-day workshop in which Swiss researchers collaborate with professional filmmakers to explore how their ideas and research can take shape through film.

Beavers Are Not Otters, Visions of AI

Marcio Morais Marinho, Corina Trafelet, Dorothee Wagner, Daniel Gacutan Salunga, Chun Chung Yeung, Mentor: Frederic Siegel

A mix-up between an otter and a beaver sparks a deeper exploration into how artificial intelligence interprets the world – and what it might miss along the way.

Datapon–Gotta Train Them

Iara De Schoenmacker, Aspasia Vozi, Mariia Becker, Mentor: Daniel Harisberger

In a world where trainers compete in fierce Datapon battles, a crisis strikes: the Modelix potion no longer heals the injured. Through federated learning, everyone unites to create a formula and save the Datapon.

Noise

Sunsha Chamakalayil, Cheng Li, Thu Zar Nwe, Deeksha Sharma, Beatrice Tărașoană, Mentor: Uma Damle

The noise of our screens can drown out the world around us. Losing control over the use of technology is more common – and more complex – than we realize and awareness is the first step.

Peak Water

Franziska Zilker, Giulio Saibene, Martin Vahlensieck, Kseniia Makhova, Mentor: Patrizia Widmer

"I need water," Andrea whispers, sweating. The water flows from melting glaciers, peaking in runoff and supplying abundant water. Until one day...

What Is Nature?

Christian Kny, Elena Bochenkova, Giulia Curatola Fernández, Kanshouwa Susie, Ross T. Shackleton, Mentor: Sarah Luo

An invitation to reflect on how anthropocentric or ecocentric worldviews shape our perception of nature – as either merely a resource for humans or a living system with its own intrinsic value.

Afterwards, the Audience Award will be presented by Virginia Richter, Rector of the University of Bern.

Ticket price per screening

- Normal tickets CHF 10.-
- Reduced* CHF 7.-

* KulturLegi/
AHV+IV+ALV/
students/
children/
young people

- Students of the University of Bern

Limited number of free tickets for students of the University of Bern and for asylum seekers and temporarily admitted persons (permit N/F/S). To be collected on the day of the screening up to 30 min. before the start time. First come, first serve.

Tickets available

- On location
- Online: www.rexbern.ch
- By phone: 031 311 75 75

Venue

Kino REX Bern
Schwanengasse 9
3011 Bern



globalsciencefilmfestival.ch

- The Science Film Academy

The Science Film Academy was founded by Swiss scientists and filmmakers who share a passion for communicating science through film.

The main showcase of the Science Film Academy is the Global Science Film Festival, inaugurated in 2017. The Global Science Film Festival promotes constructive dialogue between filmmakers, scientists, and society on essential global challenges facing us as human beings.

Since 2014, Academy members have established science film education programs at nine Swiss universities and research centers.

www.sciencefilm.ch

- mLAB

The mLAB at the Institute of Geography at the University of Bern is an experimental space that encourages researchers to develop new modes of collaborative and collective work and to critically use art, media, and digital research methods as an integral part of their work, promoting unorthodox coalitions of aesthetics and geography.

In addition to making research results visible, the focus is on sensory routes of knowledge creation. Art-based methods and perspectives enable a different kind of research. They place researchers and research participants at the center and in relation to each other in new ways. They open up spaces for the invisible and the unspeakable and provoke new ways of approaching a topic.

The mLAB is run by Prof. Dr. Susan Thieme (Critical Sustainability Studies), Prof. Dr. Carolin Schurr (Social and Cultural Geography), and the artist Mirko Winkel. It comprises a team of scholars interested in discovering new directions and imaginative formats within and beyond geography.

www.mlab.unibe.ch

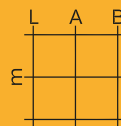
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Supporters:
Karla Cadena-Pérez, Sinje Grenzdörffer, Judith Kirschner, Ben Sulser



In Bern, the festival is organized and financially supported by the University of Bern. The mLAB at the Institute of Geography is responsible for the program's curatorial and conceptual design. The festival is an initiative of the Swiss Science Film Academy. Additional partners include the University of Zurich, the Graduate Centre of the University of Basel, Life Science Zurich, WSL, and EAWAG.