

Press release

KIDS Regio Forum 2014 – Strengthening European Children’s Film

Representatives of the media industry demand stronger cooperation and a mutual exchange

On June 19th and 20th around 80 European children’s film industry experts from 18 countries came together at the KIDS Regio Forum 2014. At the two day conference a wide range of representatives from within the European film industry, alongside film academics, met for the first time with the aim of raising the visibility and profile of, and increasing access to, children’s films in all European territories for the young target group.

Participants of the conference were film specialists and professionals representing a variety of media industry sectors such as authors, producers, commissioning editors, sales agents, distributors, politicians, and representatives of funding institutions as well as lobby groups.

With the topic “Children as Audience – from the Perspective of Research and Practice” two key themes were explored:

Raising Visibility and Profile: How can we create and design films produced in Europe that will successfully reach our target audience?

Increasing Access: How can we improve access to children’s films given the audience’s changing consumption habits, interests and needs?

An initial combination of Keynotes and Best Practice Presentations were followed by a series of interactive Think Tanks, where - in workshops and small group settings – participants analyzed and explored the key questions further from different perspectives: academic, critical, practical, creative. Here participants were encouraged to reflect on and utilize the forums’ content to discuss the current status of European children’s films, explore synergies and develop strategies to deal with the day to day challenges they encounter in their own particular fields.

In the end the idea of creating a European brand as well as fixed funding regulation was controversially suggested. Further points based on current research and resulting from the formalized Think Tank session can be announced:

Compared to other European productions, children’s films are relatively successful across borders. This demonstrates that not only are feature films very popular among children but they could also be used as an incentive for more activity within this field. It is also clear that current research is able to answer questions from the industry.

Moreover, cinema is just one of many platforms where children can have access to films. Childhood is changing and therefore it is essential to identify the specific needs of a young audience. In this context it is important to integrate children’s films within the educational system in order to preserve cultural variety.

In addition it has become evident that KIDS Regio has established itself as a key interface for exchange, cooperation and mutual support.



Since the First KIDS Regio Forum 2009 the initiative has been working actively to strengthen children's film in Europe. As a result of both the introduction of the annual European Young Audience Award in 2012 from the European Film Academy, and the special attention to live-action children's films within the distribution scheme of the Creative Europe Programme, the first successes have already been achieved.

A key announcement made at the Forum 2014 by Manfred Schmidt (MDM, the Central German Regional Film Fund) and Monique Ruinen (Netherlands Filmfonds) is that a special German-Dutch Co-Development Fund for original children's film projects is to be created. This special fund will be in place at the end of this year.

KIDS Regio supports children's films in Europe and is an initiative within the framework of Cine-Regio and a project of the German Children's Media Foundation GOLDEN SPARROW. The KIDS Regio Forum 2014 is financially supported by the Central German Regional Film Fund, the State Chancellery of Thuringia, Film I Skåne and the Creative Europe Desks Denmark and Berlin-Brandenburg, under the patronage of Jürgen Gnauck, Minister for Federal- and European Affairs of Thuringia and Head of the State Chancellery of Thuringia.

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