

2nd Animation Lab 2027

Rules & Regulations

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| Programme | 2nd Animation Lab 2027 |
| Organiser | International Arab Film Festival Zurich (IAFFZ) / Arab Film Festival Zurich (AFFZ) |
| Festival Dates | 2–7 February 2027 |
| Lab Format | Four-day mentoring, development and pitching programme for selected animation projects |

1. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by directors, producers or director-producer teams. The person applying must be directly responsible for the creative and/or production development of the submitted project and must be available to participate in the full Lab programme.

| Eligibility Criterion | Requirement |
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| Regional connection | The applicant must have a clear connection to either the Arab world or Switzerland. This may include Arab nationality or heritage, Swiss citizenship or residence, or a substantial creative/production link to either region. |
| Role in the project | Only the director, producer or an officially authorised representative of the project may submit the application and pitch the project. |
| Proof of eligibility | Applicants may be asked to provide a passport, national identity card, residence permit, company registration document or other official proof relevant to the declared eligibility. |
| Availability | Selected participants must attend all required Lab sessions, mentoring meetings, rehearsal sessions and the final pitch. |

2. Eligible Projects

The submitted project must be an animation project or a project in which animation is the dominant creative and visual element. Hybrid projects may be considered if animation plays an essential role in the storytelling, design and production process.

| Project Requirement | Accepted Standard |
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| Duration | Short films, feature-length films and other clearly defined animation formats may be submitted. The project duration must be stated accurately in the application. |
| Development status | Projects may be in development, production or post-production, provided they can still benefit substantially |

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| | from mentoring, feedback or production-related support. |
| Technique | All animation techniques are eligible, including 2D, 3D, stop-motion, mixed media and other innovative techniques. |
| AI Content Policy | The Lab supports human creativity; projects with AI-generated materials are ineligible for funding. AI tools cannot be used for scripts, storyboards, images, animation, or any creative content at any filmmaking stage. Submissions must reflect genuine human artistic contribution. |
| Originality and rights | The applicant must hold or control the necessary rights to submit the project materials and must disclose any third-party rights, adaptations or co-ownership arrangements. |
| Language | Application materials should be submitted in English where possible. Materials originally created in another language should include an English summary or translation when relevant. |

3. Required Application Materials

A complete application should provide enough information for the selection committee to assess the artistic quality, production feasibility and specific needs of the project. The organisers may request additional documents if the submitted materials are incomplete or unclear.

| Material | Required / If Available | Purpose |
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| Completed application form | Required | Provides all applicant, company and project information in a consistent format. |
| Logline, synopsis and treatment | Required | Allows assessment of story, structure, tone and artistic intention. |
| Script or detailed narrative outline | Required | Clarifies the dramatic structure and production scope. |
| Storyboard or visual sequence material | At least 10 storyboard frames required | Demonstrates visual storytelling and animation planning. If a storyboard is submitted, applicants should indicate how much of the project it covers. |
| Character and environment designs | At least the main character's design is required | Shows the visual world, main characters and design direction. |
| Animatic or visual sample | If available | Helps assess rhythm, staging, movement and animation potential. |
| Budget, financing plan and timeline | Required | Shows the production status, feasibility and areas where support is needed. |
| Links to visual materials | If available | Provides access to supplementary artwork, tests, teasers or previous work. |

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| Motivation letter | Required | Explains why the applicant wants to join the Lab and what kind of support is expected. |
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4. Selection Criteria

Projects will be reviewed by a professional selection committee and/or jury appointed by the organisers. The selection process will focus on the overall potential of the project and the applicant's ability to benefit from the Lab, according to the following criteria.

- Artistic originality and clarity of vision.
- Strength and relevance of the story, theme and visual concept.
- Quality and coherence of the submitted animation materials.
- Feasibility of the production plan, budget and timeline.
- Potential for professional development through mentoring and pitching.
- Contribution to intercultural dialogue between Switzerland and the Arab world.

5. Participation Obligations

By accepting the invitation to the Animation Lab, selected participants commit to professional, respectful and reliable participation. Attendance and active engagement are essential because the programme depends on peer exchange, mentoring continuity and structured preparation for the final pitch.

- Participants must follow the official schedule and attend all mandatory sessions unless the organisers approve an exception in advance.
- Participants must prepare and update their presentation materials according to the guidance of the mentors and organising team.
- Only the director, producer or authorised project representative may present the project during the final pitch.
- Participants are expected to treat all project materials shared by other participants as confidential unless permission is granted by the respective rights holder.
- Participants must behave respectfully towards mentors, jury members, organisers, partners, fellow participants and invited guests.

6. Awards, Sponsorship and Credits

If a participant receives an award, grant, in-kind service or sponsored production/post-production support, the specific terms will be defined in a separate written agreement with the organiser, sponsor or service provider. No award or service may be transferred to another project without written approval.

| Item | Rule |
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| Contractual obligation | Award recipients must sign the relevant agreement before receiving financial or in-kind support. |
| Credit obligation | The logos and/or official credit lines of AFFZ/IAFFZ / and the relevant sponsor or partner must be included in the project's credits and communication materials, according to the agreed wording and logo guidelines. |

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| Public communication | The organisers may announce selected projects, participants and award recipients in festival communication, press releases and online channels. |
| Use of project materials | The organisers may use stills, excerpts, loglines and project descriptions submitted by the applicant for Lab-related communication, provided this use respects the submitted rights and confidentiality limitations. |

7. Data, Documentation and Communication

The organising team may store and process application materials for the purpose of selection, programme administration, jury review, mentoring preparation, reporting to partners and communication related to the Animation Lab. Applicants should not submit materials for which they do not have the required permissions.

8. Amendments and Final Decisions

The organisers reserve the right to clarify, adapt or supplement these Rules & Regulations where necessary for the professional implementation of the programme. The decisions of the selection committee and jury are final. Submission of an application constitutes acceptance of these Rules & Regulations.