

Artists and activists shaping human rights dialogue in Geneva

Where cinema meets diplomacy, the FIFDH uses powerful stories to connect local and international voices for human rights action

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For nearly a quarter of a century, the FIFDH has created meaningful connections between local Geneva and International Geneva, harnessing the power of cinematic storytelling to foster dialogue and engagement on human rights.

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2026 will mark the 24th edition of the FIFDH, International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights. Founded at the very heart of Geneva, each year the Festival brings together filmmakers, artists, policy makers and activists who share a common view, using the arts to raise awareness as well as advocate for a fairer and more just world.

What is the FIFDH?

The FIFDH is an international festival entirely dedicated to films addressing human rights in their broadest sense, through a carefully curated selection of both fiction and documentary works. It is also a Forum. Once a year, in parallel with the March session of the UN Human Rights Council, the Festival creates a unique space where the most pressing issues of our time are discussed and debated following the screening of powerful films from around the world.

Through a high-quality film program — most titles presented for the first time in Switzerland — the FIFDH brings artists’

and activists’ perspectives to Geneva, the capital of human rights. These voices offer a vital and complementary lens to the discussions taking place among policymakers, civil society actors, and international decision-makers.

Films have the power to move hearts and minds. By telling personal stories, the films showcased at the Festival invite audiences to encounter lives they may never have known, along with their struggles, resilience, and hopes. This emotional connection fosters empathy, awareness and, ultimately, the desire to act.

The FIFDH leverages its unique position and long-standing partnerships at the intersection of cinema, human rights activism, and policy-making to raise awareness about violations happening around the world, while also highlighting the individuals and communities who are

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actively working to create solutions for the challenges facing people and their environment.

From screen to action

By highlighting not only human rights violations around the world, but also the initiatives and struggles of those working to uphold human rights and protect dignity, the FIFDH seeks to mobilize audiences to engage and take action — moving from a sense of helplessness to a sense of responsibility and agency in the face of an increasingly complex world.

This approach is made possible through the Festival's longstanding collaboration with a broad network of NGOs and organizations based in International Geneva. As actors deeply rooted in the field and closely connected to affected communities, they bring essential expertise and perspectives. By curating powerful films that resonate with their work and amplify their causes, the FIFDH helps transform awareness into collective action.

Exploring the future of the International Geneva ecosystem together

At a time when global aid cuts are profoundly reshaping the International Geneva ecosystem, it is crucial to examine what these shifts reveal about the broader challenges facing the multilateral system. Beyond their financial impact, these funding crises reflect a deeper crisis of meaning, as core values — cooperation, solidarity and humanity — are increasingly called into question.

As these principles weaken, the consequences are tangible: programs are scaled back, capacities reduced, and the most vulnerable populations are left without the protection, healthcare and support they rely on. By examining developments unfolding in Geneva, the FIFDH seeks to shed light on what is truly at stake in today's global landscape, and on the profound human cost of shifting international priorities.

The 24th edition of the FIFDH is coming soon!

From 6-15 March, 2026, the FIFDH will gather filmmakers, activists, journalists,



experts, and policymakers in Geneva, exploring the growing complexity of our world. The festival will address pressing global issues—from rising authoritarianism and the crisis of international law to technological threats, climate change, and social inequalities—while examining their local impact in Geneva and its international ecosystem.

Through a combination of documentary and fiction, the program highlights both the challenges and the solutions: citizens and communities resisting oppression, advocating for gender and climate justice, protecting human rights when governments fail, and seeking innovative ways to respond to crises. Special attention will also be given to underrepresented regions such as the DRC, Sudan, and Argentina, alongside ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine.

This year's edition, inspired by Zed Nelson's photography series called 'The Anthropocene Illusion,' reflects on how our perception of reality is shaped by images and narratives, urging audiences to reconnect with lived experiences and take responsibility in the face of contemporary upheavals. ■



Laura Longobardi and **Laila Alonso Huarte** are Editorial co-directors of the FIFDH.



Looking back to last year's FIFDH annual event

More info and tickets can be found on our website:

WWW.
fifdh.org

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