



PROGRAMME

DOC EDGE INDUSTRY 2026

29 June – 1 July 2026 / Grand Millennium Auckland

Beyond the Algorithm



Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua

I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past

The documentary landscape is transforming at unprecedented speed. Algorithms shape what audiences see, AI tools reshape how stories are crafted, and the boundaries between creator and machine grow ever more fluid.

Doc Edge Industry 2026 brings together filmmakers, technologists, distributors, and storytellers to explore what lies beyond the algorithm — the human creativity, cultural wisdom, and authentic connection that no machine can replicate.

This year's programme asks bold questions: How do we harness technology without losing our voice? How do we ensure diverse stories reach audiences in an algorithmically curated world? And how do we move forward while honouring the knowledge of those who came before us?

KEYNOTES

Our keynote speakers challenge us to look beyond the tools and ask deeper questions about the future of documentary.

They explore how algorithmic systems are reshaping distribution, how AI is transforming production workflows, and what it means to maintain authentic human storytelling in an increasingly automated landscape.

From global perspectives on ethical AI use in filmmaking to practical strategies for reaching audiences in a platform-dominated world, these sessions set the tone for the entire programme.

29 June / Day 1

** Daily programme highlight details on page 7

MORNING

0800 - 0845
Registration

0845 - 0900 . GMA Ballroom
Whakatau / Pōwhiri

0900 - 1000 . GMA Ballroom
F#&K THE ALGORITHM: Stories From the Edge Way-Finding Their People **
Kathryn Graham (facilitator); Lisa Taouma; Kim Webby; Mihingarangi Forbes

1000 - 1015 . GMA Ballroom
Paramanawa / Tea

1015 - 1115 . GMA Ballroom
BEYOND THE ALGORITHM: AI, Truth and the Future of Documentary **
Dafydd Sills-Jones; Robert Morgenstern; Arthur Machado

1115 - 1215 . GMA Ballroom
OUTRUNNING THE ALGORITHM: Grassroots Publicity That Cuts Through **
Tamar Munch; Lisa Burd; Rebecca Tansley

AFTERNOON

1215 - 1300 . GMA Ballroom
Tina / Lunch

1300 - 1515 . GMA Ballroom
Doc Edge Pitch
Selected project teams and Wayfinders

1515 - 1530 . GMA Ballroom
Paramanawa / Tea

1530 - 1645 . GMA Ballroom
Doc Edge Pitch
Selected project teams and Wayfinders

1530 - 1645 . Tasman 1
Clinic: AI Skills in Motion (By Application) **
Rob Morgenstern; Arthur Machado; Zohreh K.M. Shirazi

1645 - 1700 . GMA Ballroom / Online
Keynote Presentation: Lucie Kon
Lucie Kon, Executive Producer of Mr Nobody vs Putin

Evening Film Screenings

1800 . The Capitol Cinema / **Replica**
1800 . Takapuna Beachside Cinema / **In the Paths of Giants**

2000 . Takapuna Beachside Cinema / **First Cuts are the Deepest**
2015 . The Capitol Cinema / **58th**

30 June / Day 2

** Daily programme highlight details on page 7

MORNING

0900 - 1000 . GMA Ballroom

AGAINST THE ALGORITHM: Festivals, Selection and the Gatekeepers of Visibility **

Alex Lee; Laura Theron; Yulan Chang; Ariel Cypel

1000 - 1015 . GMA Ballroom

Paramanawa / Tea

1015 - 1115 . GMA Ballroom

Bonjour Française **

TBC (facilitator); Yann Olivier; Ariel Cypel; Alice Cagna; Laura Theron; Olivier Leroy

1115 - 1200 . GMA Ballroom

Prof. Annie Goldson in Conversation with Mette Hoffmann Meyer **

Prof. Annie Goldson; Mette Hoffmann Meyer

AFTERNOON

1200 - 1245 . GMA Ballroom

Tina / Lunch

1245 - 1500 . GMA Ballroom

Doc Edge Pitch

Selected project teams and Wayfinders

1500 - 1515 . GMA Ballroom

Paramanawa / Tea

1515- 1630 . GMA Ballroom

Doc Edge Pitch

Selected project teams and Wayfinders

Evening Film Screenings

1800 . The Capitol Cinema / **Return to the Strange Land**

1800 . Takapuna Beachside Cinema / **Collapse**

2000 . The Capitol Cinema / **The Werewolf in The Waves**

2015 . Takapuna Beachside Cinema / **Inside Gaza**

MORNING

0900 - 1030 . GMA Ballroom

F#&K THE ALGO-RITHM: Courageous Stories in a Noisy World **

Eric Nyari; Baby Ruth Villarama; Yann Ollivier

1030 - 1045 . GMA Ballroom

Paramanawa / Tea

1045 - 1145 . GMA Ballroom

BEYOND GENRE: The New Language of Documentary **

*Prof. Annie Goldson (facilitator); Kim Webby;
Eldon Booth; Matthew Metcalfe*

1145 - 1245 . GMA Ballroom

ESCAPING THE ALGORITHM: Keeping It Sane **

*ScreenSafe and Screen Auckland with Doc Edge;
Kelly Lucas; Matthew Horrocks; others TBC*

AFTERNOON

1245 - 1330 . GMA Ballroom

Tina / Lunch

1330 - 1430 . GMA Ballroom

OUTSIDE THE ALGORITHM: Who Funds the Future of the Screen Industry? **

Lauren Valmadre; Sam Wittars; Mark Westerby; SPADA; Doc Edge

1430 - 1600 . GMA Ballroom

BEYOND THE ALGORITHM: Building New Storyworlds **

Christian Jensen (facilitator); Dafydd Sills-Jones; Yi Peng Chen

1600 - 1615 . GMA Ballroom

Paramanawa / Tea

1615 - 1700 . GMA Ballroom

BREAKING THE ECHO CHAMBER: The Conversations That Matter

Open forum

1830 . GMA Ballroom

Doc Edge Awards Evening

Evening Film Screenings

1800 . Takapuna Beachside Cinema / **Coexistence, My Ass!**

1815 . The Capitol Cinema / **The Life We Leave**

2000 . Takapuna Beachside Cinema / **Kabul, Between Prayers**

2015 . The Capitol Cinema / **The Lives of My Father**

Programme Highlights

29 June

F#&K THE ALGO-RITHM: Stories From the Edge Way-Finding Their People

Māori, Pacific and Asian storytellers on finding audiences through community connection, cultural authenticity, digital strategy and new forms of audience-building.

BEYOND THE ALGORITHM: AI, Truth and the Future of Documentary

A timely conversation on AI, ethics, authenticity and the future role of human storytelling in documentary

OUTRUNNING THE ALGORITHM: Grassroots Publicity That Cuts Through

How independent documentaries can build audiences through smart publicity, media strategy, partnerships, community outreach and direct audience engagement.

Clinic: AI Skills in Motion (By Application)

A practical clinic for selected filmmakers exploring AI workflows, creative process and output.

30 June

AGAINST THE ALGORITHM: Festivals, Selection and the Gatekeepers of Visibility

A candid look at how festivals, markets and decision-makers balance curatorial vision, audience strategy, risk, timing and visibility

Bonjour Française

A French focus session fostering creative, cultural and industry connections between Aotearoa New Zealand, France and the wider region.

Prof. Annie Goldson in Conversation with Mette Hoffmann Meyer

An industry conversation with the CEO and founder of THE WHY Foundation and executive producer of major award-winning documentaries.

1 July

F#&K THE ALGO-RITHM: Courageous Stories in a Noisy World

A powerful conversation about risk, responsibility, censorship, backlash, truth and the courage required to tell stories that challenge power.

BEYOND GENRE: The New Language of Documentary

A Hybrid forms, experimentation, immersive storytelling, gaming, animation, AI and emerging technologies are reshaping what documentary can be.

ESCAPING THE ALGORITHM: Keeping It Sane

A vital session on wellbeing, burnout, resilience and building a more humane and sustainable screen industry.

OUTSIDE THE ALGORITHM: Who Funds the Future of the Screen Industry?

Who funds sector organisations, professional training and independent industry development — and how do we keep these spaces industry-led?

BEYOND THE ALGORITHM: Building New Storyworlds

XR, immersive experiences, interactive documentary, games and spatial computing are opening new possibilities for audience engagement and impact.