



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.

Mon 29 June / Day 1

** Daily programme highlights & industry guests list on page 7 & 8.

MORNING

0800 - 0845
Registration

0845 - 0900 . GMA Ballroom
Whakatau / Pōwhiri

0900 - 1000 . GMA Ballroom
**MAKING THE SPACE: Wāhine Toa
Creating Spaces Beyond the Algorithm ****
*Kathryn Graham (Facilitator); Papali'i 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; Richard Ramchurn*

1115 - 1215 . GMA Ballroom
**OUTRUNNING THE ALGORITHM:
Grassroots Publicity That Cuts Through ****
Tamar Münch; 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

Choose an option
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

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**

Tue 30 June / Day 2

** Daily programme highlights & industry guests list on page 7 & 8.

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 **

Yann Olivier; Ariel Cypel; Alice Cagnat; 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**

Wed 01 July / Day 3

** Daily programme highlights & industry guests list on page 7 & 8.

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; Kevin Denholm*

Supported by Screen Auckland.

AFTERNOON

1245 - 1330 . GMA Ballroom

Tina / Lunch or French NZ Working Lunch

1330 - 1430 . GMA Ballroom

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

Lauren Valmadre; Kay Ellmers, Meg Huston; Mark Westerby, Ellie Adams.

1430 - 1600 . GMA Ballroom

**BEYOND THE ALGORITHM:
Building New Storyworlds ****

*Christian Jensen (facilitator), Gregory Bennett, Yi-ping Chen,
Richard Ramchurn*

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

MAKING THE SPACE: Wāhine Toa Creating Spaces Beyond the Algorithm

Celebrating Lisa Taouma, Kim Webby and Mihingarangi Forbes, this session honours wāhine toa who have created space for Pasifika, Māori, Asian and Indigenous stories despite sexism, racism and exclusion. Facilitated by Kathryn Graham, it is a powerful conversation about courage, authorship, community, and building pathways beyond the gatekeepers

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.

Industry Guests

Alex Lee

Co-founder / Co-Director, Doc Edge

Alice Cagnat

Director, 'Cagnat Drawing or Nothing'

Annie Goldson (Prof.)

Facilitator; Doc Edge Super Hero, Occasional Productions

Ariel Cypel

Director, atelier des artistes en exil; Writer, Collapse

Arthur Machado

Kōawa Studios; AI Director & Artist, Odd Global & Paranoid BR

Baby Ruth Villarama

Director/Producer, Voyage Film Studios

Christian Jensen

Facilitator / Impact & Operations Lead, Doc Edge

Dafydd Sills-Jones

Head, Department of Animation, Visual Effects and Game Design, AUT

Eldon Booth

Director/Producer, Run Charlie Films

Ellie Adams

Lecturer Cinematic Arts University of Canterbury

Eric Nyari

Producer, Cineric Creative

Kathryn Graham

Ngāti Koroki Kahukura, Waikato, Tainui
Facilitator / Creative Producer, Tukua

Kay Ellmers

Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāti Raukawa (Tumu Whakarae | Executive Director), Ngā Aho Whakaari

Kelly Lucas

Executive Officer, ScreenSafe

Kevin Denholm

Director, Exposure International

Kim Webby

Producer/Director, Kimihia Films

Laura Theron

Festival Executive Director, FIFO Tahiti

Lauren Valmadre

Screen Australia

Lisa Burd

Director, No Tears on the Field

Lucie Kon

Executive Producer, 'Mr Nobody vs Putin'

Mark Westerby

Head of Attraction, Screen Wellington

Matthew Horrocks

Manager, Screen Auckland

Matthew Metcalfe

Producer / Founder, GFC Films

Meg Huston

Manager Screen Canterbury

Mette Hoffmann Meyer

Founder, The Why Foundation; Doc Mogul, Hot Docs

Mihingarangi Forbes

Ngāti Paoa/Ngāti Maniapoto
Producer, Aotearoa Media Collective

Olivier Leroy

Co-production, Incentive and Funding Executive, NZFC

Papali'i Lisa Taouma

Executive Producer, The Coconet TV

Rebecca Tansley

Director Tenor: My Name is Pati

Richard Ramchurn (Dr.)

Founder, Albino Mosquito Productions Limited (UK)

Robert (Rob) Morgenstern

Director/Producer, Atara Films

Sam Witters

Founder /Company Director The Public Good Company

Tamar Münch

Director, Kōawa Studios

Yann Ollivier

Producer, 'Inside Gaza'; Agence France Presse

Yi Peng Chen

Producer, 'Poems of Life'

Yulan Chang

Director, CCDF/CNEX Taiwan

Zohreh K.M. Shirazi

Lecturer, AUT