



INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY GIANT INDRIVE LAUNCHES GLOBAL NON-PROFIT FILM INITIATIVE “ALTERNATIVA FILM PROJECT”

New Enterprise to Support Emerging Filmmakers from Underrepresented Markets, Focusing on Central Asia in 2023

Almaty, Kazakhstan, (September 7, 2023) – Global technology company inDrive, known for its innovative peer-to-peer pricing model, announced today that it will be expanding its mission of advancing global equity by launching **Alternativa Film Project**: a global non-profit film initiative dedicated to supporting emerging filmmakers from less developed screen industries. The programme encompasses three strands: an innovative awards ceremony which recognizes the impact of local feature films, animated films, documentaries, and short films; funding via cash prizes awarded to winners; and training to uplift and upskill the next generation of filmmakers.

Every few years the initiative will spotlight a different region, with Central Asia taking center stage in 2023 for Alternativa’s maiden edition. The project will be headquartered in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the cultural center of the region where centuries-old nomadic traditions blend together with contemporary art and music. Populated by a variety of ethnic groups, the region presents a fascinating mix of cultures, religions, and beliefs and is full of stories eager to be shared with the world, yet remains untapped by the industry at large. inDrive has also previously supported the film community in Yakutia – one of the coldest and northernmost regions of Russia, where the company originated – when it launched a funding institution to support local filmmakers. Originally founded in Siberia, inDrive divested its Russian entity in July 2022 following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

The project will kick off with free and practical educational programming – the “Teen Lab” bootcamp aims to cultivate young artistic talent, educating participants about the basics of cinema and the importance of teamwork, while the “Impact Lab” is the first program outside the Global North designed to teach working producers how to create more impactful, sustainable, inclusive films by partnering with NGOs and state institutions. Other tenets of the project include public film screenings, networking events, pitching workshops, and “edutainment” shorts for social media.

Another major pillar of the initiative will be its inaugural awards ceremony, the Alternativa Film Awards: an alternative system of recognition that honors artistic merits, filmmaking potential, and work that amplifies the social impact of cinema, as well as more mainstream films with wide audience appeal. Rather than the traditional “Best Picture,” “Best Director,” and “Best Actor” prizes, the ceremony will bestow awards for titles and talents exemplifying cultural, societal, and industry impact. Evergreen awards include the “Spotlight Award,”

which honors a film that shines a light on a topic or story under the public's radar, and the "Future Voices Award," given to a debutant filmmaker with the potential to contribute to changes in the film industry and society in general. Other distinctions include the "Alter Award," which commemorates a film that addresses critical social issues (such as human rights, migration, war crimes, and the environment), and the "Nativa Award," which designates a film that touches upon topics of national or cultural identity.

The jury will consist of socially responsible filmmakers and thought leaders, not just industry professionals, and will present winners with cash prizes to further develop their filmmaking skills. The total prize fund stands at \$100,000, to be equally divided among the five festival winners so as not to establish hierarchy. The ceremony, which is slated to take place in early December 2023, accepts submissions from all Asian countries (except for the Shorts category, for which only Central Asia is eligible), with the goal of supporting cinema that brings change to the world and society through both its aesthetic and ethical impact on viewers.

inDrive founder CEO Arsen Tomsy said, "Film is a powerful tool for social change, and there are so many undiscovered creatives and trailblazers who aren't acknowledged by traditional systems. As a disruptive start-up from outside the Global North driven by the desire to create a more equitable world, we appreciate and recognise the work of similarly pioneering creatives in the screen industry.

We're thrilled to continue our expansion into the art space and use our resources to help emerging filmmakers succeed. It's so important to nurture and celebrate those who remain invisible in the existing hierarchy, to bolster local talent in emerging markets, and to foster artistic community."

Alternativa Film Project marks the latest in a long line of company initiatives to challenge systematic injustice and provide social elevators to underserved communities. By shining a light on less visible film industries, Alternativa aims to amplify a new generation of artistic voices on a global scale.

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About Alternativa Film Project

Alternativa Film Project is a new system of initiatives aimed to support and promote filmmakers, as well as discover new voices from developing but less visible film industries. Our mission is to help talents whose work can enrich our perception of the world enter the limelight. Committed to inDrive's mission to challenge injustice, we seek to build an impactful international project that will transform the status quo in the world of cinema by boosting the development of local industries and communities.

About inDrive

inDrive is a global mobility and urban services platform headquartered in Mountain View, California, USA. The inDrive app has been downloaded over 175 million times, and was the second most downloaded mobility app in 2022. In addition to ride-hailing, inDrive provides an expanding list of urban services, including intercity transportation, freight delivery, task assistance, courier delivery and employment search.

inDrive operates in over 40 countries. It supports local communities via its peer-to-peer payment model and community empowerment programs, which help advance education, sports, arts and sciences, gender equality and other vital initiatives.

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