

connecting cottbus: PROJECT LINE-UP 2025

The East-West co-production market connecting cottbus (coco) announces its vibrant and diverse selection of projects to be pitched at its 27th edition, running from 5-7 November 2025 during the FilmFestival Cottbus.

We are proud to share this year's project selection, handpicked from a wealth of inspiring submissions from across wider Eastern Europe, each one a reflection of the talent and vision of the region's filmmakers, to whom we offer our heartfelt thanks. While most of the selected film teams will be pitching at coco for the first time, we are also proud of the large number of returning coco alumni, speaking to the ever-growing network and film family the market has aimed to foster. Since connecting cottbus was established in 1999, over half of the projects presented have been completed, with almost 70 percent of those premiering at an A-list festival.

The projects in our **2025 line-up** originate from 16 countries. The **cocoPITCH** selection (**projects in development**) offers debut films alongside new work by established filmmakers like Darya Zhuk, Assel Aushakimova or Tonia Noyabrova, and again more than half are helmed by female directors. Neo-noir, coming-of-age, satirical sci-fi and magical realism, a vampire romance or queer drama - these are just a few of the flavours in this year's mix, which also introduces us to a ruthless female debt collector, an underwater archaeologist, a solitary food courier and one hungry bear.

Our **cocoWIP** selection of **works in progress** features new films by Tonia Mishiali, Claudiu Mitcu or Nikola Ljuca and genres like political thriller, elevated sci-fi and dramas in various shades and colours. Protagonists include a mathematician with a unique self-help method, a fed-up wife in communist Romania, a misfit with superpowers, ex-activists in a corporate system, former lovers and chosen family.

All projects compete for a variety of awards. The filmmakers take part in our cocoLAB in-depth feedback sessions with industry experts, while all participants can join networking events and a framework programme on current co-production topics.

Producers, sales agents, commissioning editors and other industry representatives active in East-West European co-production can **apply to attend without a project until 2 October**.

cocoPITCH Projects 2025:

Special Pitch Award FilmFestival Cottbus

ASTANA INTERNET STARS | Kazakhstan | dir: Assel Aushakimova
prod: Dana Sabitova & Assel Aushakimova, 24 FPS

ATTENTION WHORES | Czech Republic, Slovakia | dir: Alica Bednáriková
prod: Valeria Borkovcová & Tomáš Hrubý, nutprodukce | Jakub Viktorín, nutprodukcia

BEGINNERS | Lithuania | dir: Birutė Kapustinskaitė
prod: Rūta Petronytė & Justinas Pocius, Smart Casual

BEKKI | Kyrgyzstan | dir: Aygul Bakanova
prod: Chingiz Narynov, Citylab Production | Aida Usonova, Kyrgyz National Film Studio

EXACTLY WHAT IT SEEMS | USA, Poland, Estonia, The Netherlands | dir: Darya Zhuk
prod: Veta Krechetova & Darya Zhuk, TurnstyleTV | Dariusz Jabłoński & Izabela Wójcik, Apple Film Production | Ivo Felt & Volia Chajkouskaya, Allfilm | Max De Wolf, Topkapi Films

HELMET | Poland | dir: Roman Przyłipiak
prod: Aneta Dobies, House Media Company

I'LL WAIT FOR YOU LAST SUMMER | Germany, Sweden | dir: Tonia Noyabrova
prod: Sophie Cocco, Jochen Laube & Fabian Maubach, Sommerhaus Filmproduktion | Jonas Kellagher, CommonGround Pictures

LAVA LOVE | Greece, Iceland | dir: Steve Krikris
prod: Stelios Mavrodontis & Nicholas Alavanos, Filmiki Productions | Gudmundur Arnar Gudmundsson, Zik Zak Filmworks

PURGATORY | Slovenia, Austria, Greece | dir: Žiga Virč
prod: Iza Strehar & Žiga Virč, Lilit | Rok Biček, Zwinger Film | Minos Nikolakakis, Asphalt

Midpoint coco Award

RADIOAMATEUR | Poland | dir: Tomasz Habowski
prod: Marta Szarzyńska, Watchout Studio

SAROS | Turkey | dir: Ozan Yoleri
prod: Ilgim Coşar, Monday Film | Alara Hamamcioğlu Bayraktar & Sinan Kesova, Vigo Film

SOME GOOD NEWS | Hungary | dir: László Csúja
prod: Anna Szijártó, Cinesuper

THE INSPECTOR'S DEBT | Bulgaria, Latvia | dir: Teodora Markova
prod: Martin Markov & Kristina Despotova, Mirrormind | Uldis Cekulis, VFS Films

cocoWIP Projects 2025:

MONARCH | Romania, Czech Republic, France | dir: Dan Radu Mihai
prod: Livia Rădulescu, Redwood Productions | Paul-Razvan Macovei & Tudor Hermeneanu, Armadillo Productions | Pătru Păunescu & Dan Radu Mihai, Dash Film | Julietta Sichel, 8Heads Productions | Simon P. R. Bewick, Tajine Studio

RATTLESNAKES | Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, North Macedonia, Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro | dir: Nikola Ljuca
prod: Nikolina Vucetic, Biberche Productions | Ales Pavlin & Andres Stritof, Perfo Production | Damir Teresak & Ana Grbac, Maxima Film | Tomi Salkovski, Skopje Film | Yorgos Tsourgiannis, Horsefly Films | Zoran Maksimovic, Palchica Productions | Djordje Vojvodic, Bitter Frames Production

SWAPS | North Macedonia, Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria
dir: Gjorce Stavreski |
prod: Gjorce Stavreski & Ivana Shekutkoska, Fragment Film | Alžběta Janáčková, Silk Films | Nikolina Vucetic, Palchica Productions | Angel Apostolski, Push Pull Production

THE CHAMPION | Czech Republic | dir: Bohdan Karásek
prod: Ondřej Lukeš, Beginner's Mind

THE LION AT MY BACK | Cyprus, Luxembourg, Greece | dir: Tonia Mishiali
prod: Tonia Mishiali, Bark Like A Cat Films | Katarzyna Ozga & Nicolas Steil, Iris
Productions | Marinos Charalambous & Vladimir Subotic, Avaton Films

WHAT GOD THINKS ABOUT ANIMALS | Romania | dir: Claudiu Mitcu
prod: Claudiu Mitcu, Parada Film | Alina Tarbă, We Are Basca

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