connecting cottbus
east-west co-production market
at FilmFestival Cottbus

AWARD WINNERS 2026

While the 28th edition of connecting cottbus, the East-West co-production market at FilmFestival Cottbus, is still underway, the award winners out of the 13 cocoPITCH and 6 cocoWIP projects were already announced during tonight's ceremony:

The **cocoPITCH Audience Award**, a cash prize of €1,500, goes to the best pitch presentation of a project in development and is voted for by all industry participants. The audience chose **TONGUES** by director Tīna Zariņa and producer Alise Gelze (White Picture) from Latvia.

This year's cocoPITCH jury was comprised of Adis Đapo (SCCA/pro.ba), Natalia Grzegorzek (Koskino) and Zorana Mušikić (Mayana Films), who deliberated on three awards:

The **Avanpost Award** was handed out to **SVETLANA**, presented by director Vera Pirogova and producer Kristen Aigro (Stellar Film) from Estonia. Romanian post-production outfit Avanpost will provide the project with in-kind services up to €15,000. The jury chose the project for its "brave portrayal of an uncompromising woman caught between cultures and expectations."

The Croatian Audiovisual Centre presented the **HAVC Project Development Award**, a €5,000 cash award towards the further development of one project. It went to **SOMETHING WILD** by director Zsuzsanna Konrad and producers Patricia D'Intino (Good Kids) from Hungary and Maya Korn (MHK Productions) from Ireland - "a project that follows a metamorphosis within a powerful, funny and disruptive family story".

The **Producers Network Award**, consisting of free accreditation to the Producers Network at the Marché du Film in Cannes 2027, went to one producer of **WHITE GYPSY**, a "project that uses eclectic storytelling to pull us into the world of a unique protagonist". It was presented by director/producer Katarína Gramatová (džanes, Slovakia) and associate producer Vanessa Biermannova.

The **MIDPOINT Consulting Awards** went to three cocoPITCH projects, each receiving an in-depth script consultancy. The winners, announced by MIDPOINT CEO Barbora Struss, are **TERESA** (director Jan Bujnowski & producer Marcin Malatynski/Studio Filmowe Indeks, Poland), **TONGUES** (director Tīna Zariņa & producer Alise Gelze/White Picture, Latvia) and **VIRGIN MARY** (director Lilit Movsisyan & producer Inesa Mkrtchyan/Motif Films, Armenia).

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The 2026 cocoWIP jury was comprised of Natalia Dąbrowska (New Europe Film Sales), Daria Moheb Zandi (RBB) as well as Lukáš Moudrý (Studio Beep) and Robert Wunsch (D-Facto Motion). They deliberated on two awards:

Sponsored by German post-production studio D-Facto Motion, the **D-Facto Motion WIP Award** of €12,000 in-kind services went to **THIS IS IT, THE APOCALYPSE** (Türkiye/France)**,** presented by director Balahan Gürel and producer Aysun Karaman (Rename Media). Stated by the jury, "this year, we were especially impressed by a film that dares to be different. It takes risks, tries something unusual and really stands out. Its rhythm, its different layers and its strong characters make us want to see more. And it takes us far beyond the borders of Earth."

The **Studio Beep Sound Post-Production Award**, consisting of €6.000 in-kind services sponsored by the high-end studios based in the centre of Prague, was handed out to **SWITCHED STANCE**, presented by director Dániel Füzes and producer Ádám Farkas (CineSuper, Hungary). Stated by Studio Beep's Lukáš Moudrý: "We believe this project offers exciting possibilities for creative sound design, and we look forward to helping bring its sonic world to life."

Congratulations to all the winners!

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