

Partnership Proposal ↗ 2027

BY SOUTH
ASIANS ,
FOR SOUTH
ASIANS .

A documentary incubation and pitching
lab in Kathmandu, Nepal. Third edition.

KTM
DOC
LAB



WHY THE LAB EXISTS

South Asia is full of stories. Getting them made is the hard part.

-
- 01 Development money.** Very little funding exists to move a project from idea to production.
-
- 02 Access.** Few routes lead to international markets, funds and decision-makers.
-
- 03 Mentorship.** Not enough hands-on support in storytelling, producing and pitching.



HOW THE LAB WORKS

From a project in development to a room full of funders



ALONGSIDE **Observer Programme:** emerging filmmakers, mostly from Nepal, sit in on the Lab and spend time with the mentors.

TWO EDITIONS, 2025 AND 2026

What the Lab has delivered so far

122

Applications

69 in 2025, 53 in 2026

18

Projects selected

Nine in each edition

59+

One-on-one industry meetings

35+ in 2025, 24 in 2026

8

Development awards

Four at each Live Pitch

5

Countries in the cohorts

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan

8

Observers in 2026

Four of them from Nepal



THE 2026 EDITION

Longer, deeper and better prepared

Pre-lab workshops

André Lô Sánchez on entering the international industry, three rewriting sessions with Prawin Adhikari, and budgets and timelines with Mandakini Gahlot.

Six days, up from five

A community day outside the city, project presentations, group mentorships and a full day of pitch rehearsals, ending with the Live Pitch.

EURODOC masterclass

Nora Philippe and Leonard Cortana on the role of the producer, BIPOC EURODOC and impact producing.

Live Pitch, 27 May

At QFX Chhaya Center, Kathmandu, before jurors Tin Dirdamal, Sunah Kim and Pranay Limbu.

Online Pitch, 18 June

Eight industry guests, including IDFA Bertha Fund, Al Jazeera, DMZ Docs, The Whickers and Lightdox. It led to 24 one-on-one meetings.

The 2026 cohort

9 PROJECTS · 5 COUNTRIES



All About My Father

Golam Muntakim, Avik Talukdar · Bangladesh



Chahnu Wanmang (Leopard's Dream)

Mankap Nokwoham · India

Best Pitch Award, Documentary Association of Pakistan Award



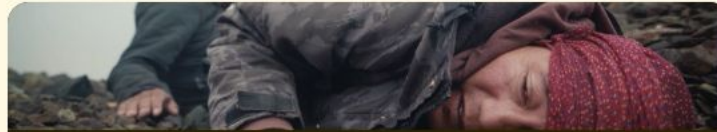
Ghosts of the Mountains

Lhakpa Choedon Lama, Sushil Sapkota · Nepal



In Between Rains

Sudarshan Hake · India



Moving Mountains

Lobzang Wangtak, Akshat Jain · India

Nepal Film Initiative Award



Search for the Karam Tree

Arifur Rahman, Edila Farid Turin · Bangladesh



Sound of Chewing Leaves

Suraj Bhattarai · Bhutan



The Emergency Exit

Mahnoor Batool, Shahnawaz Ahmed Khan · Pakistan

Spirit of Lab Award



Whisper of the Warm Spring

Sonam Norbu, Samten Gurmat · India

THE PEOPLE IN THE ROOM

Mentored by filmmakers who have done it

Rintu Thomas

India. Academy Award-nominated director of *Writing With Fire*.

2025

Anam Abbas

Pakistan. Producer, *In Flames*.

2025 · 2026

Arun Bhattarai

Bhutan. Director of *Agent of Happiness*.

2025 · 2026

Sarvnik Kaur

India. Director of *Against the Tide*

2026

ADVISORS

Jane Mote (The Whickers), Nilotpal Majumdar (Docedge Kolkata), Rajan Kathet

SELECTION 2026

Reena Mohan, Kesang Tseten, Ramyata Limbu, Sunir Pandey, Alok Adhikari

JURY 2026

Tin Dirdamal, Sunah Kim, Pranay Limbu



IN THEIR WORDS

“Kathmandu Doc Lab is not just a lab; it’s a launchpad.”

Rintu Thomas, Mentor, Academy Award-nominated director

“The online pitch was a game-changer... It made the international market feel tangible and within reach.”

Bunu Dhungana, filmmaker, Nepal

“The mentors created an atmosphere of trust and collaboration. There was no sense of competition, only mutual support.”

Gia Singh Arora, filmmaker, India

“I left with a much stronger project and a clear path forward.”

Mahera Omar, filmmaker, Pakistan

“A turning point that empowered my creative journey.”

Sumair Shamsi, filmmaker, Pakistan

AFTER THE LAB

Our projects keep moving

2025 cohort

- *Echoes Underneath*: Industry Award, Edinburgh Pitch
- *An Eventual Calamity of Time*: IDFA Bertha Fund
- *Mannu Mon*: Docs Producing South
- *A Weaver Bird's Nest*: Green Stories
- *Traces of Her*: Docedge Kolkata

2026 cohort

- *Moving Mountains*: Audience Award, Edinburgh Pitch
- *In Between Rains*: Sheffield DocFest South Asia showcase



INDUSTRY ACCESS

Who our filmmakers pitch to and meet



Also in the room: Lightdox, EURODOC, and independent producers from India and France.



HOW WE WORK

A lab built on care

In 2026, every participant, mentor and team member read our Community Agreement and Safer Space Policy aloud and signed it, inspired by BIPOC EURODOC and #DocSafe.

O1

Filmmaker first

Wellbeing comes first, with a clear structure and safety protocols.

O2

Community over competition

Peer support that grows into a network lasting well beyond the Lab.

O3

Ethical collaboration

Fair partnerships, and zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment and abuse.

O4

Built to last

We measure success by our filmmakers' growth over years, not one pitch.

LOOKING AHEAD

For 2027: keep doing what works

-
- O1 Keep the full model.** We don't reinvent the Lab every year: pre-lab workshops, a six-day residential lab and both pitches.
-
- O2 A wider regional spread.** More applications from Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Pakistan.
-
- O3 Grow the Observer Programme** to build the next generation of Nepali documentary makers.
-
- O4 Bigger awards.** More development awards, and larger ones, for the projects that pitch.
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THE 2027 BUDGET

What it takes to run the Lab



TOTAL BUDGET

\$25,000

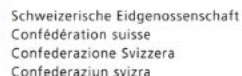
RAISED SO FAR

\$10,135

STILL TO RAISE

\$14,865

Built with partners. Now widening the circle.



Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
स्वीस सरकार विकास सहयोग एसडीसी

The **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)** backed the Doc Lab through the kimff Foundation and helped build it from its very first edition.

SDC

Documentary Association of Pakistan

Nepal Film Initiative

To keep the Lab independent and sustainable, we are building a wider group of partners, so that no single funder carries it alone. That is where you come in.



Ways to partner with the Lab

TITLE PARTNER

\$20,000

Goes towards the residential lab and helps put its future on a secure footing.

"Presented by kimff and [Your Name]"

- Premier branding across all Lab materials
- Co-host of the closing reception

CO-TITLE PARTNER

\$15,000

Goes towards participant travel and stay, and the development awards.

"In partnership with [Your Name]"

- Credit on the development awards
- Featured partner status
- Award presenter at the Live Pitch

SUPPORTING PARTNER

\$10,000

Goes towards operations, workshops and technical needs.

"With support from [Your Name]"

- Logo on all Lab materials
- Credit in the catalogue and on social media
- An award named in your honour

Other ways to help: sponsor a single award or a filmmaker's place, or give in kind (flights, hotel rooms, equipment, design and printing).

Let's build the next edition together.

Thank you for considering a partnership with the Kathmandu Doc Lab.
We would love to talk about bringing more South Asian stories to the world, together.

Alok Adhikari

Doc Lab Director

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kathmandudoclab.org

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