

Irène Challand, new Co-Director General and Programmes Director of the FIFDH



Irène Challand will assume the position of Co-Director General and Programmes Director of the Geneva International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights (FIFDH). A role she will be taking on starting September 1, 2022.

The FIFDH is pleased to announce the appointment of Irène Challand as Co-Director General and Programmes Director. She will be bringing her commitment as well as her visionary and strategic qualities to the Festival, which has just recently celebrated its 20th anniversary.

Her background as a journalist - for both RTS and ARTE - and her knowledge of the audiovisual and public service sectors, bode well for the FIFDH in terms of development and new synergies between human rights and socially engaged cinema. *«Irène Challand is a highly experienced professional and we are delighted to entrust her with the co-direction general and the direction of the FIFDH's programmes. She brings with her a strong vision for the future of the Festival, a national and international network, as well as comprehensive knowledge of the documentary and festival world. In co-direction with Rachel Gerber, in close collaboration with Florence Lacroix, Director of Communication, and together with the entire team, we wanted to strengthen the FIFDH's position, in the service of its mission to defend and promote human rights»* assures Bruno Giussani, President of the FIFDH Foundation.



Founder of the RTS Documentary Film Unit, Irène Challand was also its director for 17 years, during which she proved particularly committed to supporting independent producers and filmmakers. Since then, she has headed the SSR's «Public Value» project. She is also involved in several festivals, as a member of the foundation board (Visions du Réel and FIFF) and has served on numerous international juries.

«It is a great privilege to be able to join the FIFDH team and to share the direction with Rachel Gerber, Financial and Operational Director, on this important and necessary project. Anchored in Switzerland, in the heart of international Geneva, the Festival is a platform for dialogue and openness towards the promotion of human rights in the world. To consolidate this culture of dialogue around the fundamental, urgent and current themes of human rights is the challenge that awaits us in the coming years at the FIFDH and that I want to be able to take up with the whole team and in coherence with the objectives set up with the Foundation Board.» - Irène Challand

Irène Challand succeeds Isabelle Gattiker at the head of the FIFDH's programmes, the latter having led eight ambitious editions herself, before being called upon to direct the Office cantonal de la culture et du sport (OCCS) in Geneva. Irène Challand's experience and her passion for cinema made her an obvious choice to promote the FIFDH both in Switzerland and abroad.

The entire Festival team is delighted to welcome Irène Challand to its structure.

The next edition of the FIFDH will take place from **10 to 19 March 2023**.
Follow the news of the Festival www.fifdh.org

Biography Irène Challand

Trained as a journalist and a committed cinephile, Irène Challand moved to Berlin following the fall of the Wall. For 10 years, she observed and documented the emergence of a new Europe, on the cultural, societal and political levels, as a correspondent for TSR as well as for Arte. She also collaborated with the Locarno Festival's editorial staff.

From 2001 to 2018, she created and directed the RTS' Documentary Film Unit. She developed new forms of national and international co-productions and constantly sought to strengthen links with independent producers and filmmakers, in Switzerland and abroad, and to forge strong partnerships with festivals, including the FIFDH. In 2001, she launched the cross-media programme *Histoire Vivante* (Prix des radios francophones publiques 2004 and Prix SRT 2013), the innovative concept of which is based on the complementarity of the printed press, TV and radio within a single digital offering.

She has served on several international juries (Doc Aviv, Dok Fest Munich, Figra, Visions du Réel, Pour-cent-culturel-Migros, Civis Prize for Integration and Cultural Diversity in Europe) and Foundation Boards (Visions du Réel, FIFF). Since 2020, she has been in charge of the Public Value division of the SSR.

LE FIFDH in short

The FIFDH is one of the most important events dedicated to cinema and human rights. For 20 years, it has been held every year in the heart of Geneva, the international capital of human rights, in parallel with the main session of the UN Human Rights Council.

Over the course of 10 days, the Festival gathers 40,000 festival-goers in 80 venues in the Greater Geneva area to experience films and debates that address and denounce human rights violations. Activists, NGOs, diplomats, artists, activists, journalists and the general public are invited to meet and confront their points of view in this unique place. Two feature film competitions - fiction and documentary - offer a selection of Swiss and international films, in the presence of the filmmakers and protagonists.

Cultural activities and programme on-line

Throughout the year, the FIFDH offers a catalogue of themes and films on human rights, adapted to public and private schools, but also in Geneva's municipalities, cultural centres (museums, theatres, etc.), migrant shelters, hospitals and detention centres. The Festival also extends online with audiovisual productions and podcasts that bring the voices and causes of the FIFDH's guests to an increasingly diverse audience.

A unique laboratory for socially engaged cinema

The Impacts Days bring together filmmakers, producers, NGOs and foundations to develop collaborative synergies and conduct impact campaigns around films. A genuine link between filmmakers and International Geneva, the program attracts over 900 people from 70 countries every year.