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# Documentary film

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Documentary films have become one of the most influential ways of telling stories of world events in a time of unprecedented disruption in the media. Fake news, propaganda and false reports intentionally designed to mislead are now seen as one of the greatest threats to democracy, free debate and the world order. IMS sees documentary film as an important alternative to this development.



The award-winning *Last men in Aleppo* (Syria, 2016)

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## What we do

IMS works to promote documentary filmmaking and its ability to contribute to social, cultural and political change in some of the most trying parts of the world.

In close partnership with local film institutes, film schools, production and distribution companies, film festivals and independent filmmakers, we are seeking to enable and strengthen the infrastructures and outputs of domestic documentary film environments.

Promotion of female filmmakers and the role of women in documentary filmmaking is a priority for IMS. This is not to exclude male filmmakers but simply to utilize the opportunities of giving voices to women through documentary filmmaking and empower them to tell their side of the stories. We work with a principle of minimum 50/50 gender balance and participation in our film programme.

IMS strongly acknowledges the needs of reaching new audiences and believes that documentary film has the potential to reach diverse groups of people worldwide. As we wish to further explore this, attention will be given to projects that include new ways of approaching and activating audiences through all channels.

Currently IMS works to support documentary film initiatives in the Arab world and Iran – with the intention to extend the programme to include all countries where IMS is actively involved.

## IMS supports

- Documentary films from the MENA region – development, production, post-production.
- Independent film organisations working to enable and strengthen filmmakers locally, nationally or regionally with an inclusive working methodology.

- Establishment of co-productions between films from the MENA region and Scandinavian film companies.
- Educational initiatives: Film schools, workshops and training activities.
- Distribution initiatives: Film festivals, TV broadcasting, Online, etc.
- New initiatives activating new audiences.

*Support is given only to films that focus on topics of public interest and cover these topics in a professional and ethical manner.*

## Selection criteria

- Cover topics of public interest in a professional and ethical way;
- Promote responsible communications through documentary production initiatives;
- Priority is given to productions focusing on issues of gender equality, diversity, current affairs, and human rights;
- Priority is given to productions that seek to have an impact on the public debate and raise awareness on issues of a political, social or cultural nature;
- Documentary films should be produced or co-produced by filmmakers from the MENA region;
- Individual filmmakers and/or companies need experience from at least one or more previous audio-visual productions in order to obtain support from IMS. IMS works solely with professional or semi-professional filmmakers;
- Recipients of funding need a clear sense of their audience and an idea of how they are to distribute stories to their intended audiences;
- Full-length production formats are not necessarily an asset – shorter formats are encouraged.



paving the way for good journalism

IMS is a non-profit organisation working to support local media in countries affected by armed conflict, human insecurity and political transition. [www.mediasupport.org](http://www.mediasupport.org)

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