

# Coproducing with Switzerland

**20-40%**  
Refund on Swiss  
expenses



**Unrest** by Cyril Schäublin  
Seeland Filmproduktion GmbH (CH)  
Budget CHF 2.2 Mio



## Switzerland – The essence of European diversity

Switzerland offers a wide range of landscapes within very short distances (4 hrs max.), connected by a uniquely dense network of highways and railway: Snowy mountain tops in the Alps, palm-lined lakeshores in Ticino, rivers, forests, valleys, medieval castles. Urban surroundings with luxurious hotels, modern architectural and technological centres and scientific campuses like CERN and the EPFL/ETH universities are to be found in the cities of Geneva, Lausanne and Zurich while ancient city panorama characterise the UNESCO World Heritage town of Berne. The countryside can easily double for any Northern, Western or South European landscapes.

## Profitable working regulations and infrastructure

A highly skilled multilingual workforce and state of the art postproduction facilities complete the picture. Labour costs in Switzerland are similar to those in neighbouring countries, but you can benefit from lower social costs and tighter production schedules. In addition, Switzerland is blessed with moderate levels of taxation. International airports are to be found in all regions: Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Berne and Lugano, accessible within max. 30 minutes.

**Front: The Line** by Ursula Meier  
Bandita Films (CH)  
CH 66%, FR 24%, BE 10%  
Budget: CHF 5.2 Mio

# Facts and figures Switzerland 2021

## General data

+ 8.6 Mio inhabitants

+ 7.7% VAT

+ 1 € = 1.04 CHF  
Dec. 2021

## Film industry

+ 605 screens | 2019: 609

+ 5.6 Mio cinema admissions | 2019: 12.9 Mio

+ 0.6 admissions per person per year | 2019: 1.5

+ 88 Mio CHF box office | 2019: 198 Mio

+ More than 60 production companies have an output of at least one feature film per year

+ 25 distribution companies

## Feature films produced

+ 78 in total | 2019: 79

46 national productions | 2019: 48

16 majority co-productions | 2019: 15

16 minority co-productions | 2019: 16

+ 53 Documentaries | 2019: 52

+ 24 Fictions | 2019: 26

+ 1 Animation | 2019: 1

## Market share

+ 4.6% Swiss Film market share | 2019: 6.8%

+ 71% US market share | 2019: 66.2%  
18.7% EU market share | 2019: 22.5%

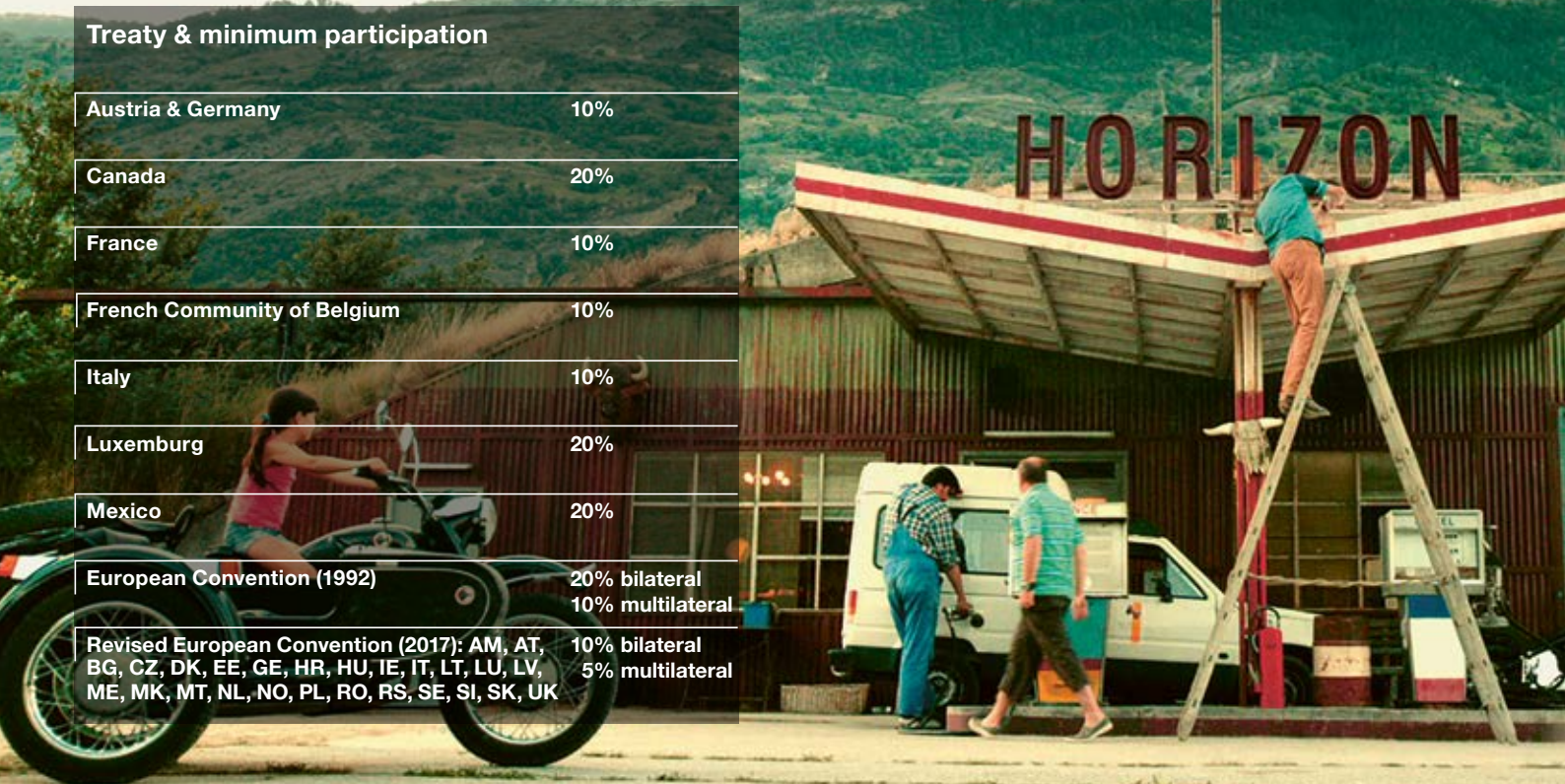
**Wonderland** by M. Krümmeracher,  
J. Gassmann, L. Blatter, G. Frei,  
B. Jaberg, C. Jaquier, J. Meier,  
T. Nölle, L. Rupp, M. Scheiwiler  
Contrast Film Bern / 2:1 Film (CH)

# Coproduction treaties

Switzerland has ratified both the European Convention on Cinematographic Coproduction from 1992 as well as the revised Convention from 2017. Separate coproduction treaties exist with eight countries.

## Treaty & minimum participation

Austria & Germany	10%
Canada	20%
France	10%
French Community of Belgium	10%
Italy	10%
Luxemburg	20%
Mexico	20%
European Convention (1992)	20% bilateral 10% multilateral
Revised European Convention (2017): AM, AT, BG, CZ, DK, EE, GE, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, ME, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, UK	10% bilateral 5% multilateral

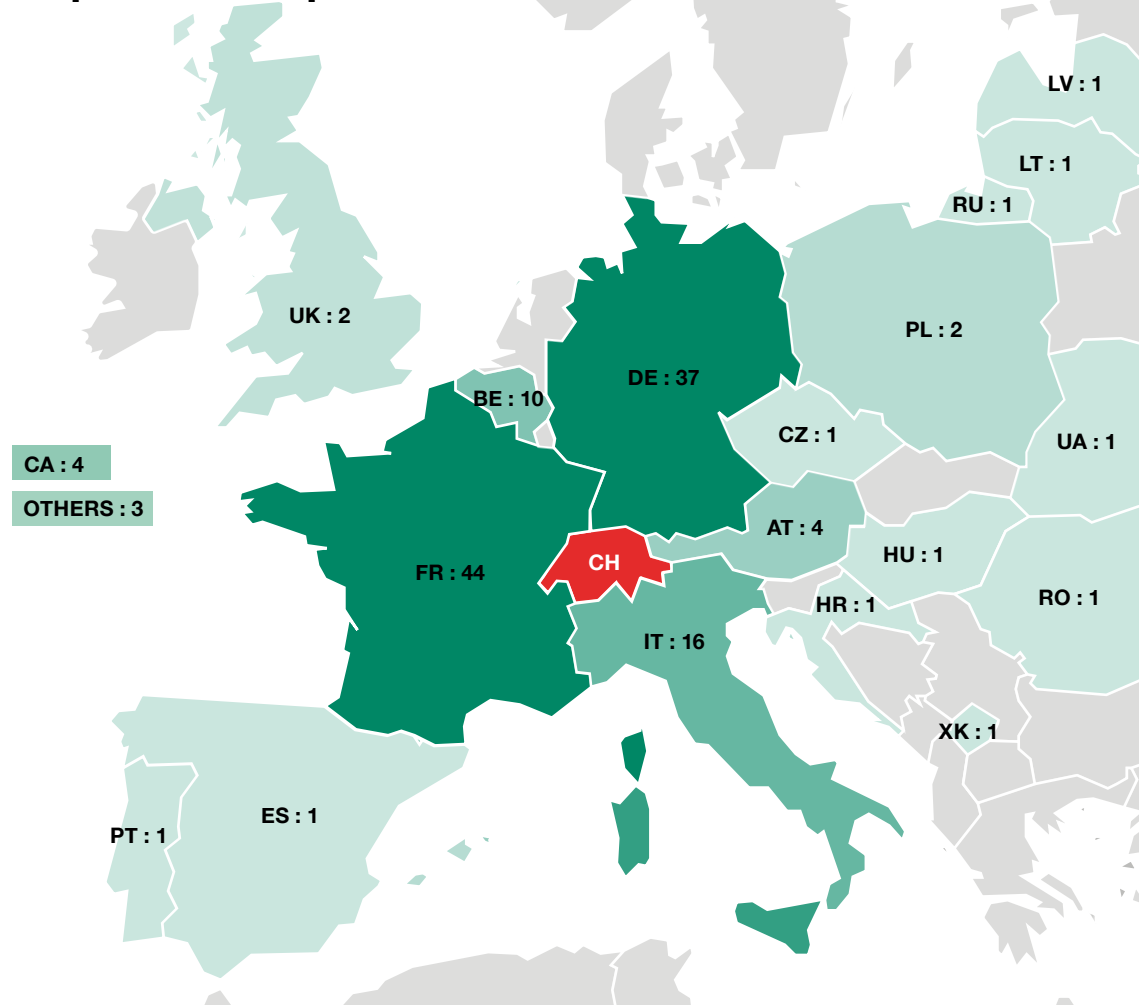




**Station Horizon**

by Pierre-Adrien Irlé and  
Romain Graf  
JUMP CUT Production (CH)

## Coproduction partners 2017-2020

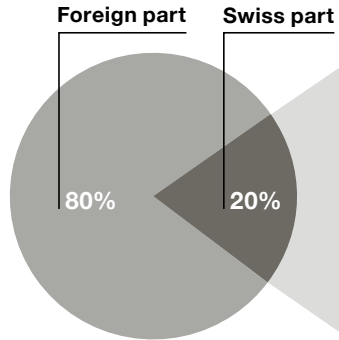
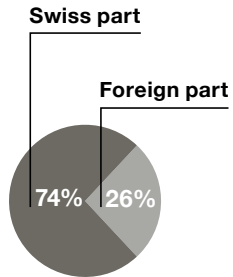


# Coproductions: Average financing

Majority Swiss

Minority Swiss

Swiss part

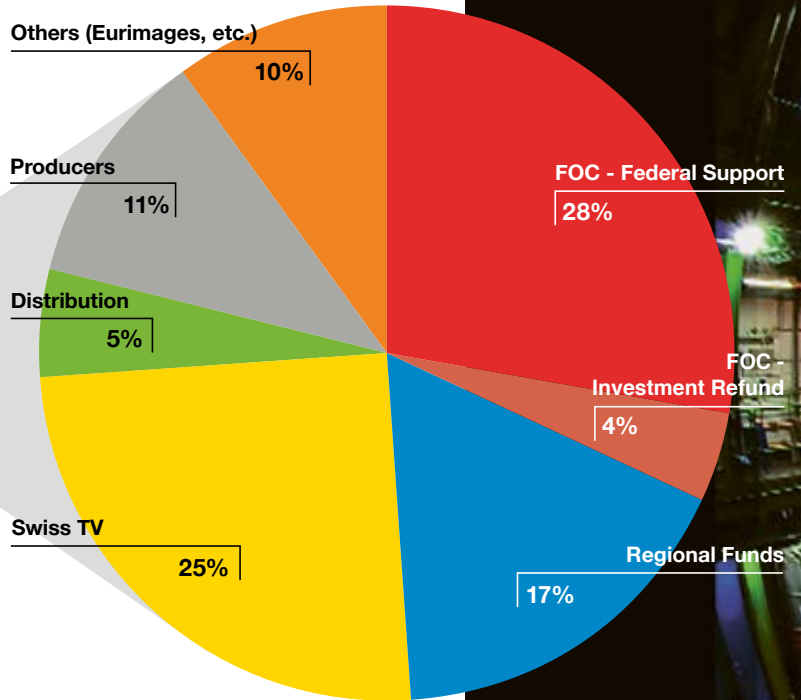


Others (Eurimages, etc.)

Producers

Distribution

Swiss TV







Swiss producers can obtain up to CHF 900'000 from public sources for a minority co-production with foreign director.

**The Sense of Beauty**

by Valerio Jalongo

AMKA Films Productions (CH)

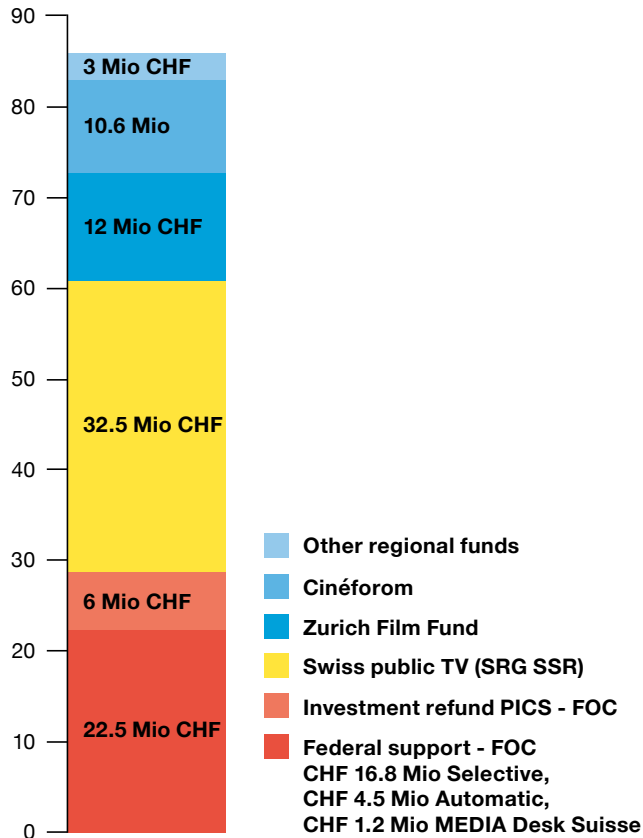
CH 61%, IT 39%, Budget CHF 810'000



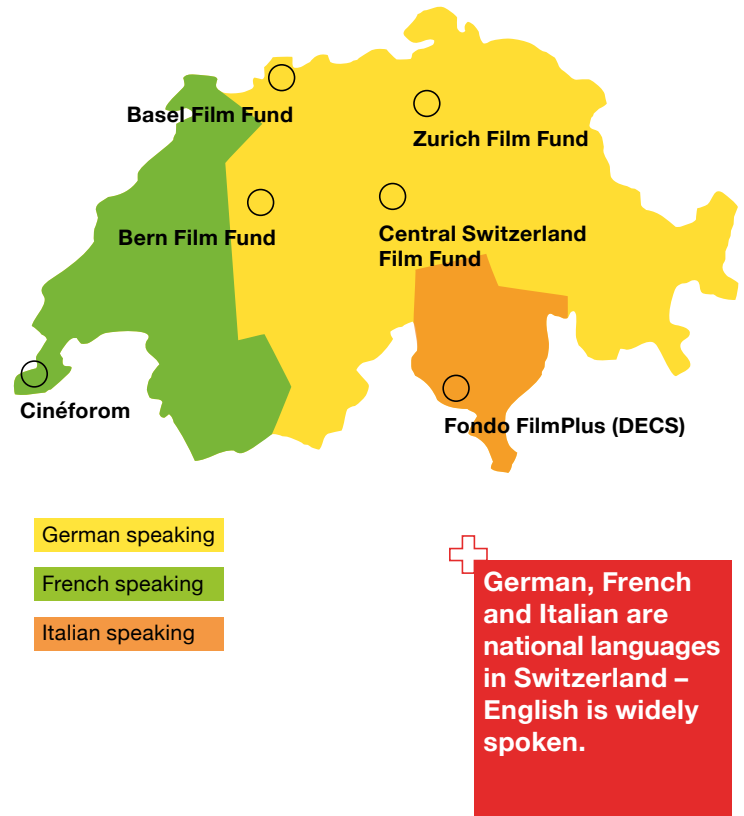
**My Life as a Zucchini** by Claude Barras  
RITA Productions (CH)

CH 50%, FR 50%  
Budget € 8 Mio  
Sold to more than 50 countries  
1.1 Mio admissions worldwide  
Academy Award® nominee 2017

# Total public funding available on national level: 86.6 Mio CHF



# Regional funds and their coverage



# Federal Office of Culture (FOC) - Film production support

## Introduction of the fund

The Federal Office of Culture FOC supports projects that contribute to the diversity of Swiss film culture. The support is a non-recoupable funding based on selective criteria evaluated by an independent commission. Support is also granted by an automatic scheme (succès cinéma).

## Who can apply?

An independent Swiss production company.

## To what production stage does it apply to? What types of projects are eligible?

Funding is allocated to the development phase for any type of feature-length film and to the production phase for both feature and short films. The projects must aim at theatrical release, festivals or digital platforms. Development funding is available to projects with a Swiss author only.

## How much can be granted?

Maximum amount (for production): Up to CHF 1 Mio for films with Swiss director and CHF 300'000 for films with foreign director.

The sum of federal funding cannot exceed 70% of the total costs. About 40 feature film projects supported every year.

## Do you fund minority co-productions?

Yes, with a dedicated budget (CHF 2'000'000). Chances of attribution can be easily calculated on the basis of a point system.

## What are the spending obligations?

Coproductions must spend the Swiss financing part in Switzerland. Up to 20% transfer may be authorized.

## What are the evaluation criteria?

Artistic quality / Artistic and technical coherence / Potential for distribution / Contribution to diversity / Production experience.

## When to apply?

Applications may be submitted 4 times per year, decisions within 2 months.

[bak.admin.ch/film](http://bak.admin.ch/film)



# Federal Office of Culture - Film Investment Refund Switzerland (PICS)

## Introduction of the funding programme

Film Investment Refund Switzerland (PICS) is a programme principally focused on Swiss-international coproductions. PICS refunds 20% to 40% of eligible film production expenses generated in Switzerland.

## Who can apply?

An independent Swiss production company.

## To what production stage does it apply to? What types of projects are eligible?

Funding is allocated only for the production phase. Projects can be feature-length films made for theatrical release, for festivals or for digital platforms.

## How much can be granted?

Total amount: CHF 6 Mio per year.

About 30 projects supported every year.

Maximum amount: up to CHF 600'000.

The sum of federal funding cannot exceed 70% of the total costs.

## Do you fund minority co-productions?

Yes, at a higher rate. PICS refunds 40% for all eligible film production expenses of minority co-productions.

## What are the spending obligations?

Fiction films: At least CHF 1.2 Mio for majority and CHF 300'000 for minority co-productions. Fiction films need also 5 days of shooting in Switzerland. Documentaries: At least CHF 250'000 for majority and CHF 150'000 for minority co-productions.

## What are the criteria?

75% of the financing must be guaranteed.

20% of the artistic and logistical expenses are refunded.

40% of the technical expenses are refunded.

## When to apply?

No special deadlines. Applications can be submitted anytime.

[bak.admin.ch/pics](http://bak.admin.ch/pics)



# MEDIA Desk Suisse

## Introduction of the fund

The Federal Office of Culture (FOC) offers a support scheme to foster international co-development at an early stage. The fund compensates for the fact that Switzerland is not member of the Creative Europe MEDIA Programme. Projects are evaluated by independent experts based on selective criteria similar to those used by the MEDIA Programme.

## Who can apply?

An independent Swiss production company.

## To what production stage does it apply to?

### What types of projects are eligible?

Funding is allocated only to the development phase (until the first day of principal photography). Projects can be feature films (fiction, documentary, animation) or series, made for theatrical release, TV or for digital platforms. Projects with foreign authors are also eligible.

## How much can be granted?

- Total amount: CHF 1'2 Mio per year,
- About 23 projects supported every year,
- Max. amount: up to CHF 60'000.

The sum of federal funding cannot exceed 70% of the total costs.

## Do you fund minority co-productions?

The Swiss production company must hold the majority of the development rights of the work. After the development phase, projects may change majority stakes and might become a Swiss minority coproduction.

## What are the spending obligations?

No specific spending obligations.

## What are the evaluation criteria?

- Potential for European and international distribution,
- Artistic quality.

Extra points for:

- European coproductions
- Films dedicated to a young audience.

## When to apply?

April and October for single projects, June for Slates (3 to 5 projects).

[mediadesk.ch](http://mediadesk.ch)





**Soul of a Beast** by Lorenz Merz  
Hesse Film GmbH (CH), 8horses GmbH (CH),  
Milan Film AG (CH), The Hub Media (CH)  
Budget CHF 3.2 Mio

# Regional funds – Cinéforum

## Introduction of the fund

Cinéforum is the film fund for the whole French-speaking part of Switzerland, offering soft money grants, both selective and automatic (bonification based on the highest grant from FOC or SRG-SSR television).

## Who can apply?

An independent Swiss production company. For films with a non-Swiss director, it must be established in the French-speaking part.

## To what production stage does it apply to? What types of projects are eligible?

All kinds of films (fictions, documentaries, animation) across all medias (cinema, television, web) may apply for development and/or production grants. There are also set grants for digital experiences (XR/interactive film, 2x CHF 175'000 for production and 4x CHF 25'000 for development per year).

## Do you fund minority coproduction?

Yes.

## How much can be granted?

For minority coproductions, the selective support can be up to 10% of the Swiss financing (up to CHF 100'000), and selective and automatic cumulated can be up to 15% of the Swiss financing (up to CHF 200'000). Those restrictions do not apply to digital experiences projects.

## What are the spending obligations?

The whole grant must be spent within the French-speaking part.

## What are the evaluation criteria?

Sole criterion for selective commissions is artistic quality. Requests above CHF 60'000 are checked production-wise for consistency.

## When to apply?

Applications may be submitted 4 times per year, or 2 times per year for the digital experiences support. The committee takes the decisions within 6 weeks.

[cineforum.ch](http://cineforum.ch)







**With the Wind** by Bettina Oberli  
RITA Productions (CH)  
CH 74%, FR 26%  
Budget CHF 4.7 Mio

# Regional funds – Zurich Film Fund

## Introduction of the fund

As one of the two main regional funds in Switzerland, Zurich Film Fund is committed to supporting the film industry in the Canton of Zurich and particularly its capital, which is the leading film hub in Switzerland.

## Who can apply?

An independent Swiss production company. If the film's director is not based in Zurich, the production company must be established in the Canton of Zurich.

## To what production stage does it apply to? What types of projects are eligible?

Funding is provided for all formats of audio-visual works:

- Story and project development on three levels
- Production
- Marketing and distribution of already funded productions only

## How much can be granted?

- Development: max. 50% of budget or CHF 100'000
- Production: max. 50% of budget or CHF 1 Mio
- Distribution/Marketing: max. 50% of budget or CHF 100'000

Every support is granted as a soft loan and must be repaid if the film is economically successful.

## Do you fund minority coproduction?

Yes, if the project and content have a significant relation to the region. The recoupment must correspond to the financing shares.

## What are the spending obligations?

150% of the loan amount granted should be spent in the region. For minority projects it can be higher. The fund demands no rights in the film and is not defined as co-producer.

## What are the evaluation criteria?

- Artistic quality
- Distribution potential
- Cultural and economic impact on the region

## When to apply?

Applications may be submitted 4 times per year. The committee takes the decisions within 2 months.

[filmstiftung.ch](http://filmstiftung.ch)





**Wolkenbruch's Wondrous Journey into  
the Arms of a Shiksa** by Michael Steiner  
Turnus Film (CH)  
CH 88%, DE 12%, Budget CHF 3.9 Mio

## Other regional funds

### Basel Region Film and Media Art Fund

Support for:

- Development: CHF 10'000-30'000
- Production: max. 50% of budget or CHF 200'000

A grant of max. CHF 1.5 Mio is reserved for projects higher than CHF 450'000.

[kultur.bs.ch/kulturprojekte/film-und-medienkunst](http://kultur.bs.ch/kulturprojekte/film-und-medienkunst)

### Bern Film Fund

Support for:

- Development: max. CHF 30'000
- Production: max. 50% of budget or CHF 750'000 (fiction)/ CHF 300'000 (docs)

150% of the amount to be spent in the region.

<https://www.kultur.bkd.be.ch/de/start/themen/kulturfoerderung/foerderung/kulturfoerderung-film.html>

### Central Switzerland

Innerschweizer Filmfachgruppe (IFFG)  
(Cantons UR, SZ, NW, OW, ZG, LU)

Support for:

- Development: max. CHF 20'000
- Production: max. 50% of budget or up to CHF 100'000 for feature films.

[kultur.lu.ch/gesuche/film](http://kultur.lu.ch/gesuche/film)

## Film commissions

Switzerland Film Commissions is a network of four film commissions and five regional contacts. It aims to connect producers and local production service providers and helps in finding local assistance, coproduction partnerships, or shooting locations.

[switzerlandfilmcommissions.ch](http://switzerlandfilmcommissions.ch)

### German speaking regions

#### Zurich Film Commission

[filmzurich.ch](http://filmzurich.ch)

[welcome@filmzurich.com](mailto:welcome@filmzurich.com)

#### Lucerne & Central Switzerland Film Commission

[filmcommission-centralswitzerland.ch](http://filmcommission-centralswitzerland.ch)

[mail@film-commission-lcs.ch](mailto:mail@film-commission-lcs.ch)

### French speaking regions

#### Valais Film Commission

[valaisfilmcommission.ch](http://valaisfilmcommission.ch)

[tristan.albrecht@valais.ch](mailto:tristan.albrecht@valais.ch)

### Italian speaking regions

#### Ticino Film Commission

[ticinofilmcommission.ch](http://ticinofilmcommission.ch)

[info@ticinofilmcommission.ch](mailto:info@ticinofilmcommission.ch)



**Heidi** by Alain Gsponer  
Zodiac Pictures (CH)

DE 67%, CH 33%  
Budget CHF 8.5 Mio  
22 Days of principal photography in Graubünden (CH)  
Sold to more than 100 countries  
4.5 Mio admissions worldwide

# SRG SSR Swiss public broadcasting

The Swiss Public broadcaster (SRG SSR) offers seven television channels in the four national languages: German (SRF), French (RTS), Italian (RSI) and Romansh (RTR). It comprehensively reflects the multicultural reality of Swiss life at national level in all socially relevant areas – from politics, culture and business to society, sport and entertainment.

The partnership between the Swiss film industry and SRG is being governed by an agreement known as the Pacte de l'audiovisuel. The Pacte sets out the terms and conditions that apply to SRG coproductions with independent filmmakers. For the period 2020-2023 SRG's commitment to Swiss film is CHF 32.5 Mio annually.

The Pacte supports both made-for-TV and general-release films: CHF 19 Mio is available annually for television productions, including series productions, and CHF 9 Mio per year for cinema projects. A share of CHF 1 Mio has been set aside for animated films. Multimedia projects are supported with CHF 500'000. Support of CHF 4 Mio is also granted by an automatic scheme (Succès passage antenne).

The Pacte 2020-2023 stipulates amendments to distribution rights that reflect changes in media use. In the future, it will be possible to stream films and series in all national languages on the new SRG player. SRG stands alongside the Federal Office of Culture as the mainstay of Swiss film promotion.



**Monte Verità** by Stefan Jäger  
telfilm (CH)  
CH 56,7%, AT 23,3%, DE 20%  
Budget: CHF 7.5 Mio

# Contacts

## Federal Office of Culture

Hallwylstrasse 15  
3003 Bern  
+41 58 462 92 71  
[cinema.film@bak.admin.ch](mailto:cinema.film@bak.admin.ch)

## MEDIA Desk Suisse

Neugasse 10  
8005 Zurich  
+41 43 960 39 29  
[info@mediadesk.ch](mailto:info@mediadesk.ch)

## Cinéforum

Maison des arts du Grütli  
16 rue du Général-Dufour  
1204 Geneva  
+41 22 322 81 30  
[info@cineforum.ch](mailto:info@cineforum.ch)

## Zurich Film Fund

Heinrichstrasse 147  
8005 Zurich  
+41 43 960 35 35  
[info@filmstiftung.ch](mailto:info@filmstiftung.ch)

## Bern Film Fund

Sulgeneckstrasse 70  
3005 Bern  
+41 31 633 85 89  
[kulturfoerderung@be.ch](mailto:kulturfoerderung@be.ch)

## Film and Media Art Fund, Basel Region

c/o Abteilung Kultur Basel-Stadt  
Marktplatz 30a  
4001 Basel  
+41 61 267 84 06  
[caroline.prodhom@bs.ch](mailto:caroline.prodhom@bs.ch)

## SWISS FILMS

The promotion agency offers film directors and producers promotional services and facilitates international distribution of their film productions.  
[swissfilms.ch](http://swissfilms.ch)

If you are looking for Swiss producers, distributors or associations, you can find lists here:  
[swissfilms.ch/de/links](http://swissfilms.ch/de/links)

## FOCAL

The foundation for professional training in the audiovisual field proposes various international programmes to emphasize the role and skills of the producers at the heart of the development and coproduction processes.  
[focal.ch](http://focal.ch)



**MEDIA**<sup>DESK</sup>  
**SUISSE**


**CINÉFORUM**



**SWISS FILMS**

**focal**

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Data sources: FOC, FSO, ProCinema  
Photos courtesy of the production companies  
and Bern Tourismus.

A man in a brown jacket is seen from behind, leading a cow with large, curved horns across a vast, snowy mountain landscape. The cow is in the foreground, and the man is slightly behind it. In the background, there are snow-covered mountains under a clear sky. A red box with white text is in the top left corner, and a white box with black text is in the bottom right corner.

The Swiss landscape not only frames the actors, but can also play a leading role.

**A Piece of Sky** by Michael Koch  
hugofilm features GmbH (CH)  
Budget CHF 3.1 Mio  
CH 86%, DE 14%