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**PRESS RELEASE**

**SOFA – SCHOOL OF FILM ADVANCEMENT  
Reveals the Participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> Edition**



Nine projects represented by ten participants will take part in the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of **SOFA – School of Film Advancement**. This edition will send its participating cultural managers on a busy one-year trip towards a precisely developed project that helps to shape a region’s professional film structure or film community. Along the way, they’ll pass three intense workshops, gatherings at film festivals and several e-learning units to exchange with distinguished international experts. The current edition will kick-start on August 18-28, 2020 with a first workshop being held online.

**The New Participants**

It is with great pleasure that **SOFA** presents its 8<sup>th</sup> generation:

**Victoria Aleksanyan**, Armenia – project: **Shortwave Lab**  
(development and funding platform for short films)

**Elkjana Gjipali**, Albania – project: **Tirana Film Commission**  
(regional production service)

**Stefanie Gödicke / Philipp Maurice Raube**, Germany – project: **NewNarratives**  
(Arabic-European audiovisual training initiative)

**Rufat Hasanov**, Azerbaijan – project: **Independent Cinema Fund**  
(alternative fund for independent Azerbaijani films)

**Leonid Kalitenya**, Belarus – project: **Svajo Kino**  
(VoD platform for Belarusian independent cinema)

**Igor Mašera**, Slovenia – project: **BSF-LUX**  
(VoD platform for Slovenian cinematography)

**Janka Pozsonyi**, Hungary – project: **Kontra Film**  
(an initiative to promote, distribute, empower Hungary's independent filmmaker scene)

**Willy Rollé**, Germany/France – project: **Tavma Pop-Up**  
(digital distribution on-demand platform for non-theatrical screening)

**Rita Stanelytė**, Lithuania – project: **Mata Hari Communication** (boutique film marketing and promotion consultancy)

**SOFA – School of Film Advancement** is a programme of workshops aiming at strengthening national film and audiovisual industries and the European cinematic landscape, as well as kick-starting projects in the realm of cinema. SOFA helps its participants to develop their ideas into concrete projects, opening up new avenues towards application for financing programmes and final implementation. SOFA's focus on cultural managers and film entrepreneurs rather than producers and directors has made it a unique programme on the international film/AV scene.

More information on the 2020/21 participants and their projects will be published soon on [joinsofa.org](http://joinsofa.org)

Dates for SOFA workshops 2020/21

August 18 – 28, 2020 in Warsaw (digital)

April 2021 in Tbilisi

June 2021 in Vilnius

**SOFA – School of Film Advancement** is a project of Filmplus gUG (Berlin) funded by German Federal Foreign Office/Civil Society Cooperation and Creative Europe – MEDIA Programme of the European Union. Besides, the 2020 Polish workshop is funded by Polish Film Institute, SDPZ (Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation), and the Lithuanian session by the Lithuanian Film Centre. The organizers also wish to thank the strategic partners Goethe-Institut, EAVE, and Midpoint.