

Africa Rising International Film Festival partners with TikTok

Africa Rising International Film Festival (Ariff) revealed it has partnered with short-form video content giant TikTok to take African filmmakers, film talent and storytelling to the platform's global audience estimated at one billion users. Ariff returns for its fourth annual instalment taking place from 25-28 November 2021.



Ayanda Sithebe and Lala Tuku

Since its inception in 2018, Ariff has sought out unique and innovative ways to get film lovers to consume content digitally in line with digital era trends. Ariff's Digital Hub showcases web series, virtual reality, interactive and short-form content conceptualised and created right here on the African continent.

"We are humbled that TikTok has found common ground with Ariff's vision of taking African creative voices to the world. This, for us, is a strategic partnership," says Ariff festival director, Ayanda Sithebe, adding that this kind of support is invaluable in amplifying an African-owned and led narrative about the continent.

In addition to hosting short-form content on TikTok, other Digital Hub initiatives that the festival will activate this year include a visual and digital art exhibition, a virtual reality station and a Podcast Lab (taking place on-site at 44 Stanley throughout the duration of the festival). Sithebe also views these as key elements that the festival, along with the continent's creative minds, needs to continue to grow, moving forward.

“There are myriad ways in which we can tell and distribute our stories as Africans and the aim of the Digital Hub is to continue pushing boundaries, providing inspiration and showing African creative talent what’s possible when we have a strong cultural and identity perspective,” he continues.

In addition to the online showcase and on-site activations, Ariff’s Digital Hub is also hosting its Craze Pitch event bringing together leading entrepreneurs to hear the ideas and pitches of young aspiring filmmakers with the aim of giving them constructive criticism and potential investment in their future projects.

Ariff partnered with Birthmark in this regard and is looking forward to some interns being absorbed into the company.

“This is exciting to me in my capacity as festival chair and as an advocate for development and training for young and new entrants within the film industry,” adds Lata Tuku.

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