

Press release
March 26, 2026.



CARTOONNEXT 2026 EXPLORES THE PRESENT AND SHAPES THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN ANIMATION AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Over 250 participants from more than 20 countries will gather on April 8-10 in the French city of Marseille for the 2026 edition of **CartoonNext**, the networking and training event for European animation and audiovisual professionals across the sector.

Created in 2022 in response to a rapidly evolving industry, the event will present a programme of conferences on topics such as distribution, production, broadcasting, publishing, gaming, creation, new technologies and music. Bringing together 45 experts and speakers from across Europe and beyond, it fosters exchanges and training activities for participants to benefit from direct feedback and in-depth discussions.

In addition to the conference programme, CartoonNext offers key creatives and producers from across Europe the opportunity to pitch their projects, along with a range of networking initiatives for both established professionals and emerging talent in the sector.

Industry Sessions to Inspire the Future

Under the supervision of Vanessa Chapman, Head of Content at CartoonNext, the programme explores the present and shapes the future of European animation and related industries through curated keynotes, panels and case studies featuring key industry players. Among other topics, it focuses on the impact of AI on animation through contributions by Audrey Schomer (Luminate), Marianne Carpentier (TF1), Cathal Gaffney (Brown Bag Films), Elena Sinel (Teens in AI) and Michelle Connolly (Educational Voice), who examine evolving workflows and job roles, as well as the new skills and training required to meet upcoming challenges. This perspective is complemented by Hayato Inoue and Olivia Papini (Tokyo Epic), who reflect on the current rise of AI-driven animated micro-dramas.

Understanding emerging trends in the animation sector is key to shaping its future. In this context, the programme highlights major developments in European animation, from shifting audience behaviour and cross-media strategies at Gulli/M6 — presented by Coralie Boitrelle-Laigle (M6 Métropole Télévision / Gulli) — to a renewed momentum in stop-motion animation driven by innovation and international collaboration, as discussed by Angélica

Lares (El Taller del Chucho), Sarah Cox (Aardman Animations) and Kerdi Kuusik-Oengo (Nukufilm Studios).

Different creative and production pathways in animation are discussed through case studies, including “Miss Saturne”, a cross-platform series with a strong visual identity presented by Annelyse Vieilledent (Les Storygraphes & Fortiche) and Marianne Lévy-Leblond (Arte France); “Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake”, a stop-motion feature developed through international co-production, presented by director Irene Iborra Rizo (Citoplasmas Stop Motion); and “The Broos”, a series presented by Gabrielle d’Andrimont and David Mirailles (Bobby Prod) that evolved from CARTOON’s Coaching Programme and Cartoon Forum to production and broadcast.

In addition, company-driven innovation in the gaming and audiovisual industries will be explored through two keynotes based on the experience of Ubisoft and The Gang Sweden, alongside a panel on the role of music in storytelling across film, TV and games, as well as a discussion on the barriers limiting women’s access to leadership roles in the games industry and the actions needed to build a more inclusive sector.

The full programme is available [at this link](#).

Networking and Training Activities

CartoonNext is a human-scale event that prioritises meaningful exchanges over mass attendance, offering an environment where decision-makers are genuinely available through a range of networking activities.

Over the course of two days, the **Pitching Sessions** will offer the opportunity to discover [eight projects](#) at different stages of development hailing from across Europe and targeting all audiences. The selected projects include TV series “Stink” (Big Bad Boo Studios, Austria), “B-860K: Synchtrails” (France), “Pink Noise” (La Mola Studio, Spain) and “Illogical Adult World” (Salt Cinema, Ukraine); the digital and digital-first content “Bobby & the Bottle Brigade” (Something Big / Kavaleer / Magic C, France) and “Cosmic Loom” (Italy); the feature film “Orphan Yakuza” (Fiilin Good Films, Finland); and AR/VR game “The Wing-Ed Freaks!” (Adventurverse Studios, Ireland).

Meanwhile, the **One-to-One Meetings** are designed for animation professionals wishing to connect with other participants, including speakers and producers. Based on each participant’s preferences, a tailored schedule of up to 20 minutes meetings will be arranged with selected companies registered for the programme.

The **Next Ideas Labs** is a new feature at CartoonNext consisting of [interactive roundtables](#) designed to foster dialogue, collaboration and networking among professionals. In one-hour sessions, participants will have the chance to engage with industry leaders, discuss key questions and share perspectives.

Each year, around 50 animation students from Région Sud take part in the CartoonNext **Coaching Programme**, featuring presentations by emerging and established key creatives and producers who share their insights into their first projects and professional experiences. Students also have the chance to attend keynotes and project pitches in order

to gain a deeper understanding of the industry. The programme also includes a **Portfolio Review**, in which participants meet professionals from different fields to receive feedback and practical advice on their work.

About CARTOON

CARTOON – European Association of Animation Film is an international non-profit association based in Brussels that organises Cartoon Movie, together with Cartoon Forum, a co-production forum for animated TV series, and the training seminars CartoonNext, Cartoon Springboard, and Cartoon Business.

The main partners of CartoonNext 2026 are Creative Europe - MEDIA Programme of the European Union, Région Sud – Provence Alpes-Côte d’Azur, Métropole Aix-Marseille Provence, SudAnim and Ville de Marseille/ Office du Tourisme Marseille.

CARTOON Director: Annick Maes

CartoonNext Coordinator: Laura Jarka – laura.jarka@cartoon-media.eu

Press Officer: Gerardo Michelin – gerardo@latindie.com – Tel: (+34) (630) 572 268

[Press Corner.](#)