

Wildscreen Festival Launches 40th Birthday Year celebrations with Call for Entries

(Bristol – 13 January 2022) Wildscreen, creators of the world’s largest natural world storytelling Festival, today opens its call for entries for the world-renowned Panda Awards and innovative Official Selection competitions. Not only will 2022 see the first ever hybrid edition of the Festival but it also marks the 40th birthday of the Wildscreen Festival.

“Despite unprecedented challenges over the past two years, our community of global storytellers have demonstrated the most inspired ingenuity and adaptability to continue revealing and sharing nature’s stories with global audiences. Nature has provided comfort and joy in uncertain times, with many forging new and deeper connections with it. We can’t wait to share those stories and celebrate the creatives behind them, as Wildscreen marks its 40th Birthday, this October.” said Lucie Muir, Wildscreen CEO.

The 2020 Wildscreen Festival was record-breaking with the online event proudly welcoming over 1,900 industry delegates from 42 countries and a public audience of over 80,000.

Wildscreen expects the momentum to grow in 2020 as the Festival and its film competitions continue to empower new storytellers and work towards democratising the industry.

Wildscreen Panda Awards

The wildlife storytelling industry takes global audiences to the world’s most remote, inhospitable and threatened environments, shining a spotlight on species and habitats that most will not have the opportunity to experience first-hand. This form of documentary has never been more important or needed, with biodiversity being threatened to the point of no return. Since 1982, the Panda Awards have celebrated the human endeavour, commitment and unique skill that it takes to tell nature’s stories.

In 2022, the Wildscreen Panda Awards will not only celebrate the very best craft, but also the most sustainable and impactful content. The production categories in the competition are: Cinematography, Editing, Emerging Talent (film and photo), Music, On-Screen Talent, Photo Story, Producer/ Director, Production Team, Scripted Narrative, Series and Sound. There will also be the following special awards: Behaviour, Impact and Sustainability. The Sustainability Award has this year been established as its own category to showcase those adopting innovative sustainability practises at every stage of the production lifecycle.

All films nominated across the fifteen categories will be eligible for the Golden Panda Award, with previous winners including *My Octopus Teacher* (2020) and *The Ivory Game* (2016).

Wildscreen Festival Official Selection

Wildscreen is committed to democratising the creation of and access to nature’s stories. Following the incredible success of the inaugural Wildscreen Official Selection Programme in 2020, which received film, 360 and VR submissions across 5 continents, the competition returns this year to showcase powerful original stories, platform authentic, indigenous and underrepresented voices and inspire positive action. Following COP26, stories exploring the interconnectivity between climate change and biodiversity are being sought, along with those that document the impact and influence of the pandemic on nature and humans’ relationships with it.

The Official Selection is open to anyone with a story about nature. Entrants will be able to submit long or short form content, including emerging technologies or platforms. A team of programmers will curate a programme featuring original and creative stories about the natural world which will be showcased as part of the Wildscreen Festival in October. The programme acts as a global launchpad to discover new voices, recognise creative innovation and establish equal opportunities for storytellers across the globe. Cash prizes of £3,000 are available.

The 2022 edition of the Festival takes place from the 10-14 October 2022 in Bristol and via a globally-accessible virtual platform. To enter the Wildscreen Panda Awards or Official Selection, [visit the Wildscreen website](#) to read the full terms and submit via FilmFreeway. The deadline to enter is 14 April but submissions prior to 24 February will receive a reduced-price Early Bird entry fee.

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For further information on Wildscreen please contact awards@wildscreen.org

About Wildscreen

Wildscreen is an award-winning not-for-profit conservation organisation. Our goal is to connect people with nature through storytelling.

We are powered by an ecosystem of projects:

- **Wildscreen Festival:** Our world-leading international festival, celebrating and advancing natural world storytelling
- **Wildscreen Network:** Our dynamic membership network at the heart of the wildlife storytelling industry which nurtures talent, supports professional development, facilitates networking and the evolution of a truly inclusive global community of natural world storytellers.
- **Wildscreen Outreach:** Our outreach work provides free and affordable access to natural world stories, content, knowledge and education in local communities, empowering a diverse, new generation of natural world storytellers and conservationists.

Find out more at www.wildscreen.org/festival