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## JAPAN NAMED 2026 COUNTRY OF HONOUR AT THE MARCHÉ DU FILM – FESTIVAL DE CANNES

*Japan will strengthen professional ties with the global film industry  
and showcase the creativity and diversity of its film & content sectors  
at the Cannes Film Market*

Paris & Tokyo – 28 October 2025

The **Marché du Film** – the world's largest international film market and business hub of the Festival de Cannes – is proud to announce **Japan** as the Country of Honour for its 2026 edition, taking place from **12 to 20 May 2026** during the **79th Festival de Cannes**.

The announcement was made today during a press conference at the prestigious Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) by **Junichi Sakamoto**, Chair of the Executive Committee for Japan, Country of Honour 2026, and **Guillaume Esmiol**, Executive Director of the Marché du Film.

As Country of Honour, **Japan will officially open the 2026 edition** by co-hosting the Marché du Film's Opening Night. Throughout the market, Japan will take part in the Marché du Film's flagship programs. Panels, networking events and project showcases will be organized with **exciting highlights on Japanese animation and genre cinema**. Other key initiatives include a summit dedicated to Japan's film industry to foster collaboration and innovation, and a **special screening day dedicated to Japanese cinema**. Through its participation, Japan aims to build strong professional networks with the international film community and promote its film & content industries for future success in global markets.

With over 120 years of filmmaking history, Japan stands as one of the world's most influential film nations. From legendary masters such as Akira Kurosawa, Yasujiro Ozu, and Kenji Mizoguchi to contemporary auteurs, Japanese cinema continues to inspire audiences and creators worldwide and is consistently celebrated in the Festival de Cannes' Official Selection.

Today, Japan's film industry remains robust, producing around 1,200 films annually and drawing over 150 million cinema-goers each year. In an era defined by digitalization and an ever-growing range of entertainment choices, Japan's box office continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience and vitality, generating over ¥200 billion (approximately USD 1.3 billion) in annual revenue. Japanese animation has also become a global cultural phenomenon, while live-action films across all genres continue to find success and inspire adaptations abroad.

Japan has long shared a close relationship with the Marché du Film. Its sales companies are among the most established in the Palais des Festivals, and the Japan Pavilion, coordinated by UniJapan, has been a long-standing fixture at the Village International. With Japanese professionals and companies expected to feature prominently across all market activities, Japan's participation as Country of Honour in 2026 promises an even more dynamic and influential presence.



**Junichi Sakamoto**, Chair of the Executive Committee for Japan, Country of Honour 2026, stated:  
“We are truly delighted and proud that Japan has been selected as the Country of Honour. It presents a wonderful opportunity to showcase the appeal of Japanese cinema on a global stage. We look forward to seeing Japan’s rich film culture, along with its emerging talents and technologies, shine even brighter internationally and contribute to the advancement of cinema both in Japan and around the world.”

**Guillaume Esmiol**, Executive Director of the Marché du Film, added:  
“We are thrilled to welcome Japan as our 2026 Country of Honour. Japan holds a unique place in international cinema, and its creative legacy continues to inspire generations of filmmakers. It also holds a unique place at the Marché du Film, as one of the most represented and dynamic countries, with highly active sales companies and producers. On a more personal note: as someone with Japanese roots, it’s a beautiful opportunity to pay tribute to my cultural heritage.”

Japan’s participation will be led by the **Executive Committee for Japan, Country of Honour 2026**, the **Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)** and the **Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)**. Specific program details and participating institutions will be announced in early 2026.

Japan follows Brazil (2025), Switzerland (2024), Spain (2023) and India (2022) as the fifth Country of Honour — an initiative launched by the Marché du Film to recognize nations for their outstanding contributions to the global film industry and to foster international exchange and collaboration.

*The Marché du Film – Festival de Cannes opens its doors on 12 May 2026, with the film market running until 20 May and the Festival concluding its activities on 23 May.*

**For media inquiries, please contact:**

- Maya Leyva, [mdf-press@festival-cannes.fr](mailto:mdf-press@festival-cannes.fr)
- Kiyomi Sakamoto, [info-prs@jetro.go.jp](mailto:info-prs@jetro.go.jp)

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**About Marché du Film – Festival de Cannes**

The Marché du Film, the business hub of the Festival de Cannes, is the world’s largest international gathering of film professionals, bringing together over 15,000 participants from around the world, including sales agents, producers, distributors, festival programmers and film institutions. Each year, the market hosts more than 1,500 exclusive screenings, 4,000 projects in development, 250 industry events – providing a vibrant platform for the global film community to connect, accelerate their business, spark new collaborations and explore the latest trends & innovations shaping the industry.

Website: [www.marchedufilm.com](http://www.marchedufilm.com)

**About METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry)**

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) is a ministry of the Japanese government. METI’s mission is to develop Japan’s economy and industry by focusing on promoting economic vitality in private companies and smoothly advancing external economic relationships, and to secure stable and efficient supply of energy and mineral resources. METI also supports Japan’s entertainment and content industries by grants for creators and businesses, strengthening intellectual property protection, and facilitating overseas business development through JETRO.

Website: [www.meti.go.jp/english/](http://www.meti.go.jp/english/)

**About JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization)**

JETRO, or the Japan External Trade Organization, is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO’s core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential. In addition, JETRO actively supports the global reach of Japanese film and animation, as well as other content sectors such as music, manga, and games—providing market intelligence, building business networks, and promoting Japanese content internationally through its overseas bases.

Website: [www.jetro.go.jp/en/](http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/)