



Dear academic,

Are you interested in participating in this year's FilmEU AGORA group? We strongly believe that together with our students, industry and external experts, you can bring valuable insights to this year's think tank topic, which is: **"What Does it Mean to Be Independent in Europe's Cultural and Creative Sectors Today?"**. This topic will explore what independence means for emerging creative professionals in Europe today and how students can be better prepared and empowered to build sustainable careers and meaningful professional autonomy.

The work in this Agora group could consider independence from several perspectives, including:

- **Creative independence:** Having the freedom and confidence to develop and express your own artistic voice.
- **Economic independence:** Being able to earn a sustainable living through creative work.
- **Professional independence:** Understanding how to work as a freelancer, establish professional networks, negotiate contracts and access opportunities.
- **Personal independence:** Developing the resilience, knowledge and practical skills needed to build and manage a creative career.
- **Independence and collaboration:** Exploring how artists can maintain their autonomy while relying on networks, organisations, funders and other creative professionals.

The first Agora meeting will be held online on Wednesday the 21st of October at 2pm CET with regular online meetings throughout the academic year. These meetings will also include our Agora students, where you will be expected to lead, guide and encourage their engagement. Together you will address the pressing challenges faced by various sectors, industries and higher education today, while contributing to reimagining the role of the arts within a broader and multidisciplinary context.

As well as online meetings, the Agora group will also meet in person 2 to 3 times throughout the year. The proposed first in person Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) will happen in VSMU, Bratislava from the 30th of November – 4th December 2026, IADT Dublin 1st – 5th March 2027 and possibly at VIA, Aarhus 31st May – 4th June 2027 (all TBC). The weeks include workshops and classes to help you understand the topic and learn more from invited experts.

From this opportunity, you will gain unique insights from colleagues who are shaping the future and get to share your thoughts and experiences in a supportive and inclusive environment.

We sincerely hope you apply and join your fellow academics on this journey for interesting debates and networking opportunities.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Dorota Vlnova	VSMU
Dovilė Lapinskaitė	LMTA
Krista Hallik	TLU
Kristina Samsarova	NATFA
Linda Carroll	IADT
Marc Van De Walle	LUCA
Paula Cipriano	UL
Rikke Hedegaard	VIA