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# Call for a position of Professor at USI, joint with the Locarno Film Festival (open rank)

## *Locarno Film Festival Professor for the Future of Cinema and Audiovisual Arts*

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The Università della Svizzera italiana, Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society, invites applications for a position as

**Professor (open rank)**

named

***Locarno Film Festival Professor for the Future of Cinema and Audiovisual Arts***

### **Profile of the University, the Faculty and the Locarno Film Festival**

Università della Svizzera italiana (USI) is one of the 12 certified public universities in Switzerland and member of *swissuniversities*. USI is a young and lively university, a hub of opportunity open to the world where students are offered a quality interdisciplinary education in which they can be fully engaged and take centre stage, and where researchers can count on having the space to freely pursue their initiatives. USI and its affiliated research institutes attract a substantial amount of competitive research funds every year, mainly from the Swiss National Science Foundation and the European Union. USI is featured in the most important international rankings. In particular it ranks 26th worldwide in the prestigious QS Top 50 Under-50; 54th in the Young University Rankings' of the Times Higher Education, and 20th in the 'THE world's best small universities 2020' rankings.

The Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society is committed to research and teaching excellence in innovative fields of humanities and social sciences, and offers an edgy and highly international context. With a strong interdisciplinary approach, it especially explores the complex challenges that society is faced with, namely: digital technologies and global communication networks; cross-cultural interactions; the way communication and marketing decisions in profit, public, and non-profit organisations intersect markets, culture, and society; and, paradigmatic shifts in the way culture is shaped and conveyed.

The Locarno Film Festival (LFF), one of the longest-lived and most important film festivals in the world, was created after the end of WWII, capturing the cultural ferment of the post-war period and the newfound values of freedom (a spirit that has always distinguished its guidelines ever since). LFF aims at launching the works of independent filmmakers, focusing on the distribution and support of films made by young directors, to offer the public an overview of the most recent auteur and popular productions – often world or international premieres – and to deepen and broaden the knowledge of the history of cinema, through its annual retrospectives. Thousands of film fans and industry professionals meet at the Festival every summer, with in common a craving and a passion for cinema in all its diversity. The audience is the soul of the Festival, as embodied by the famous evenings on the Piazza Grande, whose magical setting can accommodate up to 8,000 filmgoers every night. In recent years, the Festival has also consolidated its commitment to the training and inclusion of young people, thanks to the activities of Locarno Pro and the Locarno Academy. Unable by the health crisis to take place in its usual form, in 2020 the Locarno Film Festival accelerated a process of reflection and change, launching a signal of solidarity with the

film industry and enhancing the possibilities offered by digital. It was with this in mind that the Locarno Film Festival began to collaborate with USI to reflect on the future of events and to ensure that the Locarno Film Festival continues to be an avant-garde model of an international festival, maintaining a world primacy while having a strong local relationship, and following the fundamental values that define it: having courage, defending freedom and being aware that culture contributes to the upholding human dignity. One of the main current challenges of the Locarno Film Festival is to identify the fields of activity in which technology makes it possible to go beyond the "geographical boundaries" of an event organised in the city of Locarno and the "temporal boundaries" of an 11-day programme.

The synergy between the Locarno Film Festival and USI has taken shape over the past twenty years, though, in several key activities of the Locarno Academy, such as the Documentary Summer School, and the selection of short films made by the students of the USI Academy of Architecture. These have been joined by more recent collaborations, namely the Strategic Development Partnership in the field of strategic and organisational development of the LFF, but also the Locarno Media City initiative, a partnership with the City of Locarno, the Palacinema, and Swisscom, which, among other innovations, will enhance the role and utilization of the Locarno Film Festival archives.

## **Candidate Profile**

### *Subject focus*

The subject focus of the candidate shall be in that of cinema and/or cultural production and management in the audio-visual context. Ideally, she/he is also competent in curating and organising cultural events and, in general, she/he reflects on cultural events, on the evolution of film storytelling and film criticism.

A profile defined by transversal training and/or professional curricula that privileges interdisciplinary approaches. The candidate is also familiar with artistic experimentation, as an act of creativity and research. In full continuity with the spirit of the Locarno Film Festival, which has always been marked by the desire to discover new talents, the candidate will manage to broaden the boundaries of the art of film and experiments with new lines of research, artistic action and programming.

### *Scientific and personal profile*

The candidate has an international professional, research and training experience. She/he combines academic activity – research and teaching – with a broad and international reach and involvement in the film and/or audio-visual sector (or related), as event curator, film critic and experimenter of new practices of reflection on motion pictures. The candidate's activity encompasses the digital dimension, not only in the production of digital images but also in the digital distribution of cinema and/or audio-visual content.

A profile, which is also strongly focused on practice, favours interdisciplinary experimentation and dialogue. The candidate's research is supported by the performative use of its engagement in the cinema and/or audio-visual sector.

The candidate has a marked ability to dialogue with different audiences, both internal and external, starting from USI and LFF, to manage inclusive reflection and innovation processes and to activate networks of contacts within the communities of reference.

To this end, the candidate has expertise in the development and financing of research and open innovation projects involving the various communities of reference for the LFF.

Her/his research captures trends in the field of cinema, audio-visual and their production, as well as their design and development also as cultural events. In particular, the candidate studies the transformations offered by the change in production, consumption and communication/marketing of cinema in society. Through teaching and thought leadership activities, the candidate is also able to communicate and foster these trends, making them become reference practices. She/he

does so with an awareness of what is changing, thanks to a deep knowledge of classical and contemporary cinema. As a disseminator, the candidate is able to orchestrate an articulated training project.

The cooperative and communicative spirit of the candidate will allow him/her to bring a large academic community into the festival, which goes beyond the one she/he is personally and directly in contact with. Moreover, this community does not only include the one related to its area, cinema and audio-visual, but also includes other artistic sectors and application skills. The candidate is able to promote and manage interdisciplinary logics with the aim of co-devising a context of reflection and project paths within the LFF and USI, and with the involvement of third party entities. In this sense, the candidate's profile is defined by a marked curatorial sensitivity.

### *Seniority*

Considering the role, and in particular the need to interface and manage complex contexts, a profile with already consolidated experience, ideally mid-career, is preferred,

### **Job Description**

At USI, the successful candidate will be expected to:

- promote research also in association with research programs funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and similar institutions;
- develop, coordinate, and teach courses/seminars on her/his topic areas at different levels: Bachelor, Master and Doctoral;
- coordinate assistants' activities and act in an advisory capacity for PhD candidates; actively participate in the work of the Faculty Council and related ad-hoc committees;
- connect the competences available at USI in the field of cinema and the audio-visual arts, thus contributing to one of USI's defining elements, interdisciplinarity, which is also strongly emphasized in the 2021-2024 strategic planning of USI, and supporting the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society as USI's most interdisciplinary and interconnected Faculty. In addition, the successful candidate will consolidate the role of academic reference at the LFF, enabling as such access to a field of great interest for research.

At the Locarno Film Festival the successful candidate will be expected to:

- contribute to the training activities of LFF addressed to students, continuing education programmes, seminars, lectures, round tables and ad hoc programmes involving both student audiences and film and audio-visual enthusiasts. The development of training activities is part of the current initiatives proposed by Locarno Young and Locarno Pro, strengthening their impact and their ability to contribute to the training of talents in both the artistic and curatorial fields;
- contribute to the development of the "cultural collective" that today shapes the many initiatives that are included in the summer programme and that are also offered throughout the year, taking on the role of a driving force for critical reflection, broadening perspectives, building bridges, creativity and therefore overall growth.

The professor will have privileged access, at various levels, to the LFF, and will act as an independent advisor of the LFF, albeit through a genuine and active involvement with the LFF.

The total teaching load within degree programs is of 18 ECTS per year for a full-time position of associate and full professor and 12 ECTS for a position of assistant professor.

### **Contract and salary**

The position offered is full-time. However, part-time employment is not excluded. In the case of part-time employment, the successful candidate is required to give priority to this position.

The successful candidate will share her/his activity between the USI campus in Lugano and the USI office in Locarno.

The salary offered is highly competitive and will be defined based on experience and qualifications.

The terms of the contract are defined by the University Statutes (<https://content.usi.ch/sites/default/files/storage/attachments/press/press-usi-statuto-it.pdf>). The position would start as of September 2021.

### **Residence and Language**

The professor should take residence in Ticino (Italian-speaking part of Switzerland).

The University's graduate programs are taught mainly in English, while Bachelor classes are taught in Italian. Fluency in Italian is initially a plus, but required within the third year. The knowledge of a second Swiss national language is welcomed.

### **Application and Required Documentation:**

Applicants should submit:

- a letter of motivation addressed to the Dean of the Faculty;
- a detailed CV including a list of publications, together with documentation of relevant academic qualifications, teaching, service and professional experience;
- copies of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 10 publications of relevance for the position;
- names of three referees.

As an Equal Opportunities employer, USI ensures equality in recruitment, development, retention and promotion of staff, and that no one is disadvantaged on the basis of their gender, cultural background, disability, sexual orientation or identity. We encourage everyone who meets the selection criteria to apply. We particularly encourage and appreciate applications from women.

### **Deadline**

Applications received by the end of January 2021 will be given priority.

Please send your electronic application to the Faculty's Dean by e-mail, addressed to:

Università della Svizzera italiana  
Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society  
Prof. Luca M. Visconti, Dean  
Via Giuseppe Buffi 13  
CH-6904 Lugano  
E-mail: [concorsi.com@usi.ch](mailto:concorsi.com@usi.ch)

For further information, please contact

Prof. Luca M. Visconti (for USI)  
[luca.visconti@usi.ch](mailto:luca.visconti@usi.ch)

Raphaël Brunschwig, Chief Operating Officer (for Locarno Film Festival)

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