

# UNIC PEOPLE PROGRAMME

For immediate release:

## **UNIC LAUNCHES ITS PEOPLE PROGRAMME: ENSURING THE CINEMA INDUSTRY REMAINS AN ATTRACTIVE AND PREMIUM EMPLOYER**

**Barcelona, 19.06.2023 – The European Cinema trade grouping UNIC – representing national associations and cinema operators across 39 territories – today officially launched the UNIC People Programme, its five work streams for the year ahead, and its newly formed advisory board.**

Initial objectives and focused work streams for the first year of the Programme were announced this morning during the CineEurope Business Sessions as part of a panel discussion titled "Driving Commercial Success through People".

This new initiative aims to help the cinema industry maintain its position as an employer of choice, recognising that the ultimate competitive advantage of any organisation lies in its people. With new challenges emerging post-pandemic in particular in recruiting, developing, and investing in its workforce, the cinema industry must adapt to the ever-changing landscape of today's World. The programme strives to ensure that the industry remains well-placed to attract and retain top talent.

To achieve its mission, the programme has identified five key work streams to ensure the industry is evolving to meet the needs of its employees and remains positioned as an attractive and premier employer that attracts and retains top talent:

- Awareness of employment opportunities
- Training and career progression
- Leadership skills
- Internal culture and values
- Diversity, equity and inclusion

In addition to launching the programme, UNIC also announced its newly formed advisory board, chaired by Dee Vassili, Chief People Officer, Vue International. Additional appointments include: Phil Clapp, President UNIC and CEO UK Cinema Association (Vice-Chair); Katharina Phebey, Head of Marketing & Content, Member of the Management Board, Kinopolis; Nevena Brasanac, Booking & Exhibition Manager, Cineplex International; Zarah Doyle, HR Director UK and Ireland at ODEON Cinemas Group.

Dee Vassili, who led the panel discussion, said:

"We believe that investing in people is essential to the continued success and growth of the cinema industry. The UNIC People Programme aims to raise awareness, provide informed insights and share potential approaches on how to continue to attract and retain talent within the cinema industry, in a world where the only constant is change. "

Phil Clapp, CEO of the UK Cinema Association and Deputy Chair of the Advisory Board, emphasised the importance of the timing of today's announcement, stating:

"Some may ask why, and maybe even more so, why now? The answer to both questions is that the UNIC People Programme aims to help address the particular challenges the cinema industry is facing at the moment. We need to do more to drive positive change and ensure that the cinema industry remains an attractive employer choice for future generations."

"In an increasingly competitive marketplace, the cinema industry must actively engage in the search for talent", Laura Houlgatte, CEO at UNIC, stated. She further explained: "As markets experience full employment, the cinema industry is required to compete more than ever with other leisure, retail, and hospitality sectors for skilled professionals. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have brought about a paradigm shift in employee needs and expectations. Addressing these challenges, the UNIC People Programme seeks to renew an attractive employment proposition for the cinema industry. Through its focused work streams, the programme will create a vibrant and inclusive community that celebrates the magic of cinema while offering fulfilling and rewarding roles and careers."

Supporting the new programme are two longstanding industry partners: Ferco Seating and Generation Media who will be joining as Strategic Advisors.

Jane Shepherd, Managing Director at Ferco Seating, said:

"Our internal mission is to support and invest in our people with our focus over the past two years being our 'The Place to Work' strategy. Listening to and truly understanding the individual needs of our team has led to the implementation of a variety of inclusive practices to help them flourish and excel. It's fantastic that UNIC have launched The People Programme and cinema colleagues are aligned with a people first approach – we are delighted to support this initiative and advise on best practices we've achieved."

Greta D'Este-Donelan, Director of Entertainment at Generation Media, said:

"We are proud to support the UNIC People Programme as Strategic Advisors, an initiative that is fully aligned to Generation Media's values and vision. We passionately believe that attracting and retaining talent is key to any organisation within the cinema industry, driving innovation, diversity and, ultimately, growth, and we are delighted to contribute to this journey."

The UNIC People Programme will continue its efforts through planned panels, webinars, and podcasts, with an upcoming panel scheduled during the UNIC Cinema Days in Brussels in October and the publication of a toolkit in June 2024. More information about the UNIC People Programme and its forthcoming activity can be found here: <https://www.unic-cinemas.org/en/industry/people-programme/>



UNION INTERNATIONALE DES CINÉMAS  
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**About the UNIC People Programme:** The UNIC People Programme is an initiative launched by the UNIC Advisory Board with the mission of making the cinema industry an employer of choice. By addressing the unique challenges faced by the industry and focusing on key work streams, the program aims to attract and retain top talent. For more information, visit <https://www.unic-cinemas.org/en/industry/people-programme/>

**About Generation Media:** Generation Media is the world's leading independent agency, specialising in communications with children, young people, and families and the Entertainment sector. In 2019 Generation Media launched Generation Entertainment, with the mission to identify, produce, and distribute premium content and innovative formats to global audiences, across Cinema, Broadcast, F.A.S.T. channels, Digital and Social Media.

For more information, please visit <https://www.generationmedia.com/services/entertainment/> or email us at [entertainment@generationmedia.co.uk](mailto:entertainment@generationmedia.co.uk)

**About Ferco:** At Ferco, we commit to creating exceptional cinema seating that enhances the overall movie-going experience.

In 2021, after consultation with our people, we adopted a 'People First' strategy that prioritises the employee experience alongside their wellbeing. We have embedded this into our core values, offering our people meaningful and diverse opportunities that create belonging. We have actively responded by implementing vital well-being benefits, including flexible working, health initiatives, professional development training, sponsored personal fulfilment activities, and a desirable pension scheme. The value proposition programme we've put in place has transformed employee culture, allowing our people to feel heard and valued.

Our high-performing team works closely with our clients to understand their unique needs and deliver tailored solutions. We pride ourselves on building strong relationships and fostering long-term partnerships, with collaboration key to our approach.

With our extensive experience and global design and manufacturing facilities, we can provide bespoke solutions for independent cinemas and mainstream exhibitors, ensuring commercial success from every angle. To learn more about our offering and values, visit [fercoseating.com](http://fercoseating.com) or email us at [info@fercoseating.co.uk](mailto:info@fercoseating.co.uk).

**About UNIC:** The International Union of Cinemas/Union Internationale des Cinémas (UNIC) represents the interests of cinema trade associations and cinema operators covering 39 countries in Europe and neighbouring regions. More information at [www.unic-cinemas.org](http://www.unic-cinemas.org)

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