

SIGAL YEHUDA, Founder & Executive Director

Sigal Yehuda is a visionary leader in documentary filmmaking with over 18 years of experience supporting independent documentary filmmakers from Southwest Asia and North Africa. She is the Founder & Executive Director of Close-Up, an independent international organization based in Brussels, Belgium. Throughout her career, she has been pivotal in nurturing exceptional filmmaking talent across the SWANA region and has been involved in the development of numerous critically acclaimed documentaries, including Oscar-nominated and award-winning films such as **"No Other Land" (Academy Award Best Documentary 2025)**, **"Hollywoodgate" (Academy Award Shortlist 2025)**, **"Q" (Best Documentary at Tribeca Film Festival 2024)**, **"Five Broken Cameras" (2013 Oscar Nominee)**, **"Midnight Traveler" (Berlinale & Sundance Special Award 2019)**, and **"Kabul City in the Wind" (2018 IDFA Opening Film)**.

Over the past two decades, she has secured support for her work and for Close-Up from major international institutions such as the **European Union, the Ford Foundation, Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation, the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, and the Goethe-Institute**, as well as from long-term individual philanthropists who have supported her initiatives over many years.

Her professional contributions extend to serving as a selection committee member, pitching forum trainer, and jury member for renowned film festivals and institutions including the **International Berlin Film Festival (Berlinale), Sundance Institute, International Documentary Association (IDA), Tribeca Film Institute, CPH:DOX, Movies That Matter, ZagrebDox, and FIPADOC Film Festival**. In January 2021, she joined The Why Foundation in Denmark as an **Editorial Board Member**, and she is a member of the **European Film Academy**.

Throughout her career, she has focused on documentary filmmaking as a tool to foster dialogue, amplify underrepresented perspectives, and engage with complex social and political realities. Her work encourages emerging filmmakers to question dominant narratives and push creative boundaries, while building a values-driven community and alternative spaces for exchange, solidarity, and artistic development.