

Russia Releases List of State-Approved Movie Themes for 2015

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Vsevolod Mititello for [Calvert Journal](#).

Russia's Ministry of Culture has released a list of approved themes for films which will be financially supported by the state in 2015.

The suggestions, which range from celebrating Russia's family values to the role of Crimea and Ukraine in Russian history, partially overlap with a scriptwriting competition launched by the state last month, which invites screenwriters to enter patriotic film scripts for the chance of winning 100,000 rubles (\$1,600).

"It's standard practice for state support," Vyacheslav Telnov, director of the ministry's cinema department said. "We choose the themes which, in our opinion, need additional encouragement. Last year, for example, focused on the creation of works for the anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. It's therefore consistent that in 2015, one of the themes is about Crimea."

In the last year, culture in Russia has increasingly been used by the state to strengthen patriotism and traditional values in the country. As a result, productions demonstrating views against the government's political line, or those which show Russia in a negative light, increasingly face difficulties in receiving state support.

In November, Russia's minister of culture Vladimir Medinsky announced that the ministry's reason for denying funding to Artdocfest — Russia's largest international documentary film festival — was a result of festival director Vitaly Mansky's political opinions.

"[Mansky] has uttered so many anti-state things that we'll just let him do the festival at his own expense, we don't mind. We are not prohibiting the festival from going ahead," Medinsky said.

The list of approved topics for films that will receive state funding are:

1. Inspirational success stories (including in industries, entrepreneurial business and social work)
2. Crimea and Ukraine in the thousand-year history of the Russian state
3. The military glory of Russia: winning and winners
4. References to movies: the new life of the classics
5. Modern heroes in the fight against crime and corruption
6. A society without borders: the self-realisation of people with disabilities
7. Anniversaries: the 100th anniversary of the events of 1917, the 25th anniversary of the August 1991 coup
8. Family values as the foundation of society
9. Russia — a multiethnic country

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