

(Press Release)

association des agences
conseil et création



Cannes, June the 26th

(UNDER EMBARGO to 21:30 CEST)

French President Macron makes video address to Cannes Lions as France is awarded 2026 Creative Country of the Year

French President Emmanuel Macron addressed the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity via video today (Friday, 26th June) as the festival honoured France with the 2026 Creative Country of the Year award.

The annual accolade recognises an individual country's exceptional and enduring commitment to creativity that drives progress and growth.

In a video address to delegates at the festival's awards show on the closing evening of Cannes Lions, President Macron said: "I'd like to thank all the members of this great festival that brings to life global creativity. This award celebrates our French creativity today, and French creativity is our ability to combine formal, regal, and poetic, even irreverent, perspective."

"French creativity is a national philosophy that flows through our fashion, as much as our luxury and our culture industry. And this award celebrates the creative attractiveness of our country. From the Olympics to its video game industry, France attracts talent. And from Cannes to Dunkerque, France attracts industries and capital."

President Macron said the attractiveness of France is the result of "deliberate efforts", comprising "labour reforms, investing massively to make the country more innovative, and simplifying regulations". "This is key to free up time for creativity," he said.

He noted that this has seen France ranked as the most attractive country for foreign investment in Europe for the seventh consecutive year this year.

"France is a country where your next studio, your next European headquarters, your next creative project should be established. This award also celebrates the richness of French digital creativity, which was also recognized at the last VivaTech summit. Thank you once again from the bottom of my heart," he said.

President Macron ended his speech by inviting Cannes Lions attendees to the upcoming Lumiere Summit, the landmark international summit dedicated to cinema, series and video games, chaired by France and South Korea, which takes place on Sept. 7 at the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France.

"[The Lumiere Summit] will be an opportunity to celebrate with our South Korean friends the richness of the cinematographic creation of our two countries, and it will be a perfect rendez-vous for this French creativity," he said. "And you will see, beyond what you already recognized and celebrated through this award, that we can go further and be even more creative. Long live creativity, long live the Republic, and long live France."



In his speech, Macron referenced recent financial boosts to France's creative sector, including the France 2030 project, which received a government investment of €350m to get more films produced in France. In addition, foreign companies pledged a total of €93 billion worth of investments in France, in particular for AI and data projects, at the annual Choose France summit, which took place earlier this month.

Commenting on the award, David Leclabart, President of AUSTRALIEGAD, Co-President of the AACC, said: "For the first time in its history, the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity has named France Creative Country of the Year. This distinction recognises more than a decade of creative excellence and celebrates France as one of the world's leading creative nations. The French touch is a universal language. French creativity has a unique ability to move people, inspire audiences and connect across cultures. From luxury and cinema to advertising, design and the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, France demonstrates that creativity is a powerful force for bringing people together and attracting the world."

Tiphaine du Plessis, President of BETC FULLSIX Co-President of the AACC, said: "Creativity is one of France's greatest strategic assets. Far beyond advertising, the Cultural and Creative Industries strengthen economic growth, sustainability, international influence and national attractiveness. Creativity is not only an expression of culture, it is a driver of innovation, competitiveness and soft power. Creativity is business. Creativity is change. Creative ideas create measurable value for brands and businesses, but they also help change behaviours and accelerate societal progress. Whether promoting sustainability, inclusion or public health, creativity turns communication into action. France is shaping the future of creativity. This recognition belongs to an entire creative ecosystem (agencies, brands, creators, institutions and partners) working together under the banner 'France, The Creative Economy'. As AI transforms our industry, France remains committed to combining technological innovation with human creativity, strategic thinking and cultural vision."

Watch the film here: <https://youtu.be/4yCOYljEIng>

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ABOUT AACC

The Association of Creative and Consulting Agencies (AACC) is a professional trade organization founded in 1972. It represents and brings together agency professionals around the key challenges facing the industry: enhancing the value of our professions, strengthening the attractiveness of our agencies, and promoting responsibility. Membership in the AACC entails, among other commitments, compliance with strict professional standards that underpin the value and credibility of the AACC label.

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