Making the most of 'Tomorrow'

Your guide to organising a community screening of the film 'Tomorrow', and how to maximise its impact.
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An introduction from co-producer Cyril Dion.

We are so happy to finally see Tomorrow released in the UK for several reasons. First because, along our journey in 10 countries to find some of the most inspiring initiatives who are building a better future, we’ve spent a great time in Bristol, Todmorden and Totnes, filming the Bristol Pound, the Incredible Edible movement and Transition in Totnes. Secondly, because the Transition Network has been one of the leading inspiration of the narrative and the spirit of Tomorrow. We wanted to show how local initiatives, strong communities and creativity could start a movement able to change our energetic, economic and democratic systems. I hope we caught that spirit well and that the Transition movement will be able to use the film as a powerful tool, to share this vision and empower more and more people. That’s why we are so pleased to release Tomorrow through Transition Network with a community-led screening model that sits perfectly with the spirit of the film. And finally, because the movie has been sold in 30 countries already and we were dying to share it with you, our cousins from across the sea.

Everywhere it has been screened, Tomorrow has created great enthusiasm and led to many actions. In France 1.1 million people went to see it in mainstream cinemas across the country, and hundreds of initiatives have been taken since then by citizens, business holders or local political leaders such as community gardens, local currencies, renewable energy projects, collective composting, zero waste groceries... The same things happened in Belgium, Switzerland and Canada where the movie was, proportionally, even more successful. A huge number of projects were launched, such as Incredible Edible groups, Transition initiatives, university programmes, etc. We were incredibly surprised to see the same reactions in Bangkok, Algé, Torino, Mexico and Hong Kong.

Moreover, the movie strived to contribute to change the vision of what the future could be. It has been screened in the European Parliament in Brussels, at COP21 in Paris, in the UN in Geneva and NYC where the special advisor of Ban Ki-moon, David Navarro, said Tomorrow should be part of the training of every political leader on the planet. Around 200,000 high school students went to see the film with their teachers in France, Belgium and Switzerland. And it might have contributed to some measurable societal influence. According to the French part of the European study ‘Generation What?’ published in France on December 14, the major concern of people between 18 and 34 years old is now ecology, rather than employment.

In the UK, as in many countries of the world, we need to find new path leading to common prosperity and resilience. This movie is not claiming to have all the answers, but it definitely shows some great people inventing and trying to start the movement. I hope these stories of the future will make you feel powerful and passionate about what you can do in your own life, job, community, neighborhood, to give the purpose and the meaning you want to your actions. By doing what we love and what we are gifted for, I have confidence that we can be happy and useful in the same time. To me it is the start of a revolution.

Right: Cyril with co-producer Mélanie Laurent.
About the film

‘Tomorrow’ has been a phenomenon in France and Belgium. Already viewed by over 1.5 million people in France alone, and winner of Best Documentary at the Cesar Awards (the French Oscars), it has been hugely impactful. Produced by activist and writer Cyril Dion and actress/director Melanie Laurent, it tells the story of their search for solutions to the crisis humanity faces.

In 2014, the production team launched a crowdfunding campaign on KissKissBankBank in order to raise €200,000 to finance the film. In just 2 months, the contributions of 10,266 contributors meant that they actually raised €444,390. The film premiered in Paris during COP21.

It is a hugely positive, affirming and inspirational film, exploring creative solutions in the fields of food, energy, transport, economics and education. It visits permaculture farms, urban agriculture projects, community-owned renewable projects, local currencies, creative schools, ambitious recycling projects. It has been a huge boost to community-led projects, and is currently on release in 29 other countries, regularly receiving standing ovations, and leading to the formation of many new community projects. It is the perfect antidote to the current sense of global despondency. It also has a great soundtrack!

Here is the trailer:
Organising your community screening of 'Tomorrow'

Transition Network has negotiated the rights for a community-led distribution of the film in the UK. Communities are invited to organise screenings either in local cinemas or in other venues. The fee per screening is £100, or £200 if the screening is put on by a cinema. There is also the possibility of a lower fee of £50 for communities where £100 represents a real struggle, but given the impact this film can have, and the number of people who are keen to see it, we would urge you to be ambitious in thinking about your screening. You'll find some pointers later in this guide. To book your screening, click here.

Help us create a 'Tomorrow' groundswell

'Tomorrow' is the perfect antidote to post-Trump despondency. It's a fantastic showcase for Transition thinking and where it could go. To help build a buzz around the film, we'd love it if as part of organising your screening you could make sure someone is there with an iPad or some other film recording device, who can film some vox pops with people about what they thought of the film. If you could splice them together and put them on YouTube (using #Tomorrowfilm as a tag), it would really help us in promoting it. Please share your films on social media using the same hashtag. If you need any more suggestions on this, do get in touch.

To give you a sense of what we have in mind, here is one from Tooting, made by Transition Town Tooting after their screening of 'In Transition 2.0'.
A Menu of Possibilities: making the most of your screening

The learning from many community groups has been that this film is a great tool for bringing together the local community, local political representatives, different community organisations and others. It is wonderful for convincing those who are cynical that bottom up, community action can have any meaningful impact, as well as for inspiring your community with possibilities.

If you are thinking of organising a screening, we would really urge you to think about doing the following, suggestions distilled from the experience of screenings around the world:

**The invitation:** Think about which key people should be there, and specifically invite them. Local MP? Councillors? Key local business people? Other local groups? Give some careful attention to who you think should be in the room. Co-present the screening with other local organisation(s). It’s an opportunity for forming important partnerships. Our 'Big List' activity might help you decide who those people should be.

**Timing:** Don’t start the film too late. At just under 2 hours long, if you want to have any kind of discussion/interaction afterwards, make sure you enable that by not starting late.

**Keep the introductions brief:** people will be keen to see the film, so don’t overdo the introductions. Have someone introduce the film and, if one is planned, invite everyone to an ‘After Tomorrow’ event. Point out fire exits, and what is planned for after the film. Introduce (briefly) your group and what it does.

**Harvest ideas:** give people a Post-It note, and at the end ask them to write 'One Thing I Will Do Tomorrow', and put them all on the wall for everyone to see.

Screening of 'Tomorrow' in Paris, for schoolchildren...

In Vietnam ...
Stalls: Local groups, local produce, books about Transition and so on...

Allow the room to meet itself: Invite people to talk to someone sat next to them who they don’t know about why they’ve come and what they hope from the film. Part of this film’s message is that we need to work together, in communities, so start it right there.

After the film: After the film, avoid the usual format of a panel of ‘experts’ taking questions from the audience. People will have just sat for 2 hours watching a film. A better format is to invite people to discuss it in small groups, and to then invite thoughts and reflections from the audience. Make it an open conversation, and try to focus it onto what could practically be done.

Make it a celebration: Make your screening a real celebration of what’s already happening where you live. You might put on a meal, or invite local groups to have stalls for people to visit before the film. You might serve local food and drink, or power the screening with renewable energy. Be creative!

A follow-up event: Don’t try to cram too much into this event. You want to open up possibilities and give people an opportunity to connect with others, but not to overload them with information or try to rush them into action. In Belgium, Transition groups ran "Apres Demain" events in the weeks after the film showings. Announced at the screenings, they often included food and more discussion and focused on real actions that could be initiated in that community. Read more about the Belgium experience overleaf.

You might also find Transition Network’s guide to ‘Planning and Putting on Events’ useful.
The film tells the story of its co-producers, Cyril Dion and Mélanie Laurent. Cyril Dion is a French activist, author and journalist, who has led an NGO for seven years. In 2012, he discovered a study that was the most alarming yet: 'Approaching a state shift in the Earth’s biosphere' published in the journal Nature. It said that humankind could disappear between 2040 and 2100 if we don’t drastically change our way of life. He shared his worries with his friend, actress and filmmaker Mélanie Laurent, who for several years has been involved in his NGO and Greenpeace. Cyril has two children, Mélanie has just had a baby, and they don’t see how they can remain idle faced with this information. With a small film crew, the pair then set off on a road trip around the world in search of solutions.

The film is arranged in 5 chapters, food, energy, economics, democracy and education. Three initiatives are visited in the UK. In 2014, the production team launched a crowdfunding campaign on KissKissBankBank in order to raise €200,000 to finance the film. In just 2 months, the contributions of 10,266 contributors meant that they actually raised €444,390, a record for a film crowdfunder. The film premiered in Paris during...
Dion and Laurent start the film by visiting Totnes, meeting Rob Hopkins and Ben Brangwyn of Transition Network. They also go to Todmorden to learn about Incredible Edible from Pam Warhurst, Mary Clear and Nick Green, and to Bristol to meet Mark Burton and Ciaran Mundy of the Bristol Pound. The rest of their journey takes them to places such as the US, India, Finland, and Denmark.

The UK rollout of the film will begin on the night of January 24th with simultaneous screenings in Totnes, Todmorden and Bristol, with Cyril Dion attending the Totnes event and introducing it virtually to the other screenings. After that, communities will be invited to arrange their own screenings, and to use the film to create big events to promote their work. The UK is the first country to use such a model for distribution. If successful, it is hoped that it could be rolled out elsewhere in the same way. The aim is to get this film screened in every community in the UK.

Tomorrow is a hugely positive, affirming and inspirational film, exploring creative solutions in the fields of food, energy, transport, economics and education. It visits permaculture farms, urban agriculture projects, community-owned renewable projects, local currencies, creative schools, ambitious recycling projects.

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Information

To find out more about the film, see the film’s own website.

You can see the English language trailer of the film.

For more information on the Transition Network distribution of the film, see here.

You can extract this text from the pdf of this document here.
How ‘Tomorrow’ has given Transition a boost in Belgium. François-Olivier Devaux of Transition Hub Wallonie-Bruxelles:

Imagine suddenly your friends and neighbors talking enthusiastically about their new implication in their neighborhood, their plans to start acting locally and the deep changes they are contemplating in their daily lives.

If you have witnessed this recently, it is probably related to the release of the movie ‘Tomorrow’. Whether the movie is considered as a huge revelation, or an effective “Let’s do it” call, its impact is considerable in Belgium. In the following, we propose to analyse this impact from a Transition point of view.

Transition in Belgium

It is estimated that there are more than 100 Transition initiatives in Belgium, half of which are located in Brussels and Wallonia. In this article, we will focus on these two regions, from the perspective of its Transition Hub, the Réseau Transition.

Transition began in 2009 in Brussels and Grez-Doiceau, and slowly expanded to other rural and urban communities. In 2012, people from about 25 initiatives took part in the Conviviale 1.0 (our first “modest but awesome” Transition gathering). Through the organization of that gathering, the need to strengthen the links between initiatives and create mutual tools was strongly felt. The Réseau Transition was born! Supported by two NGOs, the first paid roles focused on organizing trainings to support initiatives and the movement.

Today, the organization is fully independent, a great number of volunteers support the Hub and four part-time employees offer direct support, trainings, tools and spread the Transition concepts around Belgium.
Why we love 'Tomorrow'

It’s a great road movie presenting initiatives that have proven themselves in ten countries around the world: concrete examples of solutions to environmental and social challenges of our times in agriculture, energy, economy, education and governance. As Gandhi once (surely) said, “Leading by example is not the best way to convince people, it’s the only one”.

It’s a funny and optimistic movie but that does not avoid presenting the big challenges we are facing. It starts by quoting an article from the Nature Journal in which more than 20 scientists explain that part of humanity will disappear before 2100 from human causes provoking a general collapse of ecosystems.

That awareness is transformed into a positive energy making Cyril and Mélanie start a journey to seek for advice on how to move forward. The first stop in their international trip is a humble English town called Totnes, where they met various inspiring people...

You will surely ask yourself after seeing this film poster who between Totnes’ £21 note and Rob is now the most famous in France, Switzerland and Belgium...

'Tomorrow' in Belgium

The success of the movie in Belgium is impressive. More than 100,000 persons have already seen it (compared to our national population of 10 million, it’s an amazing score), which makes it more successful than the Al Gore documentary 'An Inconvenient Truth'!

While at the start, only progressive newspapers covered the release of the movie, most of the mainstream journals now have published articles trying to explain this mass success. In turn, many citizens hearing echos from friends and media have gone to see the movie, which is now released in Belgium’s biggest cinema chain.

In Brussels and Wallonia, many Transition initiatives co-organized local projections as well as follow-up events usually named “After Tomorrow” ('Apres Demain').

Here are some reactions to the movie:

I just got out of the movie and I’m excited! Full of ideas, it’s all very encouraging... You’ll see!!! No spoiler here... but I wanted to share with you this feeling of joy and the will to do more that invades me!

Juanita from Ath en Transition

Two full movie theatres for a documentary!!! This mainly means that people really want to see change happen. Of the 600 spectators, 200 completed a small “Tomorrow, what about me” sheet, inviting them to reflect on a concrete action to participate in the world of tomorrow. There was a great atmosphere after the film, the bar full of local beers was emptied on the first evening. We created a short movie and folder presenting the actions of our local initiatives, which were impressively in line with the film content. The Mayor was present and congratulated us by mail with enthusiasm. He said he was delighted to see all these initiatives flourish in his town!

Valentine from “Gembloux Optimiste”

Since the film was already distributed in our town theaters, our local initiative Ixelles en Transition in Brussels didn’t organize a screening. However, we organized an “after-tomorrow” event. Our idea was to start conversations, presenting projects already underway in our initiative and help new projects to take shape. We succeeded: after the meeting, new persons are launching their idea and communicating with their contact or even organizing an action themselves! In short, the movie provides a great convergence of energy that we hope will last.

Mayliss from Ixelles in Transition
Besides the excitement, what impact has the movie had?

With so many citizens having seen Demain, it is now easier for us to present Transition, referring to the movie. “Oh yeah, right, I know Transition” is a sentence we hear more often. We have also seen a significant increase in the number of initiatives created during the last months, in part related to the movie. Additionally, existing initiatives has seen many new citizens coming to offer their contribution.

At a larger scale, it is important to state that Belgium has recently experienced many situations managed poorly by the politics (terrible handling of the migrants issue, revolting acts of terrorism, severe issues with mobility, etc.). Some citizens sense that this situation is not (only) due to incompetent politicians, but also because of a deeper flaw in the system. This understanding, combined with a positive energy of togetherness, is a great opportunity for Transition, active in this reflexion since many years.

Once the buzz created by the movie had passed, deeper analysis have started to appear in the media. What is the political message of the movie? Does it claim for more or less politics? Does the movie illustrate a temporary contestation movement, or invite for long term alternatives? It is also interesting to watch the politician answers, who of course officially love the movie, but informally don’t have enough hindsight to define their next step. Should they increase their support to the movement? Will they benefit from such a move?

We also heard some frustrations around the fact that the positive message of the movie might overshadow the initial statement around a system collapse that seems more and more obvious. This is of course a topic often discussed in Transition Initiatives, and in Rob’s Transition Culture blog. I am personally more and more convinced by the fact that experimenting and realizing that another tomorrow is possible enables you to analyze the current system more objectively and question it more frontally.

New perspectives for “après-demain”

What are the new opportunities that we are facing today, in our initiatives and hub, given the positive context for Transition? We are increasing our collaboration with universities and research centers to benefit from their analyses and inspire them with real world cases. A new project called Voies de Transition (Transition Paths), a web space to reflect on Transition, aims at inspiring local initiatives and improving the visibility of the movement.

The Inner Transition sphere of our activities is also developing quickly through rich interactions with other partners outside Transition. We are also working on the development of a “Transition Collective” (official name still under construction) which will gather many organizations striving for improving the resilience of our communities in Belgium.

Finally, we are developing Trainings on new topics and under new formats. As you can see, we have many reasons to celebrate the dissemination of Transition principles in Belgium, with the help of ‘Tomorrow’, and welcome the exciting opportunities sprouting with spring season. Long live tomorrow!
An invitation...

Are you feeling curious? Critical? Excited? Daunted? The Transition movement is made up of people like you who are already feeling the benefit of connecting with others to take care of themselves, their community and the planet. Let us help you take the next step.

Find out more about our movement. Check out whether Transition is already happening near you. Consider starting a Transition group.