



**EMBARGOED UNTIL: 00:00 21 May 2009**

## Diverse young Europeans show what it means to belong

**Today, Manifesta<sup>i</sup> and the Runnymede Trust<sup>ii</sup> release over 40 films from young people across Europe on the theme of belonging. As far right parties seek to gain votes in the European Parliament on a racist and anti-immigration platform, young people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds share stories from their lives which show their sense of belonging to their cities and the contribution that they make to them.**

The project, called **BELONGING**, is a creative video project for young people addressing the realities of migration and settlement. Working across Europe in neighbourhoods in London, Lisbon and Paris, **BELONGING** engaged teenagers, creative film-makers, artists, communities, museums and broadcast organisations in a collaboration leading to the production of a series of personal short films. Many of the young film-makers were brought together at the end of 2008 to share their ideas and experiences and reflect on what they have in common.

The films, available on the Runnymede Trust website, address many themes, from peer pressure, to religious intolerance, relationships with the police, inter-generational change, and the environment. Together, they show how young people in the three cities are engaged with their society and have a real contribution to make in spite of the barriers of racism and poverty that many of them face. The films also show that young people's voices are crucial to the debate about how we live successfully as multi-ethnic societies.

The films have been used to create resources for schools so that other young people can contribute to the debate and consider what it means to belong.

### NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The films will be launched at 6pm on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008 at Channel 4 Horseferry Road. To attend the launch contact 020 7377 9222
2. Rob Berkeley, Director of Runnymede is available for interviews and comment. To arrange an interview, please contact 020 7377 9222 during office hours. Outside of office hours, contact Rob Berkeley on 07764 935 770.
3. The project is supported by Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation<sup>iii</sup>, Equality and Human Rights Commission, RTP2, Connect Youth – Youth in Action, and British Council.
3. The films are available online at [www.runnymedetrust.org](http://www.runnymedetrust.org).



4. The educational resources will be made available free of charge to schools and youth workers. For further information please contact [info@runnymedetrust.org](mailto:info@runnymedetrust.org) or visit the Runnymede website.

---

<sup>i</sup> Manifesta is a not for profit company with a special focus on young people. Manifesta founders Colin Prescod and Marion Vargaftig have been working together since 1996 and bring extensive expertise in developing UK and European projects addressing cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and social exclusion/inclusion — using arts/ culture, film and video production - including TV. For more information visit [www.manifesta.org.uk](http://www.manifesta.org.uk)

<sup>ii</sup> The Runnymede Trust is an independent policy research organisation focusing on equality and justice through the promotion of a successful multi-ethnic society. Founded as a Charitable Education Trust, Runnymede has a long track record in policy research, working in collaboration with eminent thinkers and policymakers in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Since 1968, the date of Runnymede's foundation, we have worked to establish and maintain a positive image of what it means to live affirmatively within a society that is both multi-ethnic and culturally diverse. Runnymede continues to speak with a thoughtful and independent public voice on these issues today. For further information visit [www.runnymedetrust.org](http://www.runnymedetrust.org)

<sup>iii</sup> The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation was established in Lisbon in 1956. It has a UK Branch based in London and a Cultural Centre in Paris. The Foundation's purpose in the UK and Ireland is to help enrich and connect the experiences of individuals and secure lasting and beneficial change. The UK Branch has for more than 50 years initiated and supported pioneering social, cultural and educational developments. [www.gulbenkian.org.uk](http://www.gulbenkian.org.uk)