PRESS RELEASE

**Pohoda Festival has scored nominations in three categories for the prestigious European Festival Awards 2023.**

**Pohoda has been shortlisted in the TOP 10 of the best medium-sized festivals in Europe thanks to the votes from our visitors. Pohoda has also been shortlisted by music professionals for the TOP 5 festivals in the categories of The Take a Stand Award and The Event Safety Award.**

The winners in each category will be revealed on January 17 during a gala ceremony in Groningen, the Netherlands. Another Slovak representative, the SHARPE festival, has also made it to the list of TOP 10 best small European festivals.

Voting for the **Best Medium-Sized Festival** category involves two rounds. In the first round, attendees cast their votes for their favourite festivals. Afterward, an expert jury selects the final ten and the ultimate winner of the category. A medium-sized festival is one with a daily attendance ranging from 10,000 to 39,999 people. Pohoda has become a regular nominee in this category.

***“It's fantastic that Pohoda has secured not one, but three nominations at Europe's most prestigious festival awards. Firstly, a big thank you to everyone who voted for Pohoda in the Best Medium-Sized Festival category. We love spreading the news worldwide that we have the best festival audience, and we appreciate this confirmation once again :). A special thank you also goes to the professionals who picked us from the longlist as one of the top 10 events in Europe. We're proud to be nominated again in the Take a Stand category; having won one of these awards before, we're happy that Pohoda continues to be seen as a celebration of freedom by our European colleagues. Equally important is the nomination in the Event Safety category, as we've always prioritised safety and quality service for our visitors. Earlier this year, the prestigious IQ magazine named us one of the top 10 independent festivals in the world. Alica Ouschan, the editor of Austria's FM4 radio, even asked in her report if Pohoda might be the best festival in the world, and now we are receiving good news from the European awards as well.* It gives us strength and joy as we gear up for Pohoda 2024," adds Pohoda director Michal Kaščák about the nominations**.

**The Event Safety Award** recognises excellence in event safety and health. Pohoda Festival has earned a nomination in this category for its comprehensive safety, health, and prevention measures. Pohoda takes an inclusive approach to its visitors, making a concerted effort to address the safety and needs of everyone attending the festival. This commitment is evident in the Family Park, catering to families with children; the barrier-free access; and the various information stands that not only provide information on various topics, but also focus on prevention. Pohoda also places importance on mental health, offering a Mental Health Tent where festival-goers can talk to psychiatrists. This year, the introduction of Menstrual product dispensers was a new addition to the festival. There are also plenty of free toiletries available at hygiene stations, toilets, and baby changing facilities. Free drinking water is easily accessible at multiple locations on the site. A crucial aspect of safety measures has also been Pohoda's close, long-term collaboration with SHMÚ (Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute), which has its team of on-site meteorologists at the airport every year. Medical centres are available for visitors needing to store medicines at lower temperatures. Throughout the festival, a hotline staffed with trained psychologists and counsellors is in place to assist anyone facing challenges.

**The Take a Stand Award** puts the spotlight on the social activities and initiatives of European festivals that prioritise tolerance, humanity, and understanding in their programmes. Pohoda has received a nomination for its engagement in issues such as the climate crisis, the war in Ukraine, and LGBTI+ issues, reflecting these topics in its 2023 programme in sync with events in Slovakia. Much of the visual arts and the Plantasia project, in particular, addressed the climate crisis in a truly exceptional way. Pohoda 2023 showcased several artists from Ukraine, and the festival hosted the world premiere of the orchestral work Symphony of Free Ukraine. Various fundraising events were organised to support the people of Ukraine, including a collection for ambulances to aid in saving lives on the front line. In response to the terrorist attack outside the Tepláreň bar and the ongoing attacks on the LGBTI+ community, a new stage named Tepláreň was introduced.

The organisers would like to thank everyone who visit Pohoda and cast their votes. It is also thanks to these nominations that Slovakia is becoming more and more visible, and not only on the festival map of the world.
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**PressKit – Pohoda 2023:**
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bEgMh-vxgbmu8xU4iRFp_3fSvEhNTZaA>

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