Project Brief – Cineflow

Background Context

People today spend more time deciding what to watch than actually watching. With so many platforms and titles, it can get messy. Cineflow aims to cut through that noise by helping people find the right movie or show quickly, based on their mood and preferences.

1. What is Cineflow?

Cineflow is a web app that helps people keep track of movies and TV shows. With it, users can:
- Find trending titles through the TMDb API.
- Save stuff to a personal Watchlist.
- Mark things as Watched, Watching, or Dropped.
- Rate and review movies and shows.
- Get personalised suggestions, including mood-based picks (unique feature).

The idea is to cut down on endless scrolling and give users one simple place to organise their viewing.

2. How it Works

For example, if you just want to watch something relaxing, instead of searching across three streaming apps, you open Cineflow, choose "light & cozy", and instantly get suggestions - these can also be sorted by ratings (pulled from Tmbd).

You can also:
- Save things you want to watch soon and be reminded if they're about to leave a streaming service.
- Run a quick "mood poll" with friends so everyone can vote and decide together.

It's about making movie nights easier, less stressful, and more fun.

3. Main Features

- User Accounts

    - Register, log in, and log out.

    - Personal dashboard for each user.

- Library Management (CRUD)

    - Add or remove titles.

    - Update their status (watchlist, watched, dropped).

    - Mark favourites.

- Discovery

  - Browse trending movies and shows.

  - Search by genre, title, or year.

  - Real-time suggestions from TMDb.

- Reviews & Ratings

  - Leave 1–10 star ratings.

  - Write reviews for others to see.

- Mood-Based Recommendations (unique)

  - Choose what to watch based on how you're feeling.

  - Poll feature for groups to decide together.

- Responsive Design

  - Works on desktop, tablet, and mobile.

4. Tools & Tech (and why)

Backend (on Render):
- Django + Django REST Framework → solid for building APIs.
- PostgreSQL → handles relational data well.
- JWT Authentication → secure login system.

Frontend:
- React → smooth, modern interface.
- Bootstrap → makes styling faster and mobile-friendly.

External API:
- TMDb → trusted movie/TV database with loads of info.

Other:
- Django unittest for testing.
- GitHub for version control (branches keep work organised).

5. Goals for the Project

- Deploy a working full-stack app on Render.
- Have working login/logout and CRUD features.
- Use TMDb API for live movie/TV info.
- Build a clean, responsive interface with Bootstrap.
- Write tests so it's reliable.
- End with a polished app that shows off full-stack skills: backend, frontend, API use, testing, and deployment.

Target Audience Deep Dive

Cineflow is built for everyday movie and TV fans who want something more personal than Netflix or IMDb.
- Demographics:
  • Ages 18–40 (students, young professionals, casual binge-watchers).
  • Tech-comfortable, using laptops or phones daily.
  • Streaming subscribers (Netflix, Disney+, Prime, etc.).
- Psychographics:
  • People who hate wasting time scrolling.
  • Want quick suggestions that match their mood.
  • Like tracking what they've watched and sharing opinions.
- User Behaviours:
  • Spend 1–3 hours per night watching shows/movies.
  • Use multiple apps (Letterboxd, Netflix, Rotten Tomatoes).

Project Goals with Metrics (KPIs)

To know if Cineflow is working, I will track:
- User sign-ups: At least 20–50 early users (classmates, friends, testers).
- Engagement:
  • Average of 2+ movies/shows added per user in their watchlist.
  • At least 30% of users writing reviews/ratings.
- Feature usage: Mood-based recommendations being used at least once per week by active users.
- Technical goals:
  • Fully deployed on Render with no major downtime.
  • API calls to TMDb returning under 1 second for smooth browsing.