

Sundance FFP FAQs:

1. How do I apply?

Once a year, Sundance Institute accepts open applications for the January Screenwriters Lab only. Applications are available online each year starting February 15 and are due May 1, for the following January Screenwriters Lab.

2. Which Lab is right for me?

Sundance Institute only accepts open applications for the January Screenwriters Lab. If you are a director developing a script that you did not write, you may apply for the Screenwriters Lab with the screenwriter as a team.

3. How do I get into the Directors Lab?

Because the Directors Lab is usually populated by projects that have been through a previous Screenwriters Lab, there is no open application process for the Directors Lab. Application to the January Screenwriters Lab is the best way to put your project into the pipeline of eventual consideration for the Directors Lab.

4. How many scripts can I apply with?

You may submit up to three projects, but we encourage you to choose one project that is your priority in terms of moving forward. Please note that for each script, you must complete a separate application, and submit a separate application fee.

5. I'm attached to direct a script but I didn't write it. Can I still submit it for the Screenwriters Lab?

Yes, if you are involved with the creative development of the story, you may still apply. We will consider writers, writer/directors, and writer/director teams.

6. I have a project I want to submit for the Screenwriters Lab, but it is still a treatment. If I don't think I will be able to have a draft in screenplay format in time to submit, can I submit my treatment for consideration?

No. We need to receive a completed draft of a screenplay in order to consider your project for the Screenwriters Lab. This does not mean the final draft; however, we do ask that the script is in standard format.

7. Can I reapply with the same script next year?

Under certain circumstances, yes. We will consider re-applications with the same script only if you have completed significant revisions.

8. I am an American living abroad. Can I still apply?

For Americans living abroad, you may have problems with payment by credit card. If this is the case, please bypass the online application and email featurefilmprogram@sundance.org for further instruction.

9. Can only Americans apply?

Only U.S.-based filmmakers or U.S. citizens living abroad can use the online application for the January Screenwriters Lab. If you are not a U.S. citizen and are living outside the United States, please email ffpinternational@sundance.org for information about applying.

10. I have written a script and want Sundance Institute to produce it. Is that possible?

No. Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization. We do not produce or finance films. Rather, our Screenwriters and Directors Labs provide filmmakers with opportunities to develop their material in a workshop environment.

11. What kind of grants/support/production help can Sundance Institute offer our movie? Or that I can apply for?

Sundance Institute Feature Film Program grants are reserved for artists already supported by the Sundance Institute Feature Film Program. The only grant for which there is a public application is the Alfred P. Sloan Commissioning Grant and Fellowship. Applications for this annual grant are accepted through the online application available from mid-June through early September.

12. Should I have my industry contacts call with references?

No. Our final decision is based on the material and talent alone. Take comfort in the fact that your work will literally speak for itself!

13. What are the Lab dates?

The 2012 January Screenwriters Lab will take place January 13-18, 2012.

14. When and where is the Directors Lab?

The Directors Lab is held each June, usually during the first three-and-a-half weeks of June. Like the Screenwriters Labs, the Directors Lab is held at the Sundance Resort in Sundance, Utah.

15. Is it possible to get an extension? What's the final final final deadline?

Unfortunately, we cannot grant extensions past the May 1 deadline. You must complete the online portion of your application by this date.

16. How should I bind / format my script?

Please use 8.5" x 11" three-hole punched paper, print double-sided, and bind with two or three midsize solid brass fasteners. Please also include a cover page with the title of your project and your name.

17. How long / short is too long / too short for a script?

While there is no "correct length," the average script is between 90 – 120 pages. In most cases, if your script is significantly shorter or longer than that range, we will suggest you do more revisions before submitting it for consideration.

18. How will I be notified about acceptance? Will I be notified if I'm not accepted?

All Lab notifications will be made via email. You will hear from us either way, whether accepted or not.

19. I haven't received my notification yet, but all my friends have! What's wrong??

We deliver our notifications on a rolling basis, so please don't panic. You will hear whether you have proceeded to the second round of the application process by August 15, 2011 at the latest. Final Lab decisions will be made by December 15, 2011.

20. When will I know if I've made it to the next round?

You will hear whether you have proceeded to the second round of the application process by August 15, 2011 at the latest. Final Lab decisions will be made by December 15, 2011.

21. Can I deliver my application in person?

Yes, if you live in Los Angeles, you can deliver your application materials to our office in-person. Please call our main office line at 310-360-1981 to ensure someone will be here to accept your package.

22. I don't have much experience. Does that affect my chances at the labs?

Absolutely not. Sundance Institute seeks to foster exciting emerging voices, regardless of professional film experience.

23. Do you consider scripts written in a language other than English?

Although we will support scripts that will eventually be produced in a language other than English, your script must be translated into English in order to be considered.

24. Can I submit a script based on a novel?

Yes, we will consider scripts based on prior work, as long as you have the rights to the material.

25. How complete should the screenplay be?

Sundance Institute considers scripts at various stages of development, but you must have a full, completed screenplay in order to be considered.

26. How long should the cover letter be? Resume? Synopsis? Etc? What about format?

The cover letter and synopsis should both be between 1-2 pages in length. The resume should only be one page, or alternatively you may submit a written bio no more than 1 page in length. Your resume/bio does not have to be limited to your experience in film, though if you do have film experience it should be included. All materials should be in standard, 8.5 x 11 format.

27. Would my ideas be protected?

Yes, Sundance Institute does not share or distribute any materials.

28. Do you accept scripts that have been submitted elsewhere?

Yes, we have no restrictions on material that has been through other writers workshops or programs.

29. How should I address my letter? Michelle Satter? Sundance Staff? To Whom It May Concern?

Please address your letter "To Whom It May Concern."

Still don't see your question answered here? Email featurefilmprogram@sundance.org with further questions.