Sundance Institute is a non-profit organization that provides a wide variety of programs and initiatives for independent artists and storytellers working in film and streaming media. Fees from Festival submissions help us to support the independent creative community and keep our selection process as rigorous and democratic as possible. For more information about Sundance Institute's other programs, please visit us at www.sundance.org. All information contained in this document is subject to change and is superseded by our Festival Rules & Regulations.

Submitting Your Project to the 2027 Sundance Film Festival

1) What are the submission deadlines and what are the fees?

The following deadlines are the dates by which we must receive a completed application for your project via FilmFreeway, including a streaming upload or link. All submissions are handled identically, regardless of which deadline you choose. Late deadline submissions are processed and screened in exactly the same manner as early and official deadline submissions. The only difference is the fee. We encourage you to submit your project as early as possible to take advantage of lower submission fees.

Early Submission Deadline:

U.S. & International Short Films: Monday, July 13, 2026 - $55 entry fee
Episodic Content (60 minutes or less): Friday, July 24, 2026 - $55 entry fee
Episodic Content (over 60 minutes): Friday, July 24, 2026 - $80 entry fee
U.S. & International Feature Films: Monday, July 27, 2026 - $80 entry fee

Official Submission Deadline:

U.S. & International Short Films: Monday, August 3, 2026 - $75 entry fee
Episodic Content (60 minutes or less): Friday, August 14, 2026 - $75 entry fee
Episodic Content (over 60 minutes): Friday, August 14, 2026 - $100 entry fee
U.S. & International Feature Films: Friday, August 28, 2026 - $100 entry fee

Late Submission Deadline:

U.S. & International Short Films: Monday, August 31, 2026 - $95 entry fee
Episodic Content (60 minutes or less): Friday, September 11, 2026 - $95 entry fee
Episodic Content (over 60 minutes): Friday, September 11, 2026 - $125 entry fee
U.S. & International Feature Films: Monday, September 21, 2026 - $125 entry fee

Please ensure that your project's submission status on your FilmFreeway account is listed as "In Consideration" no later than 11:59pm PST on the final day of your selected deadline window. All submissions that are not 100% complete at that time will be disqualified and you will need to submit again during a subsequent deadline window. We recommend that you wait until your video file is ready to upload or your link is available before you fill out the application. For example, if you know you will be submitting your film for the late deadline, do not fill out the application until the first two deadlines have passed. If you submit a project with a non-working video file or link in order to meet the "In Consideration" status requirement before the deadline, your submission will be disqualified and you will be required to submit again during a subsequent deadline window.

2) What are the submission categories and how do I choose the right one for my project?

Each year, we select a slate of feature films, short films, episodic projects, and special events to exhibit within each of our Festival programs. Before you begin your submission, please read carefully the eligibility requirements for each category below and select the one that best suits your project:

U.S. Narrative Feature Films:

Any narrative or non-scripted work of fiction originating from within the United States with a running time of 50 minutes or more. In order to qualify as a U.S. Narrative Feature Film, the submitted project must be either scripted or improvisational fiction, or a fictionalization of actual events, and at least half of the project's financing must originate from within the United States. Only projects retaining world premiere status are eligible for open submission to this category. Completed projects that have been or will have been exhibited theatrically or otherwise made available to the general public, either for free or for purchase prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, public theatrical exhibition (festival or otherwise), television broadcast, home video, or any streaming/online platform within any or all countries.

U.S. Documentary Feature Films:

Any work of nonfiction originating from within the United States with a running time of 50 minutes or more. If your documentary contains re-enactments or other fictionalized depictions of actual events, you may submit to this category, but we will ultimately decide which of our Festival programs is best suited for your project, if accepted. In order to qualify as a U.S. Documentary Feature Film, at least half of the submitted project's financing must originate from within the United States. Only projects retaining world premiere status are eligible for open submission to this category. Completed projects that have been or will have been exhibited theatrically or otherwise made available to the general public, either for free or for purchase prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, public theatrical exhibition (festival or otherwise), television broadcast, home video, or any streaming/online platform within any or all countries.

International Narrative Feature Films:

Any narrative or non-scripted work of fiction originating from outside of the United States with a running time of 50 minutes or more. In order to qualify as an International Narrative Feature Film, the submitted project must be either scripted or improvisational fiction, or a fictionalization of actual events, and at least half of the project's financing must originate from outside of the United States. Only projects retaining international premiere status are eligible for open submission to this category. Completed projects that have been or will have been exhibited theatrically (festival or otherwise) outside of the project’s country or countries of origin prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible for open submission to this category. Projects that have been or will have been made available to the general public in a non-theatrical form, either for free or for purchase prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, television broadcast, home video, or any streaming/online platform within any or all countries.

International Documentary Feature Films:

Any work of nonfiction originating from outside of the United States with a running time of 50 minutes or more. If your documentary contains re-enactments or other fictionalized depictions of actual events, you may submit it to this category, but we will ultimately decide which of our Festival programs is best suited for your project, if accepted. In order to qualify as an International Documentary Feature Film, at least half of the submitted project's financing must originate from outside of the United States. Only projects retaining international premiere status are eligible for open submission to this category. Completed projects that have been or will have been exhibited theatrically (festival or otherwise) outside of the film’s country or countries of origin prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible for open submission to this category. Projects that have been or will have been made available to the general public in a non-theatrical form, either for free or for purchase prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, television broadcast, home video, or any streaming/online platform within any or all countries.

U.S. Short Films:

Any project originating from within the United States with a running time of less than 50 minutes, including credits. This includes scripted or improvisational fiction, nonfiction, experimental film or video, animation, music video, or any other short-form film or video project. In order to qualify as a U.S. Short Film, at least half of the submitted project's financing must originate from within the United States. Completed projects that have been exhibited theatrically or otherwise made available to the general public, either for free or for purchase prior to January 1, 2026 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, public theatrical exhibition (festival or otherwise), television broadcast, home video, or any streaming/online platform within any or all countries. Projects completed after December 31, 2025 are still eligible to submit to the Festival, regardless of premiere status.

International Short Films:

Any project originating from outside of the United States with a running time of less than 50 minutes, including credits. This includes scripted or improvisational fiction, nonfiction, experimental film or video, animation, music video, or any other short-form film or video project. In order to qualify as an International Short Film, at least half of the submitted project's financing must originate from outside of the United States. Completed projects that have been exhibited theatrically or otherwise made available to the general public, either for free or for purchase prior to January 1, 2026 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, public theatrical exhibition (festival or otherwise), television broadcast, home video, or any streaming/online platform within any or all countries. Projects completed after December 31, 2025 are still eligible to submit to the Festival, regardless of premiere status.

Episodic Content (60 minutes or less):

Any project presented in or intended to be presented in a multi-episode format, with a total running time of 60 minutes or less. This includes scripted fiction, improvisational fiction, or nonfiction, and may be presented in the form of a pilot episode, pilot presentation, multi-episode series, or web series. Submitted projects may originate from anywhere in the world, but multi-episode submissions must be delivered as one single and continuous video file or link, not to exceed 10GB in size. Projects may consist of single or multiple episodes, but the total running time must not exceed 60 minutes in length. Completed projects that have been or will have been exhibited theatrically or otherwise made available to the general public, either for free or for purchase prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, public theatrical exhibition (festival or otherwise), television broadcast, home video, or any streaming or online platform within any or all countries.

Episodic Content (over 60 minutes):

Any project presented in or intended to be presented in a multi-episode format, with a total running time of more than 60 minutes. This includes scripted fiction, improvisational fiction, or nonfiction, and may be presented in the form of a pilot episode, pilot presentation, multi-episode series, or web series. Submitted projects may consist of single or multiple episodes, and they may originate from anywhere in the world, with no restriction regarding length. All submissions must be delivered as one single and continuous video file or link, not to exceed 10GB in size. Completed projects that have been or will have been exhibited theatrically or otherwise made available to the general public, either for free or for purchase prior to February 1, 2027 are not eligible to submit to this category. This includes, but is not limited to, public theatrical exhibition (festival or otherwise), television broadcast, home video, or any streaming or online platform within any or all countries.

3) What are the Festival programs and eligibility requirements for each?

The Sundance Film Festival is comprised of both competition and out-of-competition film and episodic programs, all of which are listed below. You may not submit your project directly to any specific Festival program. If your project is accepted into the Festival, our Programming team will ultimately determine the Festival program in which it will be placed. All feature-length films accepted into any of these programs are eligible to compete for the *Festival Favorite Award*, determined by audience balloting at screenings throughout the Festival. These programs may vary from year to year, so the information below is subject to change at any time.

At the core of our Festival program are our competition programs. Films that are selected to be in one of these six programs are eligible for jury and/or audience awards in their respective sections:

U.S. Dramatic Competition:

This program offers audiences a first look at groundbreaking new voices in American independent film, guaranteed to leave a lasting impact on the next generation of cinema. Our U.S. Dramatic Competition consists of films submitted to us in the U.S. Narrative Feature Films category, which are subject to the eligibility requirements listed above. Projects selected for this program will be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions), and will compete against one another for jury prizes and an audience award.

U.S. Documentary Competition:

Illuminating the ideas, people, and events that shape the present day, our U.S. Documentary Competition is made up of films submitted to us in the U.S. Documentary Feature Films category, which are subject to the eligibility requirements listed above. From human rights to popular culture, these films provide a window into the subjects that define our time. Projects selected for this program will be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions), and will compete against one another for jury prizes and an audience award.

World Cinema Dramatic Competition:

These films from emerging filmmaking talents around the world offer fresh perspectives and innovative styles. Comprising films submitted to us in the International Narrative Feature Films category, films must meet the eligibility requirements listed above in order to be eligible for this program. We present these exceptional works as a way to honor the independent spirit in filmmakers everywhere. Projects selected for this program will be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions), and will compete against one another for jury prizes and an audience award.

World Cinema Documentary Competition:

Made by some of the most courageous and extraordinary filmmakers working today, these films offer a global perspective, examining issues that range from the personal to the universal. Our World Cinema Documentary program is made up of submissions to the International Documentary Feature Film category and are subject to the eligibility requirements set forth above. Projects selected for this program will be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions), and will compete against one another for jury prizes and an audience award.

NEXT:

Pure, bold works distinguished by an innovative approach to storytelling populate this program that shapes the next wave of cinema. By nature, they embody the spirit of indie filmmaking. The NEXT program may consist of films submitted to any of our U.S. and International Feature Film categories, both Documentary and Narrative. As such, they are subject to the eligibility requirements listed in each of those four categories above. Projects selected for this program may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions), and will compete against one another for the NEXT Innovator Award and an audience award.

Short Film Competition:

Driven by innovation and experimentation, our Short Film program showcases filmmaking's most unique and original voices with cutting-edge animation and the best in short form dramatic and documentary cinema. All short films are selected from the U.S. and International Short Film submission categories and are subject to the eligibility requirements above. Short films may play before features or in one of our Short Film Programs, and all accepted projects may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions), and will compete against one another for jury prizes within their respective categories and genres (U.S. Fiction, International Fiction, Nonfiction, and Animation).

Projects selected for the following Festival programs will screen out-of-competition. Open submissions to our U.S. Feature Film categories must be world premieres, while open submissions to our International Feature Films categories must be international premieres. However, we reserve the right to select projects for some out-of-competition programs that do not meet these requirements.

Premieres:

Showcasing some of the most highly anticipated feature-length fiction and nonfiction films of the coming year, this program allows audiences to experience the latest work from established directors and renowned documentarians. Acceptance into this out-of-competition program is by invitation only and selected films may not have been exhibited publicly, excluding the Festival, prior to February 1, 2027. Films selected for this program may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions).

Spotlight:

Regardless of where these impressive films have played throughout the world, Spotlight is a tribute to the cinema we love. We are confident you'll love them too. Acceptance into this out-of-competition program is by invitation only and do not need to retain any sort of premiere status in order to be selected for this program. Films selected for this program may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions).

Midnight:

An eclectic mix of horror, sci-fi, over-the-top comedy, explicit animation, and bizarre stories that defy categorization. These unruly films will keep you edge-seated and wide awake. Films accepted into this out-of-competition program may include selections from the four U.S. and International Narrative and Documentary Feature Film submission categories and may not have been exhibited publicly, excluding the Festival, prior to February 1, 2027. Films selected for this program may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions).

Family Matinee:

Created to reach the younger generation of independent film fans, this program showcases work that appeals to young and old alike. Accepted projects may include selections from the Feature and Short Film submission categories listed above and must meet the eligibility requirements for each. Films selected for this program may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions). If your feature film has played or will play elsewhere prior to February 1, 2027 and you feel it is uniquely qualified for this Festival program, please contact **programming@sundance.org** to determine your project's eligibility.

Episodic:

Continuing our long history of supporting episodic creators and storytellers, this program highlights both fiction and nonfiction series that extend across multiple installments. To be considered for this program, projects must meet the eligibility requirements set forth in the Episodic Content categories of submission listed above. While we may opt to select projects that have premiered elsewhere, some or all of the episodes submitted must retain world premiere status. Projects selected for this program may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions).

Special Events:

Featuring one-of-a-kind moments that add to the unique Festival experience, our Special Events section includes theatrical presentations with interactive elements, performances, special guests, and happenings that are sure to spark conversation throughout the Festival and beyond. Projects selected for this program may be presented both in-person and online (with geographical restrictions).

4) My project is uniquely suited to your New Frontier Program-- can I still submit?

We strive to include innovative and experimental storytelling experiences across our core Festival programs. We are not currently accepting open submissions that fall within the specific realm of the VR/AR/XR project category, nor do we accept general submissions that feature interactive elements that may be suited for a theatrical or exhibition setting. If you wish to inquire further as to whether or not your project is eligible for any of our Festival programs, please contact **programming@sundance.org**.

5) How do you determine whether a project is considered U.S. or International?

Applicants should select their submission category based on the primary source of the project's financing. If 50% or more of the film's financing came from sources within the United States, it should be submitted as a U.S. film. If more than 50% of the film's financing came from sources outside of the United States, it should be submitted as an International film. If you are unable to make a selection based on financing, you may select the submission category that you feel best suits your project. However, we reserve the right to determine which Festival program your film will ultimately be placed, if selected. We will consider a number of factors to make this determination, including film content, production location, and nationality of the cast and filmmakers.

6) How do you distinguish short films from feature films?

Films with a total running time of less than 50 minutes (including credits) are classified as shorts. Films with a total running time of 50 minutes or longer are classified as features. You should select your submission category based on what the final projected running time of the film will be, including credits. We have no minimum length requirement for short films or maximum running time restrictions for feature-length films.

7) What is the difference between the two submission categories for Episodic Content?

Our Episodic section has traditionally been comprised of multi-project programs and standalone programs featuring multiple episodes of a singular series. If you have completed a pilot episode, pilot presentation, or multiple episodes of an episodic series that has a total running time of 60 minutes or less at the time of submission, you should submit your project to the "Episodic Content (60 minutes or less)" submission category. If you wish to submit episodes of a series for which the total running time of episodes submitted exceeds 60 minutes, you should submit your project to the "Episodic Content (over 60 minutes)" submission category. In the event that the number of episodes available for your submitted project changes after the time of submission, please contact **programming@sundance.org** in order to determine the best course of action.

8) What is the definition of the term "public theatrical exhibition"?

As outlined in Item 3 above, your feature-length film or episodic project may be ineligible for many of our submission categories if a prior "public theatrical exhibition" has occurred or will occur before February 1, 2027 (excluding Sundance Film Festival exhibitions). A "public theatrical exhibition" is defined as any screening of your completed project for which tickets were made available for purchase or given freely to members of the general public, whether at a film festival or any other public screening or event. If you hold a "work-in-progress" screening of your project in order to raise completion funds, this does not count as public theatrical exhibition. However, the version submitted to us must be significantly different than the one that was screened as a work-in-progress. Test screenings held for the purpose of obtaining feedback are also considered to be work-in-progress screenings. Additionally, private, invite-only or "cast and crew" screenings of your completed project are not considered to be "public theatrical exhibitions," and thus will not affect your eligibility, even if the invited guests are required to purchase tickets in order to attend.

9) How old can my project be and still qualify for submission?

All projects submitted for 2027 Festival consideration must have been completed in 2026 or will have been completed prior to the Festival in 2027. If your project was completed prior to January 1, 2026, it is no longer eligible for consideration. If your project's production took place prior to 2026 it remains eligible for Festival consideration in the event that its completion date took place during the calendar years of 2026 or 2027. Short films remain eligible, provided that they have not premiered at any other Festivals prior to January 1, 2026.

10) May I submit my project as a rough cut?

A large percentage of the projects we receive each year are unfinished versions with incomplete or temporary sound, missing scenes, no credits or titles, unfinished VFX, etc. However, the project does need to be complete enough for us to make a decision. If you expect that your final version will be 90 minutes long, it's probably not a good idea to send us a 45-minute rough cut. Where applicable, please provide an on-screen description of missing scenes or elements as placeholders within the continuity of the film. You should also list other general elements that are missing or incomplete on a title card before the project begins. Should you choose to submit a rough cut, you can replace it at any time with an updated version, but we can only guarantee that the first version we receive will be viewed! Please wait until you are comfortable with your cut before submitting your application.

11) If my project includes non-English dialogue, do you require English subtitles?

All projects that contain significant non-English dialogue must include on-screen English subtitles at the time of submission. Please do not send us an un-subtitled foreign-language project with the intention of providing a subtitled version later. If your project is mostly in English and you wish to intentionally leave out subtitles for any non-English dialogue included as an artistic choice, you do not need to provide subtitles for those sections. Please ensure that all subtitles are hardcoded to your video file as opposed to including discreet subtitles that need to be turned on in order to display on the screen (for example, utilizing the "CC" option on your Vimeo or YouTube upload). Foreign language projects that do not include English subtitles at the time of submission may be subject to disqualification, so please do not submit a non-subtitled project as a placeholder while you await final subtitles.

12) Do you accept projects that utilized or otherwise created by Artificial Intelligence (A.I.)?

We do not currently have any restrictions surrounding the usage of Artificial Intelligence technology. However, we do require the disclosure of any usage of Artificial Intelligence for all projects submitted to the Institute for Festival consideration. Failure to disclose any usage of Artificial Intelligence in the making of a submitted project could result in disqualification of said project, as outlined in our Rules & Regulations document.

13) Can I submit my project with a temporary music track?

Temp tracks, scratch music, and temp scores are perfectly fine for submission purposes, but please include a list of missing or temporary elements directly on-screen before the film begins. If your score is not complete or you have not yet secured licensing for any or all music included in your film, please include that information directly on-screen within your video file before the project begins.

14) Am I required to obtain rights clearance for trademarked or copyrighted material?

From a legal standpoint, you must license or obtain permission from the appropriate legal rightsholder for any and all trademarked and/or copyrighted materials included in your project before you can exhibit it publicly. If your submitted project contains unlicensed or uncleared materials, it is the responsibility of the owner or owners of the project to license, clear, or otherwise replace these materials in the event that Sundance or any other entity chooses to accept the project for festival exhibition. Sundance Institute will not be held responsible for ensuring that you have obtained licensing rights or other clearance for these materials at any point during the application process, nor will we be held responsible for the inclusion of unlicensed or uncleared trademarked or copyrighted materials held within the final version of your project. It is the sole responsibility of the entity or entities claiming ownership of the submitted project to secure licensing and/or permission from the trademark or copyright holders of the material in question. This includes music, stock images/footage, or any other elements that could violate an existing legal trademark or copyright. Projects that are accepted into the Festival will be required to sign a waiver stating that all materials contained within the project do not violate any existing trademark or copyright. Quite often, rights holders offer reduced rates for independently-produced projects, so we encourage you to contact them directly to avoid any potential rights infringements.

15) Do I need to meet a minimum age requirement in order to submit a project?

No, we encourage artists of all ages to submit their work. However, we do not have any separate submission categories or Festival programs that specifically showcase the work of student filmmakers. All officially-submitted projects compete against each other for available slots within each of our Festival programs. If you are under the age of 18 and your project is accepted, we will require signed, written permission from your parent or legal guardian before your project can be exhibited at the Festival.

16) Can I post trailers, clips, and/or scenes of my project online?

Yes. Posting minimal footage or scenes from your project does not affect its eligibility for any submission category. It is also acceptable for cast and crew to use scenes from your project for the purposes of a public or private exhibition reel.

17) Is there a screenplay competition at the Festival?

We do not currently have a screenplay competition, nor do we accept screenplay or other written submissions. Completed feature films that are accepted into our U.S. and International competition programs are eligible for screenwriting prizes within their respective Festival programs, but the Festival does not have a specific competition for unproduced scripts, outlines, or story ideas. Please visit www.sundance.org for more information about other Sundance Institute programs that do accept written materials.

18) Which video formats or streaming links do you accept?

We do not accept submissions on Blu-ray, DVD, or any other physical media. All projects must be delivered as online screeners on your FilmFreeway project page, which offers direct streaming upload or the entry of Vimeo or YouTube links. If you opt to provide a link instead of uploading a streaming video file directly to FilmFreeway, your video file may be in any format/resolution accepted by the platform you choose. After you create a project page, you will be prompted to add a project file. From there you may upload your streaming video file

directly by clicking on “Choose File,” or you may enter a URL for an existing Vimeo or YouTube link. If you choose to submit a link, we recommend using password protection to ensure the highest level of security for your project. If you choose to upload a video file, FilmFreeway accepts all major video formats in full quality HD up to 20 GB. Uploaded videos are transcoded for playback compatibility and performance and we recommend that you use output settings based on the following guidelines:

Maximum video bitrate: 4500 Kbps, H.264, mp4
Audio: 256 Kbps, AAC, 2 channel stereo
Aspect ratio preserved; maximum video height of 1080 pixels

Important: If you submit a Vimeo link, be sure to update the privacy settings to allow for embedding! This does not allow us to do anything with your password protected video that we couldn’t do already; it simply allows the Vimeo player to be displayed within the FilmFreeway interface. To allow embedding, go to your video while logged into your Vimeo account, then click 'Settings' > 'Privacy' > 'Where Can This Video be Embedded?' > 'Anywhere'.

We do not accept links via email, nor do we accept links for video or file hosting platforms other than Vimeo and YouTube. Streaming uploads and links for multi-episode projects in the Episodic Content category must be submitted as one continuous video-- we cannot accept links to albums, multiple uploads, or separate links to different episodes. If you wish to update your project’s online screener with a new one, you may go to the “Project File” tab on your FilmFreeway Project Page to replace your uploaded video or link.

19) How can I tell whether or not my submission is complete?

If your application is complete, the current submission fee was paid, and your video was uploaded by 11:59pm Pacific Standard Time on the final day of the current deadline window, your project’s submission status will be listed as “In Consideration” on your FilmFreeway Project Page. You may check this status by logging into your FilmFreeway account and navigating to the “Submissions” tab at the top of the page. From there, please ensure that the submission status column next to “Sundance Film Festival” displays a circular green icon next to the words “In Consideration.” If your submission status is listed as “Incomplete,” please review your submission to ensure that all requirements and qualifications have been met and ensure that your video upload or video link is in place. If your submission status is “Disqualified,” this means that your submission was not completed by the final day of the deadline window you selected. Projects that are not received within the selected deadline window will be disqualified by the Festival. If this happens, the main application contact will receive a notification from FilmFreeway and a refund of any submission fees paid. This does not mean that you are no longer allowed to submit your project! You may re-submit any disqualified project during another deadline window. For this reason, it is highly recommended that you wait until the version of the project you intend to submit is ready to upload at the time you begin your submission. If you believe that your project was disqualified in error, please contact **programming@sundance.org**. Your project will only be disqualified in the event that your submission was not completed by the deadline you selected. If you upload a non-working or incorrect video file or you provide a non-working link in order to qualify your film prior to any of the three deadlines, your submission will be disqualified.

20) Can I submit multiple projects in the same year?

You may submit as many projects as you wish using the same FilmFreeway account. Simply create individual project pages for each one and submit them individually. We do not offer reduced rates for multiple submissions. If you submit more than one project, you must pay the submission fee that corresponds to the selected deadline window for each of them.

21) May I submit multiple versions of the same project to different submission categories?

If you believe that your project is suited for multiple submission categories, you may submit it to more than one, but only if you will be submitting significantly different versions of the same project to each individual category. For example, if you have a documentary project with a feature-length cut and another version that was edited into a multi-episode documentary format, you may submit it to both Documentary Feature (U.S. or International) and Episodic Content submission categories, but you will need to create two distinct project pages for it on your FilmFreeway account. Please do not submit an identical or slightly-modified version of one project to multiple categories. Another example would be a Short Film that you believe could also work as an episodic pilot in its current form (or vise-versa). As a programming team, we communicate with one another about projects we love. If you feel as if your project could work for multiple categories, you may indicate that in your cover letter.

22) What if my contact information or anything else about my submission changes?

You may log into your FilmFreeway account at any time to update or revise the information included on your project page. You may also upload a new version of your film or change your video link by navigating to the “Project File” tab. We will use the contact information from the “Submitter Information” section of your project page to contact you regarding the status of your submission, including whether or not you were accepted into the Festival. Please ensure that this information is always kept up-to-date! Sundance Institute will not be held responsible for incorrect or outdated contact information included with your submission. We recommend that you add the sundance.org domain to the “safe senders” list within your email client.

23) When will I find out whether or not my project was selected?

We contact all officially-submitted projects via email during the first week of December. With over 15,000 notification emails going out in a very short period of time, it is not uncommon for many of them to be caught in spam folders or bounced back to us. This issue seems to affect Gmail accounts more than others. If you don't hear from us, please know that we have made every effort to contact each individual applicant no later than December 4, 2026. If you do not receive a notification by that date, please contact **programming@sundance.org**.

24) What kind of projects are you looking for? What stands out?

We celebrate the independent spirit of interesting, diverse, and original storytelling. Projects that push the limits of style and narrative excite us, but there is no single aesthetic or genre that we look for over any other. You should create the project that you want to create, not one that you believe will be a good fit for us or any other festival platform.

25) Do you offer fee waivers?

In the interest of keeping our submissions process as thorough and unbiased as possible, we do not offer fee waivers to potential applicants. While we would love to eliminate submission fees altogether, the process of viewing the volume of submissions that we receive in a fair and thorough manner is very costly, and it is not fair to our applicants to offer fee waivers to some but not to others. We strive to keep our fees as reasonable as possible, and encourage all applicants to take advantage of our early and official deadlines to save on submission fees. All projects are required to pay the fee for the current deadline window at the time their project is submitted.

26) You don't actually watch all of these submissions, right?

We depend on new talent to uphold our mission as a Festival of discovery. If we didn't view all of the projects submitted to us, we would absolutely miss out on many fresh and exciting new offerings from the independent creative community. To that end, it is in our best interest to treat all officially-submitted projects in an equal manner. If your account is paid in full, your project's status is listed as "In Consideration" by the selected deadline date, and there aren't any technical issues with your streaming upload or link, your project will be treated in the same manner as all other projects submitted to us for Festival consideration.

27) Do you offer resources for documentarians making work that could be deemed controversial?

Sundance Institute is a partner in the Safe+Secure initiative, which focuses on the specific needs of documentary filmmakers navigating subject matter that could be considered risky, political, or otherwise controversial. For more information, please visit their website at https://safeandsecure.film.

28) Why doesn't my Vimeo link have any views?

As stated above, we absolutely view every project submitted to us with an account in good standing, but accurate statistics are not always recorded using Vimeo's methods of tracking loads and views. Vimeo videos viewed via a third-party player do not always record statistics in the same way that videos viewed via their direct link in a web browser are counted. FilmFreeway utilizes a third-party that enables us to screen submissions from within their platform. If we view your project using the Vimeo app on another streaming device (such as Apple TV or Roku), it is also being viewed via a third-party player. The vast majority of the films submitted to us are viewed in this manner, and therefore the statistics are not counted in the same way that they would be watched via a direct link. This is outlined directly in Vimeo's own online documentation, the text of which is included below:

> **What stats does Vimeo record if my video is displayed using a third-party player?**
> Unfortunately, there isn't very much data we can gather from views that don't occur within the Vimeo player. For PRO, Business, Premium users using third-party player links, we can only approximate the number of times the file is being played. Multiple impressions / plays by the same viewer in the same browser session will not be counted (like they are when our own player is used). We also cannot count finishes or any engagement / duration stats for these plays. In many cases, we will still be able to detect the website where the view is happening, the location of the view, and the device, however, this is less reliable than it would be with our own player.

29) Who can I expect to hear from if my project is accepted into the Festival?

If your project is accepted into the Festival, you will be contacted directly by a member of our Festival Programming team. We love to contact Directors and Lead Artists directly to invite them personally, so please be sure to provide their direct contact information on the application. During the invitation process, we will inquire as to whom the main contact(s) for your project should be going forward. This will be the person or persons responsible for delivering materials and other important information to our Artist Relations and Publicity teams in a timely fashion, so please have a point person in mind should your project receive an invitation.

30) If my project is accepted, what will I need to do next?

After you receive an official invitation from our Programming team, you will receive an email from your designated Festival Publicity Liaison and your designated Festival Artist Relations Liaison within 24 hours. These liaisons will guide Project Teams through the process every step of the way; prior to, during, and after the Festival, beginning with the immediate needs for our Festival press announcement. Materials must be received within a very tight window of time (generally within 1-2 business days), so we ask that Project Teams respond to their liaisons ASAP. Please be prepared to share items such as film stills and director headshots within 48 hours of acceptance! We highly recommend that you consider what those key images will be during your filming and editing process.

For more information regarding the post-acceptance process, please check out our **What to Expect if Accepted FAQ**. It's full of valuable information to help you understand and plan for delivering all of the materials and information we will require and our timeline for receipt of those materials.

31) If my project is selected for the Festival, which exhibition formats do you accept?

We require DCP for in-person Festival exhibition, as well as a ProRes file for online screenings, if applicable. Your DCP must include both a Closed Caption and an Open Caption version. ProRes files must also include Closed Captions. Non-English language films must deliver a version with standard English subtitles, and a version with English SDH subtitles (subtitles for the d/Deaf and hard of hearing). Short films must be delivered no later than December 21, 2026. Feature films and episodic projects must be delivered by January 4, 2027. Encrypted DCPs must supply open keys valid from the delivery dates above until the conclusion of the Festival. Please note that these specifications are subject to change at any time.

32) What are the dates of the 2027 Festival?

The 2027 Sundance Film Festival will take place in Boulder, Colorado from January 21 to January 31, 2027.