

SFF 2023 ACCESSIBILITY

REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Sundance Institute is committed to improving overall experiences & belonging for our staff, audiences, and artists, in alignment with our core values. We consider inclusion, racial equity, and accessibility the drivers of institutional excellence, and it is our aim, therefore, that all our programs and platforms reflect and embrace these core values at every level.

Our goal is to make all experiences (in person and online) as accessible as possible for all participants. This is an ongoing effort with many improvements still in process. Your participation in this effort is critical to creating the most inclusive experiences possible. Learn more about our accessibility efforts on our [How to Fest](#) page of the Sundance Film Festival website.

Sundance Film Festival **requires all titles to be Closed Captioned** for individuals with hearing loss. We strongly encourage films to provide **Audio Description** audio tracks for viewers with vision loss, sensory processing disabilities, and neurodivergent disabilities. We also encourage film teams to provide an **Open Caption** version of their DCP. Filmmakers may opt-in to one or more Open Caption and/or **Sensory-Friendly** screening of their film. Resources for having accessibility tracks made for your movie can be found in the last section of this page.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Closed Captions (CC) - Closed Captions are visible to patrons that choose to see them when the movie is playing. For online screenings a viewer selects to see them via a button on the user interface. In-person, at the movie theater, the patron requests a CaptiView device which will display film dialogue on a small OLED screen on a bendable support arm that sits directly in the patron's field of view.

Closed captions for films that include non-English dialogue, be aware that most captioning services will create a caption that reads as "[spoken foreign language]" for all instances where dialogue is subtitled on screen. It is recommended to reduce or eliminate these descriptors where they do not impart any new information to the viewer in consideration that subtitles are read from the screen but captions are read from a CaptiView device so information to be read in two places at the same time is problematic. In general, try to avoid closed captions that occur at the same time as on screen subtitles.

Closed captions for DCP must be formatted to a maximum of 30 characters per line, 3 line maximum otherwise they will not display correctly on a captioning device.

The use of free open source DCP creation software in recent years has been problematic for the creation of closed captions; please ensure you are only using the most recent non-beta versions of available software if you are making the DCP yourself.

Subtitles - Subtitles for foreign language films are *not the same as* CC. English subtitles for foreign language films translate spoken dialogue or written text on but do not include descriptions of other auditory cues throughout the film such as, character's reactionary sounds, music, sound effects, and ambient sounds, etc.

We trust filmmakers to decide if the subtitles sufficiently cover the necessary auditory information in the film, or if they need to create additional English CC. Dual-language films that include some spoken English must include CC for the spoken English sections.

Open Captions (OC) - Open Captions refer to content that has the captions showing during the screening for anyone watching. Text appears on screen with the image. Open caption screenings are the preferred style of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community as it is an equitable experience for all viewers.

For more information & related resources on Captions, review our Accessibility Department's [SFF Resource Captioning](#).

Audio Description (AD) - Audio Description is an additional audio track with narration of a film's key visual elements by inserting visual descriptions into pauses in the film's dialogue. An individual who is Blind or Low Vision listens to the AD tracks via personal Assistive Listening Devices.

For more information & related resources on AD, review our Accessibility Department's [SFF Resource Audio Description](#).

Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) - Assistive listening devices are wireless receivers that transmit all film sound in a compatible headset or neck loop with an adjustable volume setting. Some ALDs are used to play AD for individuals who are Blind or Low Vision, some are used simply to amplify audio for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, and some have the capabilities to amplify AD tracks for individuals who are DeafBlind. ALDs are available for all screenings of Festival films at all Festival theaters.

Sensory Screenings - A sensory-friendly screening changes the sensory experience of the film in the theater but the film itself does not change. Not every theater will offer the same experience, however, you can typically expect for the house lights to be on and the soundtrack volume to be turned down. Sensory screenings are often a preference of individuals who have sensory sensitivities or experience sensory overload such as people with anxiety, autism, hearing loss, concussion, or post traumatic stress disorder.

For more information & related resources on sensory-friendly screening, review our Accessibility Department's [SFF Resource Sensory Screenings](#).

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO SEND US?

- You will need CC files for both online and in-person screenings. Closed captions work differently with online and in-person formats and technologies.
- For online screenings from ProRes file, we need a separate .srt or .vtt file with closed captions. (.vtt allows for specific positioning of text in frame)
- For in-person screenings from DCP, the closed caption file, xml format, must be “wrapped” into the dcp package, either in the OV (original version) or included in the package as a VF (version file) that can be ingested with the OV....either works for us.
- We strongly encourage you to provide an open caption VF with your DCP for screenings where the movie plays with open captions, with captions on screen in the theater. If available, we will provide OC screenings at the request of patrons. You may also request that we offer one or more OC screenings regardless of individual request (recommended).
- For in-person screenings, you may request one or more sensory-friendly screening (recommended). This only requires action on our part during the screening of the film, however you must let us know of this preference with the submission of your film files so that we may accurately prepare theaters.

SUGGESTED VENDORS AND RESOURCES:

1. **Rev:** For the required closed captions(CC) we recommend using Rev, a festival sponsor and our preferred vendor if you don't already have CC for your project. Rev has a budget friendly rate and the turnaround is fast: [Rev.com](https://www.rev.com). Please make sure you take the time to review the .srt or .vtt caption file with the movie, (or else you won't see placement and timing), and address any edits to these files with Rev before you send it to us or your DCP vendor.
2. **3PlayMedia:** For audio description (AD) tracks and other services:
<https://www.3playmedia.com/services/audio-description/>
3. **Media Access Group at WGBH:** For more than 45 years, the Media Access Group at WGBH has been providing accessible media services to the 36 million Americans who are deaf, blind, hard of hearing, or low vision this year they are supporting Sundance Filmmakers with a discounted rate on their Audio Description (AD) services. As an original innovator of closed captioning and audio description, the Media Access Group (MAG) provides services across all media platforms. With offices in Boston and Los Angeles, they customize their workflow based on your content and technology needs.

Boston office:

Phone: 617-300-3600

Email: access@wgbh.org

Los Angeles office:

Phone: 818-562-3344

Email: access@wgbh.org