

2017 HEARTLAND FILM FESTIVAL

Submission Rules & Regulations



About the Festival

The Heartland Film Festival serves to inspire filmmakers and audiences through the transformative power of film. The 26th annual Heartland Film Festival will take place in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, October 12-22, 2017. Filmmakers participating in the Festival attend numerous screenings of their films and other special events designed to allow interaction between filmmakers and audiences.

Categories

The Heartland Film Festival selects and honors films in seven categories:

- **Narrative Feature**
 - » Dramatic or comedic narratives; animated or live-action.
 - » Anything but a documentary qualifies for this category.
 - » 50 minutes or longer.
 - » Narrative Features receiving their U.S. or World premiere at Heartland may be eligible for “Best Premiere” awards.
 - » Total of 5 Finalists will be chosen by our jury to compete for 1 Grand Prize - other Narrative Features will be featured as Official Selections.
- **Documentary Feature**
 - » Nonfiction films; animated or live-action.
 - » 50 minutes or longer.
 - » Documentary Features receiving their U.S. or World premiere at Heartland may be eligible for “Best Premiere” awards.
 - » Total of 5 Finalists will be chosen by our jury to compete for 1 Grand Prize - other Documentary Features will be featured as Official Selections.
- **Narrative Short**
 - » Dramatic or comedic narratives; animated or live-action.
 - » Anything but a documentary qualifies for this category.
 - » Under 50 minutes in length.
 - » Total of 5 Finalists will be chosen by our jury to compete for 1 Grand Prize - other Narrative Shorts will be featured as Official Selections.
 - » The Grand Prize winner in this category will qualify for consideration in the Short Films category of the Annual Academy Awards® without the standard theatrical run, provided the film otherwise complies with the Academy rules.

- **Documentary Short**
 - » Nonfiction films; animated or live action.
 - » Under 50 minutes in length.
 - » Total of 5 Finalists will be chosen by our jury to compete for 1 Grand Prize - other Documentary Shorts will be featured as Official Selections.

- **Animated Short**
 - » Animated films; dramatic/comedic narratives or nonfiction.
 - » Under 50 minutes in length.
 - » Total of 5 Finalists will be chosen by our jury to compete for 1 Grand Prize - other Animated Shorts will be featured as Official Selections.

- **High School Film Competition (HSFC)**
 - » Short films under 12 minutes in length.
 - » Narrative or documentary; live-action or animated.
 - » The director must have been in high school when the film was completed.
 - » The director must not have graduated from high school any earlier than Spring/Summer, 2016.
 - » Total of 4 Finalists (Narrative, Documentary, Indiana Narrative, Indiana Documentary) will be chosen by our jury to compete for 1 Grand Prize. Other films selected in this category will be featured as High School Film Competition selections and are not eligible for Audience Choice Awards.

- **Indiana Spotlight Competition**
 - » Narrative and documentary films, both short and feature length.
 - » Must meet two of the following three criteria for eligibility:
 - Director is a current Indiana resident or Indiana native.
 - Producer/executive producer/screenwriter is a current Indiana resident or Indiana native.
 - At least 65% of the film was shot in Indiana.
 - » Total number of category films to be determined to compete for one Grand Prize. Films in this category will be featured as Official Selections as part of the Indiana Spotlight program.

Selection Criteria

Each submitted film goes through an involved judging process, and is screened in its entirety by at least three members of the selection committee. Selected films have been seen 6-15 times by members of the screening committees, programming staff, and juries.

Films submitted to the Heartland Film Festival are judged on their overall artistic and technical quality. Selected films have a transformative power that impacts audiences by educating, inspiring, challenging or shifting perspectives - ultimately the Heartland Film Festival programs story-driven films that do much more than entertain.

Finalists/Official Selections

Films are ultimately chosen as either **Finalists**, which remain in competition for the Grand Prizes, or **Official Selections**, which screen out of competition for the Grand Prizes (though they may remain eligible for Best Premiere or Indiana Spotlight prizes, as described below).

All submitted films that meet the below eligibility requirements are considered “in competition” to be selected as a Heartland Film Festival Finalist at the time of submission. In September 2017, Finalists are publicly announced. Only Finalists are eligible for the Grand Prize in each category. Grand Prize winners are announced at the Heartland Film Festival Awards Party on Saturday, October 21, 2017. Filmmakers must be present to win, as described below.

Films that are not honored as Finalists may be invited to screen as “Official Selections” and are eligible for the Audience Choice Awards. Official Selections are no longer “in competition” for the Grand Prizes: only Finalists will be eligible for Grand Prizes. Feature-length films having their U.S. or World Premiere at Heartland are eligible for Best Premiere Awards. Indiana films meeting eligibility requirements for the Indiana Spotlight competition are eligible for the award in that category.

Other films may be invited to screen at the Festival as a “Special Presentation” or in a “To Be Announced” time slot; these may be eligible for the Audience Choice Award depending on when the films are scheduled.

Films selected as Finalists will be programmed to screen up to eight times during the Festival. Official Selections will screen up to four times.

In past years, Heartland Film generally selects approximately 25-30 Narrative Features, 25-30 Documentary Features, 55-65 short films (narrative, documentary, and animated combined) and 10-15 High School Film Competition submissions. In 2016, 138 films were selected from 2,535 submissions. This distribution of category selections is subject to change.

Notification

Filmmakers (producer or director) for films selected as Finalists in their respective category will be notified by phone around mid-August, 2017. All other filmmakers will be notified by email after that date or before mid-September, 2017. Official Selections and Finalists will be publicly announced on September 14, 2017, at the Heartland Film Announcement Party. Heartland reserves the right to release basic information about selected films as early as August.

Awards

Heartland Film Festival presents a variety of awards to selected filmmakers. The 25 films selected as Heartland Film Festival Finalists are announced on September 14, 2017. A director or producer from each Finalist must be present at the Festival from October 18-22 (as described below) in order to receive their cash prize. Finalists will be eligible for the Grand Prize awards in each category; Grand Prize winners will be announced at the Heartland Film Festival Awards Party on Saturday, October 21, 2017. The awards are adjudicated by juries comprised of individuals from the scholarly film community and previous Heartland Film Festival filmmakers. The awards are given as follows:

Five Narrative Features are selected as Heartland Film Festival Finalists, announced prior to the Festival

- › One of the five Finalists receives the \$25,000 Grand Prize for Best Narrative Feature, and is announced at the Awards Party during the Festival. The four non-winning Finalists will each receive a \$1,000 cash prize.
- **Five Documentary Features** are selected as Heartland Film Festival Finalists, announced prior to the Festival
 - › One of the five Finalists receives the \$25,000 Grand Prize for Best Documentary Feature, and is announced at the Awards Party during the Festival. The four non-winning Finalists will each receive a \$1,000 cash prize.
- **Five Narrative Shorts** are selected as Heartland Film Festival Finalists, announced prior to the Festival
 - › One of the five Finalists receives the \$5,000 Grand Prize for Best Narrative Short, and is announced at the Awards Party during the Festival. The four non-winning Finalists will each receive a \$500 cash prize.
 - › The Grand Prize winner in this category will qualify for consideration in the Short Films category of the Annual Academy Awards® without the standard theatrical run, provided the film otherwise complies with the Academy rules
 - › Each Finalist will be offered a broadcast deal by Shorts International®, which includes iTunes and Amazon Prime listings, in addition to broadcast on the ShortsHD cable channel
- **Five Documentary Shorts** are selected as Heartland Film Festival Finalists, announced prior to the Festival
 - › One of the five Finalists receives the \$5,000 Grand Prize for Best Documentary Short, and is announced at the Awards Party during the Festival. The four non-winning Finalists will each receive a \$500 cash prize.
 - › Each Finalist will be offered a broadcast deal by Shorts International®, which includes iTunes and Amazon Prime listings, in addition to broadcast on the ShortsHD cable channel
- **Five Animated Shorts** are selected as Heartland Film Festival Finalist, announced prior to the Festival
 - › One of the five Finalists receives the \$5,000 Grand Prize for Best Animated Short, and is announced at the Awards Party during the Festival. The four non-winning Finalists will each receive a \$500 cash prize.
 - › Each Finalist will be offered a broadcast deal by Shorts International®, which includes iTunes and Amazon Prime listings, in addition to broadcast on the ShortsHD cable channel
- **The Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award** will include a \$5,000 cash prize for a single winner, selected from the Festival's feature-length narrative and documentary titles. The winning film will best embody the ongoing legacy of actor and national hero Jimmy Stewart and will demonstrate the triumph of the human spirit through determination and the defiance of odds, humble vulnerability, and courage in the face of adversity.
- **U.S. or World Premiere** feature-length films are eligible for to be selected as Finalists as described above. Additionally, two awards will be given as described below:
 - › Best Narrative Feature Premiere and a cash award of \$5,000
 - › Best Documentary Feature Premiere and a cash award of \$5,000

- **Four High School Film Competition** submissions will be chosen as Finalists in four respective categories. At the Awards Ceremony one of the four Finalists will be named as the Summer White Lynch Memorial Award Grand Prize winner, and will receive an additional \$2,000 for a total prize of \$2,500.
 - » One narrative short will be chosen as the High School Film Competition Narrative Finalist, and will receive a \$500 cash award in addition to travel expenses for the director and one guardian to attend the Festival.
 - » One documentary short will be chosen as the High School Film Competition Documentary Finalist, and will receive a \$500 cash award in addition to travel expenses for the director and one guardian to attend the Festival.
 - » One narrative short meeting Indiana Spotlight requirements will be chosen as the High School Film Competition Indiana Spotlight Narrative Finalist, and will receive a \$500 cash award in addition to travel expenses for the director and one guardian to attend the Festival.
 - » One documentary short meeting Indiana Spotlight requirements will be chosen as the High School Film Competition Indiana Spotlight Documentary Finalist, and will receive a \$500 cash award in addition to travel expenses for the director and one guardian to attend the Festival.
- **Indiana Spotlight:** one film from any category that qualifies as an Indiana Spotlight selection will be selected winner of the Indiana Spotlight competition.
 - » The winner will receive a \$5,000 cash award.

One filmmaker (director or producer) from each film selected as Finalist must be present at the Festival to receive his/her award. The 25 Finalists will be revealed prior to the Festival at the Heartland Film Festival Announcement Party on September 14, 2017. The Grand Prize award winners will be revealed during the Festival's Awards Party on Saturday, October 21, 2016. A completed tax form W-9 (W-8 BEN for non-US residents) is required for any filmmaker collecting a cash prize.

There will also be six Audience Choice Awards (one each for the Narrative Feature, Documentary Feature, Narrative Short, Documentary Short, Animated Short, and Indiana Spotlight categories) announced at the Festival's Awards Party on Saturday, October 21. Audience Choice Award voting will occur on all full days of screenings through Friday, October 20. No voting will occur on Saturday, October 21.

Winners of the Best Premiere and Indiana Spotlight prizes will also be announced at the Awards Party.

**Per U.S. tax code and tax treaties, Heartland Film Festival will withhold U.S. taxes from monetary prizes when applicable, totaling as much as 30 percent of the cash award, regardless of recipients' citizenship. Taxes withheld will be deposited with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The filmmaker will be solely responsible for filing with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service if they are eligible to retrieve those funds.*

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Heartland Film Festival, films must comply with the following:

- The film must have been completed on or after June 1, 2016.
- The film must be available for 4-8 screenings during the Festival, October 12-22, 2017.
- There must not be a screening fee attached to the film. Heartland will not pay a screening fee to any film featured in the Festival; there are no exceptions.
- Heartland requires a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) for every film (feature or short). No Blu-rays, DVDs or 35mm prints will be screened at the Festival.
- Films that have had a theatrical release, a television broadcast within the United States or a release through an on-demand outlet such as Netflix, Amazon On-Demand or any other outlets that are available in Indiana prior to the Festival dates are not eligible to be named Finalists, but may be considered for “Special Presentation” screenings. Films with a theatrical release, television broadcast or available on-demand outside of the USA are eligible to screen as “Official Selections” and are eligible to be named Finalists.
- The film cannot require dual projection (interlock) or separate soundtracks.
- Non-English films must be subtitled in English.

Rules for Submission

In addition to the eligibility requirements listed above, filmmakers must comply with the following submission rules to be considered as a Finalist in their respective category:

- The submitting filmmaker must be either the producer or director of the film.
- Entries are accepted through www.withoutabox.com or www.filmfreeway.com.
- A completed official entry on Withoutabox.com or FilmFreeway.com must be digitally signed by the filmmaker.
- Payment of the non-refundable entry fee must accompany the submission.
 - » Payment can be made by credit card, check or money order payable in US dollars to Heartland Film, Inc. The filmmaker will be responsible for bank fees associated with any check returned to Heartland by the bank as unpaid.
- All items on the materials checklist (below) must be provided by the entry deadline.
- Link to a functional streaming video file (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.) in high definition 720p or 1080p. If the link is password-protected, the password is mandatory. Links may be included in the Withoutabox or Film Freeway cover letter or emailed to submissions@heartlandfilm.org.
- Multiple submissions must be provided as individual submissions. A compilation DVD is not acceptable.

Materials Checklist

All entries must submit the following information to be considered for the Festival:

- Link to a functional streaming video file (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.) in high definition 720p or 1080p. If the link is password-protected, a working password is mandatory.
- Completed and digitally signed submission on Withoutabox.com or Filmfreeway.com.
- Entry fee.

What if My Film is Accepted to Screen at Heartland?

All selected films must provide all of the following items by **Friday, August 11, 2017**, for promotion of the film in Heartland's print materials, website and media kit:

- A trailer of the film (a short clip is acceptable if a trailer is not available). It must be Apple ProRes 422 LT (or equivalent) and 1080p. Standard definition (480p resolution or lower) clips/trailers will not be accepted.
- Three (3) original DVD copies of the film for Heartland's library to be used for promotion of the Festival and historical archive purposes.
- One (1) head shot of each filmmaker or cast member who may be attending the Festival – 300 dpi and 4 in (h) x 6 in (w) or 1200 pixels (h) x 1800 pixels (w).
- Biography of 50 words or less for each filmmaker, principal cast member, or featured individual expected to attend.
- Twitter handles, Facebook/website URL for director/crew and film for social media promotion.

Exhibition Format for Selected Films

Selected films (shorts and features) must provide a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) by **Monday, September 11, 2017**.

Two Blu-ray backups and two DVD backups must be provided for each film, in case of issues with the primary exhibition format. Otherwise, no Blu-rays, DVDs or 35mm prints will be screened at the Festival.

The Heartland Film Festival reserves the right to screen your film in the significantly lower quality DVD format if your film is not delivered in a timely manner. Heartland will return film prints and media in the two weeks following the Festival.

What if My Film is Selected as a Finalist?

IMPORTANT! One filmmaker (director or producer) from each of the 25 films selected as Finalists must be present in Indianapolis from Wednesday, October 18 through the evening of Sunday, October 22 in order to receive his/her award and/or cash prize. Heartland will cover expenses (as listed below) for one filmmaker from each Finalist film. Part of Heartland's unique tradition is the promise to Festival attendees that all filmmakers from each Finalist will be present, and this is a standard we continue to uphold when giving awards. Finalists will have prime time screenings starting Wednesday, October 18, and filmmakers should be in attendance for at least one of those screenings.

The **Heartland Film Festival Awards Party** is on Saturday, October 21, and all filmmakers representing films selected as Finalists are required to be in attendance and participate in festivities. Grand Prizes will be announced in each category, and Best Premiere, Indiana Spotlight and Audience Choice Awards will all be announced. There will be a rehearsal for the Awards Party in the morning on the day of the event (attendance at the rehearsal is required for filmmakers selected as Finalists).

Finalist filmmakers are also required to attend the **Filmmakers' Brunch** on Sunday morning, October 22. After the brunch, all Finalists will be shown at a single screening venue, and filmmakers are encouraged to attend.

Note: Films that have had a theatrical release, a television broadcast within the United States or a release through an on-demand outlet such as Netflix, Amazon or any other outlets that are available in Indiana prior to the Festival dates are not eligible to be Finalists. If Heartland Film finds that a film selected as a Finalist film is scheduled to be publicly shown in Indiana or is available via an on-demand outlet between the time of acceptance and the Festival, the film will be disqualified from cash prize consideration and possibly removed from the lineup. If selected as a Finalist and you have existing plans to go wide with a theatrical release, television broadcast on-demand release plans prior to the Festival, you must tell Heartland Film immediately to discuss potential eligibility.

What if My Film is Invited to Screen as an Official Selection?

Films invited to screen as Official Selections will be eligible for Audience Choice Awards in their respective categories, but will not be eligible for Grand Prizes. Feature films holding their U.S. or World Premiere may be eligible for Best Premiere prizes and Audience Choice Awards. Films competing in the Indiana Spotlight program are eligible for the cash award in that category.

What are the Festival's Terms and Conditions of Entry to Which All Applicants Must Agree?

I, the undersigned, as submitting filmmaker (producer or director) of the film, acknowledge and agree that I have read, understood, and complied with the Heartland Film Festival submission rules. If my film is selected as a Finalist at the Heartland Film Festival, I WILL BE PRESENT at the Festival from October 18 through October 22, 2017, including the Heartland Film Festival Awards Party on Saturday, October 21, 2017 in Indianapolis, Indiana to receive the award. If I am unable to attend, another filmmaker (producer or director) representing the film will accept the award in my place. Additionally, should I be awarded, I will acknowledge Heartland Film Festival in the film's future advertising and promotional materials. I hold Heartland Film Festival harmless from any damage to the print en route or otherwise during the Festival's possession of the film.

I hold that any claims I have made about the premiere status of my film are accurate at the time of submission. I hereby acknowledge that I will notify Heartland Film Festival of any changes in the film's premiere status as soon as they occur. I accept that changes in the film's premiere status prior to the Festival may not have any bearing on my eligibility for being selected as a Finalist, but may materially impact my eligibility for Best Premiere Awards.

If selected to screen at the Heartland Film Festival, you authorize Heartland Film, Inc. to publicly exhibit your film again as part of the Heartland Film Roadshow, for at least one screening in 2017 or 2018 (without a screening or any other fee).

Heartland Film, Inc. reserves the right to withdraw any film from screening consideration at any point in the process.

I hereby warrant that I am authorized to commit the film for screening, and understand and accept these requirements and regulations, and, if accepted for the Heartland Film Festival, agree that no screening fee will be demanded. I hereby warrant that I have all the necessary rights to exhibit all elements of my submission, including but not limited to music and stock footage/imagery.

I shall indemnify and hold harmless Heartland Film Festival from and against any and all claims, liabilities, losses, damages, and expenses (including but not limited to attorney's fees, and costs of the court) which may be incurred by reason of any claim involving copyright, trademark, credits, publicity, screening, and loss of or damage to the screening prints/films entered.