

# 2020 HEARTLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

## *Submission Rules & Regulations*



### *About the Festival*

The Heartland International Film Festival serves to inspire filmmakers and audiences through the transformative power of film. The 29<sup>th</sup> annual Heartland International Film Festival will take place in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, October 8-18, 2020. Filmmakers participating in the Festival attend numerous screenings of their films and other special events designed to allow interaction between filmmakers and audiences.

### *Categories*

Heartland International Film Festival selects and organizes films in four categories:

- **Narrative Feature**

- » Dramatic or comedic narratives; live-action or animated.
- » Running time of more than 40 minutes.
- » Narrative Features with their U.S. or World premiere 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 or Special Presentations. Finalists and Official Selections will be eligible for Audience Choice, Jimmy Stewart Legacy, Social Impact, and Humor & Humanity Awards, among others.

- **Documentary Feature**

- » Nonfiction films; animated or live-action.
- » Running time of more than 40 minutes.
- » Documentary Features with their U.S. or World premiere 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 or Special Presentations. Finalists and Official Selections will be eligible for Audience Choice, Jimmy Stewart Legacy, Social Impact, and Humor & Humanity Awards, among others.

- **Indiana Spotlight Competition**

- » Narrative or documentary; live-action or animated with a running time of more than 40 minutes.
- » Films eligible include principal production (director or producer) or cast (leading actor/actress) from or currently living in Indiana and/or 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 Indiana Spotlight Program Selections and are eligible for Audience Choice Awards.

- **Heartland Horror**

- › Narrative; live-action or animated film in the horror genre with a running time of more than 40 minutes.
- › Total number of category films to be determined to compete for one Grand Prize. Films in this category will be featured as Heartland Horror Selections and are eligible for Audience Choice Awards.

## ***Selection Criteria***

Films submitted to Heartland International Film Festival are judged on their overall artistic and technical quality. Each submitted film goes through an involved judging process, and is screened by at least one member of the selection committee. Selected films could eventually be seen more than six times by members of the screening committees, programming staff, and juries. Heartland Film reserves the right to stop watching your film after 15 minutes if the reviewer determines that the film's technical quality is not at a baseline level for festival inclusion.

## ***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. Finalists are still eligible for other prizes, such as the Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award, Best Premieres, Social Impact Awards, Humor & Humanity Award, and Audience Choice.

All submitted films that meet the below eligibility requirements are considered “in competition” for Heartland International Film Festival Finalists at the time of submission. In September, 2020, Finalists are publicly announced. Only Finalists are ultimately eligible for the Grand Prize in each category. Grand Prize winners are announced at the Heartland International Film Festival Awards Brunch on Saturday, October 17, 2020. Finalist filmmakers must be present to win.

Films that are not selected by our juries as Finalists may be invited to screen as “Official Selections” and are eligible for the Audience Choice Awards, the Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award, Social Impact Awards, and Humor and Humanity Award. Official Selections are not in competition for Festival Awards/Grand Prizes.

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. “Special Presentation” films are generally titles that already have major distribution or have had their broadcast premiere prior to the Heartland International Film Festival.

Finalist films will be programmed to screen up to five times during the Festival. Official Selections will screen up to three times each, but most likely twice.

## ***Notification***

Filmmakers (producer or director) for films selected to be Finalists will be notified by no later than August 15, 2020.

All other filmmakers will be notified by email shortly thereafter. Official Selections and Finalists will be publicly announced in September, 2020, and Heartland International Film Festival reserves the right to release basic information about selected films as early as May.

## ***Awards & Prizes***

Heartland International Film Festival presents a variety of awards to selected filmmakers. Winners of the 2020 Awards are announced on October 17, 2020. A director or producer of each Finalist film must be present at the Festival from October 14-18 (through end of day, as described below) in order to receive their cash prize. 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 International Film Festival Finalists, announced prior to the Festival
  - » One of the five Finalists receives the \$20,000 Grand Prize for Best Narrative Feature, and is announced at the Awards Brunch during the Festival.
- **Five Documentary Features** are selected as Heartland Int'l Film Festival Finalists, announced prior to the Festival
  - » One of the five Finalists receives the \$20,000 Grand Prize for Best Documentary Feature, and is announced at the Awards Brunch during the Festival..
- **The Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award** will include a \$5,000 cash prize for a single winner. 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. Finalist and Official Selection titles are eligible.
- **Humor & Humanity Award** will include a \$2,000 cash prize for a single winner. The winning film will best tastefully combine comedy and pathos to inspire filmmakers and audiences through the transformative power of film. Finalist and Official Selection titles are eligible.
- **Heartland Horror Award** will include a \$2,000 cash prize for a single winner. One film from the Heartland Horror program will win this juried prize.
- **U.S. or World Premiere Awards** will be selected from Finalist and Official Selection titles with their premieres at the 2018 Heartland International Film Festival with two awards given as described below:
  - » Best Narrative Feature Premiere and a cash award of \$2,000
  - » Best Documentary Feature Premiere and a cash award of \$2,000
- **Richard D. Propes Social Impact Awards** will honor films (Finalists or Official Selections) that showcase stories centered on the fight for equality and justice. Two awards will be given as described below:
  - » Social Impact Award, Narrative Feature and a cash award of \$2,000
  - » Social Impact Award, Documentary Feature and a cash award of \$2,000
- **Indiana Spotlight:** one film from any category that qualifies as an Indiana Spotlight selection will be selected winner of the Indiana Spotlight competition. Films eligible include principal production (director or producer) or cast (leading actor/actress) from or currently living in Indiana and/or the film was shot in Indiana.
  - » The winner will receive a \$2,000 cash award.
- **Best International Feature Film Oscar® Contender:** one film in the category will be named the category winner with a cash prize of \$2,000. All films must be their official country's entry for the 2021 Academy Awards in the Best International Feature Film category.
- **FIPRESCI Award for Best Directorial Debut for USA Narrative:** visiting FIPRESCI critics will judge the best of the festival's best narrative directorial debut.

One filmmaker (director or producer) from each film selected as Finalist must be present at the Festival to receive his/her Award. The Finalists will be revealed prior to the Festival at the Heartland International Film Festival Announcement Party in September 2020. The Grand Prize award winners will be revealed during the Festival's Awards Brunch on Saturday, October 17, 2020. 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 Audience Choice Awards (one each for the Narrative Feature, Documentary Feature, Special Presentation, Indiana Spotlight, Heartland Horror, Cultural Journey, Best International Feature Film Oscar® Contender categories) announced at the Festival's Awards Brunch on Saturday, October 17. All other prize category winners will be announced at the Awards Brunch.

*\*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 Heartland International Film Festival, films must comply with the following:

- The film must have been completed on or after January 1, 2019 and be 41 minutes or longer in length.
- The film must be available for up to four screenings during the Festival, October 8-18, 2020.
- There must not be a screening fee attached to the film.
- Heartland requires a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) for every film in addition to a high-quality digital backup file. No Blu-rays, DVDs or 35mm prints will be screened at the Festival.
- Premiere status has no bearing on whether a film is selected. Heartland Film does not encourage your film being available on YouTube, Vimeo, theatrical release, etc. prior to the event, but that does not have any bearing on eligibility. Any film invited to play at the Festival MUST communicate to the director of film programming if release plans change once the film is programmed. Failure to communicate may result in the film being pulled from the lineup.
- The film cannot require dual projection (interlock) or separate soundtracks.
- Non-English films must be subtitled.

## **Rules for Submission**

In addition to the eligibility requirements listed above, filmmakers must comply with the following submission rules to be considered for a Festival award:

- The submitting filmmaker must be either the producer or director of the film.
- Entries are accepted through FilmFreeway.
- Payment of the non-refundable entry fee must accompany the submission.
  - » Payment can be made by credit card, check or money order payable in U.S. 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.
- Multiple submissions must be provided as individual submissions.
- Films submitted in the wrong categories to save on submission costs will be disqualified and fees will be kept by Heartland Film, Inc. (example: filmmaker submits to the Indiana Spotlight category but is not from Indiana) - this includes filmmaker claims of being a student when they are not indeed students. Student filmmakers must provide a scan of their current student identification card.

## **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 FilmFreeway.
- Entry fee.

## **Exhibition Format for Selected Films**

- Selected films must provide a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) by Monday, September 7, 2020.
- A high-quality digital backup file (h.264 or ProRes) is required. 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 lower quality backup format if your DCP is not delivered in a timely manner. Heartland will return film prints and media in the two weeks following the Festival.
- Selected filmmakers must provide a non-watermarked, high-quality streaming link or download link for inclusion in the private Heartland Film archives.

## **What if My Film is Selected as a Finalist?**

IMPORTANT! One filmmaker (director or producer) from each of the films selected as Finalists must be present in Indianapolis from Wednesday, October 14 through the evening of Sunday, October 18 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 14, and filmmakers should be in attendance for all their screenings once in Indianapolis.

The Heartland International Film Festival Awards Brunch is on Saturday, October 17, 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, Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award, Social Justice Award, Humor & Humanity Award, and Audience Choice Awards will all be announced. After the brunch, all Finalists will be shown at a single screening venue, and filmmakers are required to attend one final Q&A. Programmed films are entitled to 10 screening ticket vouchers plus up to 5 filmmaker badges for principal cast and crew (additional badges must be approved at the discretion of the programming staff) plus a 50-percent off discount code for additional tickets meant for cast and crew only (code not to be shared with anyone beyond the principal cast and crew).

*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 widely available 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. Films are welcome to screen at other film festivals in Indiana prior to Heartland, but may not be eligible for Best Premiere awards.*

## ***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, the Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award, and Social Impact Awards, but are 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. Programmed films are entitled to 10 screening ticket vouchers plus up to 5 filmmaker badges for principal cast and crew (additional badges must be approved at the discretion of the programming staff) plus a 50% off discount code for additional tickets meant for cast and crew only (code not to be shared with anyone beyond the principal cast and crew).

## ***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 to compete as a Finalist for Heartland International Film Festival, I WILL BE PRESENT at the Festival from October 14-18, 2020, including the Awards Brunch on Saturday, October 17, 2020 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 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 International 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 Festival Awards.

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 Heartland, 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 both intellectual and music rights.

If selected to screen at Heartland International Film Festival, I authorize Heartland Film, Inc. to publicly exhibit my film again as part of the Heartland Film Roadshow, for at least one screening in 2020 or 2021 (without any fee).

I shall indemnify and hold harmless Heartland International 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.