REGULATIONS

1. General Information

FILMFEST DRESDEN is an independent short film festival organised by Filminitiative Dresden e.V. In addition to the International, National and Central German Competition, various special programmes with a variety of thematic and country focuses, retrospectives as well as Kids and Youth programmes are shown. FILMFEST DRESDEN is one of the best endowed short film festivals in Europe. It is dedicated to short film in various forms and sees itself as a podium to present the potential and diversity of current international short film production to interested audiences and the industry. The films in the competitions are awarded by various juries, which are newly appointed by the festival every year. **39 FILMFEST DRESDEN takes place from 13.– 18. April 2027.**

2. Participation Requirements

The following film productions are eligible for submission to the **International and National Competition**:

- Short fiction or animated films (incl. hybrid forms such as AnimaDoc, experimental or documentary fiction)
- Length: 30 minutes maximum (including credits)
- Finished after 31 December 2024
- countries International Competition: all countries except Germany (German co-productions are accepted)
- countries National Competition: Germany or German co-productions
- German co-productions are automatically in the selection process for the National and International Competition, regardless of which of the two competitions the film was submitted for.
- A premiere is NOT required.

Film productions with the following criteria are eligible for the **Central German Competition:**

- Animation, short fiction, experimental or documentary film
- Length: 40 minutes maximum (including credits). Note: The Shortfilmdepot submission platform accepts films up to 30 minutes in length. For films between 30 and 40 minutes in length, the information provided during submission must be adjusted accordingly.
- Finished after 31 December 2024
- films with a connection to the federal states of Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and / or Thuringia are accepted. A connection exists if one or more of the following conditions apply:
    - Director/producer lives and works in Central Germany.
    - Director was born in Central Germany
    - Production is based in Central Germany (seat of production and/or funding from the region).
- a premiere is NOT required

- Submissions for the National Competition are automatically in the selection process for the Central German Competition, if the formal requirements are met. If this is not what you want, please indicate so when submitting.

In addition to the competitions, there is an **Official Selection for the special programs**, which is drawn from the submissions to FILMFEST DRESDEN. The Official Selection includes the Children's and Youth Section, the Panorama programs, Experiments, and Open Air.

Film productions that meet the following criteria are eligible for the Official Selection:

- Animation, short fiction, experimental or documentary film
- Length: 30 minutes maximum (including credits)
- Finished after 31 December 2024

All submissions can be nominated for the LUCA Film Award for Gender equality and diversity. The Fully Political – Film Award for Democratic Culture award is drawn exclusively from the films in competition. There is a separate screening for nominees for both awards.

Screening fees are paid for films that do not run in the competitions. The festival has no restrictions in terms of content and is open to all themes, cinematic techniques and original film formats.

Please note that, if your film is selected, only films on 35mm or DCP will be accepted for festival screenings!

3. Film Submission

Films can be submitted via the online submission platform **www.shortfilmdepot.com** only. The following fees apply per submission: International Competition (IW) €10 / National Competition (NW), Documentary and Experimental Film €8 plus the service fee charged by Shortfilmdepot. The Festival will refund submitters with the exact same sums paid for entry fees in case of cancellation of the event within 3 months after the original dates of the festival. In all other cases FILMFEST DRESDEN does not refund submission fees. **Please ensure your film meets the eligibility criteria before submitting**.

Please make sure that your submission **includes English subtitles if the original language is not English. This also applies to German-language productions.**
When submitting your entry, please upload both a video file with English subtitles burned into the video and a subtitle file (format: SRT, STL, or XML). Burned-in subtitles ensure that the subtitles are displayed reliably and positioned correctly when the selection committee reviews the film. This helps us avoid technical problems during the screening and reduces additional work for both you and us.
For English-language films, we welcome the upload of a dialogue list or subtitle file.

Works-in-progress are eligible for entry if submitted by the deadline. The cut you submit should at least be picture locked. Please label your submission "work-in-progress" for example in the opening credits or the synopsis and specify what is incomplete and still to be finished (final sound mixes, colour correction or completed visual effects).

Re-submissions are not accepted!
The call for entry starts on **01 September 2026**. The deadline for submissions to the festival is **1 December 2026.**

4. The Competitions

The competing films for the International, National and Central German Competitions are chosen by the respective selection committees consisting of nominated film experts. Further information on the selection process can be found on our website (Festival -> Selection Committee). The selection committees choose and assign the selected films to the International, National or Central German Competition sections. The submitters will be notified by email at the middle of March whether their films have been selected. The festival does not pay screening fees for competition entries.

Submitters will be notified by email in the end of January regarding the selection of films for the competitions. The competitions will be announced in February, but submitted films may also be selected for special programmes. Submitters will be informed of their selection for these programmes by email in mid-March. No screening fees will be paid for competition entries. Rejection notices will also be sent out in mid-March.

5. Awards

Subject to any changes, the following awards will be given:

International Competition Awards	
Golden Horseman Animated Film	€ 7,500
Golden Horseman Short Film	€ 7,500
Golden Horseman of the Youth Jury	€ 2,000
Golden Horseman of the Audience	€ 3,000
Dresden Short Film Award of the Association of German Film Critics (VdFK)	not endowed
National Competition Awards	
Golden Horseman Animated Film	€ 3,000
Golden Horseman Short Film	€ 3,000
Golden Horseman of the Youth Jury	€ 2,000
Golden Horseman of the Audience	€ 2,000
Saxon Film Promotion Prize	€ 20,000
Central German Competition Award	
Golden Horseman Central German Competition	€ 3,000
Audience Award Central German Competition	€ 500
Cross-competition Awards (International and National Competition)	
ARTE Short Film Prize	to purchase a film
Golden Horseman Sound Design	€ 3,000 (€ 1,500 studio shot/ € 1,500 prize money for the sound designer)
Cross-competition Awards (International, National and Central German Competition)	
"fully political" – Short Film Award for Democratic Culture	€ 3,000
Special Award	
LUCA – Gender Diversity Film Award	€ 2.000

The prize money goes to the directors of the winning films, with the exception of the ARTE Short Film Prize and the Golden Horseman Sound Design.

6. Film Transport and Insurance

The applicant is responsible for the costs of dispatching the screening copy to the festival. The festival covers the costs of returning the film to the applicants. The film copies are insured by the festival organisation for the time period that the copies are at the festival, which means from the receipt of the post to the return shipment.

7. Miscellaneous

The applicant agrees that FILMFEST DRESDEN may utilise clips of up to 59 seconds as well as selected photos and credits from their work on the festival's own homepage **www.filmfest-dresden.de**, on the festival's own social media and video channels (no download), at the festival's own events as well as for television reporting purposes.

For internal management, all contact and film data are saved by FILMFEST DRESDEN. On submission, a personal account will automatically be created for the submitter in our database. We assure that the EU data protection regulation is observed, that the data are used exclusively for this purpose and are not disclosed to a third party.

The films screened in the programmes are automatically added to the Film Library of FILMFEST DRESDEN and can be viewed individually during the festival by industry professionals (i.e. producers, curators, distributors, representatives of other festivals). Access to the Film Library is open to all accredited guests and is password protected.

We would like to emphasise that solely the respective director, producer or a person authorised by either of them is entitled to submit a film.

The submitter pays all charges incurred for works that are protected by collecting societies. FILMFEST DRESDEN does not assume liability.

No film selected may be withdrawn from the festival programme after the notification of its participation.

The submission of a work implies acceptance of the regulations.

Accreditation for the 39 FILMFEST DRESDEN will be open from January 2026.

We look forward to your submissions!
Your FILMFEST-DRESDEN-Team

As constituted in August 2026