



**Edinburgh International Film Festival 2025
Open Submissions
Rules & Regulations**

SUBMISSIONS AT A GLANCE

Submissions Information:

- The Edinburgh International Film Festival (EIFF) will take place from 14-20 August 2025.
- There are two major awards at EIFF, decided by audience vote:
 - The Sean Connery Prize for Feature Filmmaking Excellence.
 - The Thelma Schoonmaker Prize for Short Filmmaking Excellence.
- EIFF considers:
 - Short Films (30 minutes or less, including credits)
 - Feature Films (all runtimes longer than 30 minutes)
- Submission fees:
 - Short Films: \$40 Earlybird/\$45 Regular/\$55 Late.
 - Feature Films is: \$65 Earlybird / \$80 Regular / \$110 Late.

The submission fee is non-refundable and we are unable to offer fee waivers.

- Films should be submitted online via FilmFreeway, [here](#).

Eligibility:

- All films must hold UK premiere status, at minimum, without exception.
- Films must not be older than 12 months by the start of EIFF 2025 (submissions cannot have been publicly screened anywhere prior to 15 August 2024).
- EIFF will not consider films the following films:
 - Films available publicly online.
 - Films available for purchase.
 - Films that are promotional works.

For any questions about the submissions process, please contact submissions@edfilmfest.org

THE FESTIVAL

Founded in 1947 when it was known as the International Festival of Documentary Films, Edinburgh International Film Festival (EIFF) is the world's oldest continually running film festival. Following the 2023 edition, a new organisation was established under chairman Andrew Macdonald to lead a revitalised EIFF from 2024 onwards. Paul Ridd was appointed incoming CEO and Festival Director in December 2023.

The first edition of the new-look festival was held in August 2024, opening with the UK premiere of *THE OUTFRAN* and closing with the World Premiere of *SINCE YESTERDAY: THE UNTOLD STORY OF SCOTTISH GIRL BANDS*. Other film highlights included the UK premieres of *THE SUBSTANCE*, *SING SING* and *ALIEN: ROMULUS* and the main feature prize was awarded to Jack King for his film *THE CEREMONY*. Guest speakers included Thelma Schoonmaker, Gaspar Noé and Alex Garland.

Running from 14 to 20 August 2025, the latest edition of EIFF will honour 70+ years of festival history, showcasing the very best talent in filmmaking in its re-energised format that is rooted in a local Scottish context whilst embracing the international diversity of creative expression.

EIFF's August fixture now runs in parallel to a host of creative festivals taking place in Edinburgh, including Edinburgh International Festival and the renowned Edinburgh Festival Fringe, which sells millions of tickets to cultural connoisseurs from around the world. The EIFF encourages general audiences, cinephiles and industry professionals to make the trip this summer to Edinburgh, which is universally recognised as a place of beauty, history, discovery and adventure.

Helmed by Festival Director Paul Ridd and Festival Producer Emma Boa, the team aims to create a world-class showcase for independent film and filmmaking talent. Former Acquisitions Executive Ridd is supported by the EIFF Board, including Chair, Andrew Macdonald of DNA Films, producer of the iconic Edinburgh-based film *TRAINSPOTTING*; Vice Chair, Amy Jackson, producer of 2022 BAFTA award-winning indie, *AFTERSUN*; Peter Rice, former Chairman of General Entertainment at Disney and President of 21st Century Fox; Teresa Moneo, Director of UK Film at Netflix; Isla McGillivray, partner at Saffrey Chartered Accountants; and Romana Ramzan, producer at games development studio No Code Studio in Glasgow and Scotland's BFI board governor. EIFF 2025 is supported by Screen Scotland.

EIFF Director, Paul Ridd, says, *“Following the successful first edition of our revamped and relaunched EIFF in August 2024, we are absolutely delighted to begin preparations for the 2025 edition. Culture is alive and vibrant in our city over August and our festival is a crucial part of that buzz. We invite creators, industry leaders and independent film fans to get in touch with the team, bookmark the EIFF website, and start planning travel to our world-class festival in Edinburgh in August. Bring it on again!”*

Please find outlined below information on submitting a film for consideration for EIFF 2025. If you still have any questions after reading, please see our EIFF 2025 Submissions FAQ document available online at www.edfilmfest.org, or contact submissions@edfilmfest.org.

THE RULES

- All submitted films must not have received any kind of public screening, online or in-person, earlier than 15 August 2024 and meet the selection criteria as described below.
- EIFF regards a short film as 30 minutes or under and a feature film as anything over 30 minutes.
- UK Premiere status is required for all feature and short submissions. EIFF is particularly interested in World, International or European premieres, and first or second features.
- Films may have previously been publicly screened anywhere outside of the United Kingdom. However, we are **unable** to accept films that have previously been broadcast or otherwise made publicly available (**including online**) within the UK.
- Films that are available to purchase are not eligible. This includes DVD/Blu-ray/online digital download formats.
- Promotional films are not eligible (e.g. films promoting tourism, charitable appeals, etc.).

PLEASE NOTE – your fee is non-refundable. If your film does not match the criteria listed above and you still submit your film, we will not consider your film and will not refund your fee. If in doubt, we recommend reaching out to our submissions team via email to clarify the eligibility of your film before submitting.

The final selection of all films presented at the Festival and their placement in the EIFF programme is at the discretion of the Festival Director.

AWARDS

The following awards will be given at the 78th Edinburgh International Film Festival.

THE SEAN CONNERY PRIZE FOR FEATURE FILMMAKING EXCELLENCE

The Sean Connery Prize for Feature Filmmaking Excellence creates a powerful platform to showcase today's most talented and original filmmakers by linking their success to the legacy of Scotland's most famous global star.

The award, which carries a cash prize of **£50,000**, is open to features of any genre that will have their World Premiere at EIFF in August 2025. The award is voted for by cinema-goers attending public screenings during EIFF.

Eligible films are selected at the discretion of the Festival Director.

THE THELMA SCHOONMAKER PRIZE FOR SHORT FILMMAKING EXCELLENCE

The Thelma Schoonmaker Prize for Short Filmmaking Excellence will celebrate excellence in short filmmaking.

The award, which carries a cash prize of **£15,000**, is open to short films of any genre that will have their World Premiere at EIFF in August 2025. EIFF classifies a short film as 30 minutes or under. The award is voted for by cinema-goers attending public screenings during EIFF.

Eligible films are selected at the discretion of the Festival Director.

THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

DEADLINES & FEES

Final deadline for receipt of submissions is **Friday 18 April 2025**.

There are three submissions deadlines:

EARLYBIRD	Friday 7 February 2025 SHORT - \$40 / FEATURE - \$65
REGULAR	Friday 14 March 2025 SHORT - \$45 / FEATURE - \$80
LATE	Friday 18 April 2025 SHORT - \$55 / FEATURE - \$110

HOW TO SUBMIT

FilmFreeway

Films should be submitted online via FilmFreeway only. We do not accept entries by post.

The direct link to the EIFF FilmFreeway submissions page is:

<https://filmfreeway.com/EdFilmFest2025>

Log on to the website, set up an account or log in to your existing account, and submit your film to EIFF directly via the website. Your fee will be taken via online payment.

FilmFreeway allows you to submit a Secure Online Screener and will instruct you on how to upload your film onto their viewing system. EIFF programmers will then watch via their online viewing platform.

For help and support with using the FilmFreeway platform to submit your film, please refer to their Help Centre on their website and email support@filmfreeway.com if you require further assistance.

You may also contact the EIFF Submissions team by email at submissions@edfilmfest.org to discuss any problems or questions about your submission.

PAYMENT METHODS

Payment must be made in **US Dollars** only.

When you submit via FilmFreeway you will be asked to pay by credit or debit card.

The submission fee is non-refundable and we are unable to offer fee waivers.

PLEASE NOTE: We **DO NOT** accept American Express or cash payments.

HOW TO SEND YOUR SUBMISSION

Secure Online Screener

When you are submitting a **Secure Online Screener via FilmFreeway**, FilmFreeway will instruct you on how to upload your film onto their viewing system and EIFF programmers will watch via their online viewing platform. You do not need to send us anything.

RECEIPT OF SUBMISSION

After we have received your submission a confirmation email will be sent to you. When you submit via FilmFreeway you can also check the status of your submission on the website.

Please note that we are unable to provide refunds on submission fees. It is the filmmakers' responsibility to ensure that the submitted film meets the eligibility criteria. If a film becomes ineligible after it has been submitted, while we would be grateful if you let us know, we are unable to provide refunds for films already submitted.

LICENCES & COPYRIGHT

All applicable licences and waivers of copyrights, moral rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights must have been secured by the filmmaker(s).

PRIOR/CONFIRMED PUBLIC SCREENINGS & EXPECTED PREMIERE STATUS

When submitting your film, please let us know of any public screenings that have or will have taken place prior to EIFF, and advise on the expected premiere status of your film should it be selected to screen in Edinburgh in August 2025.

Please note that when determining the premiere status for a film, we are considering

ALL public screenings (including both online and in-person events) - not only screenings that have taken place at Film Festivals. This also includes any instances where the film has been screened publicly in an earlier form or as a work-in-progress.

CONTENT WARNINGS

When submitting your film, please let us know of any content warnings. A list will be provided in FilmFreeway for you to flag these. We require note of content warnings in the interests of due diligence and duty of care for our programming team - flagging content warnings will not preclude your film from being selected.

SUBTITLES

If your film contains non-English dialogue, we require that you include on-screen English subtitles. If your film is mostly in English and you are intentionally leaving out subtitles for non-English dialogue, you do not need to provide on-screen subtitles.

ROUGH CUTS / WORKS IN PROGRESS

Our programming team is happy to consider rough cuts and will judge the film accordingly. We will not reject any film on the basis of being incomplete, however you should be confident that your film will be complete well in advance of the start of the Festival. Please note that due to the large volume of titles we receive, we cannot guarantee that programmers will be able to watch the completed film at a later date. Please consider this before submitting the rough cut and aim to have your final cut ready and submitted by our LATE deadline.

When submitting a rough cut, please provide details of the elements of your film still to be completed (e.g. colour grade, sound mix, VFX etc). You can include this information within the synopsis field in FilmFreeway.

PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED

EIFF will only consider a previously submitted film if it has been considerably re-edited or re-shot. If you are unsure, it probably means it hasn't been changed enough. Please email submissions@edfilmfest.org with details of the changes made to the film since its previous submission before submitting. If your film was submitted as a rough cut in 2024, we normally would not consider it for 2025.

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

If your Secure Online Screener does not work we will contact you to resolve the issue. However, in this case there is a risk that we will not receive the working copy in time to view, and screeners that do play properly will get priority viewing. If

submitting a Secure Online Screener please ensure that it plays fully before submitting.

If you upload a new version of the film at a later date, please notify us of the change by email as FilmFreeway does not automatically flag this.

CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

Please make sure that you inform us of any changes to your contact details by emailing submissions@edfilmfest.org.

Email is the main form of communication used by the EIFF Submissions team. It is vital that we have the correct information should we need to contact you about your submission.

SCREENING FORMATS

Should your film be accepted for our official selection, screening formats will be discussed with you by our Programme Planning team.

SUBMISSIONS BY ORGANISATIONS

We are happy to accept submissions from official or professional national organisations. National film agencies and institutes or film schools submitting multiple films may contact the Submissions team at submissions@edfilmfest.org to discuss fees for multiple submissions.

SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSIONS

If your submission is successful you will be notified by invitation by **June 2025** and our official Screening Consent Form and Participation Guidelines will be sent to you for completion and return. All information with regard to press and industry viewing permissions will be included in the Screening Consent Form and Participation Guidelines.

Please note EIFF **DOES NOT** pay screening fees.

UNSUCCESSFUL SUBMISSIONS

If your submission is unsuccessful, we will inform you by email as soon as possible and no later than the end of **June 2025**.

Please note that due to the number of submissions that we receive, EIFF is unable to provide comments or feedback for any films not selected for the programme.

AGREEMENT

Submission to EIFF constitutes agreement to all rules, regulations and conditions contained in this document and your consent that your film be considered for any awards that may be given at the Festival. Submission also certifies that all film and music rights and clearances have been obtained (in accordance with UK copyright laws). By submitting, you agree not to withdraw your film from EIFF after it has been accepted by the EIFF selection board.

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