

Guidelines and Conditions

By submitting your film, you agree to the Festival's submission guidelines and its conditions.

I. About the festival

The Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival is a European festival featuring artistic and critically reflective documentary work. The 30th annual Ji.hlava IDFF will take place from October 23 to November 1, 2026, in person in Jihlava, Czech Republic, and subsequently in an online setting for the following two weeks.

2. Film submissions

We accept submissions of the following:

- Documentary films
- Experimental films
- Animated films or hybrid projects
- Various TV and film reality-based projects
- Virtual reality (VR) projects
- Documentary and educational computer games
- Interactive web documentary projects

For every film you submit, you must comply with the following conditions:

- All film submissions must be accompanied by a properly completed submission form. Any changes made to the data provided on this form must be updated promptly.
- The cost for submitting a film is a one-time administrative fee of **€25**.
- The Submitter must provide an accessible **online** preview of the film. Failure to do so will result in your film submission being rendered **invalid**.

To ensure ample time for review, we encourage applicants to submit their films starting from **January 15, 2026**. The final deadlines are as follows:

- **February 28, 2026:** For films completed in 2025.
- **April 30, 2026:** For films completed in 2026 and premiered before April 30.
- **June 30, 2026:** For rough cuts and films that have not yet had a world premiere.

*As of June 30, 2026, the possibility to officially submit and register a film in the Ji.hlava IDFF system will end. However, in case of rough cuts submitted by the end of June, the finished film can be sent to JIDFF until **August 15, 2026**.*

2.1. Submission fees

Film submissions are subject to an administration fee of **€25** per film. All films must be submitted separately, with relevant contact information for the purpose of further official communication. Submissions are only considered valid once the administrative fee has been paid in full. Submission fees are further used to financially reward the winning films.

Ji.hlava IDFF assumes no responsibility for repeated submissions of the same film, be it intentional or accidental, nor does it bear any responsibility for the failure to deliver a film by the proper deadline. **All paid submission fees are final, and no refunds will be issued.**

2.2 Acceptable submission formats

ONLINE PREVIEW

- If a preview of your film is available online, please provide the URL and the password to access your film in the submission form.
- Please note that film previews from online storage or hosting services (downloadable links) will not be accepted.
- Films submitted for preview that are not in English, Czech, or Slovak must include English subtitles.
- The online preview **must be made available without restrictions until November 1, 2026**. If you change the link or password, please inform us immediately at submissions@ji-hlava.cz, or you will risk your film not being considered for this year's festival.

Failure to provide us with a functional online preview of your film may result in your film not being considered for selection. Ji.hlava IDFF shall not be held liable in the event a preview is not delivered, and your submission fee will not be refunded for failure to do so.

Please direct all your questions regarding film submissions or films that you've already submitted to the program department at submissions@ji-hlava.cz.

3. Ji.hlava IDFF program selection process

3.1. Films selected for the program

- Films are selected for the program by the Program Board in collaboration with curators of individual thematic sections and external programmers.
- The festival and the Program Board reserve the right to choose what section the film will be included under.
- The festival reserves the right to include in the program an additional screening of award-winning or acclaimed films.
- If a film **has been selected** for the festival program, the Submitter will be notified by **September 20, 2026**, at the latest.
- The Festival is not required to provide specific feedback or justification regarding selection decisions.
- Ji.hlava IDFF reserves the right to include a repeated or added screening of the award-winning films.

3.2. Program sections – competition

Opus Bonum – an international competition section for medium-length and feature-length documentary films from all around the world. Under this section, the award for Best Debut and Best Film from Central and Eastern Europe will be announced. The jury may also award films for Best Editing, Best Cinematography, Best Sound Design, and Original Approach.

First Lights – competition of first and second feature documentary films.

Testimonies – on politics, nature and knowledge – an international competition for the best documentary film featuring political and historical implications, ecology, and environmental issues, or the best documentary film that pushes the boundaries of the scientific documentary drama.

Czech Joy – a competition for the best documentary film from a Czech production or co-production. The jury may also award films for Best Editing, Best Cinematography, Best Sound Design, and Original Approach.

Fascinations – an international competition for the best experimental film under 30 minutes long.

Fascinations – Exprmntl.cz – a competition for the best experimental film from a Czech production or co-production under 30 minutes long.

Short Joy – an international competition for documentary films under 30 minutes. (*As a condition, films from this section will be presented online on the international platform dafilms.com. The competition starts 14 days before the festival and is held by a worldwide audience vote on dafilms.com. The award for the best film in the section is presented at the opening ceremony of Ji.hlava IDFF. All films in the section are also screened physically in the festival cinemas.*)

Virtual Reality – international competition of 360° films, immersive installations, and interactive projects that explore real life, history or social situations.

3.3 Categorisation based on running time

Submitted films are categorised as follows:

- Short-length – films with a runtime of under 30 minutes
- Medium-length – films with a runtime of between 30 and 60 minutes
- Feature-length – films with a runtime of over 60 minutes

3.4. Festival premiere status

The world, international, or European premiere status is an essential prerequisite for screening films in the following competitive sections:

- Opus Bonum
- Fascinations
- Short Joy
- First Lights

A Czech festival premiere is a prerequisite for screening films under the following sections:

- Czech Joy
- Fascinations – Exprmntl.cz
- Testimonies
- Constellations
- Special Event
- Virtual Reality

The Submitter is required to provide up-to-date and accurate information about the premiere status of the film that they've submitted. Please notify us at submissions@ji-hlava.cz if the premiere status of your film changes following its submission. In exceptional cases, Ji.hlava IDFF reserves the right to present the film without a premiere in the festival's non-competition sections.

3.5. Confirming festival participation

After the Submitter has been officially notified that their film has been selected for the program and after the Submitter agrees to show their film, the Submitter is thereby obliged to participate in the festival. After this mutual agreement is made, it is no longer possible for the Submitter to withdraw their film(s) from the program.

3.6. Festival screening times

Ji.hlava IDFF reserves the right to decide on the screening times and number of screenings of each film title.

4. Additional materials for films selected for the program

4.1. Screening copy

Ji.hlava IDFF enables screenings in the following formats: DCP, 35 mm, 16 mm, and 8 mm.

4.1.1. Hardcoded subtitles

All films whose primary language is not English must have hardcoded English subtitles. This includes films in Czech, which must also have English subtitles.

4.1.2. Shipping requirements

- The screening copy of a film must be delivered to the Ji.hlava IDFF office in Prague, or delivered electronically (see shipping instructions), no later than **September 15, 2026**, unless agreed otherwise. **If the copy is not delivered in time, Ji.hlava IDFF will not be responsible for the technical quality of the screening.**
- Ji.hlava IDFF shall only cover the cost of a one-way shipment of the film copy unless agreed otherwise.
- The Festival assumes the responsibility to arrange insurance for the copy from its arrival at the office to its subsequent dispatch at the end of the festival.
- Accompanying promotional leaflets, posters, etc., are welcome only in digital format. Submitters and filmmakers attending the festival in person may bring physical promotional materials; staff will provide instructions on-site regarding designated display areas.

- All screening copies will be sent back to their rightful owners (or to another party as agreed with them) no later than December 1, 2026.
- In the event a copy is damaged, please inform the Festival no later than December 31, 2026.
- When shipping copies from countries outside the EU, please provide a pro forma invoice and do not estimate the value to be over \$10. Please attach the following specification to the parcel: “*No commercial value, for cultural purposes only.*”

4.2. Accompanying film materials

Films selected for the program must be accompanied by materials as specified by the Festival and are to be made available for use both during and after the festival.

Film clip

For purposes of promoting the film in the media as well as during the festival, please provide a one-minute clip from the film in HD quality. In the event that we have no film clip on file, we reserve the right to select a sequence of our choice.

Trailer

For further promotion of the film at the festival and on the festival's social media, such as the Ji.hlava IDFF YouTube channel, we ask that you provide us with the film's official trailer. The trailer must contain information about the film's inclusion in the festival as well as the official Ji.hlava IDFF selection logo. The logo (laurels) is available for download [here](#).

Film preview

By completing a submission form, the Submitter agrees that his/her films selected for the festival program will be included in the festival's video library and the library of the Centre for Documentary Film.

For the purposes mentioned above, all video files must be sent with the following specifications:

- *File type: .mp4, codec h.264*
- *Resolution: at least 720p (1280x720px)*
- *Data speed: between 1.5 and 3 Mb/s*
- *Audio parameters: AAC, 48KHz, stereo, 160kbps*

Online film preview

Filmmakers are required to provide an online preview of the selected film. Ji.hlava IDFF has the right to privately share this preview with select journalists, film synopsis and content writers, and/or translators before the festival and while the festival is taking place.

Dialogue list

All films selected for the festival program must be accompanied by a dialogue sheet (in the film's original language or English) to translate and add subtitles to the film or for simultaneous interpretation during a film's screening.

Stills and official poster

For every film that is selected, you must provide the festival with at least three stills no larger than 10 MB each and in .jpg or .png format (.tiff and other formats will NOT be accepted). In the event of failure to provide the necessary photographs, the festival reserves the right to use screen grabs from the film preview. The inclusion of a film poster in digital format is optional. The festival bears no responsibility for the distribution of physical posters.

4.3 Use of accompanying materials

By sending additional materials, the Submitter grants their consent for Ji.hlava IDFF to use them for non-commercial purposes and to provide them to third parties for the same purpose. Ji.hlava IDFF is not responsible for securing the license to use the materials you provide, nor does it bear any responsibility in the event of copyright infringement. Additionally, the Submitter declares that they have properly resolved all copyright issues related to the film and all its accompanying materials.

4.4 Catalogue and film information

If a submitted film is selected for the festival program, the Submitter is required to provide truthful and current information on the film, as well as contact information for the Rightsholder of the film. This information will be published on the festival website on the film's landing page.

Ji.hlava IDFF reserves the right to use its own film synopsis and film annotation. The annotation provided to the Festival by the Submitter is for referential purposes only.

5. Online film screenings

A portion of the film program will also be made available online in the two weeks subsequent to the in-person festival in Jihlava. Films selected for the online festival will only be screened upon bilateral agreement with the Rightsholder under pre-arranged terms and conditions. Films selected for the online segment of the festival will be available for viewing only within the territory of the Czech Republic and for the agreed-upon time limit, or with a limit on the number of views (unless otherwise agreed).

6. Festival video library, the Centre for Documentary Film video library

6.1. Festival industry video library

Ji.hlava IDFF reserves the right to use films that are included in the festival program for its online festival industry video library, which is intended for film professionals attending the festival. Films will be made available only following the in-person premiere of the film at the festival. This library will continue to be made available for up to three weeks.

6.2. Video library of the Centre for Documentary Film

All Submitters agree to the possible offline use of their films in the video library of the Centre for Documentary Film. The Centre for Documentary Film (CDF) operates a small video library for Jihlava, the professional public, and students interested in documentary cinema. It is an entirely non-commercial project. Films are free of charge only in their offline version in the CDF library in Jihlava.

7. Collective approval for the processing of personal data

Persons involved in the submission process agree to the processing of personal data in compliance with GDPR and their possible use as part of future communication with the Festival.

For the full text, click [here](#).