



PÖFF SHORTS (Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival)

7.–15. NOVEMBER 2023

PÖFF Shorts is the biggest short film and animation festival in the Baltics, an integral part of the FIAPF-accredited Black Nights Film Festival (PÖFF).

The festival's mission is to showcase the best animated and live action short films of all genres from cutting edge talents and bold visionaries across the world.

PÖFF Shorts hosts three internationally recognised competition programmes: the international competitions for live action and animation with their respective student competitions called New Talents, as well as the PÖFF Shorts National Competition designed to provide a platform for Estonian filmmakers and animators.

Alongside the competitions the festival presents an array of astonishing, thought provoking, inspiring and challenging out of competition short film programmes.

PÖFF Shorts is a member of the European Film Academy (EFA) and an Academy Award and BAFTA-qualifying festival.

Check out our other festivals:

Black Nights Film Festival

<https://filmfreeway.com/blacknightfilmfestival>



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Just Film Youth and Kids Film Festival

<https://filmfreeway.com/just>

Haapsalu Horror and Fantasy Film Festival

<https://filmfreeway.com/hoff>

www.shortcuts.poff.ee

Awards & Prizes

International Live-Action Competition

- Jury prize for Best Film
- Jury prize for Best Student Film (New Talents)

International Animation Competition

- Jury prize for Best Film
- Jury prize for Best Student Film (New Talents)
- Jury prize for Best Children's Film

National Competition

- Jury prize for Best Film

PÖFF Rebels With a Cause Competition short film section

- Jury prize for Best Short Film



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Jury prize: EFA awards Short Film Candidate

Winners of the International Live-Action Competition Jury prize for Best Film, International Animation Competition Jury prize for Best Film and National Competition Jury prize for Best Film will be eligible to apply for consideration for the annual Academy Awards should they fit the eligibility criteria as determined by the Academy.

Juries will decide upon one European* film in eligible competitions with a candidacy in the short film category of the European Film Awards.

* European according to the rules of European Film Academy, meaning both EU and non-EU, and shall include Israeli and Palestinian.

Rules & Terms

Short Film and Animation Festival PÖFF Shorts

07.11 – 15.11 2023

1. Introduction

PÖFF Shorts presents films in the following programmes

- International Competition programmes of short films and animation
- International Competition programmes of short films and animation for students
- National Competition programme for short films and animation
- PÖFF and PÖFF Shorts joint competition Rebels With a Cause short film section
- Non-competitive programmes, retrospectives and special presentations



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Applicants for Competitive and Non-Competitive Programmes are requested to submit through FilmFreeway or any other submitting platform indicated by the festival team. Entry applications submitted by post, e-mail or any other form except the online submission form are not considered eligible for selection.

The submission deadline for competitive and non-competitive programmes of PÖFF Shorts is 13th of August 2023.

11 Submission entry procedures

1.1.1 Films meeting the festival requirements must:

- Be short or half-length films (up to 45 minutes): fiction, documentary, experimental; live-action or animation.
- Completed after the 1st of January 2022 (regarding competitive programmes).
- Be presented in a HD video screening format (minimum 1920x1080px, Prores, DNxHD), DCP.
- Have English subtitles if they are not in English.

Films submitted to the student film competitions must be directed by a film, animation or media student.

Films produced in Estonia or are Estonian-co-productions are also eligible.

The festival reserves the right to evaluate eligible films for the competition and assign the programme section for the film on a case-by-case basis.

We are accepting the submissions of the Russian films that have been produced without the financial support of the government of Russian Federation and businesses tax-resident in the latter country. Film Schools will be considered state funded organizations and not considered. It means that we can only consider the films that have been made by independent production companies.



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Applicants for competitive and non-competitive programmes are requested to submit the film and required supplementary materials only via the indicated online submissions page. Entries submitted by post, e-mail or any other form except the online submission form are not considered eligible for selection.

The festival reserves the right to refuse late submissions.

1.1.2 Submission deadlines and fees

Submission fees are to be paid by secure online payment with a credit or debit card. Submission fees are non-refundable.

The early-bird submission deadline is 1st of July 2023

The regular submission deadline is 1st of August 2023;

The late submission deadline is 11th of August 2023.

The Festival Director and the Programming Committee reserve the right to waive submission fees for selected applicants, to not comment on their decisions regarding waivers. The Festival reserves the right to select films received at any time and through any means, or process and to refuse late submissions.

If you have questions regarding the regulations or submissions process, please email shorts@poff.ee.

1.1.3 Submission materials

For a successful submission via the submission platform the applicant is required to:

Fill in all fields possible and submit the entry form.

Provide a non-expiring screening link – with English subtitles and a password if necessary.

The approved requirements of the promotional photos and trailers for the Festival are the following:



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Film stills

Format: landscape (16:9), .jpg (.png, .tiff)

Size: 1920 x 1080 px minimum

Minimum of 3 stills.

Director's portrait image

Format: square (1:1), .jpg (.png, .tiff)

Size: 500 x 500 px minimum

Film poster

Format: portrait, .jpg (.png, tiff)

Aspect ratio: 1,45 (recommended)

Size: 555 x 800 px (recommended)

Film trailer/teaser

Provide an HD resolution trailer or an HD teaser clip of the film either as a public link to a downloadable and embeddable video on YouTube or Vimeo or as a separate file. The Festival should receive the trailer or teaser latest by the 1st of October, with an allowance to upload on the Festival's online channels.

1.2 Programming

The Programming Committee, headed by the Head of Live-Action programming and the Head of Animation programming, selects films for the competitions and non-competitive programmes. For competition programmes preference will be given to films with at least an Estonian premiere.



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Each competition film may be screened a minimum of two (2) times and a maximum of five (5) during the Festival, including press screenings. Consent from the applicant will be asked for any extra screening. The Programming Committee reserves the right to not comment on its decisions as well as the final line-up of the Festival.

POFF Shorts works towards achieving a gender equal selection-evaluation process and film programme.

13 Confirmation of films and reimbursements

Upon confirmation of the film, the Festival will inform the applicant no later than the 8th of October 2023.

Upon confirmation of the film to the Festival's Competitive or Non Competitive Sections the applicant agrees to:

- Confirm participation of the film in the Festival.
- Provide all necessary information and materials (see 1. Film submission). Provide all missing information and materials from the original submission in the way and by the deadline indicated by the festival team.
- Provide the required screening copy (see 3. Technical requirements for screening copies) in the way and by the deadline indicated by the Festival team.
- Grant permission to include the screener in the festival's video library, reserved for jury and accredited industry members only (restricted access).
- Authorise to screen the film and/or promotional materials (stills, trailer) at the Festival and at any presentation of the Festival programmes, side and promotional events in any location if organised by/or participated in and authorised by the Festival organisation.

Confirmed titles may not be withdrawn from the festival programme after its participation has been officially confirmed and the producer or producer's authorised representative has verified confirmation of the film to the programme.



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If, for exceptional reasons, the film has to be withdrawn three weeks or less before the opening of the festival, the applicant agrees to reimburse all costs to the festival related to confirmation and programming of the film including screening fee (when applicable), print delivery and handling costs as well as associated travel costs for the film delegation.

Please note that the Festival cannot guarantee the use of missing promotional materials in the Festival communications that are delivered after the deadline set by the Festival team upon confirmation of the film in the Festival.

The invoices for the film rights or print loans should be issued and delivered for payment no later than two months from the end of the festival. The festival does not accept or reimburse invoices issued after that date.

If the applicant does not provide the materials required by the Festival by the date set in regulations or by the date agreed with the festival beforehand, The Festival Director and the Programming Committee reserve the right to withdraw the film from the competition.

1.4 Technical requirements and guidelines for film formats

1.4.1 Screenings in cinemas

Screening formats for all films in all festival sections are DCP and video file. PÖFF Shorts requires both versions for its screenings.

Provided DCPs must be DCI compliant (<http://www.dcmovies.com/>) and adhere to all applicable conditions below.

DCPs must be delivered digitally through a link provided by the Festival and it should be uploaded no later than the 17th October 2023. DCPs must be provided with the correct naming according to the ISDCF DCP Naming Convention. Information for digital delivery will be provided before the festival.



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If agreed upon by the Festival, video files will be converted into DCPs by the Festival appointed lab to ensure the best possible image and sound quality during playback. Only ProRes, ProRes 444, ProRes HQ are accepted video formats.

All films selected for the festival must be provided with English subtitles, unless they are already in English. DCPs with subtitles should be provided as original language versions (OV) with separate accompanying subtitles as version-file packages (VF). Otherwise, hardcoded subtitles are recommended.

All screening copies for all sections, if provided with any subtitles, must have the subtitles on the active picture area and not in the letterbox area. Please note that the image may be cropped by up to 3% during projection, due to the position of the projector and the venue's characteristics, therefore a good safe area for the subtitles would be at least 5%. Dubbed language copies are also refused.

The festival reserves the right to demand new DCP packages free of charge in case of non-compatible DCPs or if other quality standards are not met. These include wrongly placed or missing subtitles, or wrong soundtracks.

Only unencrypted DCPs are accepted and encrypted DCPs will be refused by the Festival.

The festival supports 2K and 4K content. However, not all screens have a 4K screening capability. The festival therefore cannot guarantee that all 4K films will be screened in a 4K resolution.

We can accept high-frame-rate (HFR) or 3D DCPs, however, we are only able to screen them in selected cinema halls. Please notify the festival office if you are planning on presenting a high-frame-rate DCP.

Tapes, Blu-rays, DVD and all other formats are not accepted as screening formats, unless there are no alternatives and with prior acknowledgement from the festival.

PÖFF Shorts technical guideline is here to download and also provided along with a confirmation entry form.



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The festival reserves the right to refuse and withdraw the screening of the film from the competition or any other section if all requirements are not followed.

Our festival's technical team, dcinema@poff.ee, will happily help with any queries for all confirmed films.

1.4.2 Online screenings

Festival uses a VOD platform with Studio Grade DRM for screening films online.

1.4.2.1 Online screenings for jury, film professionals and international press members only (ProScreen)

Screenings for accredited film professionals and international press members are accessible globally via Festival accreditation.

All films that agree with online screenings must present the film in H264, 1920x1080p video format with stereo sound. All video files must be provided with hardcoded English subtitles, unless they are already in English.

1.4.2.2 Public online screenings

Public screenings for audiences in Estonia are geo-blocked outside of Estonia and can be limited to an agreed size of the audience.

All films that agree with online screenings must present the film in H264, 1920x1080p video format with stereo sound. All video files must be provided with hardcoded English subtitles, unless they are already in English.

The Festival reserves the right to refuse and withdraw the screening of the film from the competition or any other section if all requirements are not followed.

PÖFF Shorts technical guideline is here to download and also provided along with a confirmation entry form.



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Our Festival's digital cinema team, dcinema@poff.ee, will happily help with any queries for all confirmed films.

1.5 Delivery of materials

Screening copies should be delivered electronically via indicated means by the festival team upon confirmation.

Festival accepts films uploaded to film distributors' upload environments or can provide its own upload environment. All technical questions and information regarding file formats, DCP's and upload should be sent to dcinema@poff.ee.

The festival does not accept physical copies for films less than 50GB in file size.

In case of the exceeding file size, details about the delivery of physical copies will be given by the festival team.

1.6 Film delegations

The Festival may invite members of the crew of any film in any section providing either travel, accommodation and/or festival accreditation.

For Film Delegates in both competitive and non-competitive programmes the Festival can offer a maximum of three (free of charge) accreditations per film, with the preference given to the Director and/or Producer.

For the Film Delegates in competitive programmes the Festival can offer a maximum of two nights of accommodation at the Official Partner Hotel. The Festival does not cover travel costs.

For the Film Delegates in the non-competitive section, the Festival reserves the right to invite guests upon the decision of the Programming committee.

Accreditations need to be confirmed as soon as possible (and no later than the set deadline) after confirming the participation of the film at the festival. A fee will apply for extra or late accreditation applications.



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1.7 Awards and Juries

PÖFF Shorts festival appoints separate juries for the Animation Competitions, Live-Action competitions and for the National Competition; the juries will choose the winners of each category respectively.

No jury member can be involved in the production or promotion of any film in the competition.

International Live-Action Competition

Jury prize for Best Film

Jury prize for Best Student Film (New Talents)

International Animation Competition

Jury prize for Best Film

Jury prize for Best Student Film (New Talents)

Jury prize for Best Children's Film

National Competition

Jury prize for Best Film

Juries will also decide upon one European* film in eligible competitions with a candidacy in the short film category of the European Film Awards.

European according to the rules of European Film Academy, meaning both EU and non-EU, and shall include Israeli and Palestinian.

Winners of the International Live-Action Competition Jury prize for Best Film, International Animation Competition Jury prize for Best Film and National Competition Jury prize for Best Film will be eligible to apply for consideration for the annual Academy Awards should they fit the eligibility criteria as determined by the Academy.

Winners of PÖFF Shorts Competition programmes are given priority status for consideration for the PÖFF main competitions in the future.



The awards and jury members will be announced by the Festival Director no later than during the opening press conference of the Festival.

1.8 Using the festival logo

Films that have premiered at Black Nights Film Festival are welcome to use the official logo of the festival in their film's publicity and promotional materials. We ask not to modify or alter the logo without prior written permission from the Festival.

1.9 Contact

PÖFF Shorts Programme Coordinator - programme.shortcuts@poff.ee

www.shortcuts.poff.ee