



Minneapolis St Paul  
International Film Festival



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# SUBMISSIONS MANUAL

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**THE MINNEAPOLIS ST. PAUL INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (MSPIFF)**, marking its **39TH** year in **2020**, is the **LARGEST FILM FESTIVAL** in the Upper Midwest region of the United States. Operated by the **FILM SOCIETY OF MINNEAPOLIS ST. PAUL**, a non-profit organization, this highly anticipated celebration of international cinema annually debuts **MORE THAN 250 FILMS TO AN AUDIENCE OF 45,000+**, and welcomes the attendance of more than 150 filmmakers **FROM AROUND THE WORLD**.

## OVERVIEW

Each year, the festival presents a lineup of World, US, and Regional Premieres from more than 70 countries, reflecting the diversity of global cinema today. Programmers have cultivated this by developing region-based programs for feature films, which are described in the 'Features' section below.

Beyond these, existing programs include but are not limited to DARK OUT (edgy, genre-bending narratives), FRAME FORWARD (experimental/avant garde) and NEXTWAVE (family-friendly and youth-made movies). Festival will re-assign submissions to these or other appropriate programs as necessary.

Short film submissions are simply organized by Fiction, Documentary, and Animation.

### Minnesota Made:

Finally, the festival is proud to showcase works made by the Minnesota filmmaking community. It is important to the Film Society to present a platform for Minnesota filmmakers to gain exposure and make connections with other filmmakers from around the world. In the past, we accepted Minnesota-based submissions in a dedicated category, but now expect that all Minnesota Made features be submitted in the program titled NEW AMERICAN VISIONS.



## FEATURES

Note: The festival defines a feature film as having a duration that exceeds 40 minutes.

### WORLD CINEMA

No festival program embraces the number of countries, languages, styles, and genres better than World Cinema. Audiences will travel the globe and rediscover it from a multitude of new perspectives in this showcase of new fiction and documentary films from dozens of countries from every continent.

Eligibility: Submissions to WORLD CINEMA should not originate in the United States or fall under the categories Cine Latino, Images of Africa, Asian Frontiers, or Midnight Sun.

### CINE LATINO

Few cultures have had a greater influence on our country and our region than those of Latin America and Iberia. Our Cine Latino program celebrates the cinematic history and rich tapestry of Spanish and Portuguese language film and the powerful and captivating cinematic storytelling emerging from over a dozen countries.

Eligibility: Submissions to CINE LATINO should originate from primarily Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries.

### **IMAGES OF AFRICA**

As African countries free themselves from colonization, its filmmakers simultaneously free themselves from convention and blaze a trail of innovation and national identity. Thus, the images and stories of Africa rapidly become part of our global cinematic language. Experience the vivid, innovative and inspiring stories, both real and fictional, that continue to emerge from countries all across the world's second largest continent.

Eligibility: Submissions to IMAGES OF AFRICA should originate exclusively from African countries.

### **ASIAN FRONTIERS**

A continent that claims nearly 60% of the world's population, Asia encompasses a cinematic vision that is a symphony as diverse as it is discerning. As blockbusters make the headlines, we turn to independent voices that bring stories, both real and imagined, brilliantly to life.

Eligibility: Submissions to ASIAN FRONTIERS should originate exclusively from Asian countries.

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### **MIDNIGHT SUN**

Take in the sights and sounds of the far Northern climes where, for at least a few days each year, the sun never sets. This program of narratives and documentaries from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland offers a snapshot of new Nordic cinema, and a nod to Minnesota's heritage.

Eligibility: Submissions to MIDNIGHT SUN should originate exclusively from the Nordic countries: Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.

### **NEW AMERICAN VISIONS**

Celebrate the independent visions of American auteurs, whether they are one step away from Hollywood or completely outside the system. New American Visions features fiction and documentary films from filmmakers whose work is redefining the future of American filmmaking.

Eligibility: Submissions to NEW AMERICAN VISIONS should originate exclusively from within the United States.

All Minnesota Made features are encouraged to submit in NEW AMERICAN VISIONS.

## SHORTS

Note: The festival defines a short film as having a duration of 40 minutes or less. Typically, shorts with a runtime of 15 minutes or less have a greater chance of being accepted. Music videos can be submitted under the appropriate category below.

Big stories often come in small packages. Short-form films often challenge the rules of traditional filmmaking, exploring new techniques and advancing the art of storytelling.

The Festival accepts short film submissions in the following categories:

**FICTION**

**DOCUMENTARY**

**ANIMATION**

## COMPETITION

### JURIED AWARDS\*

Emerging Filmmaker  
Documentary Feature  
Spotlight Competition  
Minnesota Made Fiction Feature  
Minnesota Made Documentary Feature  
Fiction Short  
Documentary Short

\* Films in competition are selected by the programming committee on an invite only basis.

### AUDIENCE AWARDS

Fiction and Documentary Features, MN Made Fiction and  
Documentary Features, Fiction and Documentary Shorts

### NEXTWAVE YOUTH FILM COMPETITION

Nextwave Youth Film Competition is for young filmmakers ages 18 and under. Nextwave films are selected to screen at MSPIFF by a committee of peers and are eligible for two competitive awards: Best Youth Film and Excellence in Youth Filmmaking, chosen by the Nextwave Youth Jury. Nextwave at MSPIFF is the premier regional film exhibition destination for youth and a platform where young filmmakers can connect, showcase their work and engage with mentors in the field.

The festival accepts Nextwave submissions separately from regular submissions. For more information, visit:

[filmfreeway.com/nextwavemspiff](http://filmfreeway.com/nextwavemspiff)



## 2019 STATISTICS

1,275 total submissions

6% acceptance rate (16 feature films and 59 shorts)

27% of the total festival program (290 films) was made up of submissions

## PORTAL

The festival accepts submissions via FilmFreeway at [filmfreeway.com/mspiff](https://filmfreeway.com/mspiff)\*:



\* Note: Submissions to the Nextwave Youth Filmmaking Competition can only be submitted at [filmfreeway.com/nextwavemspiff](https://filmfreeway.com/nextwavemspiff).



## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### ALL FILMS

- I. Must have been completed after January 1, 2019.
- II. Non-English submissions must be available in their original language and soundtrack with English subtitles.
- III. Films that have been submitted for consideration in previous years are eligible for consideration only if they have undergone extensive changes and re-apply as a new submission.
- IV. The Film Society of Minneapolis St. Paul reserves the right to determine eligibility of any work submitted.

### FEATURES

- V. Minnesota Premieres are required of all feature submissions.
- VI. Feature films that have had a public ticketed screening anywhere in Minnesota are not eligible for submission.
- VII. Feature submissions must not have been broadcast or televised regionally, nor made publicly available in their entirety online prior to their date of exhibition in the festival.

### SHORTS

- I. Whereas Minnesota Premieres are required of all feature films, they are not required of short films. Additionally, short films may also be available for streaming online prior to its festival screening. However, these factors will be taken into consideration during selection and films that have played in Minnesota or are available online are ineligible for competition.

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be met before a submission can be considered for inclusion:

- I. Completed Submissions Form (FilmFreeway).
- II. Submission Fee paid via FilmFreeway, or money order made out to The Film Society of Minneapolis St. Paul.
- III. Online screener (Vimeo preferred). The Festival no longer accepts submissions via DVD.

Please note: Changing the password for a private online screener will make the submission unviewable, and therefore disqualified. The Festival will attempt, but is under no obligation, to contact the applicant for an updated password.



## SUBMISSION FEE WAIVERS

The following fee waivers are available. Visit <http://bit.ly/39mspiffwaiver> to apply.\*

- I. **Minnesota Made:** In recognition of Minnesota’s filmmaking community, MSPIFF offers one (1) complimentary submission per individual for projects that qualify as “Minnesota Made” and are submitted before the Late Deadline (see above). Eligible “Minnesota Made” films submitted after the Late Deadline may request a 50% discounted entry. To qualify, a film’s director must be a current Minnesota resident OR a combined 50% or more of production and/or post-production must have taken place in Minnesota.
- II. **Alumni:** Filmmakers whose work has been previously shown at MSPIFF are eligible for complimentary submissions.
- III. **Student:** Films made exclusively by college students are eligible for a 50% discount off regular submission fees.

\* Other waivers may be granted under special circumstances. Please use the form linked above to make a waiver request or contact [submissions@mspfilm.org](mailto:submissions@mspfilm.org).



## REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTED FILMS

Notifications regarding acceptance and non-acceptance of submissions will be sent by March 12th, 2020.

- I. Immediately upon notification of acceptance, submitters or primary contacts will be required to fill out an official Confirmation Form so as to provide festival staff with the most accurate and necessary information. The form includes but is not limited to the following:
  - a. Online screener link (to be used for competition jury and press requests through the duration of the festival)
  - b. Cast/Crew information
  - c. Synopsis
  - d. High-res film stills
  - e. Premiere status
  - f. Filmmaker attendance
- II. All films must be made available in Digital Cinema Package (DCP) format.
- III. All exhibition copies, including back-up content, must be delivered to the Festival office by March 26th, 2020.

- IV. Physical exhibition copies must be shipped prepaid, insured, and properly packaged. The Festival does not assume liability for damage to prints due to improper packaging or other reasons. All films while in our possession will be insured against loss and damage while participating in the event. The Festival will provide return shipping. If requested, the Festival may ship the exhibition material to another festival, decided on a case-by-case basis.
- V. The Festival reserves the right to place accepted works in the appropriate program.
- VI. The Festival reserves the right to remove a film from the festival for any reason or for no reason and shall not be liable for any refund or claims of any kind arising out of such removal.
- VII. Accepted films may be screened between 1-4 times, at the discretion of the Festival.
- VIII. Screenings will take place at official festival venues, including, but not limited to: St. Anthony Main Theatre, and Marcus Rochester Cinema.
- IX. The Festival reserves the right to use images from selected films for Festival marketing purposes.
- X. The Festival does not pay screening fees for accepted submissions.



I, the authorized representative of the project being submitted (hereafter called the “Film”) acknowledge that I am duly authorized, on my own behalf and on behalf of all other persons or entities who have any ownership rights or interests in or relating to the Film (hereafter called the “Film’s Owners”) to submit to the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. I warrant and agree, on behalf of myself and each of the Film’s Owners, that the Film is being submitted voluntarily and without promise or inducement, and that the submission of the Film neither imposes nor creates any obligation or responsibility on the part of the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival or The Film Society of Minneapolis St. Paul (hereafter called The Festival) to accept the Film for inclusion in The Festival, to exhibit the Film at The Festival, to acknowledge the submission of The Film, or to return the submission copy of The Film or associated submission materials to me or others.

I shall indemnify and hold harmless The 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 videos entered. I have paid and will pay in full all license fees, clearance fees, and other obligations, of any kind, arising from or associated with the exhibition of the Film at or in connection with The Festival.

I understand that The Festival reserves the right to waive or adjust any requirements outlined herein. I understand that I am not entitled to any refund or damage claims of any kind if my film is unable to screen due to technical or operational difficulties or if my film needs to be re-scheduled, delayed, or removed from the program for any reason.

By submitting, I warrant that I have read, understood, and accept all aforementioned regulations and requirements pertaining to submission to The Festival.