



FIRST
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
XINING
青年电影展

2022.7.27-8.4

The 16th FIRST International Film Festival Competition Rules and Regulations

1. General Information

1.1 About FIRST Competition

FIRST International Film Festival is dedicated to documenting the rich specimen of emerging sinophone filmmaking landscape and offering an effective and fair evaluation standard for that matter. With multi-faceted industry, artistic and professional perspectives, FIRST IFF aspires to provide the explorers of cinematic art with forward-looking guidance, encouragement and accompaniment.

1.2 Festival Dates

The 16th FIRST International Film Festival will take place from July 27, 2022 to August 4, 2022 in Xining, Qinghai Province, People' s Republic of China.

1.3 Eligibility

Submission to FIRST IFF is open to narrative features (60 minutes and over), feature-length documentaries (60 minutes and over) and short films (up to 30 minutes).

The following eligibility criteria must be taken into account when submitting a film to the festival:

- 1) The film must fulfill **one of** the following conditions:
 - The director is a citizen of the People' s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR and Taiwan), in the case of co-directed work, one of the directors' qualification suffices.



- The majority of the film' s dialogues is in Chinese language (including Mandarin, Cantonese and other dialects). Dubbed foreign-language film is not eligible.
 - A minimum of 50% of the filming locations are situated within the border of the People' s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR and Taiwan).
 - A minimum of 50% of the cast and crew of the film (including director, screenwriter, cinematographer, production designer, composer, editor, sound effect, main cast, producer) are citizens of the People' s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR and Taiwan).
- 2) The film was completed after January 1, 2021 (the completed version has not been public screened at any film festivals or released before this date).
- 3) For narrative features, the film should be among the director' s first three Independently directed narrative features. In the case of co-directed work, each of the directors must fulfill the condition.
- 4) Films that have already been theatrical/online released in mainland China or have scheduled the release before the FIRST IFF festival dates are not eligible.
- 5) Films, including any updated version, previously submitted to or publicly screened at FIRST IFF will not be reconsidered for the 2022 edition.



6) The following conditions apply in case of digital festival screenings prior to FIRST IFF:

- If the film has been screened with geo-block, our regular eligibility rules apply.
- If the film has been screened without geo-block and was available worldwide, a maximum of 2,000 views in total is allowed in order for the film to be eligible for FIRST IFF selection.

In both cases, the film may only have been available online for a maximum of 20 days.

1.4 Submission and Registration Fee

Films should be submitted online through the website of FIRST International Film Festival (www.firstfilm.org.cn). Submission is subject to a registration fee payable during the submission process. The fee varies according to the chosen deadline and film type.

	Early Bird	Standard	Late
Narrative Feature and Feature-length Documentary	January 1, 2022 to February 20, 2022	February 21, 2022 to April 10, 2022	April 11, 2022 to April 30, 2022
	RMB200	RMB360	RMB960
Short Film	January 1, 2022 to February 20, 2022	February 21, 2022 to April 10, 2022	April 11, 2022 to April 25, 2022



	RMB120	RMB260	RMB560
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The submission time is determined by the time all submission materials (including online submission and delivery materials) arrive at the festival office. Please take the delivery time into consideration. If the film fails to complete submission or is withdrawn from the competition, no submission fee will be refunded. If the delivery materials arrive later than the chosen deadline, you will be required to pay for the extra fee. When the extra payment is made, your film will officially enter the selection process. After the submission is closed (Narrative Feature and Feature-length Documentaries: 24:00 of April 30, 2022, UTC+8; Short Films: 24:00 of April 25, 2022, UTC+8), submitted films are not allowed to be withdrawn from the Competition.

2. Official Selection

The official selection of FIRST IFF presents three curated competition programs to promote talented filmmakers:

- Narrative Feature Competition
- Feature-length Documentary Competition
- Short Film Competition

No premiere status is required for the above competitions. Each film could only be submitted to one competition. The festival committee reserves the right to switch a



submitted film to a different competition, should it does not fit the qualifications in the competition it is submitted to.

Out of the competitions, FIRST IFF presents programs including Debut Spotlight and other thematic curations. No awards will be presented by the Jury Committee to the films in the non-competitive sections.

2.1 Narrative Feature Competition

Eligible for Narrative Feature Competition are directors of a 1st, 2nd or 3rd feature-length fictional films, 60 minutes or longer, that meet the requirements listed in '1. General' - '1.3 Eligibility' . If the film is co-directed, it should be among the first three directorial narrative features of each director.

2.2 Feature-length Documentary Competition

Eligible for Feature-length Documentary Competition are feature-length non-fiction films, 60 minutes or longer, that meet the requirements listed in '1. General' - '1.3 Eligibility' .

2.3 Short Film Competition

Eligible for Short Film Competition are films 30 minutes or shorter, that meet the requirements listed in '1. General' - '1.3 Eligibility' .

2.4 Debut Spotlight

Debut Spotlight presents 3 to 5 films selected by the festival committee from the Narrative Feature Competition and Feature-length Documentary Competition as



the festival' s highlight. The section is not open for submission. The films shall be the 1st directorial work of the director presented in world premiere or, in consultation with the festival, at least in mainland China premiere at FIRST IFF. No awards will be presented by the Jury Committee to the films in this section. Whether a film is selected into Debut Spotlight will not affect its award-judging process in the competition it belongs.

3. Awards

3.1 Official Awards

[Best Narrative Feature]

[Best Director]

[Best Performance]

[Best Artistic Originality]

[Best Screenplay]

[Best Documentary]

[Spirit of Freedom]

[Grand Jury Prize]

[Best Short Film]

[Best Animated/Experimental Short Film]

3.2 Official Award Introduction

1) Award presented to films (5 awards):

Award presented to films will be decided by the jury among shortlist films and honor the entire filmmaking ensemble of the film.

[Best Narrative Feature]

Selected among films in Narrative Feature Competition to honor the film that



shows creativity in the narrative, cinematic language, and aesthetic form. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

[Best Documentary]

Selected among films in Feature-length Documentary Competition to award the non-fiction work with archival value, humanistic concern, and the ability to reflect on the social context while being unbiased. The award is presented with a trophy, an award certificate, and a prize bonus of RMB50,000 (to the director).

[Grand Jury Prize]

Selected among films in the feature competitions to award film that explores the frontier and shows foresight in the scope of sinophone cinema. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

[Best Short Film]

Selected among live action films in Short Film Competition to award the film that presents unlimited possibility within limited time span and deals with cinematic elements in a creative manner. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

[Best Animated/Experimental Short Film]

Selected among animated and experimental films in Short Film Competition to award film that presents free auteur expression, explores the frontier of video art, and challenges the habit of watching with experimental language. The



award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

2) Award presented to individuals (5 awards):

Award presented to films will be decided by the jury among shortlist films and honor the individual contributors of the films.

[Best Director]

Selected among films in the feature competitions to award the filmmaker with outstanding sense as a director and shows a perfect combination of personal experience with cinema practice. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

[Best Screenplay]

Selected among films in Narrative Feature Competition to award the screenwriter who shows extraordinary ability and skills of writing that creatively and effectively combines literariness and cinematic language together. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

[Best Performance]

Selected among the leading actor/actress from films in Narrative Feature Competition to award the individual's outstanding performance in the conveyance of the character's charisma. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

[Best Artistic Originality]



Selected among films in Narrative Feature Competition to award the filmmaker who has made vital contribution or breakthrough in the field of cinematography, music, editing, sound, and production design. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

[Spirit of Freedom]

Presented to film in Narrative Feature Competition and Feature-length Documentary Competition with avant-garde aesthetics, this award honors the self-consciousness, culture value and the combination of independent thinking with cinematic practice. The award is presented with a trophy and an award certificate.

3.3 Other Awards

The festival committee reserves the right to add ad hoc awards, including awards decided by independent juries, the audience, third-party film critic organizations, sponsors and so on. The decision maker, judging procedure, time and form of award presentation will be notify in due course.

1) FIRST FRAME Award

The award winner is decided by an independent jury decides from the nominated films, in recognition of the diverse images of women in the works of emerging filmmakers and to encourage creative depiction of female characters and themes. The winning film shall break through the shackles of traditional narratives and



issues regarding femininity with rich cinematic vocabulary, creative observations and depictions that are closely connected to contemporary life. For details, please refer to the *16th FIRST International Film Festival FIRST FRAME Award Guidelines*.

2) Audience' s Choice Award

The festival committee select films from the Competition to constitute the Audience' s Choice Award participation pool. The winner is decided by the votes cast after screenings during the festival and is endowed with a cash prize.

3) Outstanding Figure of the Year

This Award is presented by the festival committee to a back-stage industry practitioner who proactively changes, leads, or pushes forward the filmmaking and industry environment for emerging filmmakers, independent and arthouse cinema.

4. Submission Instructions

4.1 Deadlines

The submission windows of the 16th FIRST International Film Festival are:

- Narrative Feature and Feature-length Documentary: From 0:00 of January 1, 2022, to 24:00 of April 30, 2022 (UTC+8).
- Short Film: From 0:00 of January 1, 2022, to 24:00 of April 25, 2022 (UTC+8).

The registration fee varies according to chosen submission time. Please refer to



'1.4 Submission and Registration Fee' .

The online submission, material delivery and registration fee payment should all be completed before the deadline for the film to be considered for competition. Please take the extra time needed for shipment into consideration. The festival committee and juries are not obliged to review entries received after the deadline.

4.2 Submission Process and Required Materials

The film should be submitted online through the FIRST IFF website: <https://www.firstfilm.org.cn/annual/competition/> with the following materials:

1) Preview Copy:

To complete the submission FIRST IFF requires a preview copy of the film submitted in the following format:

- MOV or MP4 in H.264 encoded video file
- File size limited to 3G for feature-length films and 1G for short films
- Embedded Chinese and English subtitles required
- The only acceptable watermark is "FIRST Preview" on the upper right corner of the frame. Please do not add other watermarks in order for the jury to review the film properly.

The preview copy may be submitted in one of the following ways:

- a. Uploading



The file may be uploaded directly to the FIRST encoded server through the submission form.

b. By Post

Please send your film (in USB disk, hard disk, etc.) to the following address:

FIRST International Film Festival

Yard No.7, Huitong Office Park,

Yaojiayuan South Road,

100025 Beijing, China

Tel: 86-010-85564221

To guarantee the submission materials reach the festival committee in time, please use a trackable and signed delivery service. Please mark “no commercial value” and “cultural use only” on the package and mark a tax value of under 10 USD.

The submission materials will not be returned. All shipping and insurance costs covering the transport of films and press materials to the festival is at the expense of those presenting the films. The festival committee reserves the right to reject pay-on-delivery packages containing submission materials.

4.3 Material Replacement

Please be careful when filling in the online submission form, as the information



will be used in the selection process. The applicant is fully responsible for the information provided. If replacement of information or material is needed after the submission, please contact submission@firstfilm.org.cn. At the discretion of the festival, the film's submission materials can be replaced **ONLY ONCE** before the submission windows close.

4.4 Work-in-Progress Version

The festival accepts submission of working-in-process preview copy, which must be at least picture-locked (no adjustment in editing). The jury will review the film based on the version submitted with no replacement allowed. The preview copy of the Work-in-Progress film must state clearly which part of the film is not complete at the beginning in the form of subtitles or intertitles (i.e. music yet to be replaced; no color grading etc.). If the film is selected, a screening version is required before July 1, 2022.

4.5 Copyright

The applicant is liable for the originality of the film and must guarantee that the music, sound, archival footage, and texts are legally licensed or authorized by the right holders. For documentary footages, please make sure to obtain permission of the filmed individuals. Any legal disputes regarding copyright or filming permission are at the stake of the applicant. The festival committee reserves the right to reject the film for competition in the case of copyright infringement.



5. Selection Process

The Pre-selection Jury and the Shortlist Jury will decide the Official Selection films and the Jury Committee will decide on the award winners. The juries will be appointed by the festival committee. No jury member may be involved professionally with the production or distribution of any film eligible for the award.

5.1 Pre-selection Jury

The Pre-selection Jury consists of the Narrative Feature Jury, the Documentary Jury and the Short Film Jury, who will review the submitted titles in corresponding categories. The film will be informed via email of the pre-selection result no later than May 30, 2022. The pre-selection results will not be publicly announced.

5.2 Shortlist Jury

The Shortlist Jury will decide the titles in the Official Competition of FIRST International Film Festival and the nominees of FIRST FRAME Award. The selected films will be screened during the festival. The Official Selection will be announced before June 30, 2022, and the nominees of FIRST FRAME Award will be announced in early July, 2022. The applicant will be notified by email.

5.3 Jury Committee

The Jury Committee will decide the award winners among shortlisted films, and



the award result will be announced on the Award Ceremony on August 4, 2022.

6. Selected Films

6.1 Screening Copy

Screening copy (standard DCP) of the selected film is required. Apart from sound mixing, color tuning and subtitles adjustment, the screening copy must be the same as the preview copy. No replacement during the Jury Committee review process is allowed. As a public platform aiming to promote new films and filmmakers, FIRST IFF does not offer screening fees to its selected films.

6.2 Publicity Materials

The entry information and materials of the selected films will be used on the festival brochure, website and online/offline promotional materials and shared with collaborating press. The festival is entitled to edit and use the information publicly. In case of incomplete information or materials, the participant is requested to submit upon selection.

6.3 Filmmaker Participation

The shortlisted film is preferably represented by the major cast and crew of the film, who should attend the festival screening, Q&As and other related events during the festival. The festival committee undertakes to provide travel and accommodation for these representatives in accordance with its hospitality



regulations.

6.4 Premiere Status

Once the film is selected, no further screenings that will affect the film's premiere status at FIRST are allowed.

6.5 Scheduling

All selected films will have 2 public screenings and 2 exclusive screenings to the accredited professionals during the festival. The time, date and venue of the screenings are entirely at discretion of the festival committee. For the award-winning films, the festival committee is entitled to arrange a minimum of 1 extra screenings after the award result is finalized. The schedule is subject to the written notice of the festival committee.

6.6 Festival Laurels and Logo

The filmmakers, producers and distributors of all films selected undertake to make mention in their publicity and advertising materials of the selection of the film for FIRST IFF, by featuring the official laurels and logo which will be supplied by the festival after the film is selected or awarded. The laurels and logo must not under any circumstances be modified or altered without the prior permission of the festival.

*The festival committee reserves the right to decide on any eventuality not foreseen in the guidelines and to modify the guidelines in due form. Participation in FIRST International Film Festival by submitting the work and/or accepting FIRST's invitation implies acceptance of the



rules and regulations by the filmmaker, producers, and rights holders. The Chinese text of these Rules and Regulations is the authentic and binding version.