

# **BRITISH INDEPENDENT FILM AWARDS**

## **RULES AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 2025**

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## TIMELINE

June	Entries open
Friday 1 August	Early deadline – shorts & features
Friday 22 August	Final deadline – shorts Final deadline for BFI Diversity Standards application – shorts Deadline for receipt of online screeners – shorts Late Deadline – features
Wednesday 3 September	Final deadline – features Final deadline for BFI Diversity Standards application – features
Friday 5 to Friday 12 September	Shorts preliminary voting
Friday 12 September	Deadline for receipt of online screeners – features
Monday 15 – Monday 29 September	Round 1 voting – features
Thursday 18 September to Wednesday 8 October	Round 1 voting – shorts
From Thursday 16 October	Longlist announcements
Wednesday 15 to Monday 27 October	Round 2 voting – features and shorts
Monday 3 November	Nominations announcement
Monday 3 – Monday 17 November	Round 3 voting (Craft categories)
Monday 3 – Monday 24 November	Round 3 voting (Best British Independent Film, Best International Independent Film, Best Feature Documentary, Best British Short Film, Raindance Maverick Award)
Thursday 20 November	Craft winners announced
Sunday 30 November	Ceremony

## ENTRY FEES

SHORTS	Entry Fee	
Early Deadline: Friday 1 August	Free	
Final Deadline: Friday 22 August	£50 + VAT	
FEATURES	Entry Fee	
	Production budget < £1m	Production budget > £1m
Early Deadline: Friday 1 August	Free	£200 + VAT
Late Deadline: Friday 22 August	£175 + VAT	£400 + VAT
Final Deadline: Wednesday 3 September	£350 + VAT	£800 + VAT

## ENTRY DEADLINES

In the event that an entry cannot be completed before the entry fees are applicable (e.g. if confirmation of a qualifying festival screening will come after 1 August, entrants may submit an entry with the qualifying festival / release field left blank to avoid the entry fees **as long as all other required information is provided**. An update on any qualifying screenings can then be sent to BIFA to confirm the film's eligibility. This must be received by the final entry deadline. If an entrant cannot afford the entry fee, they are encouraged to contact BIFA via [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film) to discuss the possibility of a fee reduction or waiver.

2025 CATEGORIES	Named nominee(s) / recipient(s)	Eligible films	Winner decided by
Best British Independent Film	Director, Screenwriter(s), Producer(s)	British features	BIFA voters
Best Director	Director	British features	Filmmaker Jury
Best Screenplay	Screenwriter(s)	British features	Filmmaker Jury
Best Lead Performance	Lead Performers	British features	Performance Jury
Best Supporting Performance	Supporting Performers	British features	Performance Jury
Best Joint Lead Performance	Lead Performers	British features	Performance Jury
Best Ensemble	Ensemble Performers	British features	Performance Jury
Breakthrough Performance	British Lead & Supporting Performers	British features	Performance Jury
Best Debut Director – Feature Documentary	British Director	British feature documentaries	Filmmaker Jury
The Douglas Hickox Award (Best Debut Director)	British Director	British features	Filmmaker Jury
Best Debut Screenwriter	British Screenwriter(s)	British features	Filmmaker Jury
Breakthrough Producer	British Producer(s)	British features	Filmmaker Jury
Best Feature Documentary	Director(s) & Producer(s)	British feature documentaries	BIFA voters
The Raindance Maverick Award	Director, Screenwriter(s), Producer(s) Entrants may choose to nominate all or any of the above-listed people	British features	BIFA voters
Best Casting	Casting Director	British features	BIFA voters
Best Cinematography	Director of Photography	British features	BIFA voters
Best Costume Design	Costume Designer	British features	BIFA voters
Best Editing	Editor	British features	BIFA voters
Best Effects	Special Effects Supervisor(s), Visual Effects Supervisor(s)	British features	BIFA voters
Best Make-Up & Hair Design	Make-Up Designer, Hair Designer	British features	BIFA voters
Best Original Music	Composer	British features	BIFA voters
Best Music Supervision	Music Supervisor	British features	BIFA voters
Best Production Design	Production Designer	British features	BIFA voters
Best Sound	The following may be entered (max. five): Sound Designer / Supervising Sound Editor / HoD Dialogue Supervisor / Editor SFX Supervisor / Editor Re-Recording Mixer Production Sound Mixer / Sound Recordist	British features	BIFA voters
Best British Short Film	Director, Screenwriter(s), Producer(s)	British short films	BIFA voters
Best International Independent Film	Director, Screenwriter(s), Producer(s)	International features	BIFA voters
The Richard Harris Award	British Performer	Individual	Nomination Committee & Board
The Special Jury Prize	Individual or organisation (usually not eligible in other categories)	–	BIFA Juries

## ADJUDICATION PROCESS

BIFA receives over 150 feature film and 300 short film entries every year. Rounds of viewing, discussion and voting amongst BIFA's voters and jurors reduce the entries to the longlists (Round 1), nominations (Round 2) and winners (Round 3) in each category.

BIFA's diverse pool of over 1500 voters consists of previous winners and nominees and other leading film professionals from across the industry. A sub-set of these voters (c. 500) take part in voting for the nominations (Rounds 1 and 2) each year and all voters are invited to vote for the winners in certain categories.

Voters are convened into 'subgroups' dedicated to particular categories for the first two rounds of voting. The adjudication process is discussion-based and the subgroups meet multiple times before votes are cast confidentially.

The winners in many categories are decided by two juries, the Filmmaker Jury and the Performance Jury, both newly-appointed each year.

### **Decided by the Filmmaker Jury**

Best Director  
Best Screenplay  
The Douglas Hickox Award  
(Best Debut Director)  
Best Debut Director – Feature Documentary  
Debut Screenwriter  
Breakthrough Producer  
The Special Jury Prize

### **Decided by the Performance Jury**

Best Lead Performance  
Best Supporting Performance  
Best Joint Lead Performance  
Best Ensemble Performance  
Breakthrough Performance  
The Special Jury Prize

The winners in the following categories are decided by votes open to all BIFA voters who have watched the nominated films:

- Best British Independent Film
- Best International Independent Film
- Best British Short Film
- Best Feature Documentary
- The Raindance Maverick Award
- The ten Craft categories (Casting, Cinematography, Costume Design, Effects, Editing, Make-Up & Hair Design, Original Music, Music Supervision, Production Design, Sound)

BIFA's Nomination Committee oversees the adjudication and voting processes and has the responsibility of making final decisions in all matters pertaining to entries, eligibility requirements, rules and processes. The Nomination Committee also meet with subgroup representatives to scrutinise and confirm voting results.

BIFA also presents two honorary awards: The Richard Harris Award, which is bestowed by BIFA's Board and Nomination Committee and the Special Jury Prize, intended to recognise an individual or organisation for their outstanding contribution within the British independent film industry, which is decided by both BIFA Juries.

More details about the BIFA voting and adjudication process can be found [here](#)

## FILM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In all cases, final decisions about a film's eligibility rest with BIFA's Nomination Committee. Under exceptional circumstances, inclusion and consideration of films which do not strictly comply with the below criteria will be subject to the discretion of the Committee. If you have questions about your film's eligibility, please contact BIFA via [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film).

### Independent

Films will usually qualify as independent where there is no involvement in the production or financing of a film by a major studio.

Any involvement by a major studio will be assessed by BIFA and a budget cap of \$25m (gross) applies where there is major studio involvement. If there is no major studio involvement, no budget cap applies.

As a guide, a film which has major studio involvement may be eligible for BIFA if:

- The film was acquired by the studio post completion for distribution only
- OR
- The gross production budget did not exceed \$25m and the project was not originated or majority co-produced by the major studio

BIFA considers the following companies to be 'major studios':

Searchlight/Disney, Amazon, Apple, Netflix, Paramount, Sony, Universal, Warner Bros

A PDF of the questions we ask if your entry has any studio involvement can be found [here](#).

### UK nationality – British shorts and features

BIFA considers a film to be 'British' if the writer(s), director(s) and originating producer(s) are British.

Where this is not the case, films are assessed by BIFA's Nomination Committee, who take into account the following factors:

- Whether the film was originated by a British production company or individual(s)
- The creative contribution from the UK (i.e. key creative team, lead cast and HoDs)
- UK funding source(s)
- Where each stage of production took place

Films that are not originated by a UK production company or individual(s) and that do not have a lead UK production company are unlikely to be eligible.

### UK nationality – individuals

Where an individual must be British to qualify for an award, such as in the debut categories, or for the purposes of identifying the nationality of a film, we will ask entrants if they or others who worked on a film have a British passport or the right to hold one, or if they have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) or have achieved 'settled status' by living in the UK for more than five years. BIFA's Nomination Committee may, at its discretion, accept individuals as 'British' if they have not lived in the UK for more than five years but have demonstrably been living and working in the UK for a considerable period of time and intend to do so in the future.

For short film qualification only, individuals who have not lived in the UK for more than five years will qualify as British if they have demonstrably lived in the UK for 3-5 years and intend to do so in the future.

If you are unsure, please use this test: <https://www.gov.uk/check-british-citizen> and get in touch with us on [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film).

A PDF of the questions we may ask to confirm your entry's British qualification can be found [here](#).

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\* Studios may be added to this list at any time.

## **BFI Diversity Standards**

British features and feature documentaries must meet the BFI Diversity Standards in order to be eligible for BIFA.

Meeting the Standards requires passing three of five Standards (A, B, C, D, E). Standards C and E are mandatory for all. Concessions may be made for smaller projects and the nature of the project, or its production will be taken into consideration during assessment.

Films that have already been assessed against the Standards (either pre or post Diversity Standards updates) do not need to be re-assessed. However, if your project did not meet Standard E or passed the standards before completion, please submit the form again with any updated information.

If your feature film has not already been assessed, please complete the assessment form by Wednesday 3 September. Do please complete all parts of the form and if you need support or have any questions about it, please contact the BFI, who will be happy to help. You can find out more about the BFI Diversity Standards [here](#)

## **Short Film Entries**

Films entered to the Best British Short Film award must be assessed against the BFI's new Diversity Standards. There is no requirement for short films to meet the Standards, simply to be assessed against them. The deadline for completing the form for your short film is Friday 22 August. Short films that have already been assessed against the Standards (either pre or post Diversity Standards updates) do not need to be re-assessed.

Please note, all assessments are made by the BFI and BIFA has no input into this process.

## FILM RELEASE REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible, feature films must be intended for theatrical release and must screen or be scheduled to screen to a paying public audience during the eligibility period, which is 1 November 2024 to 30 November 2025

Qualifying screenings can either be at an in-person film festival or on general release. If a film has confirmed distribution, we would expect a theatrical release to be planned in addition to any festival screenings and festival screenings alone will not meet the release requirements.

No re-releases may be entered. Once entered, a film can be withdrawn up to a week before the first round of voting opens. Films that are withdrawn at this point (by 8 September 2025) can be entered in subsequent years, if eligible. Otherwise, previously entered films are not eligible.

### British Features

- Must be intended for UK theatrical release
  - Must be over 70 minutes in running time
  - Must screen or have been scheduled to screen:
    - On general release in the UK during the eligibility period, for a run consisting of at least seven screenings in aggregate
- OR
- At an in-person screening at one of BIFA's qualifying British or international film festivals during the eligibility period (see the list on pages 19-20 of this document). Where there is no British theatrical release on the calendar, proof of intention to release theatrically may be required

Films that are between 40 and 70 minutes in length may be eligible if they have a theatrical release in the UK during the eligibility period.

If a film has confirmed distribution, festival screenings alone will not meet the release requirements. Where formal distribution is confirmed after a qualifying festival screening, the festival screening remains as the qualifying eligibility criterion for BIFA.

Films which have a qualifying festival screening but are scheduled for theatrical release in early 2026 (up to the cut-off date for eligibility for British films for the BAFTA Film Awards) may choose whether to enter in the current year or to wait until next year. Please contact BIFA to discuss this via [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film).

### British Shorts

- Must have been completed on or after 1 May 2024
  - Must be under 40 minutes in running time
  - Must be narrative, experimental, documentary or animation. Music videos and fashion films are usually ineligible but may be included at the discretion of the Nomination Committee and Shorts Subgroup where the film has sufficient narrative elements. To request an exception, please contact [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film)
  - Must:
    - Screen, or have been scheduled to screen at an in-person screening, as part of the official selection at one or more\* of BIFA's qualifying festivals for short films during the eligibility period of 1 November 2024 to 30 November 2025 (see pages 20-21 of this document for a full list)
- OR
- Screen on one of BIFA's recognised online channels during the eligibility period (see the list on page 21 of this document)
- OR
- Have won an award from one of BIFA's qualifying awards organisations during the eligibility period (see the list on pages 20-21 of this document)

Short films that have won awards which are not on the qualifying festivals / awards list may still be entered but their acceptance to the BIFA competition is at the discretion of the Nomination Committee.

Please note: BIFA qualifying festivals for short film fall into two categories:

A (primarily international festivals)

B (primarily British festivals)

To qualify for BIFA, short films must have screened at at least one festival from list A or at least two festivals from list B. You can see the full list of qualifying festivals for short films on pages 20-21 of this document.

## **International Features**

- Must be intended for theatrical release
  - Must be over 70 minutes in running time
  - Must have confirmed UK distribution
  - Must screen or have been scheduled to screen:
    - On general release in the UK during the eligibility period, for a run consisting of at least seven screenings in aggregate
- OR
- At one of BIFA's qualifying international festivals during the eligibility period (see the list on page 20 of this document) and be intended for theatrical release. Where there is no British theatrical release on the calendar, proof of intention to release theatrically will be required)

International features may also be entered if they have won an award at one of BIFA's qualifying international film festivals and are available for voters to watch.



## CATEGORY RULES & REQUIREMENTS

Films may be submitted to as many or as few categories as entrants wish. However, voters or the Nomination Committee may choose to consider a film in additional categories to those submitted.

Credits and eligibility decisions are based on the credits featured on exhibited prints of the film.

Category/ies	Named nominee(s)	Additional rules	Supporting Material
Best British Independent Film	<p>Fully credited writer(s), producer(s) and director(s)</p> <p>Other producer credits, such as Associate, Executive, etc. are not eligible for this award. Co-directors and co-writers are only eligible where there are no lead directors or writers credited. 'Additional Material by...', 'Original Story by...' and similar credits are not eligible.</p> <p>Where PGA determination has been made about eligible producers, only those credited p.g.a will be listed</p>		
Best International Independent Film	<p>Fully credited writer(s), producer(s) and director(s)</p> <p>See Best British Independent Film for our rules on which writing, directing and producing credits are eligible to be listed as nominees</p>		
Best Director	<p>Director(s)</p> <p>Co-directors are only eligible where there is no lead director credited</p>		
Best Screenplay	<p>Screenwriter(s)</p> <p>Co-writers are only eligible where there is no lead screenwriter credited. 'Additional Material by...', 'Original Story by...' and similar credits are not eligible</p>		<p>10-page screenplay sample [mandatory]</p>

Category/ies	Named nominee(s)	Additional rules	Supporting Material
Best Lead Performance	Lead performers	Entrants may select which category a performer should be considered for but BIFA's Nomination Committee reserves the right to make final decisions about performers' category placement.	
Best Supporting Performance	Supporting performers		
Best Joint Lead Performance	Lead performers	<p>For two (or exceptionally three) performances that are the joint focus of the film, especially where the performances share a large number of scenes and screen time.</p> <p>Entrants may choose to put performers forward for Best Joint Lead as well as Lead Performance. Please note: performers entered into this category must also be entered into the Best Lead Performance category. Performers will be listed for voting in both categories but can only be nominated and win in <u>either</u> the Joint Lead <u>or</u> Lead Performance category</p> <p>Performers put forward for Best Supporting Performance may not enter the Joint Lead category</p> <p>The number of nominations in this category is variable (up to a maximum of five) and is dependent on the number of eligible entries in any given year</p>	
Best Ensemble Performance	Three or more performers who form a core ensemble.	<p>This award is for a group of three or more performers in films <u>without a clear lead performer</u> and where the ensemble drives the story. Examples might include films like The Death of Stalin or The History Boys, as opposed to films like Billy Elliot</p> <p>Entrants are responsible for electing which performers to put forward for this category, but the suitability of entries will be subject to the approval of the Performance subgroup, who may decide to limit which performers are included in the ensemble of the film</p> <p>Please note: performers entered into this category must also be entered into the Best Supporting Performance category. Performers will be listed for voting in both categories but can only be nominated and win in <u>either</u> the Best Ensemble <u>or</u> Supporting Performance category</p> <p>This award is presented only at the discretion of the Performance subgroup. Ordinarily, only the winner in this category will be announced with no nominations selected. Exceptionally, depending on entry numbers, up to three nominations may be announced, in which case the winner will be decided by the Performance jury and announced at the ceremony</p>	
Breakthrough Performance	<p>Lead &amp; supporting performers</p> <p>Must hold, or have the right to hold, a British passport</p>	For British performers taking their first significant role in a theatrical feature film. Eligibility of performers with significant theatre or TV credits will be determined by the Nomination Committee	

Category/ies	Named nominee(s)	Additional rules	Supporting Material
The Douglas Hickox Award (Best Debut Director)	<p>Director(s)</p> <p>Must hold, or have the right to hold, a British passport</p> <p>Co-directors are only eligible where there is no lead director credited.</p>	<p>For a British director for their debut fiction feature film. Previous television or documentary credits do not disqualify an individual from consideration. Documentaries are ineligible in this category</p> <p>Where there is no lead director credited, all co-directors must be first-time fiction feature directors to be eligible for this award. This includes any co-directors who are ineligible to enter because they are not British. Debut directors who have co-directed with another director for whom this project is not a debut, are not eligible for this award.</p> <p>Where a director has previously made a micro-budget feature (under £50k budget), they may still be eligible for this award for a subsequent film, subject to review by BIFA's Nomination Committee</p>	
Best Debut Director – Feature Documentary	<p>Director(s)</p> <p>Must hold, or have the right to hold, a British passport</p> <p>Co-directors are only eligible where there is no lead director credited</p>	<p>For a British director for their debut documentary feature film. Previous television or feature credits do not disqualify an individual from consideration</p> <p>Where there is no lead director credited, all co-directors must be first-time feature documentary directors to be eligible for this award. This includes any co-directors who are ineligible to enter because they are not British. Debut directors who have co-directed with another director for whom this project is not a debut, are not eligible for this award.</p> <p>Filmmakers must be able to show the appropriate release forms if requested. If they are not able to do so, BIFA's Nomination Committee will determine whether the film is eligible for BIFA</p>	
Best Debut Screenwriter	<p>Screenwriter(s)</p> <p>Must hold, or have the right to hold, a British passport</p> <p>Co-writers are only eligible where there is no lead screenwriter credited. 'Additional Material by...', 'Original Story by...' and similar credits are not eligible</p>	<p>For a British screenwriter for their debut fiction feature film. Previous television or documentary credits do not disqualify an individual from consideration</p> <p>Where there is no lead screenwriter credited, but not all of the fully credited co-writers are eligible for this award, we may ask for more information about the division of responsibility throughout the project,</p>	10-page screenplay sample [mandatory]

Category/ies	Named nominee(s)	Additional rules	Supporting Material
Breakthrough Producer	<p>Producer(s)</p> <p>Must hold, or have the right to hold, a British passport</p> <p>Other producer credits, such as Associate, Executive, etc. are not eligible for this award</p>	<p>For a British producer for their first or second documentary or fiction feature film</p> <p>Where a producer wishes to be considered for the award for their second feature film, BIFA's subgroup and Nomination Committee will assess whether the producer's first film could be considered their industry breakthrough</p>	<p>Questionnaire [mandatory]</p> <p>Additional statements from other members of the production team will be requested at Longlist stage.</p>
The Raindance Maverick Award	<p>Fully credited writer(s), producer(s) and director(s)</p> <p>By default, all above-listed people are listed as nominees in this category. Entrants may, at their discretion, choose instead to limit the number of nominees (e.g. just the director, or just the producers) but must explain this decision in the statement accompanying their entry</p> <p>See Best British Independent Film for our rules on which writing, directing and producing credits are eligible to be listed as nominees</p>	<p>This award highlights innovation, uniqueness of vision, maverick filmmaking and risk-taking in fiction films with a budget under £1m, and documentary features with a budget under £500k, rewarding bold, creative, ambitious work that belies its limited budget.</p> <p>Eligible fiction films must not have exceeded a £1m (gross) production budget. Eligible documentary features must not have exceeded a £500k (gross) budget.</p>	<p>Questionnaire [mandatory]</p>
Best Feature Documentary	<p>Director(s) and producer(s)</p> <p>Co-directors are only eligible where there is no lead director credited</p>	<p>Films should be non-fiction and photograph an actual occurrence or employ partial re-enactment, stock footage, stills, animation, stopmotion or other techniques, as long as the emphasis is on fact and not on fiction</p> <p>Filmmakers must be able to show the appropriate release forms if requested. If they are not able to do so, BIFA's Nomination Committee will determine whether the film is eligible for BIFA</p>	
Best British Short Film	<p>Fully credited writer(s), producer(s) and director(s)</p> <p>Other producer credits, such as Associate, Executive, etc. are not eligible for this award</p> <p>Co-directors and co-writers are only eligible where there are no lead directors or writers credited</p>	<p>Films must be under 40 minutes in length</p> <p>Must be narrative, experimental, documentary or animation.</p> <p>Music videos and fashion films are usually ineligible but may be included at the discretion of the Nomination Committee and Shorts subgroup where the film has sufficient narrative elements. To request an exception, please contact <a href="mailto:entry@bifa.film">entry@bifa.film</a></p>	

Category/ies	Named nominee(s)	Additional rules	Supporting Material
Best Casting	Casting Director		Statement [mandatory]
Best Cinematography	Director of Photography		Statement [optional*]
Best Costume Design	Costume Designer		Statement [optional]
Best Editing	Editor Other editing credits, such as Assistant or Co-Editor, are not eligible		Statement [optional]
Best Effects	Special Effects Supervisor and/or Visual Effects Supervisor		Statement & Effects breakdown reel [mandatory]
Best Make-Up & Hair Design	Make-Up & Hair Designer	Prosthetics Designers are also eligible in this category	Statement [optional]
Best Music Supervision	Music Supervisor	<p>This award is for the supervision of sourced music where sourced music makes up at least 40% of the film's music soundtrack. To be eligible, it must be clear which music in the film is sourced or licensed music (either within the film or via supporting documents)</p> <p>Documentaries about music, where the majority of the music featured is that of the subject of the documentary, are not eligible. Music biopics or films that feature real musicians are usually eligible, but the Nomination Committee may require more information from category entrants regarding the level of work involved in sourcing or recreating the subject's music and performances.</p> <p>The number of nominations in this category is variable (up to a maximum of five) and is dependent on the number of eligible entries in any given year. This award will only be presented if there are sufficient entries in the category</p>	<p>Questionnaire [mandatory]</p> <p>Music Cue Sheet, plus breakdown of percentages of original and source music [mandatory]</p>

Category/ies	Named nominee(s)	Additional rules	Supporting Material
Best Original Music	Composer/Songwriter Other credits such as co-composers are only eligible where there is no lead composer	<p>This award is for the composition of original music for a film where original music makes up at least 40% of the film's music soundtrack. To be eligible, it must be clear which music in the film is original score (either within the film or via supporting documents). Pre-existing instrumental music should not be considered score unless written specifically for the film</p> <p>Documentaries about music, where the majority of the music featured is that of the subject of the documentary, are not eligible unless the music has been composed specifically for the film</p> <p>The number of nominations in this category is variable (up to a maximum of five) and is dependent on the number of eligible entries in any given year. This award will only be presented if there are sufficient entries in the category</p>	<p>Questionnaire [mandatory]</p> <p>Music Cue Sheet, plus breakdown of percentages of original and source music [mandatory]</p>
Best Production Design	Production Designer		Statement [optional]
Best Sound	<p>The following may be entered, up to a maximum of five people:</p> <p>Lead or sole Sound Designer / Supervising Sound Editor / HoD</p> <p>Lead or sole Dialogue Supervisor / Dialogue Editor</p> <p>Lead or sole SFX Supervisor / SFX Editor</p> <p>Lead or sole Re-Recording Mixer</p> <p>Lead or sole Production Sound Mixer / Sound Recordist</p>		Statement [mandatory]
The Special Jury Prize	An individual or organisation within the British independent film industry	<p>This award is intended to recognise an individual or organisation for their outstanding contribution within the British independent film industry</p> <p>Entrants are invited to submit a single member of their entered film's production team whose work deserves recognition but whose role is <u>not</u> currently recognised by one of our competitive awards categories.</p> <p>Eligible roles include Executive Producer, Production Manager, Camera Operator and <u>not</u> Producer, Director, Production Designer, for example</p> <p>Note; The Special Jury Prize is awarded by our juries. These recommendations will be compiled and submitted to our juries for consideration, though jury members reserve the right to award the Prize to a recipient not associated with any of the productions in competition</p>	Statement [mandatory]

## Supporting Material Checklist

Category	Statement	Questionnaire	Other Material
Best Screenplay			Mandatory: 10-page screenplay sample (any 10 consecutive pages)
Debut Screenwriter			Mandatory: 10-page screenplay sample (any 10 consecutive pages)
Breakthrough Producer		Mandatory	Confirmation of this statement by another producer / a director / writer / HoD also involved in the project is required and they may be contacted by BIFA for additional supporting information
Raindance Maverick Award		Mandatory	
Best Casting	Mandatory		
Best Cinematography	Optional		
Best Costume Design	Optional		
Best Editing	Optional		
Best Effects	Mandatory		Mandatory: Breakdown reel Reel should be a maximum of five minutes long and include how key scenes/effects within the film were achieved. It should be an accurate reflection of both the special and visual effects input. It may not include voiceover or talking heads, but factual captions are accepted.
Best Make-Up & Hair Design	Optional		
Best Music Supervision		Mandatory	Mandatory: Music Cue Sheet + percentages of original and source music
Best Original Music		Mandatory	Mandatory: Music Cue Sheet + percentages of original and source music
Best Production Design	Optional		
Best Sound	Mandatory		
The Special Jury Prize	Mandatory		

### Statement formats and example questionnaires can be found at the end of this document.

Whilst many statements remain optional, we strongly recommend they are submitted for craft categories, particularly where the work involved is not immediately obvious to voters. All statements, questionnaires and supporting materials submitted to BIFA are shared with voters to support their judging process. Supporting materials should be submitted as soon as possible, and by Friday 12 September.

This year, BIFA will be compiling statements for all entries nominated in the craft categories and sharing those directly with all those voting for winners in these categories (many additional voters join the process at this point). All statements received at that point will be included, there will be no further mailings of information to voters. BIFA will remind all entrants with films longlisted in these categories of this mailing.

## **IMPORTANT NOTES REGARDING AWARDS PRESENTATION**

### **TROPHIES**

One award trophy will be issued where the winner is a film (e.g. Best British Short Film); one award trophy will be issued to each named nominee where the winner is an individual (e.g. Best Director). Additional trophies can be purchased in the event of an award win.

### **TICKETS**

BIFA aims to include all nominees at events held to celebrate the nominees and to announce the winners but unfortunately this is not always possible. Confirmation of which nominees will be offered complimentary tickets to BIFA events will be issued in advance of each event.

### **ENTRY THRESHOLDS AND SPECIALIST CATEGORIES**

If we do not receive sufficient entries into an award category, we reserve the right to not present that award. This applies to all categories. Similarly, should we not have sufficient voters in a specialist category, e.g. craft categories, BIFA reserves the right to not present that award.

If BIFA does not receive sufficient entries into the Joint Lead Performance category to ensure a minimum of three nominees, we may choose to present a longer list of nominees and two award winners in the Best Lead category.

Best Ensemble Performance Award is presented only at the discretion of the Performance subgroup. If the Subgroup deems that the award should not be presented in a given year, we may choose to present a longer list of nominees and two award winners in the Best Supporting Performance category.

If you are unsure about category placement for any of your entries, please get in touch with us at [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film).



## ENTRY & FILM ACCESS

### HOW TO ENTER

Entries to BIFA can be made by a film's distributor or another representative, such as the producer, a sales agent or a festivals/awards advisor. If duplicate entries are made, BIFA will contact the entrants to clarify which one to proceed with.

To enter a film to BIFA:

1. Create an account (or log in to your existing account) here: <https://members.bifa.film/entries>
2. Complete an entry form for the type of film that you wish to enter
3. If an entry fee is applicable, it will need to be paid on submission of the entry to BIFA

Entrants will be invited to check their completed entries before voting opens. It is the entrant's responsibility to ensure that all category listings are accurate and complete as no changes can be made once voting is open.

### ACCESS TO ENTERED FILMS

Entrants must provide BIFA voters with online access to their entered films. In-person screenings may be organised at the discretion of the entrant, in addition to online access.

Feature films entered into BIFA can be uploaded to Eventive, a secure and cost-effective screening platform. Entrants will be asked to indicate if they wish to use this platform during the entry process. Use of Eventive is not compulsory but it is strongly encouraged as this is the preferred platform for voters.

Entrants may continue to use their screening platform of choice and handle distribution of screening links directly with voters (subject to signature of a data processing agreement) where applicable. These screeners should be available to voters for the entire voting period and should not be time limited. If you wish to distribute screening links directly, please get in touch with [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film) to discuss before the screener deadline of 12 September.

Use of Eventive will incur the following flat fee charges, which the entrant is responsible for covering, payable at point of entry:

EVENTIVE FEES	Film budget	Flat Fee per title
International feature	under £1m	£50 (+VAT)
	over £1m	£100 (+VAT)
British feature	under £1m	£75 (+VAT)
	over £1m	£150 (+VAT)

Eventive is not available for use for short film entries.

Where adequate access to films or mandatory supporting information has not been provided by the deadline of 12 September (or 22 August for Short Films), entry to BIFA will be rescinded and the film will be removed from contention. There will be no refund for any entry fees paid.

## ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

Mandatory:

- Online: all screeners should be provided with closed caption subtitles
- In-person: access information must be provided for all screenings and included in screening invitations

Preferred:

- Online: subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) and audio description should be included in screeners where possible
- In-person: an option for SDH subtitles at screenings or specific subtitled screenings where several screenings are offered

## USE OF ENTRANT MATERIALS

You can see how we will use the information and materials you will be required to submit with your entry [here](#). You must ensure that you have permission to share any materials uploaded to the entry form. **Please do not submit any stills, poster artwork, clips or film trailers that you do not have legal rights to use.**

## REFUNDS

BIFA does not issue refunds for entries submitted and then withdrawn by the entrant. Please ensure that your film will be available to BIFA voters for the full voting period before submitting your entry. If an entered film is deemed ineligible for BIFA, entrants may request a 50% refund of the full entry fee paid. Please read the full BIFA rules and eligibility criteria carefully before submitting your film.

## SCREENING AND CAMPAIGNING RULES

BIFA does not allow campaigning of any kind. This applies to both features films and short films. Where entrants would like to invite BIFA voters to in-person screenings of their films, they must be solely for the purposes of giving voters an opportunity to experience their film in cinema.

- Screenings arranged especially for BIFA voters must not include a Q&A or any additional activity such as drinks receptions, gifts, goody bags etc.
- You may invite voters to screenings as part of other events, e.g. festivals, premieres, cinema release and press previews which have Q&As and where drinks are offered, but these screenings must not include additional activity or gifts for BIFA voters
- Information regarding all additional film screenings for voters will be combined and sent in a weekly voter mailout. Listings will also be available on the voter screenings calendar, accessible by voters and jury only. If you would like to invite voters to screenings of your films, please make sure you advise BIFA at least five days in advance so information can be included in the mailout before the screening
- BIFA will not send out individual emails regarding entrants' film screenings to voters and we will not send individual supplementary emails regarding screenings
- BIFA will not permit entrants to email voters directly – we do not share our voters' contact details

If you are thinking of arranging in-person screenings solely for BIFA voters, please consider that a large proportion of our voters live outside London and all voters have access to online screeners of your film, so we cannot guarantee an audience at your screening. We strongly advise that you discuss your potential screening(s) with the awards team before booking your screening.

All decisions made by BIFA and its Board and Committees are final, and no correspondence will be entered into as to why particular entries were or were not nominated.

## BIFA 2025 QUALIFYING FESTIVALS

### BRITISH FEATURES

AFI Fest	Imagine Fantastic Film Festival (Amsterdam)
Annecy Festival	Leeds International Film Festival
BAFTA – Film longlisted	Locarno
London Breeze Film Festival	Manchester Film Festival
Belfast Film Festival	Manchester Animation Festival
The Berlin International Film Festival / Berlinale	Melbourne International Film Festival
BFI Flare	New York Film Festival
BFI London Film Festival	North East International Film Festival
Brighton Rocks International Film Festival	Open City Doc Fest
British Urban Film Festival (BUFF)	Oxford International Film Festival
Cambridge Film Festival	Raindance Film Festival
Cannes Film Festival	Ramsgate International Film Festival
CPH: DOX	International Film Festival Rotterdam
Cork International Film Festival	S.O.U.L Film Festival
CINECITY Film Festival of Brighton	San Sebastian Film Festival
Cornwall Film Festival	Sci-Fi London
Crystal Palace International Film Festival	Sheffield DocFest
Deaffest	Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival
Doc'n Roll Festival	Spirit of Independence Film Festival
Edinburgh International Film Festival	Sundance Film Festival
Fantasia Film Festival (Montreal)	SXSW
Fantastic Fest (Austin)	Telluride Film Festival
Flatpack Festival	Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)
Glasgow Film Festival	Tribeca Film Festival
Hot Docs	UK Jewish Film Festival
Irish Film Festival London	Unrestricted View Film Festival
IDFA International Documentary Film Festival	Venice Film Festival

## QUALIFYING FESTIVALS FOR INTERNATIONAL FEATURES

AFI Fest	Sundance Film Festival
Berlin Film Festival	SXSW
BFI London Film Festival	Telluride Film Festival
Cannes Film Festival	Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)
New York Film Festival	Tribeca Film Festival
San Sebastian Film Festival	Venice Film Festival

## QUALIFYING FESTIVALS & AWARDS FOR SHORT FILMS

All films submitted into the British Short Film category must have been accepted into:

- At least one festival from Section A or
- At least two festivals from Section B

If your film has been accepted to two or more Section B festivals only, at least one of those qualifying festivals must be/have been within this year's eligibility period of 1 November 2024 – 30 November 2025.

**To be eligible for BIFA 2025, short films must have been completed after 1 May 2024.**

## SECTION A: Primarily international festivals

AFI Fest	Imagine Fantastic Film Festival (Amsterdam)
Annecy Film Festival	Iris Prize LGBTQ+ Film Festival
BAFTA – Film Nominated	Kurzfilm Festival Hamburg
BAFTA Cymru – Film Nominated	Open City Documentary Festival
BAFTA Scotland – Film Nominated	Oska Bright
The Berlin International Film Festival / Berlinale	Palm Springs International ShortFest
BFI Flare	Raindance Film Festival
BFI London Film Festival	Rumi Foundation Grierson Trust Best Documentary Short Award
Cannes Film Festival	International Film Festival Rotterdam
Clermont-Ferrant International Short Film Festival	San Sebastian Film Festival
CPH: DOX	S.O.U.L Film Festival
Deaffest	Sheffield DocFest
Edinburgh International Film Festival	Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival
Encounters Film Festival	Sundance Film Festival
Fantasia Film Festival (Montreal)	SXSW Film Festival Short Film Programme
Fantastic Fest (Austin)	Toronto International Film Festival
Foyle Film Festival	Tribeca Film Festival
Hot Docs Festival	UK Jewish Film Festival
IDFA International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam	

## SECTION B: Primarily British festivals

Aesthetica Short Film Festival	London Short Film Festival
London Breeze Film Festival	Manchester Film Festival
Beeston Film Festival	North East International Film Festival
BFI Future Film Festival	Norwich Film Festival
Bolton International Film Festival	Oxford International Film Festival
Brighton Rocks International Film Festival	Ramsgate International Film Festival
British Urban Film Festival	Short Com Comedy Film and Animation Festival
Bute Street Film Festival	Short Short Story Film Festival
Cambridge Film Festival	Spirit of Independence Film Festival
Cardiff Mini Film Festival	Sunderland Shorts Film Festival
Cork International Film Festival	Sunrise Film Festival
CINECITY Film Festival of Brighton	The Shortest Nights
Cornwall Film Festival	The Smalls
Crystal Palace International Film Festival	TweetFest Film Festival
Edinburgh Short Film Festival	Unrestricted View Film Festival
Exit 6 Film Festival	Watersprite Student Film Festival
Glasgow Short Film Festival	Wigan & Leigh Short Film Festival
Irish Film Festival London	Wimbledon International Short Film Festival
Kino London Short Film Festival	Women Over 50 Film Festival
Leeds International Film Festival	Women X Film Festival
London International Animation Film Festival	Worcester Film Festival

## QUALIFYING ONLINE CHANNELS FOR SHORT FILMS

Channel name	Website
BBC Three*	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/bbcthree">bbc.co.uk/bbcthree</a>
Channel 4*	<a href="http://channel4.com">channel4.com</a>
Directors Notes	<a href="http://directorsnotes.com">directorsnotes.com</a>
Field of Vision	<a href="http://fieldofvision.org">fieldofvision.org</a>
The Guardian Docs	<a href="http://theguardian.com">theguardian.com</a>
Minute Shorts 'Minute Shorts Presents' Playlist	<a href="http://minuteshorts.co.uk">minuteshorts.co.uk</a>
New York Times Op-Docs	<a href="http://nytimes.com">nytimes.com</a>
NOWNESS	<a href="http://nowness.com">nowness.com</a>
VICE	<a href="http://vice.com">vice.com</a>

\* Films that were commissioned by and produced for either of these channels will not normally be eligible unless they have screened or be scheduled to screen at another qualifying channel or festival.

**Festival not listed**

If you wish to enter a film that has not screened or is not scheduled to screen at one of the above listed BIFA qualifying festivals but has screened at another UK festival within the eligibility period, please contact us via [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film) to discuss whether that festival can be considered qualifying.

**Online festivals**

Films must have screened at an in-person event to a paying public audience. Online screenings only at BIFA recognised festivals do not normally qualify as eligible. Please email [entry@bifa.film](mailto:entry@bifa.film) if you would like to check your eligibility status.

For more information about how we select our qualifying festivals, or to feedback on our list, please visit <https://www.bifa.film/about/bifa-qualifying-festivals/>

## STATEMENT TEMPLATES

Please keep statements to 200 words per category unless otherwise indicated.

<p>Best Casting</p> <p>[mandatory]</p>	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the Casting Director (CD) that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Casting award (max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were any unusual challenges in the casting process overcome, or innovative casting techniques put to use?</li> <li>• Did the CD discover exciting new talent or cast an experienced actor in a career-defining role?</li> <li>• Did the CD's casting decisions significantly impact the production of the film in an unexpected way? How well does the casting serve the characters?</li> <li>• Was anybody else (director, producers) involved in the casting process for any of the performers? Had any performers already been cast before the CD joined the project?</li> </ul>
<p>Best Cinematography</p>	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the Cinematographer that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Cinematography award (max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there unusual challenges in shooting the film that were overcome, or innovative cinematography techniques put to use?</li> <li>• Were any significant creative contributions made that impacted the director's vision and the final film?</li> <li>• Describe a scene in the film that the Cinematographer is particularly proud of, and tell us why – for example because of the aesthetic outcome, it was challenging to shoot, or it required an unusual approach to filming, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>Best Costume Design</p>	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the Costume Designer that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Costume Design award (max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there unusual challenges in designing, procuring or creating the costumes that were overcome, or innovative costume design techniques put to use?</li> <li>• Did they respond to their brief in a particularly creative way, or make decisions that had a significant creative impact on the final film?</li> <li>• Please tell us about an item of costume that they are especially proud of or that particularly demonstrates their skills.</li> </ul>

Best Editing	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the Editor that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Editing award (max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there unusual challenges in editing the film overcome, or innovative editing techniques put to use?</li> <li>• Describe a scene in the film that the Editor is particularly proud of, and tell us why – for example, it was particularly challenging to edit, or the outcome was exceptional, etc.</li> <li>• Did they do something particularly creative or new with an established genre or type of film?</li> <li>• Did they make any significant creative contributions that impacted the director's vision and the final film?</li> </ul>
Best Effects  [statement & reel mandatory]	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the VFX and/or SFX Supervisor(s) that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Effects award (max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there unusual challenges in producing effects for the film that they overcame, or innovative techniques put to use?</li> <li>• Are there any particular scenes or effects that voters should pay attention to?</li> <li>• Is there a particular effect or scene that they're especially proud of?</li> </ul> <p>Entrants should also submit a short effects breakdown video (max five minutes). This reel should include how key scenes/effects within the film were achieved and it should be an accurate reflection of both the special and visual effects input. It may not include voiceover or talking heads, but factual captions are accepted.</p>
Best Make-Up & Hair Design	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the Make Up and/or Hair Designer(s), or by Prosthetics Designers if applicable, that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Make-up &amp; Hair Design award (max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there unusual challenges in the designing or production of the makeup and/or hair for the film that they overcame, or innovative techniques put to use?</li> <li>• Did they respond to their brief in a particularly creative way, or make decisions that had a significant creative impact on the final film?</li> <li>• Tell us about a particular item of Make-Up &amp; Hair design that they're especially proud of or that particularly demonstrates their skills.</li> <li>• </li> </ul>
Best Music Supervision	<p>Entrants will be required to fill in an online questionnaire, which will be sent to the Music Supervisor(s) once the entry is confirmed. You can view a pdf of the questionnaire <a href="#">here</a>. This is an example only and should not be completed.</p>
Best Original Music	<p>Entrants will be required to fill in an online questionnaire, which will be sent to the Composer(s) once the entry is confirmed. You can view a pdf of the questionnaire <a href="#">here</a>. This is an example only and should not be completed.</p>



Best Production Design	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the Production Designer that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Production Design award (Max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there unusual challenges in the production design of the film that they overcame, or innovative techniques put to use?</li> <li>• What did the Production Designer believe to be the most successful element, set or creative part of their design for the film and why?</li> <li>• Is there a particular element or item of the film's Production Design that they're especially proud of?</li> </ul>
Best Sound	<p>Please describe any outstanding achievements by the Sound department members who have been entered for the award that should be taken into consideration by BIFA voters when voting for the Best Sound award (Max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the unusual challenges for the Sound Designer / Department in capturing and creating the sound for this film?</li> <li>• If being entered as a team, please describe how the team worked together in a particularly effective or creative way.</li> <li>• Describe any interesting or unique ways that the sound crew interacted with the director, producers, composer and/or the film editor and any outstanding creative decisions that had a significant impact on the director's vision for the final film?</li> <li>• Describe a scene in the film that the Sound team is particularly proud of, and tell us why – for example, it was challenging to record, it required an unusual approach to mixing, it best exemplifies the skills of the team, etc.</li> </ul>
Breakthrough Producer	<p>Entrants will be required to fill in an online questionnaire, which will be sent to each nominated producer once the entry is confirmed. You can view a pdf of the questionnaire <a href="#">here</a>. This is an example only and should not be completed.</p>
Special Jury Prize [mandatory]	<p>Please explain your reasons for putting forward this individual for the Special Jury Prize. Please tell us their role within this production and describe any outstanding achievements and contributions to the production or wider industry that should be taken into consideration by BIFA Juries when voting for the winner of this award (max 200 words)</p> <p>Voters find specific examples helpful, so you might want to include responses to the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there any unusual challenges faced in their role?</li> <li>• Did they respond to their role in a particularly creative way?</li> <li>• How did they exceed expectations within their role?</li> <li>• Does their work have wider benefit, beyond the production of the film?</li> <li>• Is there a part of their work you/they are particularly proud of?</li> </ul>
The Raindance Maverick Award	<p>Entrants will be required to fill in an online questionnaire, which will be sent once the entry is confirmed. Only one questionnaire is required per film entry into this category. You can view a pdf of the questionnaire <a href="#">here</a>. This is an example only and should not be completed.</p>