

SHORT WAVES FESTIVAL

Transparency Document / Submissions and selection process

The core of our almost year-long work is creating a valuable competition program, where there is a space for creativity and new voices, experimenting in terms of film language and bringing up the most important as well as marginalized topics. We believe that a film festival is not only a place of meetings and shared joy given by collective film screenings but also a platform for discussion about the current state of cinema and the world, strongly engaging politically and socially.

We are not afraid of showing films that openly present and fight against social and political injustice, analysing local and global changes, often presenting characters or topics that go unnoticed in our everyday life. What we mostly appreciate in cinema is honesty, authenticity and visualisation of our own life experiences as well as space for other voices and perspectives.

We also believe that by creating mutual trust in the film and festival industry we are able to not only develop our Festival but also show good practices and transparency of communication which is immensely important in creating film events and networks. Therefore, document showcasing transparent selection process comes from a natural need for sharing knowledge that is crucial as well as well-known for our team and could be helpful for anyone involved in the film industry. Public confrontation of our actions and workflow with film industry professionals can also open new discussions and trends as well as improve our practices and communication between programmers and filmmakers.

SELECTION COMMITTEES

Each competition section has its own pre- and selection committee. All of them are in constant contact with the competition coordinator who's responsible for continuous technical and meritorical support. Short Waves Festival hires 10-12 people to watch submissions, rate them, review them, discuss them collectively and create so-called long and short lists (a list of films with the highest rate).

Each year we try to broaden the selection committee, inviting professionals from different film and art backgrounds. We keep 50/50 policy in terms of gender equality, we search for theorists (PhD graduates and film school tutors, film critics) as well as practitioners (curators, filmmakers, programers) and we also draw inspiration from younger professionals (young graduates of film schools). Each member of the selection committee is provided with a salary. The festival doesn't hire or cooperate with volunteers for the competition pre-selection or selection.

The whole selection committee can be found on the Festival official website in mid-October.

COMPETITION COORDINATOR

Competition coordinator is a person who organizes the workflow of selection committees, takes care of the formal side of submissions as well as service and access to all the submission tools and platforms (FilmFreeway and Filmchief). She_He works on increasing the diversity of the selection. Throughout the whole year she_he stays in touch with distributors, producers, film schools, art galleries, independent filmmakers. She_He visits film festivals in search of new titles and expands the list of new distribution contacts. Competition coordinator also watches all films from long and short lists and she_he is present in most discussions of selection committees and has the final decision in shaping the competition program.

WORKFLOW

The selection work starts with the opening of the submission call. Depending on the number of submissions each of the films is watched once or twice, or more, by the selectioners. Each of the films receives a short review and it's rated in 0-10 scale. Films that are rated higher than 6,5 are watched once again by a competition coordinator. All members of the selection committee are requested to review the films in the best screening conditions possible. Each competition team holds 1 to 2 meetings in which the most interesting and valued films are discussed. Each member needs to prepare a long list that is carefully watched and reviewed by a competition coordinator, and followed by one or two final discussions.

SUBMISSION PLATFORM

Short Waves Festival uses FilmFreeway as the only submission platform that allows creating a free account and it's one of the most intuitive and clear systems. Members of the submission committee work also on another platform Filmchief that allows to gather all the data and to transparently proceed with all the submission work elements like watching, rating, reviewing.

FILM ASSESSMENT

We do not impose any specific requirements in terms of rating and reviewing films. We do believe in the experience and professionalism of our team and their competences are primarily judged during the creation of the committee. Nevertheless, we provide a direction in which the Short Waves Festival is likely to follow when building the competition section. Important characteristics are: creativity in terms of showing the subject, innovation and freshness of the cinematic language, production quality, screenwriting cohesion, honesty in message and idea, consistency in building all the film elements. We also rely on different experiences and knowledge of our selection team to prepare a more diverse selection.

SUBMITTERS

Everyone who set up a FilmFreeway account can submit a film to the festival. Each submitter needs to pay a submission fee which differs depending on the particular section and the date of submission. The submission fees are used to partially cover the selection committee members' salaries. Filmmakers that struggle with the political or financial problems can be offered waivers that can be reached by contacting us on competitions@shortwaves.pl however, each case will be treated individually. All the submission fees' rates are available on the [FilmFreeway](#) site.

FINAL SELECTION

Final selection relies on watching all the short lists prepared by each of the selection committee members followed by a number of meetings and online or offline discussions. Besides all the components from the Film Assessment section there are also some other important details that we take into account: gender policy, creating space for films made by filmmakers from minority groups and young emerging artists, ethical and political context of production, geographical diversity, other festival selections and the general program cohesion.

PROGRAMMING

Selecting films is part of the submission process but for the Short Waves Festival team, programming is one of the most crucial parts of the festival planning. Programming is a process of creating program sets and showing films in a very specific order within them. The idea can be flexible and it depends on the subjective approach: it can be based on thematic idea, audio or visual connection, length balance and many more. It's important that each film in the programme has the right space to create an equal level of attention and not be dominated by the film surrounding.

FESTIVAL

All the screening copies of the selected films are prepared with the highest care. All the translations are based not only on work with English subtitles but also original language dialogue lists (if possible) to achieve the most precise and contextual translation. Subtitles are spaced as carefully as possible so as not to invade the space of the film visuals and artistic vision. All of the competition productions are screened in cinema venues and in exceptional situations in open-air locations, however, operated by a professional cinema crew. We do care about the highest quality of screenings, hence the request for PRORES copies. If a filmmaker is at the Festival in person, he_she can ask for the projection test by prior notification (10 days before the screening). Each film is also presented in the catalogue with a synopsis as well as with the most important film information such as technical details and contact to a filmmaker/producer/distributor. The filmmakers of films selected to the competition sections are invited to the festival in Poznan in order to take part in moderated Q&A sessions with the festival audience.

JURY

During the Short Waves Festival, all the competition films are judged by an international jury, youth jury and the festival audience. The international jury consists of film, art and culture industry professionals. The youth jury (aged 16-19) is chosen from an open call and their jury duties are monitored by a film professional. The Festival's audience decides about awards by voting for their favourite film at each screening.

The whole jury is officially presented a few weeks before the Festival.

The Festival's director and the Festival's competition coordinator organize one introduction meeting with the jury members to present jury duties, establish a work schedule and introduce the most crucial Festival's program values. It's also immensely important to create an atmosphere and space full of trust, safety and equality to avoid any sort of feelings of marginalization or harm. In order to

reach that goal, transparent communication with each of the jury members is a fundamental action for the whole team.

During jury deliberations there is always one person from the team that monitors discussion of the jury but under no circumstances she_he can influence the jury's decisions. Each deliberation needs to end (if time allows for the deliberation to be prolonged or repeated) by awarding the films and preparing the statements that are drawn up in the jury protocols.

AWARDS

Short Waves Festival offers financial prizes in each competition. Awards prize money is in the amount of 13000 EUR. Each award that exceeds the amount of 440 EUR needs to be charged with 10% tax. Each of the competition films can be invited to Short Waves on Tour - the touring competition that takes place in Poland after the Short Waves Festival and in which there's a chance to award the monetary prize. Each filmmaker/distributor/producer will be informed beforehand and asked for permission to include their film.

The exact amounts of the prizes will be available on our website a few weeks before the Short Waves Festival.

If you have any questions or doubts about the selection process, please contact us on competitions@shortwaves.pl.