



## GUIDELINES AND FAQ FOR THE GENERAL ENTRY CATEGORIES

All films submitted for Academy Awards consideration in the general entry categories must meet the eligibility requirements listed in Rule 2 and Rule 3 in the Complete Rules & Eligibility, posted at: <http://www.oscars.org/oscars/rules-eligibility>

Listed below are details related to the eligibility criteria, as well as answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ).

### DEFINITION OF A COMMERCIAL THEATER

To be considered a commercial motion picture venue for Academy Awards purposes, a theater must meet the following criteria:

1. Regularly show new releases
2. Charge admission
3. Have regular non-specialized programming open to the general public
4. Exploit and market films through regular listings and advertising
5. Generally run films for seven consecutive days, with multiple showings daily

### THEATRICAL REQUIREMENTS

#### Digital Qualifications and Submission Rules

Most of the Academy's Award categories allow for eligibility by means of digital presentation, as outlined in "Rule Two – Eligibility" in the Academy's "Rules & Eligibility."

Here is the language in Rule Two that applies to digital presentation:

All eligible motion pictures must be publicly exhibited using 35mm or 70mm film, or in a 24- or 48-frame progressive scan Digital Cinema format with a minimum projector resolution of 2048 by 1080 pixels, source image format conforming to ST 428-1:2006 D-Cinema Distribution Master - Image Characteristics; image compression (if used) conforming to ISO/IEC 15444-1 (JPEG 2000), and image and sound file formats suitable for exhibition in commercial Digital Cinema sites.

The audio in a typical Digital Cinema Package (DCP) is 5.1 or 7.1 channels of discrete audio and these are the preferred audio configurations. The minimum for a non-mono configuration of the audio shall be three channels as Left, Center, Right (a Left/Right configuration is not acceptable in a theatrical environment).

The audio data shall be formatted in conformance with ST 428-2:2006 D-Cinema Distribution Master –



Audio Characteristics and ST 428-3:2006 D-Cinema Distribution Master Audio Channel Mapping and Channel Labeling.

### **What does this mean for filmmakers?**

The first thing that you will need is what is now called a Digital Cinema Package, commonly abbreviated as DCP. The SMPTE and ISO/IEC documents mentioned in the general rule are international standards that define the technical characteristics of the DCP. As a practical matter, you can rely on professional companies that specialize in converting projects to DCP to provide you with a DCP that will comply with these standards. Your original image capture can be whatever you want (film, digital video, CGI, and so on), but ultimately you will need individual, "one per frame" digital image files for the compression step of the mastering process.

Once you choose a mastering facility, you may discuss with them the most efficient and cost-effective method of conversion for your project. Your finished DCP will be provided to you on a computer Linux-formatted HDD (hard disk drive) – typically a USB drive or *preferably* a universal 7200 rpm SATA drive in a CRU drive carrier.

### **OK. I have a DCP. What next?**

For your qualification screenings, as defined in Rule Two and the special rules for the various categories, you will need to find a commercial theater equipped with a digital cinema projector that meets the requirements outlined in Rule Two, as well as a digital cinema server that will play the SMPTE DCP you have received from your mastering facility.

In practice, there are only two types of DCI-compliant digital cinema projectors that are acceptable for your qualification screenings. The first type uses DLP Digital Cinema technology licensed by Texas Instruments to projector manufacturers. Be sure your cinema has a true DLP Digital Cinema projector, one that has a pixel count of **2048 x 1080**, and not one of the industrial grade DLP projectors that typically have pixel counts of 1920 x 1024 with reduced color and other image performance characteristics. The second type of projector is the **Sony SXR Ultra HiRes Cinema "4K"** series intended for digital cinema applications.

There are several companies who manufacture digital cinema servers that meet the applicable SMPTE specifications, and will play DCPs that are mastered according to these specifications.

These companies include:

- Dolby Laboratories
- Doremi Labs
- GDC
- DVS

Be sure the server system in your cinema can play a SMPTE DCP as defined in Rule Two above. If you are not sure, you may confirm with the manufacturer that the server you plan to use is "compliant" with the applicable SMPTE digital cinema specifications.



And for up to date Digital Cinema goings on go to: [www.dcinematoday.com](http://www.dcinematoday.com)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Can my film have nontheatrical distribution (broadcast and cable television, PPV/VOD, DVD distribution, Internet transmission, streaming) and still be eligible for Academy Award consideration?  
**Yes, but not before the first day of the qualifying theatrical release. If the film has previously received nontheatrical distribution before its qualifying theatrical release then it cannot qualify for Academy consideration.**
2. What about theatrical distribution outside of Los Angeles, or screenings at schools or film festivals?  
**Features under consideration for the general entry categories may be released at commercial theaters outside of Los Angeles County (including other states or countries), and may play in schools and at film festivals without affecting their eligibility.**
3. What about same day and date VOD?  
**VOD can occur simultaneously with the first day of the qualifying theatrical release but not before.**
4. Does this mean I can't run a trailer on the Internet?  
**Trailers are fine as long as the footage totals no more than ten minutes or ten percent of the film's running time, whichever is less.**
5. My film was broadcast on television (or other nontheatrical distribution) outside the U.S. before it opened theatrically in the U.S. Is it still eligible?  
**If the film had a theatrical release outside the U.S. *before* it was broadcast in a nontheatrical format (such as television, or video-on-demand), *and* if the broadcast was *only* outside the U.S., the film could still be eligible. Please contact Credits Submissions with details.**
6. Does an HD-Cam or Blu-Ray meet the digital screening requirements?  
**Only a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) meets our digital requirements. See above for more information on what constitutes a Digital Cinema Package.**
7. If my film is nominated for Best Picture, which individuals receive the statuette?  
**The individuals must have screen credit of "producer" or "produced by" on the nominated film. See Rule 16, Special Rules for the Best Picture of the Year Award for more information.**
8. Rule 4, titled "Submission," says I need to send prints of the film to the Academy, and I need to sign an agreement. Should I upload or send that with the OSC form and credits?  
**No, do not send a print or DVD of the film when submitting the OSC entry form for consideration in the general entry categories. You'll be asked to send a print with an acknowledgement of the Academy Regulations if the film receives a nomination(s). Other Awards categories do require a print**



with the entry form; please refer to the Rules & Eligibility for special rules for other categories.

9. The OSC submissions site asks me to list some credits, but you're also asking for complete screen credits or legal billing? What are those?

**Screen credits are the full cast and crew credits that appear on the film itself, from beginning to end. Studios often refer to the screen credits as legal billing, because there may be contractual agreements about the appearance or location of a credit on the film. For the purposes of the Awards, we use the complete screen credits to verify the information on the OSC form.**

10. I'm filling out the Official Screen Credits form online, but I don't see a field for music. I want the composer/songwriter to be considered for Awards; how do I submit songs or a music score for consideration?  
**To be considered for any of the Music Awards (Original Score and/or Original Song) the composer has to initiate the Music submission process. A composer can do this by registering on our submissions site ([submissions.oscars.org](http://submissions.oscars.org)) and requesting access to the Music category.**

11. I'm filling out the Official Screen Credits form online, but I don't see a field for visual effects or special effects. I want members of the effects crew to be considered for Awards. How can I do this?

**Submitters cannot select individuals for Visual Effects Awards consideration. Visual Effects nominations, including Special Effects, are determined by the Visual Effects Executive Committee.**

12. My assistant filled out the form and made some mistakes. Will you make the changes?

**It is your responsibility as the filmmaker to make sure that all information on the entry form is accurate. When you sign the entry form, you are agreeing that the information on the form is correct. We may contact you, or the person listed as the submitter on the OSC form, if we see differences between what's on the OSC form and what's listed in the film's complete screen credits. If you need to make any changes, please contact us.**

13. I submitted my film last year, but since then I've added different material and removed other material. Can I submit it again?

**No. We do not accept works in progress or re-releases.**

14. My film was originally released in another country, and/or the dialogue in my film is in a foreign language, not English. Shouldn't I submit it for the Foreign Language Film Award instead of the general entry categories?

**All entries for the Foreign Language Film Award must be submitted through the country of origin by a specially appointed committee. Individual filmmakers cannot submit films in the Foreign Language Film Award category. However, motion pictures from all countries may be eligible for the general entry awards (Rule 2 and Rule 3), as long as they satisfy the requirements of the other applicable rules, and contain English-language subtitles if released in a foreign language.**

15. What advertisements are required?

**An ad may be as simple or as elaborate as you wish. For the purposes of a general entry submission, a theater listing or theater showtimes grid will meet this requirement.**