

**RULE SEVEN
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE
ANIMATED FEATURE FILM AWARD**

I. DEFINITION

An animated film is one in which characters or objects are given the illusion of life by having movement created for them, by any human means. While the crucial movement of a live-action motion picture is captured at speed, animation is the craft of human creation and manipulation of images to produce a performance from inanimate objects.

At least 75 percent of the motion picture's running time, without opening or end credits, must include animation of the primary subject or subjects. An animated feature film has a running time of more than 40 minutes.

Upon submission, filmmakers must provide information supporting how the motion picture qualifies as an animated film.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. To be eligible for awards consideration for the 98th Awards year, an animated feature film must fulfill one of the following qualifying criteria. The eligibility period begins on January 1, 2025, and ends on December 31, 2025.

1. The picture must have been publicly exhibited for **paid admission** in a commercial motion picture theater in one of the six qualifying U.S. metro areas: Los Angeles County; City of New York [five boroughs]; the Bay Area [counties of San Francisco, Marin Alameda, San Mateo and Contra Costa]; Chicago [Cook County, Illinois]; Dallas-Fort Worth [Dallas County, Tarrant County, Texas]; and Atlanta [Fulton, Georgia], for a run of at least seven consecutive days. Screenings during the theatrical release must occur at least three times daily, in the same theater, with at least one screening beginning between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. daily. The seven consecutive days of the theatrical release are required to occur in one venue. The motion picture must be advertised during its qualifying theatrical release in a manner normal and customary to theatrical feature distribution practices and may receive movie critic reviews.

All motion pictures must be publicly exhibited by means of 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 the most recent revision of SMPTE ST 428-1 (D-Cinema Distribution Master – Image Characteristics); image compression (if used) conforming to the most recent revision of ISO/IEC 15444-1 (JPEG 2000); and image and sound files packaged as Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) in the “SMPTE DCP” format. SMPTE DCP refers to SMPTE ST 429-2 (D-Cinema Packaging – DCP Operational Constraints) and related specifications. (Blu-ray format does not meet Digital Cinema requirements.)

The audio in a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) is typically 5.1 or 7.1 channels of discrete audio. 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). In addition to channel-based audio, object-based audio may also be present as an immersive audio bitstream.

The discrete audio data shall be formatted in conformance with the most recent revision of SMPTE ST 429-3 (D-Cinema Packaging – Sound and Picture Track File), SMPTE ST 428-2 (D-Cinema Distribution Master – Audio Characteristics) and SMPTE ST 428-12 (D-Cinema Distribution Master Common Audio Channels and Soundfield Groups). Immersive audio, if present, shall be formatted in conformance with the most recent revision of SMPTE ST 2098-2 (Immersive Audio Bitstream Specification) and SMPTE 429-18 (D-Cinema Packaging –

Immersive Audio Track File) and packaged in conformance with the most recent revision of SMPTE 429-19 (D-Cinema Packaging – DCP Operational Constraints for Immersive Audio).

OR

2. The film must have been submitted and deemed eligible in the International Feature Film category as its country's official selection for the 98th Academy Awards.

All films must be submitted in a standard theatrical exhibition aspect ratio, in formats currently accepted by the Academy (see Paragraph II.A.1 above), no matter which other formats may have been used during their theatrical run or festival screening. Films must have the necessary clearances for commercial theatrical exhibition. Festival clearances are not sufficient.

B. Only individual feature works are eligible. This excludes from consideration such works as:

- A multi-part, ongoing or limited series,
- Episodes extracted from a larger series,
- Segments taken from a single “composite” program, or
- Alternate versions of ineligible works.

C. **Films that, in any version, receive a nontheatrical public exhibition or distribution before their qualifying theatrical release as defined in Paragraph II.A.1 above will not be eligible for Academy Awards consideration.** Nontheatrical public exhibition or distribution includes but is not limited to:

- Broadcast and cable television
- Pay Per View/Video on Demand
- DVD and/or streaming distribution
- Inflight airline distribution
- Internet transmission

Up to fifteen percent of the running time of a film is allowed to be shown in a nontheatrical medium prior to the film's theatrical release.

Films qualifying under Paragraph II.A.2 are exempted from this rule.

III. SUBMISSION

- A. For films qualifying between January 1, 2025, and June 30, 2025, entrants must submit all submission materials, including the digital upload of the film and captions for streaming purposes, by 5 p.m. PT on **Wednesday, September 10, 2025**. For films qualifying between July 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025, entrants must submit all submission materials, including the digital upload of the film and captions for streaming purposes, by 5 p.m. PT on **Thursday, November 13, 2025**.
- B. The picture must be submitted in the same Awards year in which it first qualifies. Motion pictures submitted for the 98th Academy Awards in any category will not be eligible for consideration in subsequent Awards years in any category.
- C. **Monday, December 1, 2025**, is the last day to withdraw a film from Academy Awards consideration. Withdrawing and/or failure to complete the qualifying standards may risk future awards disqualification.
- D. Entrants must complete the online submission form located on the Academy's Awards Submission site and submit to the Academy the digital upload of the film for streaming purposes, including English captions or subtitles, as well as all required submission materials.

- E. Submission forms must be signed by all credited directors and producers. This is to ensure that all potential awards-eligible parties are properly informed of the submission. The digital upload of the film submitted for Academy Awards consideration must be identical in content and length to the print or DCP that qualified. For films with a planned theatrical release before the end of the calendar year, but which will not have a locked picture by the submission deadline, entrants may request an extension for the digital upload of the film only. For films qualifying after **Thursday, November 13, 2025**, entrants must provide documentation from the qualifying theater by the submission deadline confirming that the film will satisfy the release requirements.
- F. The significant dialogue or narration must be substantially in English, or the film must have English-language subtitles.
- G. The Academy may retain for its archives one ProRes file and one DCP of every film receiving a nomination. By submitting a film, the filmmaker agrees that the Academy has the right to make copies and distribute them for voting purposes only.

IV. NOMINEES AND AWARD RECIPIENTS

- A. An entry form naming the intended award recipient(s) and including the signatures of **all** the credited producer(s) and director(s) is required. This is to ensure that all parties are properly informed, and that agreement on the designated award recipient(s) is settled prior to submission.
- B. The award recipient(s) shall be designated by those responsible for the production of the film. The designated recipient(s) must be **the key creative individual(s) most clearly responsible for the overall achievement**. There is a maximum of FOUR designated nominees, one of whom must be the credited director who exercised directorial control, and the other(s) of whom must have a director or producer credit. In determining the number of producers eligible for nomination, a bona fide team of not more than two people shall be considered to be a single “producer” if the two individuals have had an established producing partnership as determined by the Producers Guild of America’s Producing Partnership Panel.
- C. Producing nominees for each film will be listed in order based on agreed-upon producer position as shown in legal billing submitted by distributor.
 - i. Established producing partnerships will be noted with an ampersand symbol (&).
- D. If a producer is named, that individual must have performed a major portion of the producing functions, in accordance with Academy producer criteria established in partnership with the Producers Guild of America. Production companies, organized groups or persons with the screen credit of co-director or any credit other than DIRECTOR or PRODUCER shall not be eligible as nominees for the film. Persons with screen credits of executive producer, co-producer, associate producer, line producer, produced in association with or any other credit shall not receive nominations or Academy statuettes. To qualify as a producer nominee for a nominated picture, the producer must have been determined eligible by the Producers Guild of America’s vetting process or successfully appealed so that a resolution may be reached prior to the nominations announcement.
- E. Final determination of the qualifying nominees for each nominated film will be made by the Animation Branch Executive Committee, including the right to name any additional qualified producer as a nominee.

V. VOTING

- A. All active and life Academy members will be invited to view the eligible submissions in the category. Those who opt in will be required to see a minimum percentage of submitted eligible films as defined by the current procedures to receive a nominations ballot.

- B. All submitted eligible films will be made available to the participating voting members. A nominations ballot shall be made available to all members of the Animation Branch. Members shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five motion pictures by secret ballot. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Animated Feature Film award.
- C. Final voting for the Animated Feature Film award shall be restricted to active and life members of the Academy.

VI. OTHER RULES

- A. Animated feature films submitted in this category may also qualify for awards in other categories if they meet the specified requirements and submission deadlines.
- B. The Animation Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.