

**RULE SIXTEEN
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL FEATURE FILM AWARD**

I. DEFINITION

An international film is defined as a feature-length motion picture (over 40 minutes) produced outside the United States of America and its territories with a predominantly (more than 50%) non-English dialogue track. Animated and documentary feature films are permitted.

II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. The country-selected film must be first released in the country of origin and begin no earlier than October 1, 2024, and no later than September 30, 2025, and be first publicly exhibited for at least seven consecutive days in a commercial motion picture theater for the profit of the producer and exhibitor. The seven consecutive days of the theatrical release are required to occur in one venue. In order for films to more easily meet theatrical exhibition requirements, the Academy will allow films to qualify outside the country of origin, provided the film is theatrically exhibited outside of the United States and its territories for at least seven consecutive days in a commercial motion picture theater for paid admission.

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).

- B. The film must be advertised and exploited during its qualifying theatrical release in a manner considered normal and customary to theatrical feature distribution practices. The film need not have been released in the United States.
- C. **Films that, in any version, receive a nontheatrical public exhibition or distribution before their qualifying theatrical release will not be eligible for Academy Awards consideration.** Nontheatrical public exhibition or distribution includes but is not limited to:

- Broadcast and cable television
- PPV/VOD
- DVD and/or streaming distribution

- Inflight airline distribution
 - Internet transmission
- D. The recording of the original dialogue track as well as the completed picture must be predominantly (more than 50%) in a language or languages other than English. **Accurate, legible English-language subtitles are required.**
- E. The submitting country must confirm that creative control of the film was largely in the hands of citizens, residents, or individuals with refugee or asylum status in the submitting country.
- F. Should a selection committee not disclose up-to-date and/or accurate information related to a submitted film's citizenship, business-related affiliation or credit on a selected film, designated credits, production details and release information, a film will be deemed ineligible.
- G. The International Feature Film Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

III. SUBMISSION

- A. Each country shall be invited to submit its best film to the Academy. Selection of that film shall be made by **one** approved organization, jury or committee, of which at least 50% must include artists and/or craftspeople from the field of motion pictures. A list of the selection committee members must be submitted to the Academy no later than **Friday, August 15, 2025**, or by the submission deadline published by the Academy. All selection committees will be required to adhere to guidelines that are approved by the International Feature Film Executive Committee. Countries submitting for the first time, or which have not submitted for the previous five years, must present a list of selection committee members and application materials for Academy approval by December 31, 2025, for eligibility in the following (99th) Awards year. A country need not submit a film every year for Awards consideration.
- B. **Only one film will be accepted from each country as the official selection.** Films should be submitted to the Academy as soon as they are selected.
- C. The Academy will provide online access to each country's approved selection committee so that the producer of the selected film can supply full production information.
- D. The following submission materials must be submitted to the Academy by **5 p.m. PT on Wednesday, October 1, 2025**:
- Completed online submission forms
 - Digital upload of the film for streaming purposes
 - [For Internal Use Only] A secure and password-protected link to the film. This is required to test non-English dialogue.
 - Full cast and credits list
 - Director's biography and photograph
 - A designated key frame for streaming display artwork
 - Proof of the film's qualifying theatrical release, including but not limited to advertising
- E. Entrants whose films advance to the shortlist must submit either one 35mm or 70mm film print or one DCP of the film after the shortlist is announced. By submitting a film, the filmmakers agree that the Academy has the right to make copies and distribute them for voting purposes only. The Academy will retain for its archives one print of every motion picture receiving a nomination for the International Feature Film award.

IV. VOTING

- A. International Feature Film nominations will be determined in two rounds of voting:
1. In the preliminary round, 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 number of submitted eligible films as defined by the current procedures. Members will vote by secret ballot in the order of their preference for not more than fifteen motion pictures. The fifteen motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall advance to the next round of voting.
 2. In the nominations round, all active and life Academy members will be invited to view the fifteen shortlisted films in the category. A member must see all shortlisted films for the ballot to be counted. Members shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five motion pictures. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the International Feature Film award.
- B. Final voting for the International Feature Film award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members who have viewed all five nominated films.
- C. The Academy statuette (Oscar) will be awarded to the film and accepted by the director on behalf of the film's creative talents. For Academy Awards purposes, the country will be credited as the nominee. The director's name will be listed on the statuette plaque after the country and film title.

V. ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY RESTRICTIONS

In addition to complying with the Awards Rules for the 98th Academy Awards, all participants in the Awards competition are also bound by the Awards Campaign Promotional Regulations concerning the promotion of eligible films and are subject to the penalties provided therein, including the potential declaration of ineligibility by the Board of Governors for violation of those guidelines.

VI. ELIGIBILITY IN OTHER CATEGORIES

- A. International Feature Film submissions may be submitted for consideration for the 98th Academy Awards in other categories, including Best Picture, provided they comply with the rules governing those categories.
- B. Animated feature films submitted to the International Feature Film category are eligible for the Animated Feature Film category, provided that they meet the eligibility requirements outlined for the International Feature Film category and the Animated Feature Film category.
- C. Documentary feature films submitted to the International Feature Film category are eligible for the Documentary Feature Film category, provided that they meet the eligibility requirements outlined for the International Feature Film category and the Documentary Feature Film category.
- D. Films submitted for consideration in the International Feature Film category for the 98th Academy Awards are **NOT** eligible for consideration in other awards categories in the subsequent year, nor could the films have been submitted in other awards categories in a previous year.