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# 99TH ACADEMY AWARDS® OF MERIT

## **RULE ONE AWARDS DEFINITIONS**

1. Academy Awards of Merit shall be given to designated individuals annually – unless otherwise specified in the special rules governing the category – to honor outstanding artistic and scientific achievements in theatrically released feature-length motion pictures, and to honor other achievements as provided for in these rules and approved by the Board of Governors.
2. Awards shall be conferred at annual Awards ceremonies.
3. Awards of Merit in the form of the gold statuette trophy of the Academy (Oscar) shall be conferred to designated individuals annually – unless otherwise specified in the special rules governing the category – for the following achievements:

<b>ACTING:</b>	Performance by an actor in a leading role. Performance by an actor in a supporting role. Performance by an actress in a leading role. Performance by an actress in a supporting role.
<b>ANIMATED FEATURE FILM:</b>	Best animated feature film of the year.
<b>ANIMATED SHORT FILM:</b>	Best animated short film.
<b>CASTING:</b>	Achievement in casting.
<b>CINEMATOGRAPHY:</b>	Achievement in cinematography.
<b>COSTUME DESIGN:</b>	Achievement in costume design.
<b>DIRECTING:</b>	Achievement in directing.
<b>DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM:</b>	Best documentary feature film of the year.
<b>DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM:</b>	Best documentary short film.
<b>FILM EDITING:</b>	Achievement in film editing.
<b>INTERNATIONAL FEATURE FILM:</b>	Best international feature film of the year.
<b>LIVE ACTION SHORT FILM:</b>	Best live action short film.
<b>MAKEUP AND HAIRSTYLING:</b>	Achievement in makeup and hairstyling.
<b>MUSIC:</b>	For achievements in music written for motion pictures:  a. Original score.* b. Original song.* c. Original musical.*
<b>BEST PICTURE:</b>	Best motion picture of the year.
<b>PRODUCTION DESIGN:</b>	Achievement in production design. (The Academy statuette shall be given also for the set decoration

on the picture that wins the Production Design award.\*\*)

- SOUND:** Achievement in sound.
- VISUAL EFFECTS:** Achievement in visual effects.
- WRITING:** For each of two classifications:
- a. Adapted screenplay.
  - b. Original screenplay.

\* May not be given every year. See special rules for this category for conditions of presentation.

\*\* See special rules for this category for conditions of presentation for animated feature films.

4. The following Governors Awards shall be given at such times as in the judgment of the Board of Governors there are deserving recipients, but are not necessarily given each year:
  - a. IRVING G. THALBERG MEMORIAL AWARD (Statuette). This award shall be given to a creative producer whose body of work reflects a consistently high quality of motion picture production. (See Rule Twenty-five.)
  - b. JEAN HERSHOLT HUMANITARIAN AWARD (Statuette). This award shall be given to an individual in the motion picture arts and sciences whose humanitarian efforts have brought credit to the industry by promoting human welfare and contributing to rectifying inequities. (See Rule Twenty-five.)
  - c. THE HONORARY AWARD (Statuette). This award shall be given to honor extraordinary distinction in lifetime achievement, exceptional contributions to the state of motion picture arts and sciences in any discipline, or for outstanding service to the Academy. (See Rule Twenty-five.)
5. The following Special Awards may be given at such times as in the judgment of the Board of Governors there are deserving recipients, but are not necessarily given each year:
  - a. SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (Statuette). (See Rule Twenty-six.)
  - b. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL AWARDS. (See Rule Twenty-seven.)
  - c. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. (See Rule Twenty-eight.)
  - d. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SERVICE AWARD. (See Rule Twenty-eight.)
  - e. AWARD OF COMMENDATION. (See Rule Twenty-eight.)
  - f. OTHER SPECIAL AWARDS shall be given at such times as in the judgment of the Board of Governors there is a deserving recipient, but not necessarily each year. They shall be in such form as the Board of Governors may decide.

## **RULE TWO ELIGIBILITY**

1. Eligibility for Academy Awards consideration is subject to Rules Two and Three, and to those special rules approved by the Board of Governors that follow.
2. All eligible motion pictures, unless otherwise noted (see Paragraph 10, below), must be:

- a. feature length (defined as over 40 minutes),
- b. publicly exhibited by means of 35mm film, 70mm film, or Digital Cinema format. Any Digital Cinema exhibition shall use image and sound files packaged as Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) in conformance with the most recent revision of SMPTE ST 429-2 (D-Cinema Packaging – DCP Operational Constraints) and its normative references, and shall use a 24- or 48-frame progressive scan format and a projector with a minimum resolution of 2048 by 1080 pixels.

A Digital Cinema Package (DCP) shall contain either monophonic audio or discrete channel-based audio. Any non-monophonic audio configuration shall include, at a minimum, Left, Center, and Right channels. A Left/Right configuration alone does not satisfy the minimum non-monophonic audio requirement. Object-based audio may also be present as an immersive audio bitstream.

Immersive audio, if present, shall be formatted and packaged in conformance with the most recent revision of SMPTE 429-19 (D-Cinema Packaging – DCP Operational Constraints for Immersive Audio) and its normative references.

**Note 1:** Digital Cinema requirements are not satisfied by consumer, broadcast, streaming, or non-DCP file-based delivery formats, including but not limited to Blu-ray, DVD, HDCAM, QuickTime, ProRes, MP4, or other similar formats.

**Note 2:** Common theatrical audio configurations include monophonic, LCR, 5.1, and 7.1 channel presentations.

**Note 3:** Use of SMPTE RDD 52 – D-Cinema Packaging, SMPTE DCP Bv2.1 Application Profile – is recommended to improve interoperability in theatrical exhibition environments.

- c. 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 and Tarrant County, Texas]; and Atlanta [Fulton County, Georgia].

A commercial motion picture theater is defined as a brick-and-mortar establishment that operates year-round and regularly screens first-run films for paid admission,

- d. for a theatrical qualifying run of at least seven consecutive days in the same commercial motion picture theater, during which period screenings must occur at least three times daily, with at least one screening beginning between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. daily,
  - e. advertised and exploited during their theatrical qualifying run in a manner normal and customary to theatrical feature distribution practices, and
  - f. released within the Awards year deadlines specified in Rule Three.
3. Films that, in any version, receive their first public exhibition or distribution in any manner other than as a theatrical motion picture release will not be eligible for Academy Awards in any category. 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
    - Episodic series

Motion pictures released in such nontheatrical media **on or after the first day of their theatrical qualifying run remain eligible**. Also, up to fifteen percent of the running time of a film may be shown in a nontheatrical medium prior to the film's qualifying run. (See also Paragraph 11, below.)

Film festivals may provide films online through either a transactional pay wall or password-protected entry, which will not affect the films' eligibility for future Academy qualification. The Academy will allow an exemption for those films that are released online through a festival's online platform, provided the filmmaker(s) submit proof of inclusion in the festival. With these provisions, films will be expected to comply with all other eligibility requirements for the 99th Academy Awards.

4. Eligibility is contingent on the receipt by the Academy of a completed Oscars Submission Form (General Entry). All credited individuals with a "producer" or "produced by" credit are required to sign the entry form, to ensure that all parties are properly informed of the criteria and deadlines regarding the film's eligibility and designated award recipients. DVDs or DCPs are not accepted in lieu of, or in addition to, the Oscars Submission Form. The Oscars Submission Form must be completed online at the Academy's Awards Submission site and can only be submitted by a confirmed representative of the releasing company or production company. The submission shall include:
  - a. full, complete, and authentic screen credits from opening titles through end credits,
  - b. the name of the commercial motion picture theater where the film has qualified, and
  - c. the dates and times of the theatrical qualifying run.
5. Eligibility for all awards shall be determined by credits as they appear on the theatrical qualifying version of the film and/or as certified to the Academy by the producing companies, but final determination in any event shall be made by the Academy. The Academy shall not be bound by any contract or agreement relating to the sharing or giving of credit and reserves the right to make its own determination of credit for purposes of Awards consideration.
6. In the event of any dispute concerning credits, the Academy reserves the right to declare any achievement ineligible or, alternatively, to reject all claims to credit, list credits as being in controversy, and withhold any award until the dispute is resolved. The Academy is not responsible for resolving credit disputes between an individual, production company, studio or releasing partner.
7. With regard to Generative Artificial Intelligence and other digital tools used in the making of the film, the tools neither help nor harm the chances of achieving a nomination. The Academy and each branch will judge the achievement, taking into account the degree to which a human was at the heart of the creative authorship when choosing which movie to award. If questions arise regarding the aforementioned use of Generative Artificial Intelligence, the Academy reserves the right to request more information about the nature of the use and human authorship.
8. The alteration of an achievement by changing a picture from the version shown in the theatrical qualifying run, upon which eligibility is based, shall subject such achievement to the risk of being declared ineligible by the Academy.
9. Only bona fide theatrical feature works may be considered, and the Academy retains the right to deem any submission ineligible. This excludes from consideration such works as:
  - a. Works which are essentially recordings of performances that were originally produced for another medium.
  - b. Alternate or re-edited versions of completed works which have previously been publicly exhibited.
  - c. Works originally created as episodic television (for broadcast and/or streaming). This may include pilots or material as part of an ongoing, multi-part or limited series.

10. Motion pictures from all countries shall be eligible for the annual awards listed in Rule One Paragraph 3, as long as they satisfy the requirements of the other applicable rules and contain accurate and legible English-language subtitles if released in a language other than English.
11. Alternate and/or additional qualifying methods not listed in Rules Two and Three appear in the Special Rules for the Animated Feature Film award (see Rule Seven), the Animated Short Film award (see Rule Eight), the Documentary Feature Film award (see Rule Thirteen), the Documentary Short Film award (see Rule Fourteen), the International Feature Film award (see Rule Sixteen), the Live Action Short Film award (see Rule Seventeen), the Music awards (see Rule Nineteen) and the Best Picture award (see Rule Twenty).
12. No appeals are permitted. The Academy Board Awards Committee reserves the right to make determinations to maintain consistency across categories.
13. The Academy shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

### **RULE THREE THE AWARDS YEAR AND DEADLINES**

1. The required theatrical qualifying run (described in Rule Two Paragraph 2) must begin between **January 1, 2026, and December 31, 2026.**
2. A motion picture first theatrically exhibited **inside** the U.S. prior to the theatrical qualifying run shall be eligible for submission, provided the prior exhibition is a theatrical preview or festival screening after January 1, 2025. No nontheatrical public exhibition or distribution may occur prior to the first day of the theatrical qualifying run.
3. A motion picture first theatrically exhibited **outside** the U.S. prior to the theatrical qualifying run shall be eligible for submission, provided the prior exhibition is a theatrical preview or festival screening, or takes place in a commercial motion picture theater after January 1, 2025. After the start of its initial non-U.S. theatrical engagement, a picture may be exhibited in those same non-U.S. territories on television and other nontheatrical media. **Inside** the U.S., no nontheatrical public exhibition or distribution may occur prior to the first day of the theatrical qualifying run.
4. Each picture may have only one theatrical qualifying run. The earliest theatrical exhibition that meets such definition shall be designated the picture's qualifying run. Inside the U.S., the qualifying run must take place during the same calendar year (as defined in Paragraph 1) of any paid theatrical release in a commercial motion picture theater.
5. For films which have their theatrical qualifying run between January 1, 2026, and June 30, 2026, all Oscars Submission Forms (General Entry and Best Picture) and accompanying full screen credits must be submitted to the Academy by **5 p.m. PT on Thursday, September 17, 2026.** For films which have their theatrical qualifying run between July 1, 2026, and December 31, 2026, entrants must submit all Oscars Submission Forms (General Entry and Best Picture) and accompanying full screen credits to the Academy by **5 p.m. PT on Thursday, November 12, 2026.**
6. For films qualifying after **Thursday, November 12, 2026,** entrants must provide documentation from the qualifying theater by the submission deadline confirming that the film will satisfy all release requirements.
7. **Tuesday, December 1, 2026,** 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.

## RULE FOUR SUBMISSION

1. "Every award shall be conditioned upon the delivery to the Academy of one print or one copy of every film nominated for final balloting for all Academy Awards. Such print or copy shall be in a format and of a quality equivalent to the film's theatrical release; if a film exists in more than one format, then the version deposited shall be the film print. Such print or copy shall become the property of the Academy, with the proviso, however, that the Academy shall not use such print or copy for commercial gain. Such print or copy shall be deposited with the Academy and, subject to matters not within its control, shall be screened by the Academy for the membership in advance of distribution of final ballots." (Academy Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 6.)

2. "Every award shall be conditioned upon the execution and delivery to the Academy by the recipient thereof of a receipt and agreement reading as follows:

I hereby acknowledge receipt of Academy Regulations for use of the Academy Award statuette and the phrase "Academy Award(s)" in advertising. In consideration of the signing of a similar agreement by other Academy Award nominees, I agree to comply with said regulations. I understand that on (date) I may receive from you a replica of your copyrighted statuette, commonly known as the "Oscar," as an award for (category) – (film title). I acknowledge that my receipt of said replica does not entitle me to any right whatever in your copyright, trade-mark and service-mark of said statuette and that only the physical replica itself shall belong to me. In consideration of your delivering said replica to me, I agree to comply with your rules and regulations respecting its use and not to sell or otherwise dispose of it or any other "Oscar" replica I have been awarded or have received, nor permit it or any other "Oscar" replica I have been awarded or have received to be sold or disposed of by operation of law, without first offering to sell it to you for the sum of \$1.00. You shall have thirty days after any such offer is made to you within which to accept it. This agreement shall be binding not only on me, but also on my heirs, legatees, executors, administrators, estate, successors, and assigns. My legatees and heirs shall have the right to acquire any "Oscar" statuette replica I have received, if it becomes part of my estate, subject to this agreement.

I agree that if I have heretofore received any Academy trophy I shall be bound by this receipt and agreement with the same force and effect as though I had executed and delivered the same in consideration of receiving such trophy." (Academy Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 7.)

3. In submitting a film for Academy Awards consideration in any category, the film's owners are deemed to have conveyed to the Academy the right to choose excerpts from the film and/or its screenplay, compositions and/or master recordings from Music category submissions, nominating screenings, materials, including but not limited to Before and After reels and portfolios, and from all approved and available promotional materials relating to the film, including publicity stills, posters and electronic press kits, which are submitted to the Academy in connection with the film's Awards consideration, for incorporation by the Academy at its sole discretion, into the Academy Awards telecast for the year in which the film is in competition, and into all other media content produced by the Academy relating to films submitted for Awards consideration, which is not disparaging of those films, for exhibition by the Academy and its licensees in all forms of media until 30 days following the Academy Awards telecast. The owners also convey the right to use excerpts from such films and/or its screenplay, nominating screenings, materials, including but not limited to Before and After reels and portfolios, and promotional materials subsequently for any nonprofit purposes of the Academy Museum, the Academy Foundation or Academy websites, in each case subject to the Academy's compliance with all applicable guild requirements relating to such uses. The owners shall have obtained all the aforementioned rights from the talent and/or subjects appearing in the film, as well as all other represented personnel. Films must have the necessary clearances for commercial theatrical exhibition. Festival clearances are not sufficient. Owners of nominated films are obligated, if requested, to submit to the Academy a high-definition digital videotape of the film in either D-5 or HDCAM format and of all approved promotional materials relating to the film, in the highest quality

formats available, no later than five days following the Academy's request for such materials. The Academy will maintain all materials under appropriate security. Owners of films submitted for Academy Awards consideration which receive a nomination must submit a 35mm or 70mm film print or unencrypted DCP to the Academy Film Archive for preservation purposes for the Academy Collection no later than one year following the nominations announcement. Film prints and DCI compliant DCPs must also be supplied immediately following the announcement to be screened at Academy venues for voting purposes.

## **RULE FIVE BALLOTING AND NOMINATIONS**

1. Voting on all achievements shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.
2. All eligible films will be listed by the Academy on Reminder Lists of Eligible Releases for specific categories. The information provided on the Oscars Submission Form is what will appear on the Reminder Lists shared with members. This includes, but is not limited to, production companies, releasing companies, credits, etc.
3. Individual Reminder Lists from which the shortlists and nominations are voted shall refer only to the film in which the achievement was made, and not to any individual responsible, except in the case of nominations for Acting achievements, which name both the individual and the one picture wherein the achievement occurred.
4. Voting for shortlists, nominations and final awards shall be by secret ballot. Ballots shall be made available by the Academy, and completed ballots shall be received and tabulated by a firm of certified public accountants designated by the Academy President.
5. In the nominations voting, the marking and tabulation of all ballots shall be according to the preferential or reweighted range voting system. Votes for achievements in motion pictures not on the Reminder List will not be counted in the nominations balloting. Tabulation of final ballots shall be according to the plurality or preferential system. **No "write-in" votes shall be counted on the final ballot.**
6. Not more than five nominations shall be made for each award, except for the Best Picture award, which shall have ten nominations. The viewing of all nominated films is required to vote in each respective category in the final voting round.
7. In the event a shortlisted or nominated film or achievement is declared ineligible by the Academy in any round of voting, it shall not be replaced, and the category will proceed with one less recognized achievement and/or nomination.
8. In the event that an achievement voted an award was done in collaboration, each of the eligible collaborators shall receive an award unless the number of awards is specifically limited by a category's special rules. In the event of a tie for first place in the final balloting, awards shall be given for both achievements.
9. Each branch or other designated committee shall be permitted to formulate its own special rules, provided the final ballot presents not more than five achievements in each category, and that nominations and final voting in each category are restricted to active and life Academy members. All rules shall be presented for approval to the Board of Governors before implementation.

## **RULE SIX SPECIAL RULES FOR THE ACTING AWARDS**

1. A Reminder List including up to ten eligible actresses and up to ten eligible actors for each eligible motion picture shall be made available along with nominations ballots to all active members of the Actors Branch, who shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five acting achievements in each category: Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role, Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role, Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role, Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role. Only roles credited in the film's legal billing and demonstrably performed by humans with their consent will be considered eligible. Uncredited performances will not be considered eligible.
2. The five acting achievements in each category receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Acting awards.
3. A performance by an actor or actress in any role shall be eligible for nomination either for the leading role or supporting role categories. If, however, all the dialogue has been dubbed by another actor, the performance shall not be eligible for awards consideration. Singing that is dubbed will not affect the performer's eligibility unless it constitutes the entire performance. The determination as to whether a role is a leading or supporting role shall be made individually by members of the branch at the time of balloting.
4. The leading role and supporting role categories will be tabulated simultaneously. If any performance should receive votes in both categories, the achievement shall be placed only on the ballot in that category in which, during the tabulation process, it first receives the required number of votes to be nominated. In the event that the performance receives the number of votes required to be nominated in both categories simultaneously, the achievement shall be placed only on the ballot in that category in which it receives the greater percentage of the total votes.
5. In the event that an actor or actress receives a sufficient number of votes to be nominated for one achievement in one category and for another achievement in the other category, both achievements shall be eligible.
6. The Actors Branch Executive Committee shall have the right and responsibility to resolve all questions of eligibility, rules, and the designation of award recipients.
7. Final voting for the Acting awards shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

## **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 99th Awards year, an animated feature film must fulfill one of the following qualifying criteria. The eligibility period begins on January 1, 2026, and ends on December 31, 2026.
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 and 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 qualifying under this paragraph shall satisfy the theatrical exhibition format requirements of Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B.

**OR**

2. The film must have been submitted and deemed eligible in the International Feature Film category in accordance with the requirements stated in Rule Sixteen.

All films must be submitted in a standard theatrical exhibition aspect ratio and in formats currently accepted by the Academy under Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B, 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, 2026, and June 30, 2026, 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, September 17, 2026**. For films qualifying between July 1, 2026, and December 31, 2026, 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 12, 2026**.
- B. The picture must be submitted in the same Awards year in which it first qualifies. Motion pictures submitted for the 99th Academy Awards in any category will not be eligible for consideration in subsequent Awards years in any category.
- C. **Tuesday, December 1, 2026**, 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 12, 2026**, 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.

# **RULE EIGHT SPECIAL RULES FOR THE ANIMATED SHORT FILM AWARD**

## **I. DEFINITION**

- A. A short film is defined as an original motion picture that has a running time of 40 minutes or less, including all credits.
- B. This excludes from consideration such works as:
  - 1. Previews and advertising films (product sales, commercials, etc.)
  - 2. Alternate or re-edited versions of short films which have previously been publicly exhibited
  - 3. Short films created from materials substantially taken from or cut down from completed, publicly exhibited feature films. This includes, but is not limited to:
    - Credit sequences
    - Re-edited scenes
    - Segments taken from a feature film
  - 4. Works originally created as episodic television (for broadcast and/or streaming). This may include pilots or material as part of an ongoing, multi-part or limited series.
- C. 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.

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

Documentary short films that are animated may be submitted in either the Animated Short Film category or the Documentary Short Film category, but not both.

## II. ELIGIBILITY

A. To be eligible for awards consideration for the 99th Awards year, a short film must fulfill one of the following qualifying criteria. The eligibility period begins on October 1, 2025, and ends on September 30, 2026. This qualification must take place within two years of the film's completion date.

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 County, Georgia], for a theatrical qualifying run of at least seven consecutive days in the same commercial motion picture theater, during which screenings must occur at least one time daily. The picture must be advertised and exploited during the theatrical qualifying run in a manner normal and customary to theatrical distribution practices.

All motion pictures qualifying under this paragraph shall satisfy the theatrical exhibition format requirements of Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B.

**Student films cannot qualify with a theatrical release.**

**OR**

2. The film must have won a qualifying award at a competitive film festival, as specified in the Short Film Qualifying Festival List, regardless of any prior public exhibition or distribution by nontheatrical means. Proof of the award must be submitted with the entry. The Short Film Qualifying Festival List is available at [www.oscars.org](http://www.oscars.org) or may be obtained from the Academy.

**OR**

3. The film must have won a Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal award in the Academy's 2026 Student Academy Awards competition in the Animation or Alternative/Experimental categories.

All films must be submitted in a standard theatrical exhibition aspect ratio and in formats currently accepted by the Academy under Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B, no matter which other formats may have been used during their theatrical run or festival screening.

B. A short film qualifying under Paragraph II.A.1 above may not be exhibited publicly or distributed anywhere in any nontheatrical form until **after** its qualifying theatrical release. 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 or II.A.3 above are exempted from this rule.**

- C. The Animation Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

### III. SUBMISSION

- A. 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.
- B. Submission forms must be signed by all credited directors, producers and designated nominees. This is to ensure that all potential awards-eligible parties are properly informed of the submission.
- C. The short film submitted for Academy Awards consideration must be identical in content and length to the print or DCP that qualified. Films must have the necessary clearances for commercial theatrical exhibition. Festival clearances are not sufficient.
- D. Dialogue or narration must be substantially in English, or the film must have English-language subtitles. Entrants must refer to the Academy Screening Room Guidelines for any additional required materials.
- E. For films qualifying between October 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, 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, August 13, 2026**. For films qualifying between July 1, 2026, and September 30, 2026, 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, October 8, 2026**.
- F. **Tuesday, December 1, 2026**, 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.
- G. If a short film advances to the Nominations round of voting, additional materials including a film print or DCP of the film may be required after the shortlist is announced.
- H. 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.
- I. No short film may be submitted more than once for Academy Awards consideration. A short film must be submitted in the same Awards year in which it qualifies.

### IV. NOMINEES AND AWARD RECIPIENTS

- A. The nominee(s) should be the individual(s) most involved in the key creative aspects of the filmmaking process. **A maximum of two persons may be designated as nominees**, one of whom must be the credited director who exercised directorial control, and the other of whom must be in a key creative position. Companies or organized groups shall not receive nominations or awards.
- B. If a producer is listed on the submission form as a designated nominee, that individual must have performed a major portion of the producing functions. If there is more than one producer credited in

the legal billing, all individuals with a “producer” or “produced by” credit on films that reach the Nominations round will automatically be vetted. The Animation Branch Executive Committee will determine which producer(s), is eligible to receive a nomination.

- C. Final determination of designated nominees for each shortlisted film will be made by the Animation Branch Executive Committee.

## **V. VOTING**

- A. All active and life members of the Animation Branch and Short Films Branch will be invited to view the eligible submissions in the Animated Short film category. Those who participate will be required to see a minimum percentage 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.
- B. To determine nominations, all active and life members of the Academy will be invited to view the fifteen shortlisted Animated Short Films. A member must view all shortlisted films to vote in the Nominations round. Members shall vote by secret ballot 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 Animated Short Film award.
- C. Final voting for the Animated Short Film award shall be restricted to active and life members of the Academy who have viewed all of the nominated animated short films.

## **RULE NINE SPECIAL RULES FOR THE CASTING AWARD**

### **I. DEFINITION**

Casting refers to the process by which a casting director collaborates with a film’s director and producers on the creative consideration and selection of actors who comprise the acting ensemble of a film.

### **II. ELIGIBILITY AND VOTING**

- A. For the preliminary voting period, the Casting Directors Branch shall review a reminder list of all eligible films and vote to select a maximum of ten films for further consideration, as a shortlist. Voting shall be done via secret ballot, in order of preference. Achievements shall be judged within the parameters defined by the Casting Directors Branch Executive Committee.
- B. Before the preliminary voting period, the governors will host at least one meeting open to all branch members to discuss the casting process of films eligible for consideration. Individuals who worked on a motion picture that is raised will have the opportunity to speak about their work, prior to branch discussion. They will not be present during that conversation so that other branch members can speak openly about the film.
- C. For Academy Awards consideration, the individual(s) who shall be eligible must have onscreen credit of “Casting Director” or “Casting.” No more than three individuals will be considered eligible per film.
- D. The Casting Directors Branch will hold a Bake-Off nominating event hosted by the branch governors, which shall be open to branch members and all eligible Academy voters, either in person or online. The event will aim to describe and illustrate the casting process for each shortlisted film and the contributions of each casting director to that process. A Q&A with the films’ casting directors will be part of the event. Only the designated potential nominees will be allowed to address questions.

- E. The Casting Director(s) of each shortlisted film are responsible for collaborating with their producers and/or distributors to provide the Academy with a reel containing excerpts of selected scenes which are emblematic of the film's casting achievements. All reels must meet the below requirements, or else the reel may not be shown.
  - i. Excerpts must be from the final release version of the film and shall not exceed five minutes in total running time.
  - ii. All elements of the excerpts should be presented exactly as they appeared in the final release version of the film and must focus on the casting achievements under consideration.
  - iii. Each excerpt must start and finish without any editorial or sound blend between excerpts.
  - iv. All reels are required to include closed captioning.
- F. The film's producers or distributors shall grant the Academy the right to use the excerpts for any voting purposes, and for any nonprofit purposes of the Academy Museum, the Academy Foundation or Academy websites.
- G. Active voting members of the Casting Directors Branch shall be eligible to view the excerpts of the ten films under consideration at the annual nominating screening (Bake-Off) and/or on the Academy Screening Room.
- H. Following the Bake-Off, voting shall be conducted as follows:
  - i. A ballot shall be submitted by all eligible members of the Casting Directors Branch for not more than five motion pictures, in the order of their preference, from the ten films under consideration.
  - ii. Viewing the ten films under consideration is required for voting.
  - iii. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Casting award.
  - iv. Following the announcement of the five nominees, an edited video of the Bake-Off, focusing on the work of the nominees, and a photo grid of the cast and/or the full cast list will be made available online for all eligible Academy voters.
  - v. Final voting for the Casting award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members and shall be governed by the Academy's voting procedures for all award categories.
- I. Excerpt reels shall become the property of the Academy and be placed in the Academy Film Archive, with the proviso that the Academy will not use the excerpts for commercial gain.
- J. Such other rules or procedures necessary for the proper conduct of this award and all questions of eligibility and rules shall be resolved by the Casting Directors Branch Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

**RULE TEN  
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE  
CINEMATOGRAPHY AWARD**

- 1. A Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures shall be made available along with a nominations ballot to all members of the Cinematographers Branch.
- 2. Preliminary voting shall produce a shortlist of twenty motion pictures. Eligible Cinematographers Branch members shall vote by secret ballot in order of their preference for not more than twenty pictures to be considered for the Cinematography award. The twenty motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall advance to the next round of voting.

3. The Cinematographers Branch Executive Committee will request that producers provide opportunities to view their motion pictures through advance screenings. This is especially encouraged in instances where a film will be released after the preliminary voting period.
4. To determine nominations, all eligible Cinematographers Branch 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 Cinematography award.
5. In accordance with Rule Two Paragraph 5, only principal position credit(s) shall be considered eligible for the Cinematography award.
  - a. When producing companies wish to present multiple Directors of Photography / Cinematographers for Academy Awards consideration, the Cinematographers Branch Executive Committee will review such requests to verify each individual's contribution to the final motion picture.
6. The Cinematographers' Branch understands that AI tools are now part of many filmmakers' creative process. The Cinematographers Branch Executive Committee may request the disclosure of any known use of generative AI or other AI tools in the creation of the cinematographer's own work for awards consideration. The Branch maintains this policy to encourage transparency, education, and to ensure submissions are evaluated fairly and in context.
7. Final voting for the Cinematography award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.
8. Such other rules or modifications as may be necessary for the proper conduct of this award shall be adopted by the Cinematographers Branch Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

**RULE ELEVEN  
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE  
COSTUME DESIGN AWARD**

1. A Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures shall be made available along with a nominations ballot to all members of the Costume Designers Branch, who shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five motion pictures.
2. To be eligible for the Costume Design award, the costumes for the picture must have been conceived by a costume designer. It is the intention of this rule to recognize the **designing** of costumes for their special use in narrative motion pictures. Eligibility shall be determined by the Costume Designers Branch members present at a meeting called specifically for that purpose prior to the start of nominations balloting.
3. In accordance with Rule Two Paragraph 5, only principal position credit(s) shall be considered eligible for the Costume Design award.
4. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Costume Design award.
5. Final voting for the Costume Design award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

**RULE TWELVE  
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE  
DIRECTING AWARD**

1. A Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures shall be made available along with a nominations ballot to all members of the Directors Branch, who shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five productions.
2. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Directing award.
3. Final voting for the Directing award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

**RULE THIRTEEN  
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE  
DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM AWARD**

**I. DEFINITION**

An eligible documentary film is defined as a theatrically released nonfiction motion picture dealing creatively with cultural, artistic, historical, social, scientific, economic, or other subjects. It may be photographed in actual occurrence, or may employ partial reenactment, stock footage, stills, animation, stop-motion, or other techniques, as long as the emphasis is on fact and not on fiction.

A feature-length film is defined as an original motion picture that has a running time of more than 40 minutes.

**II. ELIGIBILITY**

- A. To be eligible for awards consideration for the 99th Awards year, a documentary feature film must fulfill one of the following qualifying criteria. The theatrical eligibility period begins on January 1, 2026, and ends on December 31, 2026. The eligibility period for winning a qualifying festival award begins on October 1, 2025, and ends on September 30, 2026.
  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 County, 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 qualifying under this paragraph shall satisfy the theatrical exhibition format requirements of Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B.

**OR**

2. The film must have won a qualifying award at a competitive film festival, as specified in the Documentary Feature Film Qualifying Festival List, regardless of any prior public exhibition or distribution by nontheatrical means. Proof of the award must be submitted with the entry. The Documentary Feature Film Qualifying Festival List is available at [www.oscars.org](http://www.oscars.org) or may be obtained from the Academy. The eligibility period for winning a qualifying festival award begins on October 1, 2025, and ends on September 30, 2026.

**OR**

3. The film must have been submitted and deemed eligible in the International Feature Film category in accordance with the requirements stated in Rule Sixteen.

All films must be submitted in a standard theatrical exhibition aspect ratio and in formats currently accepted by the Academy under Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B, 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. Works that are essentially promotional or instructional are not eligible, nor are works that are essentially unfiltered records of performances.
- C. 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.
- D. **Films that, in any version, receive a nontheatrical public exhibition or distribution before their qualifying theatrical release as defined in Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B 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 or II.A.3 above are exempted from this rule.**

### III. SUBMISSION

- A. For films qualifying between October 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, 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, August 13, 2026**. For films qualifying between July 1, 2026, and December 31, 2026, 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, October 15, 2026**.
- B. The picture must be submitted in the same Awards year in which it first qualifies. Motion pictures submitted for the 99th Academy Awards in any category will not be eligible for consideration in subsequent Awards years in any category.
- C. **Tuesday, December 1, 2026**, 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, October 15, 2026**, 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) should 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 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. All individuals with a “producer” or “produced by” credit on films that reach the Nominations round will automatically be vetted by the Producers Guild of America. 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 Documentary Branch Executive Committee.

#### **V. VOTING**

- A. All active and life members of the Documentary Branch will be invited to view the eligible submissions in the category and will be required to see a minimum number 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.

- B. To determine nominations, all active and life members of the Documentary Branch will be invited to view the fifteen shortlisted Documentary Feature Films. A nominations ballot shall be made available to all members of the Documentary Branch. 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 by secret ballot. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Documentary Feature Film award.
- C. Final voting for the Documentary Feature Film award shall be restricted to active and life members of the Academy who have viewed all of the nominated documentary feature films.

## **VI. OTHER RULES**

- A. Documentary 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 Documentary Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

## **RULE FOURTEEN SPECIAL RULES FOR THE DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM AWARD**

### **I. DEFINITION**

- A. A short film is defined as an original motion picture that has a running time of 40 minutes or less, including all credits.
- B. This excludes from consideration such works as:
  - 1. Previews and advertising films (product sales, commercials, etc.)
  - 2. Alternate or re-edited versions of short films which have previously been publicly exhibited
  - 3. Short films created from materials substantially taken from or cut down from completed, publicly exhibited feature films. This includes, but is not limited to:
    - Credit sequences
    - Re-edited scenes
    - Segments taken from a feature film
  - 4. Works originally created as episodic television (for broadcast and/or streaming) or as part of an ongoing, multi-part or limited series
  - 5. Short documentary films created for an anthology series are eligible for consideration provided that the films meet all other eligibility criteria under Paragraph II.
- C. An eligible documentary film is defined as a theatrically released nonfiction motion picture dealing creatively with cultural, artistic, historical, social, scientific, economic, or other subjects. It may be photographed in actual occurrence, or may employ partial reenactment, stock footage, stills, animation, stop-motion, or other techniques, as long as the emphasis is on fact and not on fiction.

Documentary short films that are animated may be submitted in either the Animated Short Film category or the Documentary Short Film category, but not both.

### **II. ELIGIBILITY**

- A. To be eligible for awards consideration for the 99th Awards year, a documentary short film must fulfill one of the following qualifying criteria. The eligibility period begins on October 1, 2025, and ends on September 30, 2026. This qualification must take place within two years of the film's completion date.

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 County, Georgia], for a run of at least seven consecutive days in the same commercial motion picture theater, during which screenings must occur at least one time daily. The picture must be advertised and exploited during the theatrical qualifying run in a manner normal and customary to theatrical distribution practices.

All motion pictures qualifying under this paragraph shall satisfy the theatrical exhibition format requirements of Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B.

**Student films cannot qualify with a theatrical release.**

**OR**

2. The film must have won a qualifying award at a competitive film festival, as specified in the Short Film Qualifying Festival List, regardless of any prior public exhibition or distribution by nontheatrical means. Proof of the award must be submitted with the entry. The Short Film Qualifying Festival List is available at [www.oscars.org](http://www.oscars.org) or may be obtained from the Academy.

**OR**

3. The film must have won a Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal award in the Academy's 2026 Student Academy Awards competition in the Documentary category or Alternative/Experimental category.

All films must be submitted in a standard theatrical exhibition aspect ratio and in formats currently accepted by the Academy under Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B, no matter which other formats may have been used during their theatrical run or festival screening.

- B. Works that are essentially promotional or instructional are not eligible, nor are works that are essentially unfiltered records of performances.
- C. A short film qualifying under Paragraph II.A.1 above may not be exhibited publicly or distributed anywhere in any nontheatrical form until **after** its qualifying theatrical release. 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 or II.A.3 above are exempted from this rule.**

- D. The Documentary Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

### **III. SUBMISSION**

- A. 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.

- B. 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.
- C. The short film submitted for Academy Awards consideration must be identical in content and length to the print or DCP that qualified. Films must have the necessary clearances for commercial theatrical exhibition. Festival clearances are not sufficient.
- D. Dialogue or narration must be substantially in English, or the film must have English-language subtitles. Entrants must refer to the Academy Screening Room Guidelines for any additional required materials.
- E. For films qualifying between October 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, 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, August 13, 2026**. For films qualifying between July 1, 2026, and September 30, 2026, 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, October 8, 2026**.
- F. **Monday, December 1, 2026**, 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.
- G. If a short film advances to the Nominations round of voting, additional materials including a film print or DCP of the film may be required after the shortlist is announced.
- H. 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.
- I. No short film may be submitted more than once for Academy Awards consideration. A short film must be submitted in the same Awards year in which it qualifies.

#### IV. NOMINEES AND AWARD RECIPIENTS

- A. The nominee(s) should be the individual(s) most involved in the key creative aspects of the filmmaking process. **A maximum of two persons may be designated as nominees**, one of whom must be the credited director who exercised directorial control, and the other of whom must have a director or producer credit. Companies or organized groups shall not receive nominations or awards.
- B. Persons with the screen credits of executive producer, co-producer, associate producer, line producer, produced in association with or any credit other than director or producer shall not receive nominations or Academy statuettes.
- C. If a producer is listed on the submission form as a designated nominee, that individual must have performed a major portion of the producing functions. If there is more than one producer credited in the legal billing, all individuals with a “producer” or “produced by” credit on films that reach the Nominations round will automatically be vetted. The Documentary Branch Executive Committee will determine which producer(s) is eligible to receive a nomination.
- D. Final determination of designated nominees for each shortlisted film will be made by the Documentary Branch Executive Committee.

#### V. VOTING

- A. All active and life members of the Documentary Branch will be invited to view the eligible submissions in the category and will be required to see a minimum number 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.

- B. To determine nominations, all active and life members of the Documentary Branch will be invited to view the fifteen shortlisted Documentary Short Films. A member must view all shortlisted films for the ballot to be counted in the Nominations round. Members shall vote by secret ballot 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 Documentary Short Film award.
- C. Final voting for the Documentary Short Film award shall be restricted to active and life members of the Academy who have viewed all of the nominated documentary short films.

### **RULE FIFTEEN SPECIAL RULES FOR THE FILM EDITING AWARD**

- 1. A Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures shall be made available along with a nominations ballot to all members of the Film Editors Branch, who shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five motion pictures.
- 2. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Film Editing award.
- 3. In accordance with Rule Two Paragraph 5, only film editors who hold principal position credit(s) shall be considered eligible for the Film Editing award.
- 4. Final voting for the Film Editing award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

### **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. To be eligible for awards consideration for the 99<sup>th</sup> awards year, an international feature film must fulfill one of the following qualifying criteria.
  - 1. The film must be the official selection by a country or region via the country or region's Academy-approved Selection Committee.

#### **OR**

- 2. The film must have won a qualifying award at an international film festival, as specified in the International Feature Film Award Qualifying Festival List. The International Feature Film Award Qualifying Festival List is available at [www.oscars.org](http://www.oscars.org) or may be obtained from the Academy.

- B. All film submissions must be first released theatrically in the country or region of origin for paid admission. The theatrical release must begin no earlier than October 1, 2025, and no later than September 30, 2026, 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 or region 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 qualifying under this paragraph shall satisfy the theatrical exhibition format requirements of Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B.

- C. The film's theatrical release 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.

- D. **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
- Pay Per View/Video on Demand
- DVD and/or streaming distribution
- Inflight airline distribution
- Internet transmission

- E. 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.**

- F. The submitting country or region 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 or region.

- G. Should a selection committee not disclose up-to-date and/or accurate information related to a submitted film crew's citizenship, business-related affiliation or credit on a selected film, designated credits, production details and release information, a film will be deemed ineligible.

- H. The International Feature Film Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

### III. SUBMISSION

- A. An Academy-approved Selection Committee must fulfill the following:

1. Each country or region 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 14, 2026**, 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 or regions 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, 2026, for eligibility in the following (100th) Awards year. A country or region need not submit a film every year for Awards consideration.
2. **Only one film will be accepted from each country or region as the official selection.** Films

should be submitted to the Academy as soon as they are selected.

3. The Academy will provide online access to each country or region's approved selection committee so that the producer of the selected film can supply full production information.
  4. The submitting country or region 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 or region.
- B. The following submission materials must be submitted to the Academy by **5 p.m. PT on Wednesday, September 30, 2026**:
- 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
- C. Should a selection committee not disclose up-to-date and/or accurate information related to a submitted film's crew's citizenship, business-related affiliation or credit on a selected film, designated credits, production details and release information, a film may be deemed ineligible.
- D. 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 film will be credited as the nominee and accepted by the director on behalf of the film's creative talents. The director's name will be listed on the statuette plaque after the film title and country or region if applicable.

## V. ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY RESTRICTIONS

In addition to complying with the Awards Rules for the 99th 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 99th 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 99th 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.

## RULE SEVENTEEN SPECIAL RULES FOR THE LIVE ACTION SHORT FILM AWARD

### I. DEFINITION

- A. A short film is defined as an original motion picture that has a running time of 40 minutes or less, including all credits.
- B. This excludes from consideration such works as:
  - 1. Previews and advertising films (product sales, commercials, etc.)
  - 2. Alternate or re-edited versions of short films which have previously been publicly exhibited
  - 3. Short films created from materials substantially taken from or cut down from completed, publicly exhibited feature films. This includes, but is not limited to:
    - Credit sequences
    - Re-edited scenes
    - Segments taken from a feature film
  - 4. Works originally created as episodic television (for broadcast and/or streaming). This may include pilots or material as part of an ongoing, multi-part or limited series.
- C. A live action film uses imagery and sound created primarily through practical photographic techniques used to capture physical actors, props, sets, and locations. **Documentary short films will not be accepted in the live action category.**

### II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. To be eligible for awards consideration for the 99th Awards year, a short film must fulfill one of the following qualifying criteria. The eligibility period begins on October 1, 2025, and ends on September 30, 2026. This qualification must take place within two years of the film's completion date.

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 County, Georgia], for a theatrical qualifying run of at least seven consecutive days in the same commercial motion picture theater, during which screenings must occur at least one time daily. The picture must be advertised and exploited during the theatrical qualifying run in a manner normal and customary to theatrical distribution practices.

All motion pictures qualifying under this paragraph shall satisfy the theatrical exhibition format requirements of Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B.

**Student films cannot qualify with a theatrical release.**

**OR**

2. The film must have won a qualifying award at a competitive film festival, as specified in the Short Film Qualifying Festival List, regardless of any prior public exhibition or distribution by nontheatrical means. Proof of the award must be submitted with the entry. The Short Film Qualifying Festival List is available at [www.oscars.org](http://www.oscars.org) or may be obtained from the Academy.

**OR**

3. The film must have won a Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal award in the Academy's 2026 Student Academy Awards competition in the Narrative or Alternative/Experimental categories.

All films must be submitted in a standard theatrical exhibition aspect ratio and in formats currently accepted by the Academy under Rule Two, Paragraph 2.B, no matter which other formats may have been used during their theatrical run or festival screening.

- B. A short film qualifying under Paragraph II.A.1 above may not be exhibited publicly or distributed anywhere in any nontheatrical form until **after** its qualifying theatrical release. 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 or II.A.3 above are exempted from this rule.**

- C. The Short Films Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

### **III. SUBMISSION**

- A. 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.
- B. Submission forms must be signed by all credited directors, producers and designated nominees. This is to ensure that all potential awards-eligible parties are properly informed of the submission.

- C. The short film submitted for Academy Awards consideration must be identical in content and length to the print or DCP that qualified. Films must have the necessary clearances for commercial theatrical exhibition. Festival clearances are not sufficient.
- D. Dialogue or narration must be substantially in English, or the film must have English-language subtitles. Entrants must refer to the most recent Academy Screening Room Guidelines for any additional required materials.
- E. For films qualifying between October 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, 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, August 13, 2026**. For films qualifying between July 1, 2026, and September 30, 2026, 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, October 8, 2026**.
- F. **Tuesday, December 1, 2026**, 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.
- G. If a short film advances to the Nominations round of voting, additional materials including a film print or DCP of the film may be required after the shortlist is announced.
- H. 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.
- I. No short film may be submitted more than once for Academy Awards consideration. A short film must be submitted in the same Awards year in which it qualifies.

#### **IV. NOMINEES AND AWARD RECIPIENTS**

- A. The nominee(s) should be the individual(s) most involved in the key creative aspects of the filmmaking process. **A maximum of two persons may be designated as nominees**, one of whom must be the credited director who exercised directorial control, and the other of whom must have a director, producer, or writer credit. Companies or organized groups shall not receive nominations or awards.
- B. Persons with the screen credits of executive producer, co-producer, associate producer, line producer, produced in association with or any credit other than director, producer or writer shall not receive nominations or Academy statuettes.
- C. If a producer is listed on the submission form as a designated nominee, that individual must have performed a major portion of the producing functions. If there is more than one producer credited in the legal billing, all individuals with a “producer” or “produced by” credit on films that reach the Nominations round will automatically be vetted. The Short Films Branch Executive Committee will determine which producer(s) may be eligible to receive a nomination.
- D. Final determination of designated nominees for each shortlisted film will be made by the Short Films Branch Executive Committee.

#### **V. VOTING**

- A. All active and life Academy members will be invited to view the eligible submissions in the Live Action Short Film 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.

- B. To determine nominations, all active and life Academy members will be invited to view the fifteen shortlisted Live Action Short Films. A member must view all shortlisted films to vote in the Nominations round. Members shall vote by secret ballot 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 the Live Action Short Film award.
- C. Final voting for the Live Action Short Film award shall be restricted to active and life members of the Academy who have viewed all of the nominated live action short films.

## **RULE EIGHTEEN SPECIAL RULES FOR THE MAKEUP AND HAIRSTYLING AWARD**

### **I. DEFINITION**

Makeup refers to any change in appearance of a human performer's face, head, or body created by the practical and physical application of cosmetics, three-dimensional materials, prosthetic appliances, or facial hair applied directly to the performer's face, head, or body. Hairstyling refers to any practical and physical change in the appearance of a human performer through hairstyling, wigs, or hairpieces applied directly to the performer.

### **II. ELIGIBILITY AND VOTING**

- A. Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch members of the Academy shall attend meetings to review a Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures. To be eligible to vote in the determination of the shortlist, branch members must attend at least one of the two final branch meetings that occur prior to the opening of preliminary round voting for the category.

Artists from the eligible films may provide portfolios demonstrating their makeup and hairstyling achievements. While portfolios are not required for achievements to be considered, they are encouraged to help inform branch members. Portfolios should highlight the work that appears in the final qualifying theatrical version of the film and include before-and-after photos whenever possible.

If a portfolio is submitted, the portfolio is required to be submitted digitally. The portfolio must be no more than eight pages. A simple title page may also be included but will be counted as part of the eight-page maximum. Physical portfolios may be accepted but are optional. Portfolios will be retained and housed for research use at the Academy's Margaret Herrick Library.

- Any text must be limited to brief annotations of the images presented
- Only human characters/actors that appear in the qualifying theatrical version of the film may be included
- Before and after photos are encouraged
- Only one portfolio per film will be accepted
- Digital portfolios should be sent as a PDF or TIFF file
- If a portfolio does not comply, it will not be shared with branch members

Portfolio guidelines may be subject to change at the discretion of the Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch Executive Committee and/or Governors.

- B. Active Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch members shall vote by secret ballot by selecting in the order of their preference not more than ten motion pictures to be considered for the Makeup and Hairstyling award. The ten motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall advance to the next round of voting.

- C. The Makeup and Hairstyling Bake-Off is a pre-voting event in the Nominations round where the designated nominees of the ten shortlisted films are invited to discuss their work. Studio representatives, producers, and/or the designated nominees of the ten shortlisted films shall be required to provide excerpts of selected scenes showcasing the achievements under consideration to help inform voters of the work being considered. If a film is shortlisted, the Academy will provide a complete list of format requirements.

Excerpts must be from the final qualifying theatrical version of the motion picture and shall not exceed five minutes in total running time. All elements of the excerpts should be presented exactly as they appeared in the final qualifying theatrical version of the motion picture and must focus on the practical and physical makeup and/or hairstyling achievements under consideration. Each excerpt must start and finish with standard edits without sound blends. Edits such as fades and dissolves are not permitted. Each excerpt must appear in the chronological order that is presented in the final qualifying version of the motion picture. If the excerpt reel does not meet these requirements, it may not be shown. A DCP or film print, and digital streaming file (including English captions) of the reel will be required.

Producers shall provide the Academy the right to use the reel for any voting purposes, and for any nonprofit purposes of the Academy Museum, the Academy Foundation or Academy websites. The Bake-Off event and requirements may be subject to change.

- D. Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch members shall screen the excerpts from the motion pictures. Nominations voting will be restricted to active and life voting members of the Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch. Nominations voting for the Makeup and Hairstyling award shall be restricted to voting branch members who have viewed all shortlisted films in the category. Branch members vote by secret ballot by selecting not more than five motion pictures in order of preference. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominees for the Makeup and Hairstyling award.
- E. Final voting for the Makeup and Hairstyling award shall be restricted to active and life members of the Academy.
- F. Such other rules or modifications as may be necessary for the proper conduct of this award shall be adopted by the Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

### **III. NOMINEES AND AWARD RECIPIENTS**

- A. To be eligible for nomination purposes, a makeup artist or hairstylist must:
    - 1. Be involved in the design, creation, and supervision of the achievement under consideration and actively and physically participate in the hands-on makeup and/or hairstyling application during makeup and/or hairstyling tests and camera tests.
- OR**
- 2. Be involved in the daily hands-on application and supervision of the makeup and/or hairstyling achievement.
  - B. The Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch will vote by secret ballot to determine the specific individual makeup and/or hairstyling craft achievements for each film recommended to be considered for the award. The Branch may request that studios provide opportunities to view their motion pictures in advance of voting for the shortlist. Not providing the Branch opportunities to view the film prior to the start of preliminary voting may deem a film ineligible for consideration for the award.

- C. Selected makeup artists and hairstylists credited on the motion pictures under consideration for the Makeup and Hairstyling award shall be requested to provide the Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch Executive Committee with written descriptions explaining the procedures used to create the makeup and hairstyling achievements. Information such as the names and credits of the primary artists directly involved with, and principally responsible for the achievements being considered, may also be requested.
- D. The Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch Executive Committee will meet to select which credited artist(s) shall be eligible for nomination in accordance with the specific craft achievements determined by the Branch. Committee members will vote by secret ballot for up to three artists per film. An individual must receive a majority vote to be eligible as a designated nominee. The individual(s) with the highest majority vote will be deemed the designated nominees.

Up to three nominees may be designated in the Makeup and Hairstyling category, when there are three primary and essential contributors to the achievement(s) as determined by the Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch Executive Committee. Final determination of designated nominees for each shortlisted film will be made by the Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch Executive Committee. Appeals for additional nominees or statuettes will not be granted.

- E. When selecting the designated nominees, Committee members who worked on a recommended film or stand to benefit from a film's nomination or otherwise have a conflict of interest that could impair their judgment must abstain from voting.
- F. The Makeup Artists and Hairstylists Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

## RULE NINETEEN SPECIAL RULES FOR THE MUSIC AWARDS

### I. CATEGORIES

#### A. Original Score:

An original score is a substantial body of music that serves as original dramatic underscoring and is written specifically for the motion picture by the submitting composer(s).

#### B. Original Song:

An original song consists of words and music, both of which are original and **written specifically for the motion picture**. There must be a clearly audible, intelligible, substantive rendition (not necessarily visually presented) of both lyric and melody, used in the body of the motion picture or as the first **new** music cue once the end credits begin.

#### C. Original Musical:

An original musical consists of not fewer than five original songs (as defined in Paragraph I.B above) by the same writer or team of writers, either used as voiceovers or visually performed. Each of these songs must be substantively rendered, clearly audible, and intelligible, and must further the storyline of the motion picture. An arbitrary group of songs unessential to the storyline will not be considered eligible.

### II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. The work must be the result of a creative interaction between the filmmaker(s) and the composer(s) and/or songwriter(s) who have been engaged to work directly on the motion picture.
- B. A score must be created specifically for the eligible feature-length motion picture and comprise a minimum of 35% of the total music in the film.
  - 1. If a score does not meet the minimum 35%, the composer may submit a letter to the Music Branch Executive Committee, stating reasons for the score to be accepted for consideration. All letters must be received by the due dates published by the Academy for the current Awards cycle.
  - 2. All decisions of the Music Branch Executive Committee shall be final.
- C. In cases such as sequels and franchises from any media, no more than 20% of the score may use pre-existing themes and music borrowed from previous scores in the franchise.
- D. The work must be created and recorded exclusively for use in the motion picture **prior** to any other usage.
- E. Only the **principal composer(s) or songwriter(s)** responsible for the conception, substantive authorship and execution of the work **as a whole** shall be eligible for an award.
  - 1. Expressly excluded from eligibility are all individuals not responsible for the substantive authorship of the original work, including:
    - a. partial contributors (i.e., any writer or composer not responsible for the overall design of the work)
    - b. performers, producers, and/or arrangers not responsible for the creation of the original song or score
    - c. music supervisors
- F. A score shall not be eligible if:
  - 1. it has been diluted by the use of pre-existing music, or
  - 2. it has been diminished in impact by the predominant use of songs or any music not composed specifically for the film by the submitting composer, or
  - 3. it has been assembled from the music of more than one composer.
- G. No more than one statuette will normally be given in the Original Score category. A second statuette may be awarded when two credited composers function as equal collaborators, each contributing fully to the original dramatic underscore for the film.
- H. The Music Branch Executive Committee has the right, in what it alone determines to be a very rare and extraordinary circumstance, to award a third statuette to three individuals who functioned as equal collaborators in the creation of the Original Score and do not work together as a recognized band or group.
- I. In cases where a group of credited composers function as equal collaborators in a recognized band, a single statuette will be awarded to the group. Each credited composer in the band must agree to the single "group statuette" option by signing and returning a Group Award form prior to the submission deadline. Final determination of the awardable composers in the group will be made by the Music Branch Executive Committee.

- J. No more than two statuettes will normally be given in the Original Song category. A third statuette may be awarded when there are three essentially equal writers of a song. The Music Branch Executive Committee has the right, in what it alone determines to be a very rare and extraordinary circumstance, to award a fourth statuette. Regardless of the number of statuettes awarded, all eligible contributions must be essentially equal.
- K. A group is defined as five or more essentially equal credited songwriters. In those cases where more than five credited songwriters function as collaborators, the Music Branch Executive Committee has the right, in what it alone determines to be a very rare and extraordinary circumstance, to allow more than five credited songwriters to be considered for the group award. Final determination of the awardable songwriters in the group will be made by the Music Branch Executive Committee.
1. A single statuette will be awarded to the group. Each songwriter must agree to the single “group statuette” option by signing and returning a Group Award form prior to the submission deadline.
- L. In the case of an original musical, the composer or adapter of the instrumental score may qualify for an award if their contribution is deemed relevant and substantial.
- M. The Music Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all rules interpretations and all questions of eligibility. All decisions shall be final.
- N. It is within the sole and confidential discretion of the Board of Governors to determine what awards, if any, shall be given.

### **III. SUBMISSION**

- A. For an achievement to be eligible for nomination in any of the Music categories, the submission must be initiated either personally by the songwriter or composer, or by their authorized representative, or by an authorized representative of the distributing studio of that film.
- B. Submission forms must be signed by all submitting writers and must be accompanied by a complete final music cue sheet listing all music cues.
- C. Original Song submissions must further be accompanied by:
- A vocal lead sheet.
  - A digital video clip of no more than three minutes of each song, showing how the song is used in the motion picture. The clip must have captions provided per the Academy’s digital submission guidelines.
    - i. For songs submitted as the first new music cue once the end credits begin, the video clip must include the last 15 seconds of the film prior to the start of the credits, for a total clip runtime of 3:15.
  - A completed “Original Song Contribution Form,” obtainable from the Awards Submission site. The Music Branch Executive Committee will review all submission materials when making the determination of award-eligible songwriters.
    - i. Any songwriter whose contributions are not essentially equal must submit a letter along with the Contribution form, outlining in detail the nature of each person’s contribution.
  - No more than three (3) songs from any one film may be submitted for Original Song, regardless of writer(s).
- D. Original Score submission forms must further be accompanied by:
- A completed “Music Breakdown Form” obtainable from the Awards Submission site.
  - A final cue sheet.

- In cases where other non-submitting composers have contributed original music in the film – either by shared authorship of cues or by additional cues not shared with the submitting composer – a letter signed by ALL listed composers explaining the contribution of each must be submitted to the Music Branch Executive Committee by the submission deadline along with all other required materials. A letter simply acknowledging the eligibility of only the principal composer(s) is not sufficient.
- E. The composer's on-screen credit and submission form, as well as the actual cue sheet for the music as used in the film and supplied by the film company, shall be used by the Music Branch Executive Committee to help determine the eligibility of the score.
- F. Song submissions are due by **5 p.m. PT on Wednesday, October 14, 2026**. Score submissions are due by **5 p.m. PT on Wednesday, November 4, 2026**. New submissions will not be accepted beyond these dates; however, for existing submissions an extension may be granted at the Academy's discretion **only** for the purposes of delivery of supplemental materials such as video clips or final cue sheets.
- G. The Music Branch Executive Committee has the right, but not the obligation, to submit any eligible works in all three categories, but must do so no later than the submission deadline published by the Academy.
- H. The submitting writers and/or producers shall provide the Academy with the right to use Original Score, Original Song, and Original Musical submissions for any voting purposes, and for use in the production of the Academy Awards telecast.

#### **IV. VOTING**

- A. Works shall be judged on their effectiveness, craftsmanship, creative substance, and relevance to the dramatic whole, and only as presented within the motion picture. Extended, revised, enhanced or alternate versions outside of the film shall not be considered.
- B. The Music Branch Executive Committee requires that producers provide opportunities to view their motion pictures via the Academy Screening Room or advance theatrical screenings. This is required in instances where a title will be released after the preliminary voting cycle opens for shortlist selection.
- C. Films eligible for Original Score and film clips of eligible Original Songs shall be viewed by all members of the Music Branch who will vote in the order of their preference for not more than fifteen achievements in Original Song and twenty achievements in Original Score. The achievements receiving the highest number of votes in each category shall advance to the next round of voting.
- D. Five nominees for Original Song and five nominees for Original Score will then be chosen by a second round of balloting. Members shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five achievements in each category. The five achievements receiving the highest number of votes in each category shall become the nominations for final voting for the award.
- E. No more than two songs from any one film by the exact same writers may be shortlisted. If more than two songs from a film by the exact same writers are in contention, the two songs with the most votes will advance to the shortlist. However, no more than two songs from any one film, regardless of writers, may be nominated for the Original Song award.
- F. If there are twenty-five or fewer qualified works submitted in any category, the Music Branch Executive Committee may recommend to the Board of Governors that nominations be limited to three. If there are nine or fewer qualifying works submitted in any category, the Music Branch Executive Committee may recommend to the Board of Governors that no award be given in that category for the current Awards year.

- G. The category of Original Musical may be activated only by special request of the Music Branch Executive Committee to the Board of Governors in a year when the field of eligible submissions is determined to be of sufficient quantity and quality to justify award competition.
- H. Final voting for each category shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

**RULE TWENTY  
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE  
BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR AWARD**

**I. ELIGIBILITY**

- A. To be eligible for awards consideration for the 99th Awards year, a feature film must fulfill the following qualifying criteria. The eligibility period begins on January 1, 2026, and ends on December 31, 2026.
  - 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 and 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 General Entry requirements must be fulfilled, in compliance under Rule Two – Eligibility.

**AND**

- 2. The picture must complete the Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run criteria, consisting of the following:
  - a. Completed theatrical releases in nine additional markets, separate and in addition to the market being utilized for the film’s General Entry qualifying run, resulting in a total of at least ten markets. All theatrical releases must be publicly exhibited in a commercial motion picture theater for paid admission.
  - b. The Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run must consist of theatrical screenings of at least seven days, consecutive or non-consecutive, with at least one showtime per day.
  - c. The nine additional markets must be included on the list of top 50 U.S. markets, which is available at [www.oscars.org](http://www.oscars.org) or may be obtained from the Academy. In the event that a film is not able to fulfill this requirement, a maximum of two distinct non-U.S. territories may be counted as part of the additional markets requirement pending approval from the Academy.
  - d. A film’s Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run must occur within 45 days, either before or after, the completion of the film’s General Entry qualifying theatrical run.
  - e. If the expanded theatrical run extends beyond the December 31, 2026 eligibility period, it must still be completed either within 45 days or by January 21, 2027, whichever date would arrive earlier.
    - i. Failure to complete the Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run by applicable window listed above may result in the revocation of a film’s nomination.

**AND**

3. The motion picture must meet the requirements of two out of the four Representation and Inclusion Standards. A representative confirmed by the film's motion picture company must complete the submission of the Representation and Inclusion Entry Form (RAISE).

B. The Academy shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules.

## II. SUBMISSION

- A. For films which have their General Entry theatrical qualifying run between January 1, 2026, and June 30, 2026, all Oscars Submission Forms (General Entry), Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run information, a completed RAISE form, and full screen credits must be submitted to the Academy by **5 p.m. PT on Thursday, September 17, 2026**. For films which begin their theatrical qualifying run between July 1, 2026, and December 31, 2026, entrants must submit all Oscars Submission Forms (General Entry), Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run information, a completed RAISE form, and full screen credits to the Academy by **5 p.m. PT on Thursday, November 12, 2026**.
- B. Films entering for Best Picture can only be submitted by a confirmed representative of its distributor or production company. Production companies will be defined as those in the legal billing of the film as "A (insert company name) Production."
- C. Producers must be listed on the entry form in order of legal billing or otherwise agreed-upon contractual position submitted by the film's distributor. All credited individuals with a "producer" or "produced by" credit are required to sign the entry form, to ensure that all parties are properly informed of the criteria and deadlines regarding the film's eligibility and designated award recipients.
- D. For films that have not been released by or have not completed a Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run by the November 12, 2026, submission deadline, entrants must provide documentation by the final submission deadline confirming that the film will satisfy all release requirements. Documentation must include the following:
  - Booking confirmation of a General Entry qualifying theatrical run if one has not yet been completed.
  - Booking confirmation of a Best Picture Expanded Theatrical Run, or a document detailing release plans, including specific dates, markets, and theaters.
- E. **Tuesday, December 1, 2026**, 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.

## III. NOMINEES AND AWARD RECIPIENTS

- A. The individual(s) who shall be credited for Academy Awards purposes must have screen credit of "producer" or "produced by." 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. The nominees will be those three or fewer producers who have performed the major portion of the producing functions. 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.
- B. To qualify as a producer nominee for a nominated picture, the producer must have been determined awards-eligible by the Producers Guild of America for the picture or have successfully appealed the Producers Guild of America's refusal of such eligibility. Final determination of the qualifying producer nominees for each nominated picture will be made by the Producers Branch Executive Committee, including the right to name any additional qualified producer as a nominee.

- C. Films released from January 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026, must be able to provide proof of submission to the PGA for mark certification or awards-only determination no later than September 14, 2026. Films released from July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, must be able to provide proof of submission to the PGA for mark certification or awards-only determination no later than November 12, 2026.
- D. Producing nominees for each film will be listed in order based on agreed-upon producer position as shown in legal billing submitted by distributor and verified by producer(s) on the completed Oscars Submission Form.
  - ii. Established producing partnerships will be noted with an ampersand symbol (&).
- E. The Producers Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of nominees and award recipients.

#### IV. VOTING

- A. A Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures shall be made available online along with a nominations ballot to all active and life members of the Academy.
- B. All active and life members of the Academy shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than ten motion pictures. The ten motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Best Picture award.
- C. Final voting for the Best Picture award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

### RULE TWENTY-ONE SPECIAL RULES FOR THE PRODUCTION DESIGN AWARD

- 1. A Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures shall be made available along with a nominations ballot to all members of the Production Design Branch, who shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five motion pictures.
- 2. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Production Design award.
- 3. Prior to the start of nominations voting, a meeting of the Production Design Branch shall be held to rule on the eligibility of all productions for Awards consideration. Eligibility for this award shall be limited to the production designer and set decorator **primarily responsible** for the design of the production and the execution of that concept. An art director may be considered eligible for the Production Design award only when a production designer is absent from the credits. When the environment of a film is substantially composed of animation and digital artistry, the designer most responsible for that achievement also may be considered. In the case of fully animated feature films, the production designer alone shall be considered; a set decorator shall not be considered unless physical sets were constructed for that film.
- 4. The Production Design Branch shall have the discretion to give more weight to design than to execution. Any submission requesting award eligibility for more than one production designer, more than one set decorator, more than one art director or an additional artist, exhibiting extraordinary circumstances, must be accompanied by a letter of justification submitted by the producer and the production designer to the Academy no later than 5 p.m. PT on November 12, 2026. These circumstances will be reviewed at a special meeting of the Production Design Branch; however, in no case will more than one additional award be considered.

5. Except as indicated above, recognition in the form of the Academy statuette shall be given for the production design and for the set decoration of the motion picture receiving the Production Design award.
6. Final voting for the Production Design award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

**RULE TWENTY-TWO  
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE  
SOUND AWARD**

1. A Reminder List of all eligible motion pictures shall be made available along with a nominations ballot to all members of the Sound Branch.
2. Preliminary voting shall produce a shortlist of ten motion pictures. Sound Branch members shall vote in order of their preference for not more than ten pictures to be considered for the Sound award. The ten motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall advance to the next round of voting.
3. The Academy must receive the names of the individuals responsible for the work through the Oscars Submission Form (General Entry) by the General Entry submission deadline, 5 p.m. PT on November 12, 2026.
4. The Sound Branch Executive Committee will request that producers provide opportunities to view their motion pictures via the Academy Screening Room or advance theatrical screenings. This is required in instances where a title will be released after the preliminary voting cycle opens for shortlist selection.
5. When a motion picture is shortlisted, the sound team responsible for the motion picture selected for Awards consideration shall be required to provide a DCP of one clip reel from their film's release master, highlighting the sound achievements. This clip reel will be screened by the Sound Branch at a nominating screening, prior to nominations voting. For archival purposes, a DCDM must be provided.
  - a. Clip reels must be from the final release version of the motion picture and may be up to ten (10) minutes in total running time per title. Less than ten minutes is permitted.
  - b. Each clip reel must be exactly as it appears in the final release version; no edits or audio manipulation of the clip reel will be permitted, beyond what is technically required to create the presentation reel. Two cuts within the clip reel are permitted, along with one second of black on either side of the cut(s). If the clip reel consists of two or more segments, they must all be presented in the same sequential order as they appeared in the final release version of the motion picture.
  - c. The excerpted clip reel must be presented in the same sound format(s) as used in the final release version of the motion picture. All submissions should be supplied as a fully authored DCP, with NO encryption.
  - d. If the clip reel does not meet these requirements, the producers shall be notified and given an opportunity to make corrections within the deadline period; otherwise, it will not be exhibited.
  - e. The producers shall provide the Academy the right to use the clip reel for any voting purposes, and for any nonprofit purposes of the Academy Museum, the Academy Foundation or Academy websites.
  - f. A multimedia file version of the clip reel shall be provided for use in the production of the Academy Awards telecast.
  - g. Clip reels shall become the property of the Academy and placed in the Academy Film Archive, with the proviso that the Academy will not use the clips for commercial gain.
6. To determine nominations, all Sound Branch members will vote in the order of their preference for not more than five of the motion pictures from the shortlist. The five motion pictures receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Sound award.

7. No more than six individuals per motion picture shall be named as designated nominees for the Sound award.

8. Eligibility for this award shall be limited to the creative team comprised of, in the following order:

a. no more than two production sound mixers

The production sound mixer is the individual who served in that capacity for at least 2/3 of the principal photography schedule. Should there be two individuals whose respective time on the show was less than the 2/3 minimum, the producer must submit a letter to the Sound Branch Executive Committee by the deadline published by the Academy, explaining the eligibility of the designated nominees. The Sound Branch Executive Committee will make the final determination of eligibility.

b. no more than two supervising sound editors

The sound editing supervisor(s) must have been directly involved in and primarily responsible for the planning, creation, direction and execution of the sound design and editing for the motion picture. The supervisor(s) must be the primary creative decision maker and principal interpreter of the director's vision to the sound editing team. The supervisor(s) must approve the sound effects and their specific placement in the show, coordinate the creation of newly designed sound and Foley effects, and coordinate the editing of both production and post-sync dialogue. The supervisor(s) must participate and contribute during the creation of the pre-mixes as well as be present throughout the entire final sound mix. In the event the above responsibilities are divided, both supervisors must adhere to the above criteria.

1. Any sound team member who is credited as anything other than supervising sound editor or sound supervisor and contends that they meet the qualifications as written above, must petition the Sound Branch Executive Committee by providing a letter of explanation regarding their contributions to the film by the date published by the Academy. This includes supervising sound designer, sound designer, or a sound design credit.

c. no more than three rerecording mixers

No more than three eligible co-rerecording mixers who have contributed substantially to the final sound mix shall be designated for Academy Awards purposes. The rerecording mixer(s) must have combined the various sound elements into the final soundtrack under the approval of the director. They must have been present for all creative decisions, and executed any changes, alterations or fixes requested by the director. Rerecording mixers who only provided pre-dubs or pre-mixes, or materials for international versions, are not eligible.

9. Should any nominated individual have performed multiple roles on one production (such as supervising sound editor and rerecording mixer), that individual will receive only one citation in the nomination and one statuette.

10. The Sound Branch Executive Committee has the right to return any eligibility question to the creative team (including the producer and director) for their resolution. The creative team must demonstrate overwhelming support and consensus for any exception. If the creative team is unable to agree, the Sound Branch Executive Committee reserves the right to deem that title ineligible.

11. Special Circumstances

In the event that a member of the team responsible for the sound of a motion picture is deemed noteworthy but does not conform to the breakdown of roles in Paragraph 8 above, the individuals

named in the Oscars Submission Form (General Entry) from the Academy's Submission site may deviate from the aforementioned breakdown in Paragraph 8.

- a. The submission must include those responsible for production sound mixing, sound editing supervision and rerecording mixing of the film. These positions may not be exchanged for a special circumstance request.
  - b. A letter of explanation regarding any requested exceptions to Paragraph 8 must be submitted to [sound@oscars.org](mailto:sound@oscars.org) by 5 p.m. PT on Thursday, November 12, 2026.
  - c. The letter of explanation shall be submitted by the producer and director and include written support for the exception from all members of the eligible sound team.
  - d. The Sound Branch Executive Committee will review all special requests and accompanying letter(s). The committee has the sole responsibility and reserves the right to grant any special request it determines to be extraordinary.
  - e. The decision of the Sound Branch Executive Committee on special circumstances eligibility shall be final.
12. The Theater Sound Inspection Committee shall inspect and approve the projection sound systems of the Academy's theaters prior to the annual screening of nominated achievements. No changes may be made in the sound systems after final approval by the Committee. Any standard release print (DCP) that plays on the normal projection sound system of the Academy's theaters requires no special approval of the Committee. Any production that deviates from the normal sound system, or requires modification of the system, must be approved by a majority of the Committee before the final check of the system. Notification of such deviation or modification requirements must be submitted to the Academy at least three weeks in advance of the theater inspection meeting.
13. Final voting for the Sound award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.
14. Such other rules or modifications as may be necessary for the proper conduct of this award shall be adopted by the Sound Branch Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

### **RULE TWENTY-THREE SPECIAL RULES FOR THE VISUAL EFFECTS AWARD**

1. The Academy President shall appoint a chair who will preside over an Executive Committee that is composed of active and life members of the Visual Effects Branch.
2. The Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee shall review a reminder list of all eligible films and, through a series of meetings, shall vote to select a maximum of twenty films for further consideration. Achievements shall be judged within the parameters defined by the Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee and on the basis of:
  - a. the contribution the visual effects make to the overall production, and
  - b. the human artistry and skill, fidelity, and technical achievement with which the visual illusions are achieved.
3. Avoiding conflicts of interest: Committee members are considered *conflicted* if they have:

- a. Worked on the proposed film
- b. Or stand to benefit from the film's nomination
- c. Or if they otherwise have a personal or professional conflict of interest that could impair their judgment

*Conflicted* committee members may present relevant information when requested, but shall not advocate for the film. Conflicted members shall abstain from voting on the achievement and shall be excused during deliberation.

4. The Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee will request that producers provide opportunities to view their films through advance screenings. If the film is not available by two weeks prior to the selection meeting, excerpts may be submitted. If suitable materials are not made available, the Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee has the right to deem the film ineligible.
5. The producers of the twenty films under further consideration (or their designees) shall be requested to provide the committee with the following:
  - a. The names and titles of the primary individuals – not to exceed four in number – directly involved with, and principally responsible for, the visual effects achieved and a description of their contributions. **Additional names will not be considered.** The Visual Effects award is a craft award. For that reason, producers, coordinators, and executives are not eligible for this award, unless they acted in the capacity of craftspeople with primary creative responsibility for the achievement.
  - b. Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee supplementary video – not to exceed three minutes in total running time – providing firsthand information from the lead visual effects supervisor regarding precisely what was created as a visual or mechanical effect, to arrive at the finished work.
6. Any disputes concerning the list of designated nominees that are submitted by the film's producers will not be accepted without a formal appeal. Appeals should contain short statements from the individuals concerned, and from team members working directly with the individuals, as appropriate. Appeals must be submitted to the committee by December 3, 2026.
7. The producers of the ten films that will be considered for nomination (or their designees) shall be requested to provide the committee with the following:
  - a. Written descriptions and visual material illustrating the procedures used to create the effects.
  - b. The Bake-Off reel – not to exceed ten minutes in total running time – containing excerpts from the digital release DCP of the motion picture. The Bake-Off reel will present the effects shots in movie order, with minor exceptions allowed. This composition playlist must reference only the theatrical release DCP media essence files. For smoother presentation, audio-only crossfades are allowed, and shall not exceed a length of 0.5 seconds. Producers wishing to submit a film excerpt reel instead may do so, provided the motion picture was originally released in that format. In this case, a duplicate excerpt reel from the composite release print must be provided for archiving. All formats containing narration are required to include closed captioning.
  - c. Intro Before and After reel – not to exceed three minutes in total running time – showing the progression of a minimum of two steps in the creation of a finished shot, from raw plate to finished product, or – in the case of shots or sequences created entirely off the set – storyboards, concept art or previsualization. The audio should be silent (MOS) overlaid with voice-over narration explaining the material that is either prerecorded or provided by an attending designated

nominee. The content of this reel should be directly related to the material in the Bake-Off reel. All formats containing overlaid narration are required to include closed captioning.

- d. A multimedia file version of the composition playlist or excerpt reel for use in the production of the Academy Awards telecast.
- e. Display artwork used to represent the film on the Academy Screening Room.

If these supporting materials are not made available, the Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee has the right to deem the film ineligible.

- 8. The producers shall provide the Academy the right to use the excerpts for any voting purposes, and for any nonprofit purposes of the Academy Museum, the Academy Foundation or Academy websites.
- 9. Visual effects, as an achievement or a craft, shall be determined by the Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee. Eligibility of the submitted body of work and contributor(s) to the achievement, for nomination purposes, shall also be determined by the committee.
- 10. Active voting members of the Visual Effects Branch shall be eligible to view the excerpts of the ten films under consideration at the annual nominating screening which is required viewing to vote. The screening order of the films will be randomized with exceptions allowed for technical reasons by the projection staff. Written descriptions of the effects shall be made available to all active branch members prior to the screening.
- 11. The producers (or their designees) may attend the nominating screening, however, only the designated nominees will be allowed to address branch members.
- 12. Following the running of the excerpts and discussion relative to the achievements, voting shall be conducted as follows:
  - a. A ballot shall be submitted by all eligible voting members of the Visual Effects Branch on the ten films under consideration.
  - b. For each of the ten films, voting members are required to have seen the film or shall abstain from voting on that film.
  - c. Five films shall be selected, using reweighted range voting, to become the nominations for final voting for the Visual Effects award.
  - d. Final voting for the Visual Effects award shall be restricted to active and life Academy members. Members shall be required to view the 3-minute Before and After reels to be eligible to vote in the category.
- 13. Composition playlists and excerpt reels shall become the property of the Academy and be placed in the Academy Film Archive, with the proviso that the Academy will not use the excerpts for commercial gain.
- 14. Such other rules or procedures necessary for the proper conduct of this award shall be adopted by the Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

#### **RULE TWENTY-FOUR SPECIAL RULES FOR THE WRITING AWARDS**

- 1. An award shall be given for the best achievement in each of two categories:

## **Adapted Screenplay**

## **Original Screenplay**

2. To be eligible in either Writing category, an explicit screenwriting credit must be present in the film's legal billing and the screenplay must be human-authored. Credited production companies or entities of any kind are ineligible for consideration in the Writing categories.
3. To be eligible in either Writing category, a copy of the final shooting script must be submitted in PDF form.
4. The Writers Branch Executive Committee will review the legal billing for all eligible titles. Reminder Lists of all eligible screenplays in each category shall be made available along with nominations ballots to all members of the Writers Branch, who shall vote in the order of their preference for not more than five screenplays in each category.
5. The five screenplays in each category receiving the highest number of votes shall become the nominations for final voting for the Writing awards.
6. The Writers Branch Executive Committee shall resolve all questions of eligibility and rules. Once the Writers Branch Executive Committee has made its final decision, category determination appeals and additional materials are not accepted.
7. Final voting for the Writing awards shall be restricted to active and life Academy members.

## **RULE TWENTY-FIVE RULES FOR THE GOVERNORS AWARDS**

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

The Governors Awards include the Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award, the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award, and the Honorary Award. They are determined and bestowed by the Board of Governors.

### **II. NOMINATING PROCEDURES**

- A. Nominee recommendations for the Governors Awards shall be solicited from the entire membership. All eligible recommendations from members shall be shared with governors prior to the nominations deadline.
- B. Governors shall nominate candidates for particular awards prior to a meeting in which the Awards Committee shall review eligible recommendations from members and may nominate additional candidates for awards.
- C. All nominations from governors and the Awards Committee shall be shared with the Board of Governors prior to a nominee review session in which governors shall review the list of nominees and discuss their candidacy. Following the nominee review session, there shall be a selection meeting in which governors shall discuss nominees and vote.

### **III. VOTING PROCEDURES**

- A. At an annually designated meeting of the Board of Governors, governors shall discuss nominees and voting shall be conducted by secret ballot. Discussion of nominees shall be limited to two minutes per

speaker, and no supplemental material advocating for a specific nominee, such as presentations or video, may be shown.

- B. The governors shall indicate their preference for a Governors Award by selecting one candidate from among the names listed on the ballot. The candidate who receives a majority of the votes shall be the Governors Award recipient.
- C. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, all candidates with less than 10% of the votes shall be eliminated from consideration and the remaining candidates shall stand for a second round of voting.
  - i. If after the second round of voting no candidate receives a majority of the votes, the one candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated from consideration and the remaining candidates shall be voted upon.
  - ii. If, after the second round of voting in which no candidate receives a majority, there are two or more candidates tied with the lowest number of votes, and if they do not comprise more than half of the entire field of candidates still under consideration, then all of those candidates who are tied with the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated from consideration. If those tied with the lowest number of votes comprise more than half of the remaining field, then the governors shall vote by ranking those who are tied in order of preference; the resulting top vote-getter shall remain on the ballot and the others shall be eliminated.
  - iii. This process of elimination shall continue until a candidate with a majority is determined.
- D. A second, third, and fourth Governors Award may also be presented, following the same nominating and voting procedures as described above except discussion shall be limited to one minute per speaker. All nominees, determined prior to the meeting, remain eligible other than those that are ineligible due to limitations.
- E. If any selected Governors Award recipient is unable to accept the award at the annual ceremony, the Board of Governors has the discretion to not bestow the selected award or to select a different candidate. To select a different candidate, governors shall meet again and continue the process of elimination outlined above.

#### **IV. LIMITATIONS**

- A. No more than **four** Governors Awards may be presented in a given Awards year.
- B. No more than one Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award and one Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award may be presented in a given Awards year. There is no such restriction on the Honorary Award.
- C. Between the Governors Awards recipients, a minimum of three disciplines must be represented in a given Awards year.
- D. No proxies shall be permitted in balloting for any Governors Award.
- E. No Governors Award shall be voted posthumously.
- F. No sitting member of the Board of Governors shall be eligible to receive a Governors Award.
- G. No individual shall be eligible to receive any particular Governors Award more than once.
- H. No competitive Oscar winner shall be eligible to receive an Honorary Award except in extraordinary circumstances.

**RULE TWENTY-SIX  
RULES FOR THE  
SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

1. This award shall be given to an individual for an achievement which makes an exceptional contribution to the motion picture for which it was created, but for which there is no annual award category. Such award shall only be conferred, however, for achievements in productions that also qualify under Rules Two and Three.
2. Nominations for the Special Achievement Award shall be made at a special meeting of the Board of Governors.
3. Following completion of the nominations for this award, a secret ballot shall be taken on which the governors vote for the nominee of their preference. The nominee receiving the highest numerical score shall be considered further in a second secret ballot to determine if this award shall be given. If the achievement receives a vote of **two-thirds** of the governors present, the person(s) named as being responsible for the achievement shall receive the Special Achievement Award.
4. No proxies shall be permitted in balloting for the Special Achievement Award.
5. Such other rules or modifications as may be necessary for the proper conduct of this award shall be adopted by the Board of Governors.

**RULE TWENTY-SEVEN  
SPECIAL RULES FOR THE  
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL AWARDS**

**I. AWARDS DEFINITIONS**

1. Academy Awards for scientific and technical achievement shall be given by the Board of Governors upon recommendation from the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee and the Board Awards Committee. Awards may be given for devices, methods, formulas, discoveries, or inventions of special and outstanding value to the motion picture arts and sciences.
2. Except in extraordinary circumstances, no awards shall be given posthumously. No awards shall be given where all recipients are deceased. No Academy Award of Merit may be given posthumously.
3. To avoid conflicts of interest, individuals directly involved with any achievement under awards consideration must not participate in the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee and its surrogate groups. Further, members of the committee and its surrogate groups who have a personal connection with any achievement shall not be present during deliberation and shall abstain from voting on the achievement. Finally, individuals who work at the same organization as a potential award recipient but who are not associated with the achievement may participate but shall abstain from voting on the achievement.
  - a. The Academy reserves the right to revoke award recognition in the event a conflict of interest not previously disclosed is discovered.
4. No sitting member of the Board of Governors shall be eligible – through direct application, application by proxy, discovery by committee, or by upgrade from a previous achievement – to be the sole recipient of the Technical Achievement Award, Scientific and Engineering Award, or the Academy Award of Merit for a Scientific and Technical achievement.

- a. In exceptional circumstances, a sitting member of the Board of Governors may be recognized alongside other contributors. The Academy will resolve all issues of eligibility.
5. No current employee of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences shall be – through direct application, application by proxy, discovery by committee, or by upgrade from a previous achievement – the recipient of the Technical Achievement Award, Scientific and Engineering Award, or the Academy Award of Merit for a Scientific and Technical achievement, and shall remain ineligible for a period of three years after their employment has ended.
6. Any projects, inventions, programs, or initiatives directly originated by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences are ineligible to receive a Scientific and Technical Award.
7. Awards for scientific and technical achievement may be granted in any of the following three classifications:

**ACADEMY AWARD OF MERIT**

For those achievements that have an extraordinary influence upon the advancement of the motion picture arts and sciences.

**SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING AWARD**

For those achievements that exhibit a high level of engineering and are crucial to the progress of the motion picture arts and sciences.

**TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

For those achievements with an outstanding contribution to the progress of the motion picture arts and sciences.

**II. PROCEDURES**

1. An official public announcement will be made, and requests shall be sent to individuals and organizations engaged in scientific and technical developments for motion pictures, inviting them to submit any devices, methods, formulas, discoveries, or inventions for awards consideration. These achievements may be developed by the submitter or by any other organizations.
2. The Academy President shall annually appoint two chairs of the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee who shall serve a one-year term.
3. After reviewing the initial submissions, the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee Chairs shall select members to serve on the Committee. Committee members must be members of the Academy, and these selections are subject to the approval of the Academy President. Committee members should be selected based on their professional and technical expertise and should be able to provide meaningful input regarding the submissions received. The committee will be dissolved upon the completion of the annual term. Committee members must be representatives of the motion picture and/or technical fields.
4. A list of all areas of potential achievements (“Areas of Focus”) under consideration shall be widely publicized to permit anyone with claims of prior or relevant invention, or of achievements similar to those under consideration, to bring them to the attention of the committee.
  - a. A maximum of six Areas of Focus may be investigated per award year.
5. In evaluating the submitted achievements, the committee shall strive to seek out other items similar to those being considered for awards. If such items are discovered, they may be considered on an equal basis.

6. The committee shall then conduct a series of meetings and examinations and shall arrange for such demonstrations as are necessary to evaluate the achievements properly and make recommendations for action by the Board of Governors and the Board Awards Committee.
7. The Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee Chairs may at times form subcommittees during the investigation process. The chair of each subcommittee group shall be one of the members of the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee and shall conduct its meetings and discussions.
8. The committee may appoint surrogate groups for each technical classification in which there are achievements to be considered (“Areas of Focus”).
9. Each surrogate group shall consider all achievements in its field. The surrogate groups shall evaluate those achievements and forward their conclusions to the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee in the form of a written report prepared by the respective surrogate group members.
10. All voting by the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee shall be done by secret ballot. All decisions as to award recommendations and classifications shall require a two-thirds majority vote of those attending and not abstaining.
11. The committee shall carefully evaluate all information regarding the actual authorship of each achievement being considered for an award and shall, at its sole discretion, identify the individual(s) and/or organization(s) to be recognized. The committee shall recommend to the Board of Governors and the Board Awards Committee the person(s) and/or organization(s) to whom an award shall be made, the classification of award and the text thereof.
12. In recommending awards, the committee will judge to the best of its ability the scientific and technical merits of the achievements, but does not warrant that the person or persons who are named on the award were responsible for the origin or development of the entire achievement.
13. Full claim for originality and development of each achievement must be established to the satisfaction of the committee. If any controversy should arise as to the origin or authorship of an achievement, the committee may request that the Board of Governors postpone action until proper credit is established.
14. It shall be within the discretion of the committee to recommend that no awards be given.
15. It shall be within the discretion of the committee to review any Academy Award conferred for scientific and technical achievement to determine subsequent to the granting of such award whether the classification of such achievement should be elevated by reason of its contribution to the motion picture arts and sciences, and to recommend elevation in classification to the Board of Governors and the Board Awards Committee.
  - a. Recommendations to upgrade previously conferred Scientific and Technical Awards must originate with a proposal by a member of the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee, the Board of Governors, or the Board Awards Committee.
16. Such other rules as may be considered necessary for the proper conduct of these awards shall be adopted by the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors and the Board Awards Committee.

**RULE TWENTY-EIGHT  
RULES FOR THE  
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SPECIAL AWARDS**

1. The Scientific and Technical Special Awards may include:

- a. **SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.** This award shall be given to an individual whose technological contributions have made an extraordinary and lasting impact on the motion picture industry.
  - b. **AWARD OF COMMENDATION.** This award shall be given in recognition of outstanding technical achievements in the motion picture arts and sciences.
  - c. **SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SERVICE AWARD.** This award shall be given to an individual in recognition of extraordinary service to the motion picture industry.
2. A Special Awards Review Subcommittee will identify potential candidates for the **Scientific and Technical Lifetime Achievement Award** and the **Scientific and Technical Service Award**. This committee will be composed of the chairs of the Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee, the chair of the Board Awards Committee, three other members of the Board Awards Committee, and five Academy members selected by the President.
    - a. Any candidate must be endorsed by two members of the Special Awards Review Subcommittee to be considered.
    - b. The Special Awards Review Subcommittee will form surrogate groups to investigate the candidates' careers and contributions.
    - c. Each surrogate group will produce a report on each candidate which will include a minimum of **three** letters of recommendation from active Academy members.
  3. The Scientific and Technical Awards Executive Committee may propose candidates for the **Award of Commendation** and forward their recommendations to the Board Awards Committee for consideration.
  4. No sitting member of the Board of Governors shall be eligible to receive the Scientific and Technical Lifetime Achievement Award, the Award of Commendation or the Scientific and Technical Service Award.
  5. No current employee of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences shall be eligible for the Scientific and Technical Lifetime Achievement Award, the Award of Commendation or the Scientific and Technical Service Award and shall remain ineligible for a period of three years after their employment has ended.
  6. The names of the proposed award recipients, along with the corresponding summary reports and letters of recommendation, will be brought before the Awards Committee. A vote of **two-thirds** of the committee members is necessary to approve and endorse each proposal to be presented to the Board of Governors.
  7. The names of the award recipients approved by the Awards Committee, along with the corresponding summary reports and letters of recommendation, will then be brought before the Board of Governors for consideration. A vote of **two-thirds** of the Board of Governors is necessary to bestow any of these awards.
  8. No more than one Scientific and Technical Lifetime Achievement Award and one Scientific and Technical Service Award may be presented in a given Awards year. There is no such restriction on the Award of Commendation.
  9. All voting will be done by secret ballot. No proxies shall be permitted in balloting for any of these Special Awards. No Special Awards shall be voted posthumously.

10. Presentation of these awards is made at a special event honoring scientific and technical achievements.

**Approved by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Board of Governors  
on April 23, 2026.**