

**2026-2027 Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting Rules,
Eligibility and Terms & Conditions**

Entrant Rules & Eligibility

1. An entrant's total lifetime earnings for motion picture and television writing may not exceed \$25,000 USD before the end of the competition. This limit applies to compensation for motion picture and television writing services as well as for the sale of (or sale of an option on) screenplays, teleplays, stage plays, books, treatments, stories, premises and any other source material. If an entrant becomes ineligible during the course of the competition, the entrant must notify the Nicholl Fellowships in writing in a timely manner.

In most instances, fellowship and competition prize money is not counted as earnings unless it includes a "first look" clause, an option or any other quid pro quo involving the writer's work.

Entrants must be human and cannot represent a production company or Artificial Intelligence agent/entity and be aged 18 or older at the time of entry.

2. Current Academy employees (full-time and part-time), officers, Governors, Trustees, current Nicholl Executive Committee members, and the immediate families of these individuals are not eligible. Current Academy consultants, third-party vendors, and the immediate families of these individuals are not eligible. Active and Emeritus Academy members and their immediate families are not eligible to submit. Alumni from any Academy's talent development programs) are not eligible until they are two years past the completion of any of these programs. Nicholl Fellowship winners are not eligible to enter again.
3. Entrants referred by Nicholl partners must register with the Nicholl fellowships and submit:
 - A completed application form (URL to form provided by the Academy to the writer), including affirming eligibility.
 - If requested, entrant to provide one PDF file of the original feature film screenplay provided by the referring Nicholl Partner . The feature screenplay should be in standard industry format (12 point Courier) and no shorter than 80 pages and no longer than 125 pages. Scripts that are outside of standard industry format and/or have cheated margins to exceed 125 pages may have this counted against them during judging.

Submitted scripts must have been written originally in English; translations by a third party (including translation software) will not be accepted. No multi-part, episodic scripts will be accepted.

Submitted scripts must be the original work of the entrant(s) and may not be based, in whole or in part, on any other fiction or nonfiction material, published or unpublished, produced or unproduced. Entries may, however, be adapted from the entrant's original work, which should be noted in the logline required on the application form. Scripts that include dialogue, characters, or scene description generated by artificial intelligence (AI) are ineligible for this competition.

Entries lacking a logline on the application form will be disqualified.

If the script is based on a true story, historical or contemporary, the "based on true story/events" button should be selected within the online application form.

Collaborative work by two writers who share equally in its creation is eligible. Collaborative work for which one writer developed the idea and another writer wrote the screenplay is not eligible. Collaborative work by three or more writers is not eligible. The collaborator's name must be provided during the online application process. Writing partners selected as Fellows will divide the fellowship stipend equally.

The entrant is responsible for ensuring their name, address, phone number or any other identifying information does not appear on the title page or any other page of the script when applying. Placing a Library of Congress or WGA registration number on the title page is acceptable but not required.

4. **For the 2026-2027 Nicholl Fellowships competition, entrants must be recommended by an official Nicholl Partner.** Applications will be accepted should they meet the requirements. Submitted scripts will not be returned. The Academy is not responsible for late, misdirected, missing, incomplete, or damaged entries.
5. The final selection of fellowship winners will be made by the Academy Nicholl Fellowships Executive Committee.
6. An entrant (or writing team) may submit a *maximum* of one screenplay in the current competition. Only one copy, draft or version of any screenplay may be submitted by an entrant or writing team, and violation risks disqualification—this includes submission for consideration via more than one public portal partner. Entrants who open multiple accounts to submit more than one entry in the competition risk disqualification--this includes submission for consideration via more than one public portal partner. Under no circumstances will substitutions of either corrected pages or new drafts of an entry screenplay be allowed.
7. A screenplay referred to the Academy by an official Nicholl partner (including Nicholl partner universities, screenwriting labs, film festivals, filmmaker programs) is ineligible to be submitted for future consideration. A screenplay that is submitted through a public portal that does not get referred to the Academy may be submitted up to three times in a 10 year period.
8. Entrants support a professional workplace and acknowledge that any form of abuse or harassment towards Academy staff and the Academy's partners is prohibited. Abusive, discourteous, and/or harassing language and/or conduct may result in disqualification of entrant and/or banning the entrant from future entry at the Academy's discretion.
9. Every writer of a screenplay that advances to the final round will be asked to write to the Academy Nicholl Fellowships Committee expressing the writer's personal and professional interests.
10. Academy Nicholl Fellowships may be held concurrently with other fellowships or any other similar award, or while completing a formal course of study. The fellowship year may be deferred to allow a student winner to complete their education.
11. Academy Nicholl Fellows agree to furnish the Academy with a copy of the screenplay(s) written during the fellowship year. The Academy acquires no rights to the work (or to the entry script) and will not participate in its marketing or in any other aspects of its commercial future.

Competition Terms and Conditions:

By entering, I (we) represent and agree:

- The information supplied in this application is accurate.
- The material submitted is my (our) sole and original work.
- I (we) will indemnify and defend the Academy Foundation and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, its employees, directors and agents, from, and against, all claims, demands, losses, costs, damages, judgments, liabilities and expenses (including attorneys' fees) arising out of or in connection with my (our) entry or submissions to the Academy Nicholl Fellowships competition, or any works related to such submissions.
- The Academy Foundation may retain the material submitted for use in connection with its Academy Nicholl Fellowships deliberations, and thereafter for its archival collection of educational materials, to which use I (we) expressly waive compensation.
- The burden of obtaining copyright or otherwise protecting any proprietary interests in the material, if I (we) wish to do so, rests entirely with me (us).
- I (we) understand the purposes and conditions of the Academy Nicholl Fellowships and to my (our) acceptance of them should I (we) be selected as a Nicholl fellow.
- I am (we are) eligible for the competition, and that I (we) will notify the Academy Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting if I (we) become ineligible prior to the conclusion of the competition.
- Providing false or misleading information on this application or failing in any other way to comply with the rules of the competition, will subject me (us) to disqualification, forfeiture of prize money and/or other penalties.