

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FAQs

1. What is the eligibility period for qualifying for the 92nd awards?
Films qualifying theatrically must complete the runs in both cities between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019.
2. Can my film have nontheatrical distribution (broadcast and cable television, PPV/VOD, DVD distribution, Inflight airline distribution, Internet transmission) and still be eligible for Academy Award consideration?
Yes, but not before its theatrical release has begun. If the film has previously received nontheatrical distribution then it cannot qualify through a theatrical release. The film would only be able to qualify through winning a qualifying festival award on the Academy's Documentary Feature Qualifying Festival List.
3. What about same day and date VOD or TV broadcast?
VOD can occur in conjunction with the first day of the qualifying theatrical release but not before.
4. Will my film be ineligible if it screens at schools and/or film festivals?
Any sort of public screening, such as schools and film festival screenings, do not affect the film's eligibility.
5. How much of my film can be shown publicly online before its qualifying theatrical run?
Trailers and clips are fine as long as the footage totals no more than ten minutes or ten percent of the film's running time, whichever is less.
6. If my film won a qualifying festival award, is it required to have a qualifying theatrical run?
No, by winning a qualifying festival award (see festival list for specific awards), the film is automatically eligible to be submitted in the Documentary Feature category. However, in order to be eligible for Best Picture and all other craft categories, including Music, the film must complete a Los Angeles qualifying theatrical run.
7. I would like to name the executive producer as the second possible nominee for my film.
Only individuals with a director or producer credit are eligible to receive an Oscar in the Documentary categories. Everyone with a Director or Producer credit must sign off on the designated nominees when submitting.
8. The entry form only allows for two or three possible nominees but another person who worked on the film definitely deserves an award.
Upon submission, normally two or three individuals may be named as possible nominees for a documentary feature. In the event that the film advances to the shortlist, all producers will be vetted to determine the appropriate nominees for the film.
9. My assistant filled out the form and made some mistakes. Will you make the changes?
It is your responsibility as the filmmaker to make sure that all information on the entry form is accurate. When you sign the entry form, you are agreeing that the information on the form is correct.
10. Does an HD-Cam or Blu-Ray meet the digital requirements?
Only a Digital Cinema Package (DCP) meets our digital requirements.

11. I submitted my film last year, but since then I've added new material or re-edited. Can I submit it again?
No. We do not accept works in progress; the version submitted to the Academy must be the final and definitive version of your film.

12. I submitted my film last year, but since then I've won an additional festival award. Can I submit it again?
No. The category rules only allow for a film to be submitted once for awards consideration.

13. What advertisements are required?
While advertisements in specific publications are not required, please submit a digital copy (scanned image or PDF) of the film's movie critic review(s) in either the LA Times, LA Weekly, NY Times or Time Out. Please ensure that the scan(s) show the publication name and date.

14. My film was broadcast on television outside the U.S. before it opened theatrically in the U.S. Is it still eligible?
If the film received a theatrical release outside the U.S. before it was broadcast on television, and if the television broadcast was only outside the U.S., the film could still be eligible. Please contact the Awards Office with details.

DEFINITION OF A COMMERCIAL VENUE

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

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

PRODUCER GUIDELINES

If a documentary film reaches the semifinal round, all credited producers will be required to complete a Producer Eligibility Form describing the exact nature of the work they performed for the film. Working in close cooperation with a documentary director, a documentary producer's functions include active involvement in at least two-thirds of the following (each of which are not necessarily equally weighted.)

1. Conceiving the underlying concept or selecting the material on which the production is based
2. Securing any necessary rights
3. Selecting and hiring any writers and collaborating on the development of the treatment/outline
4. Securing financing
5. Selecting and engaging the director, when applicable
6. Managing rights, clearances, insurance and all legal issues throughout production
7. Selecting and securing people to film/interview
8. Selecting and securing shooting locations

9. Selecting and briefing the cinematographer
10. Preparing the final budget
11. Preparing the shooting schedule
12. Selecting and securing all necessary production components, including equipment
13. Designing and managing production workflow
14. Selecting and briefing the editor and editorial staff
15. Supervising and approving day-to-day expenditures and cost reports as they relate to the final budget
16. Supervising the day-to-day operation of the production crew
17. Resolving day-to-day disputes and conflicts related to the production
18. Ongoing viewing and appraising of raw footage with the director and editor
19. Constantly evaluating the film's progress and need for additional shooting/interviews
20. Selecting and briefing the composer and/or music supervisor
21. Selecting and securing all post-production/editorial equipment and managing post-production workflow
22. Viewing and appraising all cuts
23. Spotting music and sound effects
24. Supervising the music recording session
25. Supervising all sound mixing sessions
26. Conceiving and approving titles and graphics
27. Approving the final print (film or digital)
28. Planning and securing distribution
29. Collaborating on the marketing, publicity and distribution plans for the motion picture
30. Collaborating on the plans for exploitation of the motion picture in foreign and ancillary markets

DCP THEATRICAL REQUIREMENTS

Digital Qualifications and Submission Rules

Most of the Academy's Award categories allow for eligibility for award consideration by means of digital presentation, as outlined in "Rule Two—Eligibility" in the Academy's "Rules for Distinguished Achievements."

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

"All eligible motion pictures must be publicly exhibited using 35mm or 70mm film, or in a 24- or 48- frame progressive scan Digital Cinema format with a minimum projector resolution of 2048 by 1080 pixels, source image format conforming to ST 428-1:2006 D-Cinema Distribution Master—Image Characteristics; image compression (if used) conforming to ISO/IEC 15444-1 (JPEG 2000), and image and sound files packaged as Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) in either "Interop" or "SMPTE DCP" formats. SMPTE DCP refers to SMPTE ST429-2 and related specifications. (Blu-ray format does not meet Digital Cinema requirements.)

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

The audio data shall be formatted in conformance with ST 428-2:2006 D-Cinema Distribution Master – Audio Characteristics and ST 428-3:2006 D-Cinema Distribution Master Audio Channel Mapping and Channel Labeling."

What does this mean for filmmakers?

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

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

OK. I have a DCP. What next?

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

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

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

These companies include:

- Dolby Laboratories
- Doremi Labs
- GDC
- DVS

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

I've heard about encrypted DCPs and KDMs. What do these terms mean for me?

ENCRYPTED DCPS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. NO KDM KEYS.

The image size for a "Flat" 1.85 aspect ratio should be 1998 x 1080 or 3996 x 2160.

For a 2.39 "Scope" aspect ratio, image size should be 2048 x 858 or 4096 x 1716.

For 1.90 full container 4096 x 2160

Please fully specify your DCP aspect ratio in submission documents.

Please specify the Target Color Gamut Data (TCGD). We prefer X'Y'Z'

*** Please include only one version of one film per hard drive.*

Where can I find a mastering facility to make my DCP?

There are DCP mastering facilities worldwide. Please contact us for facilities in the Los Angeles area who can convert your submission to that of a legal DCP package playable on standard theater playout equipment.

*** Please note that the Academy is not responsible for fixing badly transferred data.*

Note: Facilities owning a DVS "Clipster" or "Fuze" product can create/author legal DCPs without encryption if enhanced with the DCP package option.

Note: There is also a non-encrypted DCP creation program that runs on Final Cut Pro 7 from Doremi Labs.

<http://www.doremilabs.com/products/cinema-products/final-cut-pro-plug-in/>

Remember, Digital content on a hard drive is fragile. Please ship carefully.

For more info on DCI specifications and the state of the Digital Cinema progress please go to:

http://www.dcinemovies.com/DCIDigitalCinemaSystemSpecv1_2.pdf

http://www.dcinemovies.com/DCI_Stereoscopic_DC_Addendum.pdf

And for up to date Digital Cinema goings on go to: www.dcinematoday.com