**13th DC Shorts Film Festival**

September 8-18, 2016

FILM SUBMISSION DEADLINES

JAN 30, 2016

MARCH 30, 2016

APRIL 30, 2016

The DC Shorts Film Festival showcases one of the largest collection of short films in the USA. In 2015, we screened 125 films from 26 countries in 17 unique showcases over 11 days to audiences of more than 9,000 people. The festival has been named as the “Coolest Short Film Festival” by MovieMaker Magazine, and is a three-time winner of the Washington City Paper’s “Coolest Short Film Festival” contest/award. The 11-day event (September 8-18, 2016) includes film screenings, Q&As, filmmaker workshops and parties in locations throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan area, and online through the secure DC Shorts Online Film Festival.

* **Our main judging criteria is STORY**. Do you have an interesting, original story about developed, well-written characters? If so, then you are a good fit for us.
* **We screen all genres and styles of films**.
* **We screen films from :30 seconds to 20 minutes**. Longer films may be considered, but are generally difficult to program. We will not consider any film over 30 minutes.
* **All entrants receive written feedback from the selection panel**. This information has been invaluable to thousands of past entrants – it is the reason we have been a top pick of Moviemaker Magazine year after year.
* Films that screened at past DC Shorts Film Festivals have gone on **win countless other competitions, including the Academy Awards**.
* **Washington, DC has some of the most sophisticated audiences in the world**. In a city with over 70 film festivals a year, DC Shorts continues to be a dominant force for film distribution in the region.
* **The DC Shorts Film Festival is the largest short film event**on the east coast of the United States.
* DC Shorts just topped the list as **Moviemaker Magazine’s Coolest Short Film**Festival – an honor we are thrilled about, and has been listed as a “Festival Worth the Submission Fee” — again.

**JURY AWARDS**

**Jury Awards:**

(as of December 1, 2015)

* Outstanding Live Action Short
* Outstanding Animated Short
* Outstanding Documentary Short
* Outstanding First-Time Director
* Outstanding Local Film

**Non-Jury Awards:**

* Filmmakers’ Choice (chosen by filmmakers in attendance)
* Festival Programmer’s Choice (chosen by the Festival Director)
* Audience Favorite Awards

**ENTRY FEES AND DEADLINES**

Entry deadline is Saturday, April 30, 2016 or until there are no more slots available – which ever comes first. Because we provide the screening committee’s comments, we are only able to review 1,500 entries. Look at the chart below — this indicates the number of entry slots taken. Wait too long to enter, and you may be shut out.

**EARLY BIRD (January 30, 2016)**

The entry fee is $30 when submitted through [dcshorts.com](http://dcshorts.com/)

$40 when submitted through our submission partners.

**REGULAR DEADLINE (March 30, 2016)**

The entry fee is $40 when submitted through [dcshorts.com](http://dcshorts.com/)

$50 when submitted through our submission partners.

**EXPENDED DEADLINE (April 30, 2016)**

The entry fee is $50 when submitted through [dcshorts.com](http://dcshorts.com/)

$60 when submitted through our submission partners.

DC Shorts does not extend registration deadlines.

**NOTIFICATION DATE**

July 1, 2016

All filmmakers will receive notice of acceptance or rejection via email, as well as a complete report with screeners’ comments. If you do not receive this email by the notification date, please contact the office.

**RULES AND SCREENING LICENSING AGREEMENT**

DC SHORTS GENERAL FILM COMPETITION

Please read this agreement carefully before you submit your film. By submitting your film, you expressly acknowledge and agree that you shall be bound by the terms of this agreement.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL FILMS. Films must have been completed after January 1, 2015. Films must not exceed 20 minutes in length, including credits. All non-English language films must have English subtitles. A separate entry form and additional entry fee must be submitted for each film.

ENTRY FORM AND PREVIEW MATERIALS FOR ALL FILMS. All films must be submitted and paid for through [dcshorts.com](http://dcshorts.com/), [filmfestivallife.com](http://filmfestivallife.com/), [clickforfestivals.com](http://clickforfestivals.com/), [filmfreeway.com](http://filmfreeway.com/), [reelport.com](http://reelport.com/) or [festhome.com](http://festhome.com/). Illegible or incomplete entry forms will not be accepted. Entry forms that do not include full payment of entry fees or working online screener URL by April 30, 2016 will not be accepted.

ONLINE SCREENERS. We accept online screeners through [Vimeo.com](http://vimeo.com/) and [Youtube.com](http://youtube.com/)when submitted through our own submission form, and through our various submission form partners. We will not watch films submitted on any other websites. DC Shorts, its members, directors, employees, and volunteers are not responsible for broken or incorrectly submitted URLs. Submissions may not be withdrawn from the Festival once they have been entered, except at the sole discretion of the Festival directors. There are no refunds for entries with incomplete entry forms, or incorrectly formatted preview materials. In our experience, [Vimeo.com](http://vimeo.com/) screeners have the best HD playback, and are preferred by our screening team. DC Shorts no longer accepts DVD screeners.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS. All entries are automatically included in the general DC Shorts Film Competition. DC Shorts will review films in their entirety. Films will be watched and reviewed by members of the Selection Committee; a volunteer group of DC-area filmmakers, film enthusiasts and critics. Films are scored and filmmakers will receive a short critique and feedback. After the final submission deadline, the Selection Committee will review the total scores of all the films in competition and select final films from a group of the top scorers. In addition to the top scoring films, final screening decisions will be influenced by the time constraints of showcases (each showcase runs for approximately 90-minutes, with an average of eight short films featured in each showcase). We will also select no less than 10% of films from filmmakers from the greater Washington, DC region. Award information is explained below. All prizes are subject to change, and updates to the prize package will be posted online at [festival.dcshorts.com](http://festival.dcshorts.com/)

AWARD INFORMATION. Awards will be presented in the following categories: Outstanding First-Time Director; Filmmakers’ Choice (chosen by filmmakers in attendance); Festival Director’s Choice; Outstanding Live Action Short (selected by a panel jury); Outstanding Animated Short (selected by a panel jury); Outstanding Documentary Short (selected by a panel jury); and Outstanding Local Film (selected by a panel jury). In addition, audience members in each screening will vote on Audience Favorites. Awards are subject to change before the event, with an updated list to be posted at [festival.dcshorts.com](http://festival.dcshorts.com/). All awards will be announced at the final Filmmaker Brunch on Sunday, September 11, 2016.

NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE. Letters of inclusion or non-inclusion, with a link to the reviewers’ comments, will be sent to the email address provided on the entry form no later than July 1, 2016. DC Shorts does not send physical mail — please ensure that your email address is accurate on your application. DC Shorts is not liable for emails delayed by spam filters, server rejections, or outdated email addresses.

SCREENING FORMATS. Films, acceptance contracts and other materials mentioned in the Letter of Acceptance must arrive at the Festival office no later than 11:59pm, July 20, 2016. DC Shorts requires two files for projection: a professionally converted DCP (24fps only) and an AppleTV formatted .mp4 file. Both files may be uploaded or sent via mail on a USB flash drive to be returned in a provided self-addressed, self-stamped envelope. Films with incomplete materials by the deadline will forfeit their ability to screen in the festival. DC Shorts, its members, directors, employees, and volunteers are not responsible for lost, misplaced, and undelivered film and media.

FILMMAKER AND WRITER ATTENDANCE. DC Shorts encourages filmmakers to attend the festival. To this end, we will assist every filmmaker (and one guest) who wishes to attend by providing a meal pass to be used at local restaurants, complimentary housing in a volunteer’s private home, discounted hotel rooms, passes for public transportation, invitations to all parties, tours and events, and passes for all film screenings (either in the general theater or in our special Filmmaker Lounge.) DC Shorts is unable to provide financial compensation for travel expenses or additional expenses incurred during the Festival week.

COMMUNICATIONS. DC Shorts does not send physical mail — please make sure the email address in your entry form is accurate. Changes of email address can be sent to info@dcshorts.com. DC Shorts is not liable for emails delayed by spam filters, server rejections, outdated email addresses or any other technical or human error. DC Shorts staff can be reached by email at info@dcshorts.com, or by mailing DC Shorts, 1317 F Street, NW, Suite 920, Washington, DC 20004 USA. The office phone number is 202-393-4266.

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING. All selected films and scripts may be excerpted for publicity purposes. DC Shorts reserves the right to promote any film or script to print, broadcast or internet media as required to market the Festival or our parent organization.

THEATRICAL SCREENINGS. By submitting your project to DC Shorts, the filmmaker grants non-exclusive rights to screen their film once at a public programming session. Films screened will not be announced prior to the event, and filmmakers will not be informed of their participation. Not all films are selected for this event. By accepting inclusion in DC Shorts, the filmmaker grants non-exclusive rights to showcase their film during the festival week (September 8-18, 2016) in as many screenings as required. This includes the competition screenings and the “Best Of” showcase which will play after competition ends. In addition, DC Shorts has non-exclusive rights to repeat the showcases through December 31, 2017 for fundraising purposes. All ticket sales are property of DC Shorts.

INTERNET BROADCAST. DC Shorts may make films screened at DC Shorts available for commercial internet broadcast and download. Filmmakers have the ability to opt out of this program upon acceptance into the festival. This is an optional program in which the filmmaker has the ability to opt-in on acceptance of the Participation Agreement, sent on inclusion into the festival.

TELEVISION BROADCASTS. DC Shorts reserves the non-exclusive right to repeat the various showcases on local (DC metropolitan area) cable access channels without any further compensation to the filmmaker. Filmmakers have the ability to opt out of this program upon acceptance into the festival. This is an optional program in which the filmmaker has the ability to opt-in on acceptance of the Participation Agreement, sent on inclusion into the festival.

CONTROLLING LAW, VENUE AND SEVERABILITY. This License shall be governed by the laws of the United States and the District of Columbia without consideration of conflicts of laws provisions and principles. All claims between the parties, regardless of legal theory and whenever brought, shall be resolved in the state or federal courts of the District of Columbia, USA, and you stipulate that you expressly submit to the personal jurisdiction of such state and federal courts, and you further agree that any judgment may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof. If for any reason a court of competent jurisdiction finds any provision, or portion thereof, of this Agreement to be unenforceable, the remainder of this License shall continue in full force and effect.

COMPLETE AGREEMENT. This License constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the use of films and supersedes all prior or contemporaneous understandings regarding such subject matter. No amendment to or modification of this License will be binding unless in writing and signed by an authorized representative of DC Shorts Film Festival. Nothing in this Agreement constitutes a waiver of DC Shorts’ rights under the United States of America patent and copyright laws or any other Federal or State law, nor of any of DC Shorts’ rights under the rules or laws of any country, territory, republic, and/or province. **DC Shorts reserves the right to remove a film from the festival program for any reason or for no reason and shall not be liable for any refund or claims of any kind arising out of such removal.**