

Berlin International Underground Film Festival (BIUFF)

About

 **This is not just another film festival. This is a statement.**

The Berlin International Underground Film Festival (BIUFF) is a movement, launching with a clear and powerful mission: to build a **true ecosystem** of support for independent and defiant voices. We are not here to sell awards; we are here to **discover talent and build futures**.

Our Mission: Discovered in Berlin

We are based in Berlin, a city where art sprouts from concrete and defiance is in its DNA, because we believe that true cinema is not manufactured—it is **discovered**. BIUFF is a global platform for all independent creators—filmmakers, screenwriters, and photographers who dare to be different. We are looking for personal stories, bold perspectives, and artistic honesty.

The "4U" Philosophy

At the heart of our festival lies an award that transcends all categories: **The Grand Prize, our "4U" Trophy**. This ultimate honor is bestowed upon only one work per edition that powerfully embodies all four of our foundational principles:

- **Uncensored**
- **Uncompromising**
- **Unconventional**
- **Unbound**

Our Model: Hybrid & Supportive

BIUFF is more than just a competition; it is a **hybrid festival** and a true connection point. While our initial judging is conducted online, the journey culminates in a **live screening and awards event in the heart of Berlin**.

And in our deep commitment to supporting you, we've simplified the process: **with one single entry, your project is automatically considered for all relevant awards**. This is your chance to connect with a network of like-minded professionals from around the globe, supported by the Kariz Creative Hub.

Honoring the Unsung Heroes

Finally, we proudly honor the true architects of defiant cinema. For the first time, a major international award will be dedicated to the **Line Producers and Production Managers** who, with the art of resistance, make the impossible possible.

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In a digital landscape saturated with soulless competitions and hollow laurels, we rise on a different foundation: **authenticity**.

Join us. Submit your work to the beating heart of European independent cinema and show your voice to the world.

Awards & Prizes

THE BIUFF VALUE: One Submission, All Opportunities

We believe in the value of your complete work. At BIUFF, you do not need to pay multiple fees for different categories. By submitting your project in one of our main submission categories, it will automatically be considered for all relevant awards listed below.

BIUFF's Foundational & Special Awards (The Core 10)

These 10 awards form the core pillars of the BIUFF philosophy, honoring the achievements that define the spirit of our festival.

The "4U" Grand Prize

This is our festival's highest honor, transcending all categories. The "4U" Trophy is awarded to the one singular work per edition that most powerfully embodies all four of our foundational principles: Uncensored, Uncompromising, Unconventional, and Unbound.

BIUFF Jury Honor

This special award is bestowed upon a filmmaker who has created a work of exceptional audacity and innovation. The recipient will receive an exclusive invitation to join our main jury for the next festival edition, helping to shape the future of BIUFF.

The Production Navigator Award

In a pioneering, first-of-its-kind international initiative, BIUFF presents this major award to the unsung heroes of independent cinema: the Line Producers and Production Managers. This award celebrates the art of crisis management and smart decision-making under difficult circumstances. (Includes the "Next Project Production Grant" from the Kariz Creative Hub).

Underground Spirit Award

This award goes to the film that most powerfully represents the raw, authentic, and defiant soul of underground cinema.

Berlin Film Award

A special tribute to our host city and endless source of inspiration. This award honors the best film that captures the spirit of Berlin—whether through a story told on its streets or through the rebellious, creative energy that is in the city's DNA. This award is our unbreakable bond with the capital of European underground cinema.

Best First-Time Filmmaker

Honoring the audacious vision and promising talent of a director's first feature or short film.

Human Rights Cinema Award

For courageous films that shine a light on critical social issues and give a voice to the voiceless.

Environmental Cinema Award

Honoring films that explore the fragility of our planet and challenge us to rethink our relationship with the environment.

Best Female Director

Dedicated to supporting and celebrating the unique vision and powerful storytelling of female directors.

Best Student Film

Celebrating the next generation of defiant filmmakers and the fresh, unfiltered voices emerging from film schools worldwide.

Main Competition Awards

- Best Feature Film (Narrative, Documentary, Animation)
- Best Short Film (Narrative, Documentary, Animation)
- Best Music Video
- Best Mobile Film
- Best One-Minute Film
- Best AI-Generated Short Film
- Best Screenplay (Feature & Short)

Craft & Performance Awards

- Best Director
- Best Performance (a single, gender-neutral award)
- Best Cinematography
- Best Editing
- Best Production Design (incl. Art Direction, Costume & Makeup)
- Best Sound Design

✓ Official Selection

The festival jury and administration reserve the right to add special awards up until the day of the final announcements.

All selected projects will receive our official laurels and will be promoted on our platforms.

Rules & Terms

👉 Our Fees Philosophy: Supportive & Transparent

At BIUFF, we are deeply committed to supporting independent cinema and its active artists. Our goal is to create a platform where every independent voice has a chance to be heard.

Therefore, we keep our submission fees as low as possible to remove financial barriers for filmmakers. The fee collected is used solely to cover the operational costs of our thorough and professional judging process, ensuring that every submitted work is reviewed with the care and respect it deserves.

1. General Eligibility

- **Completion Date:** In honor of our inaugural edition and to support a wider range of independent works, we are proudly extending the standard eligibility window to the last 5 years. Any outstanding project completed after January 1, 2020, has a chance to be seen. This is a unique opportunity for our first year only; more standard completion date restrictions will apply in future editions.
- **Premiere Status:** For our initial competition, there are no premiere status requirements. Projects that have previously screened at other festivals or have been made available online are eligible.
- **Genre & Style:** We welcome all genres, styles, and forms of expression.

2. Submission Process

- **Entry Fees:** Entry fees are non-refundable under any circumstances.
- **Multiple Entries:** You may submit multiple different projects. However, for each individual project, only one submission in its primary category is required to be considered for all relevant awards.

3. Technical Specifications

- **Language & Subtitles:** All non-English language films must have accurate, embedded/hardcoded English subtitles.
- **Files:** It is the responsibility of the submitter to provide a high-quality, fully functional screener file.

4. Rights & Clearances

The submitter guarantees that they own all necessary rights and clearances for their work, including all copyrighted elements (music, archival footage, etc.). All legal responsibilities for any copyright infringement lie solely with the submitter.

5. Festival Rights

- **Promotional Use:** BIUFF reserves the right to use short excerpts from selected projects (clips, trailers, posters, and stills) for promotional purposes on our official website, social media channels, and in media campaigns.

6. Judging & Selection Process

- **Jury Decisions:** All decisions made by the jury are final and cannot be disputed.
- **Feedback:** Due to the high volume of submissions, the festival is not obligated to provide feedback on non-selected projects.
- **Selection Guarantee:** Adherence to all rules does not guarantee selection. The final selection is based on artistic merit and the jury's decision.

7. Screening & Awards

- **Screening Process:** Our competition judging is conducted privately by our jury. To protect your film's premiere status for other festivals, no films will be screened publicly online unless explicitly agreed upon in writing with the filmmaker.
- **Notification:** Winners will be notified via email. The full list of winners will be announced on our official website and social media platforms.