

Warsaw, 25 March 2026

REGULATIONS

42nd WARSAW INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
9–18 October 2026

1. ORGANIZATION, OBJECTIVES, DATES

The Warsaw International Film Festival (WFF) is organized by the Warsaw Film Foundation. Its objective is to present the best films from around the world to Polish and international audiences and to encourage better communication and mutual understanding between people living in different countries and coming from different cultural backgrounds.

The Warsaw International Film Festival is accredited by FIAPF (www.fiapf.org) as an international competitive film festival. WFF presents films made for theatrical release.

The 42nd WFF will take place from **9 to 18 October 2026**.

2. SECTIONS

The Festival programme is divided into the following sections:

2.1. International Competition

Feature fiction films (over 60 minutes) from all over the world. World and international premieres.

2.2. Competition 1–2

First and second feature fiction films (over 60 minutes) by directors from all over the world. World, international and European premieres.

2.3. Documentary Competition

Feature-length documentary films (over 60 minutes) from all over the world. At least Eastern European premieres.

2.4. Short Films Competition

Short fiction, documentary and animated films (up to 40 minutes) from all over the world. Winners may apply for the Oscar® – the award of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. World, international and European premieres.

2.5. Encounters

Feature-length fiction and documentary films (over 60 minutes) that premiered at the most important international film festivals in 2026.

2.6. Free Spirit

Independent, innovative and rebellious films. Feature-length fiction and documentary films (over 60 minutes) from all over the world. At least Polish premieres.

2.7. Special Screenings

Feature-length fiction and documentary films (over 60 minutes) from all over the world. Non-competitive section. At least Polish premieres.

2.8. Family Film Weekend

Feature-length and short films for children and their parents. Non-competitive section. At least Polish premieres.

2.9. Best Polish Short Films 2026

Selected Polish short films (up to 60 minutes) from 2026. Non-competitive section. Premiere status is not required.

2.10. Accompanying Events

The WFF programme may also include accompanying events: thematic sections, retrospectives, masterclasses, sections presenting film classics, etc.

3. CONDITIONS OF FILM ELIGIBILITY

3.1. Except for special cases approved by the WFF Programming Director, only films meeting the following conditions may be selected:

a/ in the case of competition sections – the first public screening of the film must have taken place on or after 1 January 2026;

b/ Polish films previously presented at the 2026 Gdynia Film Festival, provided they were not screened at any other Polish festival (with the exception of the Best Polish Short Films section and Accompanying Events);

c/ films that have not previously been distributed, publicly screened or broadcast on television available in Poland (with the exception of Accompanying Events);

d/ films that have not previously been made available on the Internet.

3.2. Submission fees

1.04–15.05.2026

- EUR 35 – feature-length film
- EUR 25 – short film

16.05–15.07.2026

- EUR 55 – feature-length film
- EUR 35 – short film

16.07–31.07.2026

- EUR 75 – feature-length film
- EUR 50 – short film

Additionally:

- Best Polish Short Films 2026 – EUR 25
- Family Film Weekend (feature-length) – EUR 35
- Family Film Weekend (short) – EUR 25

In the event of postponement or cancellation of the current edition of the WFF, the organizers undertake to invite the films selected this year to participate in the next edition. Rights holders who do not agree to this are entitled to a refund of the submission fee, provided they inform the organizers of their withdrawal within four weeks of the announcement of the decision to postpone or cancel the current edition of the WFF.

3.3. Accepted format*:

DCP (Digital Cinema Package): 2K/jpeg2000/mxf, 24 fps, 25 fps

IMPORTANT! If the DCP is encrypted, the rights holder is obliged to:

- provide KDMs for testing purposes (for at least 7 days from the date of receipt of the film copy);
- provide KDMs for the entire duration of the festival.

*applies to the theatrical screening format, not the submission format (see point 4.2).

3.4. World, international and European premieres have priority.

4. SELECTION

4.1. The Festival Programming Director invites films to participate in the Festival.

4.2. Selection accepts links to films as well as films on USB drives or DVD discs: with English subtitles (if dialogues are in a language other than Polish or English), submitted by the deadline.

4.3. Submitted DVD discs will be destroyed within six months after the end of the Festival.

5. IMPORTANT DATES

- 1 April – opening of submissions
- 31 July – submission deadline
- 21 September – announcement of selection results
- 24 September (Thursday), 12:00 – press conference
- 19 September – deadline for delivery of film copies
- 9–18 October – Festival
- 12–17 October – Warsaw Industry Days
- 17 October, 8:30 p.m. – awards ceremony
- 18 October – screenings of award-winning films
- 6 November – final deadline for returning film copies

6. MATERIALS FOR PUBLICATION, LANGUAGE VERSIONS AND SUBTITLES

6.1. All films will be screened in their original versions with English subtitles, except for films with dialogues in English. The requirement to provide English subtitles also applies to Polish films.

6.2. Polish distributors cover the costs of preparing copies with Polish subtitles for their films.

6.3. If a film does not have a Polish distributor, the Festival organizers cover the costs of preparing electronic Polish subtitles.

6.4. Producers of Polish films presented at the WFF cover the costs of preparing English subtitles and are obliged to deliver copies with English subtitles.

6.5. Upon confirmation of participation in the Warsaw International Film Festival, rights holders undertake to deliver all materials required for Polish translation, publication on the Festival website and in the Festival catalogue within the specified deadline.

6.6. The Festival reserves the right to publish only materials delivered by the specified deadline.

7. SCREENINGS

7.1. Each film may be screened a maximum of five times.

7.2. If a film wins an award at the WFF, the organizers may arrange an additional screening on the last day of the Festival, provided that the total number of screenings does not exceed five, in accordance with point 7.1.

7.3. The Festival organizers determine the screening schedule.

7.4. During the Festival, it is forbidden to organize any screenings of films participating in the Festival prior to their official Festival screening.

8. JURIES AND AWARDS

Jury members and Jury Presidents are invited by the WFF Programming Director, who may attend jury deliberations without voting rights. Each competition section has a separate jury. Decisions are made by a simple majority in an open vote.

Persons associated with films in competition may not be members of the jury.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING CASH AWARDS:

a) payments are made exclusively by bank transfer;

b) the entire award amount is transferred to one account of the winner.

8.1. International Competition

a/ **Main Award – Warsaw Grand Prix**, funded by the Mayor of the Capital City of Warsaw. Cash award: PLN 100,000*. Award for the director(s). Only one Warsaw Grand Prix winner (no ex aequo).

b/ **Best Director Award**

Cash award: PLN 10,000*. Award for the director(s).

c/ **Special Jury Award**

Cash award: PLN 5,000*. The award may be granted to an actor, composer, editor, cinematographer, producer, director, screenwriter or production designer.

d/ **Special Mention** (optional)

The Jury may grant a Special Mention to a selected creator or film. No cash award.

Only one winner may be awarded in each category in the International Competition (no ex aequo).

8.2. Competition 1–2

a/ **Main Award – Winner of Competition 1–2**

Cash award: PLN 10,000*. Award for the director(s). Only one winner (no ex aequo).

b/ **Special Mention** (optional)

The Jury may grant a Special Mention. No cash award.

8.3. Documentary Competition

a/ **Best Documentary Feature**

Cash award: PLN 5,000*. Award for the director(s). Only one winner (no ex aequo).

b/ **Special Mention** (optional)

The Jury may grant a Special Mention. No cash award.

8.4. Short Films Competition Awards

a/ **Short Grand Prix**

Cash award: PLN 2,000*. Award for the director(s). Only one winner (no ex aequo).

b/ **Best Animated Short Film**

Cash award: PLN 1,000*. Award for the director(s).

c/ **Best Live-Action Short Film**

Cash award: PLN 1,000*. Award for the director(s).

d/ **Best Documentary Short Film**

Cash award: PLN 1,000*. Award for the director(s).

NOTE: If fewer than four films from a given category are selected, the award in that category will not be granted.

8.5. Encounters

Audience Award

Cash award: PLN 40,000*. Award for the Polish distributor of the winning film (existing or future).

8.6. Free Spirit

Free Spirit – Audience Award

No cash award.

8.7. WFF Audience Award

Award granted to the best film among all Festival sections, excluding Accompanying Events. No cash award.

*all cash awards are subject to tax in accordance with Polish law.

9. TRANSPORT AND LIABILITY FOR FILM COPIES

9.1. Festival film copies must be delivered to the Festival Office in Warsaw no later than 20 September.

a/ Earlier uploading of the DCP file to cinema servers will be considered only if the Festival Office receives such a request by 15 September.

b/ Internet transfer of DCP files is preferred for short films.

9.2. Polish producers and distributors deliver and collect copies at their own expense.

9.3. Transport of film copies without a Polish distributor, unless otherwise agreed, is covered by the WFF:

a/ both ways, if the copy is sent by and returned to the lending company (Producer or Sales Agent);

b/ one way (import to Poland only), if the copy is forwarded to another film festival;

c/ in the case of delivery on a USB drive, the copy will not be returned.

9.4. Copies will be returned by 6 November, provided the Festival is informed of the shipping address at least two working days prior to dispatch. If shipping instructions are received later, but no later than 18 December, the copy will be returned within one month. If no instructions are received by 18 December, the copy will not be returned (it will be destroyed).

9.5. Festival organizers are responsible for the safety of copies from the moment they are collected from the transport company until they are handed back. Liability for damage or loss is limited to the cost of producing a new standard copy, up to a maximum of EUR 3,500.

9.6. Damage to a film copy must be reported to the Festival Office in writing within one month of its return and before subsequent screenings.

10. OTHER MATTERS

10.1. Participation in the Festival implies acceptance of these Regulations.

10.2. After accepting the invitation to participate, a film may not be withdrawn from the programme.

10.3. Participation in the Warsaw International Film Festival automatically entails compliance with these Regulations.

10.4. Producers, distributors, sales agents or other persons/organizations submitting a film must be duly authorized.

10.5. The Festival Programming Director reserves the right to decide on exceptions to these Regulations in justified cases.

10.6. In the event of any dispute concerning interpretation of these Regulations, only the Polish-language version shall be considered binding.

Festival Office address (mail and courier deliveries):

Warsaw International Film Festival

ul. Lwowska 11/11

00-660 Warsaw

Contact: films@wff.pl