

## 2018 Smithsonian African American Film Festival (SAAFF)

### Call for Submissions

The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture invites US filmmakers to submit cinematic and media art works relating to one of three themes, *Making a Way Out of No Way*, *Power of Place*, and *Cultural Expressions*, for consideration in its juried African American Film Festival, taking place in October in Washington, D.C. Please review the Call for Submissions information carefully. Noncompliance risks disqualification.

The submission period runs through May 14, 2018, or when the maximum number of submissions is received, *whichever is sooner*. Late submissions may be available for feature films having a world premiere. See below for details.

### Who can Submit?

Professional and student filmmakers residing in the United States. Filmmakers under the age of 18 must make their submission through a parent or legal guardian.

### What to Submit?

Cinematic and media art works relating to the three festival themes:

- **Making a Way Out of No Way:** Films that show how African Americans crafted possibilities in a world that denied them opportunities. Taking its inspiration from a popular African American expression, *Making a Way Out of No Way* explores themes of agency, creativity, and resilience through personal stories of African Americans who challenged racial oppression and discrimination and created opportunities from seemingly insurmountable odds.
- **Power of Place:** A sense of place has deeply shaped African American history and culture. Films that show a multifaceted range of African American communities, how identities have formed and changed, where traditions have been made and lost in all corners of the country and in turn influenced the regions around them. The power of place is about geography, but also about memory and imagination.
- **Cultural Expressions:** Films that visualize African American and African diaspora culture, particularly through style, image and identity; culture and cuisine; craftsmanship and creativity; and language – through the spoken word or body movement.

Additionally, both prior to **and** throughout the SAAFF (except as otherwise expressly noted below), the film must be a DC-Regional premiere, eligible under the following criteria:

Narrative & Documentary Shorts, Feature Films, Experimental & Animation	Eligible	Ineligible
<b>Narrative &amp; Documentary Shorts &amp; Feature Films:</b> ANY public screening, broadcast, distribution or exhibition before November 1, 2019 ( <i>other than as described in 1 below</i> )		X
<b>Experimental &amp; Animation:</b> ANY public screening, broadcast, distribution or exhibition before November 1, 2019 ( <i>other than as described in 1 below</i> )		X
<b>Theatrical:</b> Any commercial exhibition in the US ( <i>other than as described in 2 below</i> )		X
<b>Theatrical:</b> Theatrical exhibition only outside of the US and on/after January 1, 2018	X	
<b>DVD:</b> Any commercial DVD distribution ANYWHERE (Feature & Short?)		X
<b>TV:</b> Any broadcast available to US audiences		X
<b>TV:</b> Limited broadcast available only outside the US and on/after January 1, 2017	X	
<b>Digital:</b> Any digital broadcast (including via a non-password protected website, whether commercial or personal, e.g. Vimeo, YouTube, etc.)		X
<b>Festival:</b> Any exhibition held <b>IN</b> the Washington, DC area as part of a film festival ( <i>other than as described in 2 below and, for clarity, except for the SAAFF</i> )		X
<b>Festival:</b> Any feature film that was exhibited as part of a film festival held outside the Washington, DC – Baltimore, MD – Richmond, VA Region and on/after January 1, 2017	X	
<b>1:</b> Private, invite only screenings (i.e. screenings for family or cast or screenings for feedback)	X	
<b>2:</b> Academic screenings for students/faculty in a classroom or in-person, school-based film festival.	X	
<b>3:</b> For <b>selected</b> films: Theatrical, DVD, TV, Digital and/or festival screenings scheduled to be held <b>during</b> the SAAFF, but after the Feature’s Premiere, if approved in advance <b>and</b> in writing by the Festival.	X	

Films must contain only the participant's own original material or material for which he or she has full permission to show to the public at SAAFF, and must not violate any person's privacy or other rights. Bear in mind, also, that the Smithsonian's programming is intended for a broad audience of all ages; do not submit films that are pornographic or blatantly sexually explicit, defamatory/false/deceptive, appear to be advertising or partisan-political in nature, or promote violence, unlawful activities, or tobacco. The Smithsonian reserves the right to disqualify submissions it deems inappropriate under these guidelines.

Non-English language works must have English subtitles at the time submitted. Dialogue lists will not be accepted.

**Note:** If at any time the Festival determines that a submission no longer meets all of the applicable eligibility criteria, the submission will be disqualified.

### **Can I Submit a Film That Is a Work-In-Progress?**

Submissions may be in work-in-progress form for feature films only; however, films that are not final cuts must be **clearly marked** 'Work in Progress' (WIP) or 'Rough Cut' with an indication of what will change or what is missing (e.g., temp sound, Avid output, missing animation, etc.) either indicated in the film cut itself or within the copy display in the streaming link.

As long as the streaming link remains the same and password does not change you may update the link with newer cuts as they are available up until the last applicable submission deadline noted above. (In the unlikely event of a password change or link change you must email the Festival immediately with that change so we may update your record.)

If the Festival is not notified of the change and the link is found to be inactive or the password to be incorrect the Festival will send an email to the submitter's address on file to follow up. If a response with the correct information is not received within forty-eight (48) hours, the submission may be deemed ineligible. If you have submitted a WIP or rough cut of your film by DVD, the Festival will work with you to facilitate the submission of any updated version(s) up until the last applicable submission deadline noted above.

### **Can I submit a trailer?**

No, we will not consider your project if you only send a trailer.

### **Do I have to obtain rights and clearances for the music or other copyrighted material included in my film?**

**Yes.** Only submit films for which you have the necessary rights to exhibit the film at SAAFF.

If your film is selected, as a condition of being screened at SAAFF, you must execute a release in which, among other things, you represent and warrant that you obtained the rights necessary to exhibit your film at SAAFF, and hold the Smithsonian harmless from any claim arising from the exhibition of your film at SAAFF.

### **Can I Submit More Than One Film?**

Yes, but each film must be individually submitted and accompanied by its own complete submission form and payment (see below). If you include multiple film entries in one submission any or all of them may be disqualified.

### **When Can I Make My Submission?**

Now. The Submission period for all films *begins on April 9, 2018, and ends on either May 14, 2018, or when the maximum number of submissions are received, whichever is sooner.\** The maximum number of submissions under consideration for the festival are: 125 films classified as “feature film,” and 175 “short films”.

\* There is an extended submission period for feature films (narrative and documentary) but only if (i) the film has not been screened publicly or otherwise distributed anywhere at the time of submission, and (ii) the maximum number of feature film submissions has not been met. Submit such films no later than June 8, 2018.

### **How Do I Submit My Film?**

Use the online submission form available at [nmaahc.si.edu/filmfest](http://nmaahc.si.edu/filmfest). Submissions must include all of the following:

1. An official SAAFF online submission form, properly completed.
2. A private and/or password protected streaming link of the film (the link must be active at least through October 30, 2018).
3. Payment of submission fee.

Within 24 hours of completing and submitting your online submission form, you should receive an email confirmation. If more than 24 hours have passed and you have not received an email confirmation, you may contact Etix via phone at 1-919-653-0443 OR 1-800-514-3849 or make a customer support request using the form at <https://www.etix.com/ticket/online/help2.jsp>

The Smithsonian reserves the right to disqualify any submission, without refund of any kind, if it determines in its sole discretion that the submission is incomplete, ineligible, or contains inaccurate information (i.e. erroneous URL or password information).

### **I Am Having Technical Difficulties Making a Submission.**

#### **Who Can Help?**

Please contact the website vendor, Etix, via phone at 1-919-653-0443 OR 1-800-514-3849 or make a customer support request using the form at <https://www.etix.com/ticket/online/help2.jsp>. NMAAHC staff will not be able to help with any technical difficulties on the site. If you do not receive a response from Etix, you may email the Festival at [NMAAHC-CAAMA@si.edu](mailto:NMAAHC-CAAMA@si.edu).

### Can You Mail or Fax Me a Submission Form?

No. Submissions must be made through the website ([nmaahc.si.edu/filmfest](http://nmaahc.si.edu/filmfest)).

### What Are the Submission Fees?

Submission fees are in U.S. Dollars, per film, must be made at the time of submission, and are **non-refundable**.

Shorts / Experimental & Animation: \$30.

Features: \$40 if submitted before May 14, 2018; \$100 if submitted between May 14 and June 29, 2018.

**\*Student Filmmakers** (Shorts only): Submit at a discounted rate of \$20 per submission by providing a scanned copy of a current and valid student ID card or a letter from an accredited school verifying the entrant's enrollment. A PDF or JPG file of this scan must be submitted through Festival's online submission form at the time of submitting the film in order to qualify. Student films must be produced through an accredited educational institution. Submissions from K -12 students, under the age of 18 must be co-submitted by a legal guardian.

**\*Active Military & Veteran Filmmakers** (Shorts & Features): Submit at a discounted rate of \$20 per short film submission and \$30 per feature film submission by providing a scanned copy of documentation verifying the entrant's military status. A PDF or JPG file of this scan must be submitted through Festival's online submission form at the time of submitting the film in order to qualify.

### How do I pay the submissions fee?

The submission website accepts credit cards (American Express, Visa, MasterCard, TCB, or Discover) only.

### How Will Films Be Selected?

All eligible submissions will be screened in full by a member of the SAAFF screening committee, which includes Smithsonian curators as well as filmmakers, industry professionals, and experts, and a selection will be screened again by the full committee. Committee members will evaluate and select films for the festival based on storytelling, technical execution, and relevance to the festival themes and mission of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. The committee also will give preference to films having a World premiere, or for feature films, a US premiere.

The committee will invite up to five films to compete in each of the competition sections listed below. The committee will place films in the competition section it determines, in its sole discretion, to be most appropriate. The competition sections are:

***Narrative Feature Competition***: Open narrative films having a running time of forty (40) minutes or longer, not to exceed 120 minutes.

***Narrative Short Competition***: Open narrative films having a running time of less than forty (40) minutes.

**Documentary Feature Competition:** Documentary works must have a running time of forty (40) minutes or longer, not to exceed 120 minutes.

**Documentary Short Competition:** Documentary works must have a running time of less than forty (40) minutes.

**Experimental & Animation Competition:** Works should have a running time of less than forty (40) minutes.

### **How and when will I be notified if my film is selected?**

Those whose films are selected by the committee for the juried competition will be notified via email by July 30, 2018.

### **What Is Required of Me if My Film Is Selected?**

If your film is selected, you must:

- Provide the selected film in a format that is appropriate for exhibition by no later than August 15, 2018. The Smithsonian will determine, in its sole discretion, if a film format is appropriate for exhibition.
- Complete all paperwork requested by the festival must be submitted before August 15, 2018 to participate in the film festival. The paperwork will include a publicity and liability release, and may include additional forms deemed necessary by the Smithsonian in its sole discretion.

In addition, you will be invited to attend the festival in Washington, DC. The invitation includes a festival pass, complimentary tickets to the filmmaker's film screening, and the opportunity to participate in a Q&A session.

\*There is a possibility of films submitted through the open call to be programmed in a non-juried portion of the Festival. If your film is selected for such, and the Smithsonian determines that you have satisfied both of the requirements listed above, you may receive a festival pass and complimentary tickets to your film's screenings.

### **How will the Jury Evaluate the Selected Films?**

Each film will be reviewed by a jury of three to five industry professionals and experts and asked to name the best film in each competition category on the basis of: Overall Impact and appeal to SAAFF Audience; Writing/Story; cinematography and editing; relevance to festival themes and Museum's mission; and special consideration for innovative use of storytelling or use of technology.

### **What Awards Will Be Presented?**

To be announced.

**Will I be notified if my film isn't selected?**

Yes, filmmakers will receive an email notification if their film is not selected for programming at the festival.

**Does SAAFF provide any feedback on film not selected?**

Unfortunately, SAAFF will not be able to provide feedback on films not selected for the film festival.

**When and where does the SAAFF take place?**

The Smithsonian African American Film Festival takes place on October 24 – 27, 2018 in Washington, DC.

**Can Smithsonian Staff (all) submit films?**

Smithsonian staff, contractors, and volunteers are not eligible to submit films for the juried competition.