



**FIRST**  
INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL  
XINING  
青年电影展

2025.7.20-7.28

**FIRST | FRAME**

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**The 19<sup>th</sup> FIRST International Film Festival  
General Guidelines for  
FIRST FRAME Submission and Participation**



## 1. About FIRST FRAME

FIRST FRAME is a competitive section of the FIRST International Film Festival that examines gender and identity through individual life experiences and social relationships, highlighting diverse representations of female in cinema. The section awards Film of the Year and Short Film of the Year, with prizes supported by CHANEL and determined by an independent jury.

FIRST FRAME explores the inherent issues of identity, living experience and social perspectives with critical thinking. It engages with the inner discourse on these subjects, utilizing the concept of 'frame' to showcase the diverse expressions of feminine vitality on screen across generations of filmmakers, bringing into focus the living experience and filmmakers themselves. By presenting the vibrant female images, the films reflect the context of the times, providing a unique perspective for youth Sinophone cinema and contributing to the future of narratives on femininity. FIRST FRAME expects the film to break through the shackles of traditional female images in the narrative and issues regarding femininity, as well as various perspectives of auteurs.



## 2. Awards

- **Film of the Year**

Presented to a feature film which highlights and encourages diverse narratives on female themes. It honors works that delve into gender and identity discourses, individual life experiences, and social relationships. The award is presented with a trophy, an award certificate, and a prize bonus of RMB 100,000.

- **Short Film of the Year**

Presented to a short film to recognize and encourage its creative approaches that challenge conventional gender narratives. It honors works that expand and enrich women's on-screen representation and vividly portray women's life experiences.

The award is presented with an award certificate, and a prize bonus of RMB 10,000.

## 3. Submission Guidelines

### 3.1 General Regulations

-Only films that have been submitted and registered can be considered for selection.

-Film submission and registration are exclusively accepted online at <https://www.firstfilm.org.cn/portal/form/submission/info>

-Submissions to FIRST FRAME are open to narrative features (min. 60 minutes), documentaries (min. 60 minutes) and short films (max. 30 minutes incl. credits).

-Submitted film should be completed after January 1, 2024.



-For narrative features, the film should be among the director's first three independently directed narrative features. In the case of co-directed work, each of the directors must fulfill the condition.

-Films that have already been theatrical/online released in mainland China or have scheduled the release before the FIRST IFF festival dates are not eligible.

-Films, including any updated versions, which have been submitted to or publicly screened at previous FIRST IFF may not be accepted again.

### **3.2 Eligibility**

To be considered for participation, a film must meet one of the following conditions:

- The director must be a citizen of the People's Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan). In the case of co-directed work, one director's qualification is sufficient.
- The majority of the film's dialogues must be in the Chinese language (including Mandarin, Cantonese, and other dialects). Dubbed foreign-language films are not eligible.
- A minimum of 50% of the filming locations must be situated within the borders of the People's Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan).
- A minimum of 50% of the cast and crew, including the director, screenwriter, cinematographer, production designer, composer, editor, sound effects,



main cast, and producer, must be citizens of the People's Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan).

### 3.3 Submission Deadline and Fee

The 19<sup>th</sup> FIRST IFF calls for entries from January 1, 2025. All submissions are closed at 24:00 of April 28, 2025, UTC+8.

Films will only be considered for selection after the processing fee is received.

The processing fee varies according to the chosen deadline and film type.

	Early Bird (January 1 to February 13)	Standard (February 14 to April 14)	Delayed (April 15 to April 28)
Feature Film	RMB 300	RMB 580	RMB 980
Short Film	RMB 200	RMB 380	RMB 780

- The submission deadline is determined by the receipt of all required materials, including the preview screener. Failure to meet the selected deadline will result in an additional fee. No submission fee will be refunded if a film fails to complete submission or is withdrawn from the competition.
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- Once the submission deadline has passed, withdrawal of submitted films from the competition is not permitted.

### **3.4 Materials to Upload**

#### **3.4.1 Preview Screener**

To finalize the submission process, FIRST IFF mandates a preview screener in the following format:

- MOV or MP4 in H.264 encoded video file.
- File size limited to 3G.
- Chinese and English subtitles must be embedded.
- The only acceptable watermark is “FIRST Preview” in the upper right corner of the frame. Kindly refrain from adding any other watermarks to ensure a proper film review by the jury.

#### **3.4.2 Still Photos and Director's Portrait**

Three to five still photos of the submission and one director's portrait are required for submission.

If you encounter technical problems that cannot be resolved during the uploading process, you may choose to send your materials to the organizing committee by other means, please contact [submission@firstfilm.org.cn](mailto:submission@firstfilm.org.cn) for details.



### 3.5 Material Replacement

If replacement of information or material is needed after the submission, please contact [submission@firstfilm.org.cn](mailto:submission@firstfilm.org.cn). At the discretion of the festival, the film's submission materials can be replaced **ONLY ONCE** before the submission deadline. Please note, once the review process initiates, no replacements will be accepted.

### 3.6 Declaration of Copyrights

Applicants must ensure the film's originality, affirming legal licensing for music, sound, archival footage, and texts from right holders. Permission for documentary footages from filmed individuals is essential. The applicant is solely responsible for any legal disputes related to copyright or filming permission. FIRST IFF reserves the right to reject films from competition in case of copyright infringement.

## 4. Review Process

The Selection Committee and the Shortlist Committee will decide the Official Selection films. The ultimate winners will be awarded by Jury.

### 4.1 Selection Committee

The Selection Committee will assess all eligible submissions. Selected submissions will be forwarded to Shortlist Committee for further reviews.



Participants will be notified of the results via email by May 31, 2025. These results will not be publicly disclosed.

#### **4.2 Shortlist Committee**

The Shortlist committee will assess and determine the finalist line-up for FIRST FRAME. All selected films will be publicly announced by July 15, 2025, and screened during the festival. Submitters will receive a notification email and must promptly acknowledge it.

#### **4.3 Jury**

Jury will decide the award winners, and the award results will be revealed during the film festival.

### **5. Guidelines for Official Selected Films**

#### **5.1 Screening Copy**

A screening copy (standard DCP) of the selected film is mandatory. Except for sound mixing, color tuning, and subtitles adjustment, the screening copy must match the submitted screener. No replacements are allowed during the review process. FIRST IFF, as a platform promoting new films and filmmakers, does not provide screening fees for selected films.

#### **5.2 Participants' Obligations**

No film may be withdrawn from the festival program after its participation has been publicly announced. During the festival, no participating film may be





screened outside the festival venues prior to its official presentation at the festival.

Participation in the festival necessitates unconditional adherence to all regulations outlined in these guidelines. Producers, distributors, and other individuals or organizations submitting a film must ensure that any third parties associated with the production agree to its participation in the festival. FIRST IFF reserves the right to rule on any cases not provided for in these guidelines.

### **5.3 Screening Schedule**

Each selected film can be screened up to five times during the FIRST IFF in Xining, with scheduling at the discretion of the festival. The schedule is subject to written notice from the festival team.

### **5.4 Presence in Xining**

The key cast and crew of shortlisted films should attend film presentations, Q&As, the awards ceremony, red carpet, and other related events during the festival. FIRST IFF provides subsidies for travel expenses and accommodation.

### **5.5 Required Publicity Materials**

Information and materials from selected films will be utilized on online media (websites, apps, and social media channels) and print products (festival publications), as well as by third parties for editorial coverage of FIRST IFF. The festival team has the right to edit and publicly use this information. Participants are obligated to submit any incomplete information or materials upon selection.



## 5.6 Festival Laurels and Logo

The filmmakers, producers and distributors of all films selected undertake to make mention in their publicity and advertising materials of the selection of the film for FIRST IFF, by featuring the official laurels and logo which will be supplied by the festival after the film is selected or awarded. The laurels and logo must not under any circumstances be modified or altered without the prior permission of the festival.

\*Participation in FIRST International Film Festival by submitting the work and/or accepting FIRST's invitation implies acceptance of the rules and regulations by the filmmaker, producers, and rights holders. The festival committee reserves the right to amend the rules and regulations and will announce them in due course. The Chinese text of these rules and regulations is the authentic and binding version.