

2026 MELBOURNE DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL (MDFF)

SUBMISSION RULES & CALL FOR MASTERCLASS SUBMISSIONS

CALL FOR MASTERCLASS SUBMISSIONS – REGISTRATION OF INTEREST

MDFF is inviting expressions of interest from documentary practitioners and filmmakers for our Online Masterclass Series, commencing July 2026.

If you're interested in leading or participating in a masterclass, please email:

 info@mdff.org.au

 Deadline: 30th June 2026

Note: While MDFF supports MIFF, it is an independent organization and not affiliated with MIFF.

2026 FESTIVAL FORMAT

The 2026 Melbourne Documentary Film Festival will be presented as a hybrid event, with both in-cinema and online screenings.

SUBMISSION RULES

These rules apply to all film submissions to the Melbourne Documentary Film Festival Inc. (MDFF). By submitting your film, you agree to the following:

1. Submission Guidelines

1.1. MDFF will assess each submission ("Submission") based on the Eligibility Criteria below.

1.2. Films that do not meet the Eligibility Criteria at the time of screening will not be eligible for programming.

1.3. MDFF may choose to accept or decline any eligible film at its sole discretion. Acceptance does not guarantee screening.

1.4. All MDFF decisions are final. No submission fee refunds will be given for any reason.

➡ Please check all deadlines, currency conversions, and costs before submitting.

1.5. Due to the high volume of entries, individual feedback is not available.

Interested filmmakers may instead register for our Documentary Open Mic by emailing info@mdff.org.au.

1.6. Selected filmmakers will be contacted in late May or early June 2026.

1.7. Selected applicants must sign the MDFF Screening Agreement. Films without signed agreements will not be screened.

1.8. MDFF does not pay screening fees to selected filmmakers.

2. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for consideration:

a. Submissions must be received by 31st May 2026

b. Films must have begun production after 1st January 2013

c. Films must not have been released (DVD, freely online, or theatrically) before 12 July 2025, except:

- **Films released via FanForce**
- **Video Essays, Documentary Web Series, and some Short Documentaries**
- **ABC, SBS, and NITV feature documentaries (must include new material)**
 - d. Films must be in English or have English subtitles**
 - e. Submission must include the applicable fee**

⚠ MDFF reserves the right to move some or all of the festival online based on safety guidance from COVID Safe Events, City of Melbourne, or Vic Health.

3. Submission Method

MDFF prefers submissions via:

- **FilmFreeway, or**
 - **Secure Vimeo or YouTube screeners**
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4. Return of Materials

- **Submitted materials will not be returned**
 - **Please do not send original or master copies**
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5. Applicant Warranty

By submitting a film, you confirm:

- a. You have the legal right to submit the film**
 - b. The film meets all Eligibility Criteria**
 - c. All necessary rights, permissions, and licenses have been secured (including copyright)**
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6. Technical Specifications

For DCP Screenings (Feature, Short, Video Essay):

- **Format: DCP**
- **Frame Rate: 24 FPS (not 25 FPS)**

For 360° / VR Documentaries:

Video:

- **Format: .mp4**
- **Resolution: 4K (2:1 aspect ratio)**

- **Frame rate: 30 FPS**

Audio:

- **Stereo: Attached to video**
- **Spatial: Provided as a separate `.tbe` file (41 kHz only). If spatial audio is used, the video must have no audio track.**

7. Additional Notes

- **A film can be submitted to MDFF no more than twice**
- **Please select only one category per submission. Do not submit to multiple sections.**



Good luck filmmakers!

We look forward to discovering your work at the 2026 Melbourne Documentary Film Festival.



Questions or submissions for Masterclass or Open Mic: info@mdff.org.au