



COMPETITION - STORIES SECTION REGULATION AND GENERAL RULES OF PARTICIPATION

THE FESTIVAL

Heroes IFF is the independent festival dedicated to science fiction and fantasy feature and short films, horror and thriller, action, adventure, and transmedia. The festival involves great masters of cinematic and visual arts, young authors and independent productions, students from universities and international cinema and visual arts institutes in its various sections, with the aim of promoting and supporting the ideation, development, and production of genre films both in its competition-related activities and in its out-of-competition activities, of a cultural or promotional nature.

ORGANIZING ENTITY

Heroes IFF is an independent festival organized by the association "La Citta' dell'Animazione e dei Contenuti Digitali" (the city of animation and digital content).

DATES AND VENUE

Heroes IFF will be held from 9th to 11th of December 2025, in Rome.

PROGRAM

The official program of the Heroes International Film Festival presents a competition section called Stories (short films in the science fiction or fantasy, horror, thriller, action, adventure, or transmedia genres), divided into two categories: *International Short Films Competition*, created by independent productions and authors of cinema and visual arts, and *International Graduation Short Films Competition*, created by students and graduates of international universities and academic institutions.

There is also a section called UNIVERSES with international genre works (feature films in the science fiction or fantasy, horror, thriller, action, adventure, or transmedia genres) that will award the *Film of the Year* prize.

Finally, the Storyworlds section presents screenings and retrospectives of great genre classics from both theatrical distribution and television and online broadcasting.

On the initiative of the artistic director, the activities of the Heroes Film School (masterclasses, international keynotes, and meetings for the public and industry professionals) are added, along with exhibitions (to be held in the physical space of the Heroes Exhibit Hall).

COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY

Only works created from January 1st, 2024, are considered for the official selection of the stories competition of the festival. These works must never have been broadcast by television networks or online platforms and must have a maximum duration of 30 minutes.

Only works created from January 1st, 2024, are considered for the official selection of the universes competition of the festival. These works must never have been broadcast by television networks or online platforms and must have a minimum duration of 50 minutes.

The selection of competing works, which must be in the science fiction or fantasy, horror, thriller, action, adventure, or transmedia genres, is made at the sole discretion of the festival organization, which will also determine the order of presentation and the scheduling of the works in the event program.



REGISTRATION OF COMPETITION PIECES

Registration to participate in the selection must be completed **no later than October 16, 2025**.

Each participant can register one work.

The registration of the works must remain absolutely confidential until the program is announced by the festival, under penalty of exclusion from the selection. It also entails the commitment to provide the film for two public screenings for free and not to withdraw the film once the invitation has been accepted.

Each work submitted for selection must be presented in its original language with English subtitles, except for works in Italian, for which subtitles are not required.

At the time of registration, it is mandatory to upload the works, with download option, following the technical specifications listed in these regulations. You must indicate the category for which you are competing (international short films competition, international graduation films competition, film of the year), the genre (science fiction or fantasy, horror, thriller, action, adventure, or transmedia), the original and English title of the work, duration, country and date of production, language of the work, subtitles, a brief synopsis in English, except for works in Italian, for which a synopsis in both English and Italian is required, producer(s), production company, director, and author(s).

All material must be entered in the online registration form no later **than October 16, 2025**.

Finalists will be subsequently contacted for additional material as required for the Heroes information material and the promotion of the film (artistic and technical cast, biography and filmography of the director, b/w and color photographs of the director, actors, and film scenes, comments from the film director).

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The shorts sent must comply with one of the following technical specifications:

- h264 codec mp4 container, 1080p resolution bitrate between 5 and 8 mbps;
- h264 codec mp4 container, 720p resolution bitrate between 4 and 6 mpbs.

The characteristics indicated above must be verified before sending the materials. If the event that the materials, for whatever reason, do not conform to the specifications indicated above, or are incomplete, damaged, or unreadable, the work will not be registered and therefore not submitted in the competition.

JURY, SELECTION, AND AWARDS

The jury will determine, from the entries received, the winning works of the *International Short Films Competition* and the international graduation short films competition categories. The jury will be composed of 4 members selected from international and national professionals of "genre" cinema (science fiction and fantasy, horror, thriller, action, adventure, and transmedia), critics, and journalists from the audiovisual sector, and it has the authority to award:

- The Best "Genre" Short Film Award for the *International Short Films Competition Category*;
- The Best "Genre" Short Film Award for the *International Graduation Short Films Competition Category*;
- The Film Of The Year award for the *Universes Category*.

The first-place winner of each category will receive a prize provided by the festival's technical sponsors. The jury also reserves the right to award special mentions. The artistic direction has the authority to award the



"Heroes Special Prize" in each edition to national or international representatives of note in "genre" narratives in cinema or series.

By November 4th, 2025, an email will be sent to the proposers communicating the outcome of their application. The selection of the finalists will be announced by November 7th, 2025.

CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION AND DISCLAIMER

At the time of online registration, the registering participant declares that the association "La Città dell'Animazione e dei Contenuti Digitali" is exempt from verifying the legitimacy of the film entry and is exempt from any responsibility. Online registration requires the full and unconditional acceptance of this regulation and the registering participant's full and unconditional acceptance of the organization's decisions regarding the selection of the piece itself, its screening, and its insertion in the event program. If, after selection, the conditions for the admission of the film provided for in this regulation are no longer met, for any reason, the association "La Città dell'Animazione e dei Contenuti Digitali" reserves the right to exclude the film from the event program and, if already inserted, to not proceed with its projection. Each participant acknowledges that accredited television and other media partners will be present at the festival for the purpose of recording television and radio broadcasts. By agreeing to participate in the festival and by subscribing to this regulation, each participant recognizes the right of these media partners to perform any kind of recording, even in the presence of sponsor brands, and freely gives them broadcasting rights for any recordings made, allowing said media partners to use them as needed and potentially pass them on to third parties. The winning participant will also undertake to include the official logo, prepared and provided by the organization, on all promotional material that accompanies the diffusion of the winning piece (posters, press books, trailers, opening credits, official websites, official press) as well as on copies presented and circulated at the festival. The winning films must also recognize the obtained award in all supporting promotional materials that accompany the film's release, according to the official graphics prepared and supplied by the organization. The definitive and complete graphics for these supporting materials must be sent for verification and approval by the organization.

DISPUTES

The Italian text of this regulation will have final authority in the event of disputes.

The present regulation and the relevant online registration are exclusive to the selection for the Heroes International Film Festival.