

**FILM
INDEPENDENT
SPIRIT
AWARDS**

**2016
RULES & REGULATIONS**

INTRODUCTION

These are the official rules and regulations for the 2016 Film Independent Spirit Awards. The 2016 Spirit Awards will be held February 27, 2016.

Please read the rules and regulations in their entirety prior to filling out the submission form.

Please call the Nominations Office at 310.432.1200 for clarifications regarding rules and regulations.

Final interpretation of all rules and regulations and eligibility of submissions shall be made by the Spirit Awards Nominating Committees and Film Independent.

FILM INDEPENDENT

9911 W. Pico Boulevard

11th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90035

Phone 310.432.1200

Fax 310.432.1241

Nominations Office

Jennifer Wilson, Nominations Manager

Setu Raval, Nominations Producer

Phone 310.432.1200

Email: spiritawards@filmIndependent.org

Postmark Deadlines

Regular: Tuesday, September 22, 2015 | Final: Tuesday, October 13, 2015

2016 FILM INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS

General Timeline

Tues., Aug. 11, 2015	Submissions open
Tues., Sep. 22, 2015	Regular Submission Deadline
Tues., Oct. 13, 2015	Final Submission Deadline
Tues., Nov. 24, 2015	Nominations announced
Tues., Nov. 24, 2015	Media and publicist credential applications online
Tues., Nov 24, 2015	Spirit Awards tables on sale to nominees and Arts Circle Members ONLY
Fri., Dec 4, 2015	Deadline to receive Nominee Materials
Tues., Dec 8, 2015	Spirit Awards tables on sale to general public
TBA	Deadline to become a voting Film Independent Member
TBA	Online voting site live
Fri., Jan. 29, 2016	Deadline to receive media credential applications
Mon., Feb. 1, 2016	Media credential notification begins
Fri., Feb. 5, 2016	Deadline to receive publicist credential applications
Mon., Feb. 8, 2016	Publicist credential notification begins
TBA	Online Ballot Deadline
Sat., Feb 27, 2016	2016 Film Independent Spirit Awards

RULES FOR ELIGIBILITY

1. All submitted films must be at least 70 minutes long.
2. Cost of completed film, including post, should be less than \$20 million. Any variations are at the sole discretion of the Nominating Committees and Film Independent.
For verification purposes, all films with total budgets exceeding \$15 million or films with budgets under \$500,000 and applying for the Cassavetes Award are required to submit the top sheets from the Final Cost Reports. Absolutely no exceptions to this requirement will be made.
3. Eligible films must have either:
 - a. Been shown in a commercial theater in the United States for at least one week (seven consecutive days) beginning in the 2015 calendar year; OR
 - b. Been shown in 2015 at one of the following six film festivals: Los Angeles Film Festival, New Directors/New Films, New York Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, Telluride Film Festival or Toronto International Film Festival.
4. Although films may be submitted in any year they are eligible, such as the year they screen in a qualifying festival or the year of their theatrical release, once a film is nominated (in any category), it is no longer eligible for submission in subsequent years.
Films that qualify through a festival screening and will be released the first quarter of 2016 should submit. Films that qualify through a festival screening but will not be released until after the first quarter of 2016 should submit next year, for the 2017 Awards. For any questions or clarifications, please contact Setu Raval, Nominations Producer at 310.432.1244 or sraval@filmIndependent.org.
5. Except for the category of Best International Film and Best Documentary, all nominations go to American productions. The Spirit Awards defines an "American production" as:
 - a. A film in which U.S. citizens or permanent residents are credited in at least two of the following categories of responsibilities: director, writer or producer. This can be fulfilled by one person with multiple duties or by separate individuals; OR
 - b. The film is set primarily in the United States and at least 70% financed by companies whose principal offices are in the U.S.
Verification of financing is a REQUIREMENT. If requested by Film Independent, the submitter (filmmaker or distributor) must supply proof of citizenship or permanent residence of filmmaker(s). Films that have been asked to but do not submit proof of residence or financing will not be considered. The final category(ies) for which a film may be nominated are at the discretion of the Spirit Awards Nominating Committees and Film Independent.
6. Documentary films are only eligible for Best Documentary; international narrative films are only eligible for Best International Film.
7. Eligibility for all awards shall first be determined by credits as they appear on the screen and/or as supplied to Film Independent by way of this submission form, provided by the film's production company or the distributor responsible for the film.
If a film is determined ineligible for any reason or submitted in the wrong category, the Spirit Awards Nominations Staff will contact the submitter (filmmaker or distributor).

NOMINATING GUIDELINES

The Spirit Awards nominations are determined by three (3) committees: American Narrative, Documentary and International. In addition, Film Independent awards three (3) filmmaker grants, Someone to Watch, Truer than Fiction, and the Producers Award to emerging filmmakers, which are determined by three (3) additional committees. These six (6) committees, which are assembled by Film Independent, consist of industry professionals including directors, writers, producers, actors, cinematographers, editors, casting directors, film critics, film programmers and members of Film Independent's Board of Directors.

The Spirit Awards Nominating Committees apply the following guidelines in making their selections. Any variations of the rules or guidelines are at the sole discretion of the Nominating Committees and Film Independent:

- Uniqueness of vision
- Original, provocative subject matter
- Economy of means (with particular attention paid to total production cost and individual compensation)
- Percentage of financing from independent sources

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Please submit the following required materials by e-mail to: spiritawards@filmindependent.org

(via Dropbox, HighTail, or WeTransfer)

- PDF version(s) of all signature page(s) with ALL required signatures
- One digital press kit that includes the following (physical press kits will not be accepted):
 - Representative production stills from the film (preferred formats: JPEG, TIFF, PNG)
 - A full, complete and official list of credits
 - Key bios of writer(s), director(s), producer(s), cinematographer(s), editor(s) and actor(s)
 - Film Synopsis (100 words or less)
- Final cost report top sheet (required for all films with total budgets exceeding \$15 million and films with budgets under \$500,000 and applying for the John Cassavetes Award.)

If available, please provide upcoming screening schedules for submitted film(s). All committee members are encouraged to view films in theatres when available. If you have questions regarding screenings, please contact Setu Raval, Nominations Producer: 310.432.1244; sraval@filmindependent.org.

Please mail the following required materials to:

Film Independent
Attn: Spirit Awards Nominations
9911 W. Pico Blvd, 11th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90035

- **15 DVDs of each submitted film**

DVDs must be clearly labeled with title, run time, and director's name(s). All information and materials are confidential. Use of submitted DVDs will be strictly limited to Spirit Awards Nominating Committee members and key members of the Nominations staff of Film Independent. DVDs will be returned upon prior arrangement with the Nominations Manager, Jennifer Wilson: jwilson@filmindependent.org. All screener returns must be arranged by November 2, 2015.

Online streaming videos will only be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Email Nominations Producer, Setu Raval: sraval@filmindependent.org for more information.

- **Payment**

If not using PayPal, a check made out to "Film Independent" for the required submission fees:

- **Regular deadline fee (by Tuesday, September 22, 2015):**
\$350.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$400.00 non-Member fee
- **Final deadline fee (by Tuesday, October 13, 2015):**
\$425.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$475.00 non Member fee

To join Film Independent and become a Member or Arts Circle Member go to www.filmindependent.org

If you are submitting by the early deadline, all materials, especially DVDs, must be received by Tuesday, September 22, 2015. If DVDs are not received by the deadline the final deadline fees will apply. If you are submitting by the final deadline, all materials, especially DVDs, must be received by Tuesday, October 13, 2015. Incomplete submissions may be disqualified.

Should you receive a nomination for the 2016 Spirit Awards, the primary contact for the film is responsible for supplying all required materials (including nominee and representative contact information, EPK, trailer/soundtrack, press materials, film artwork and DVD screeners) to Spirit Awards Production **NO LATER** than Friday, December 4, 2015. Please visit the FAQ page on www.spiritawards.com for a more detailed list of required materials and specs.