

**FiLM
iNDEP
ENDENT
SPiRiT
AWARDS**

2020 Rules & Regulations

These are the official rules and regulations for the 2020 Film Independent Spirit Awards.
The 2020 Spirit Awards will be held February 8, 2020.

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

You may call the Nominations Office at 323.556.9349 for clarifications and with questions.

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

Nominations Office

Setu Raval, Senior Manager, Grants & Awards
Jennifer Wilson, Nominations Manager & Senior Programmer

Tel: 323.556.9349

Email: spiritawards@film-independent.org

FILM INDEPENDENT

5670 Wilshire Blvd, 9th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90036

T: 323 556 9300

IMPORTANT DATES

Early deadline (Tuesday, August 27, 2019):

\$300.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$350.00 – non Member fee

Regular deadline (Tuesday, September 17, 2019):

\$350.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$400.00 – non Member fee

Late deadline (Tuesday, October 8, 2019):

\$425.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$475.00 – non Member fee

Extended Film Independent Member deadline (Friday, October 11, 2019):

\$425.00 – Film Independent Member fee

2020 FILM INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS

General Timeline

Tues., Aug. 6, 2019	Submissions open
Tues., Aug. 27, 2019	Early Submission Deadline
Tues., Sep. 17, 2019	Regular Submission Deadline
Tues., Oct. 8, 2019	Late Submission Deadline
Fri., Oct. 11, 2019	Extended Film Independent Member Submission Deadline
Thus., Nov. 21, 2019	Nominations announced
Thus., Nov. 21, 2019	Media and publicist credential applications online
Fri., Nov. 22, 2019	Spirit Awards tables available for priority sale
Wed., Dec 4, 2019	Spirit Awards tables on sale to general public
Thurs., Dec. 5, 2019	Deadline to join as a Member and be eligible to receive screeners
Fri., Dec 6, 2019	Deadline to submit nominated film materials
TBA	Online voting site live
Fri., Jan. 10, 2020	Deadline to receive media credential applications
Thurs., Jan. 16, 2020	Media credential notification begins
Fri., Jan. 17, 2020	Deadline to receive publicist credential applications
Wed., Jan. 22, 2020	Publicist credential notification begins
TBA	Online Voting Deadline
Sat., Feb. 8, 2020	2020 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 \$22.5 million. 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 2019 calendar year; OR
 - b. Been shown in 2019 at one of the following seven film festivals: New Directors/New Films, New York Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, SXSW Film Festival, Telluride Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Tribeca 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 2020 should submit this year. Films that qualify through a festival screening but will not be released until after the first quarter of 2020 should submit next year, for the 2021 Awards. For any questions or clarifications, please contact the Nominations office at 323.556.9349.
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 in significant part in the United States and/or has significant American content.

The Spirit Awards Nominating Committees and Film Independent reserve the right to determine if a film qualifies as International or American Narrative.

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.
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).

CATEGORY INFORMATION

The final categories for which a film may be nominated are at the sole discretion of the Spirit Awards Nominating Committees and Film Independent. Films may be eligible in several categories but will be nominated only once in each category type (e.g., a film cannot be nominated for *both* Best Feature and Best First Feature). Except for the category of Best International Film and Best Documentary, only American productions are eligible. For the purposes of this submission form, all fiction films are referred to as "narrative."

Best Documentary: Both American and International documentaries are eligible in this category. The award is given to the director(s) and producer(s). Films submitted in this category are not eligible in any other category.

Best International Film: International narrative films are eligible in this category. The award is given to the film's director(s). Films submitted in this category are not eligible in any other category.

All American Narrative films will be considered for the following categories:

Best Feature: All films, including films made by first-time directors, are eligible for Best Feature. Award is given to the producer(s). Co-producers, executive producers, associate producers and line producers are not eligible.

Best First Feature: Eligibility determined by the director(s) for whom this is his/her/their narrative feature directorial debut, though awarded to both the director(s) and producer(s) of the film.

Best First Screenplay: Writer(s) for whom this is his/her/their first produced feature screenplay are eligible in this category. Screenwriters with "Story By" credit will be considered.

Best Screenplay: All American narrative feature screenplays, including screenplays by first-time writers, are eligible in this category. Screenwriters with "Story By" credit may be submitted.

John Cassavetes Award: Awarded to the best American narrative feature with a budget under \$500,000 and given to the film's producer(s), director(s), and writer(s). For verification purposes, all films submitted in this category are required to submit the top sheet from the film's Final Cost Report. The winning film in this category will be determined by the American narrative nominating committee.

Best Director: Directors of all American narrative features, including first-time directors, are eligible in this category.

Best Cinematography: All American narrative features are eligible in this category.

Best Editor: All American narrative features are eligible in this category.

Best Female Lead: All American narrative features are eligible in this category.

Best Male Lead: All American narrative features are eligible in this category.

Best Supporting Female: All American narrative features are eligible in this category.

Best Supporting Male: All American narrative features are eligible in this category.

Only actors in "American Narrative" films are eligible in actor categories.

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, and an additional filmmaker grant, the Bonnie Award, to a mid-career female director. The filmmaker grant awards 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:

- Diversity, Innovation, 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

You will receive an email with a link and instructions on how to upload your materials and your digital screener within 24 hours of submitting your form.

Materials Checklist

- A screener of your film submission will need to be uploaded in its entirety to our partner screener website, Vison Media. DVDs or links (Vimeo, Youtube, etc) will not be accepted.
- 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 the Nominations office at 323-556-9349.

Payment

If not using a credit card, please mail a check made out to "Film Independent" for the required submission fees:

- **Early deadline fee (by Tuesday, August 27, 2019):**
\$300.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$350.00 non Member fee
- **Regular deadline fee (by Tuesday, September 17, 2019):**
\$350.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$400.00 non Member fee
- **Late deadline fee (by Tuesday, October 8, 2019):**
\$425.00 – Film Independent Member fee | \$475.00 non Member fee
- **Extended Film Independent Member deadline fee (by Friday, October 11, 2019):**
\$425.00 – Film Independent Member fee

Checks can be mailed to:

Film Independent
Attn: Spirit Awards Nominations
5670 Wilshire Blvd., 9th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90036

Film Independent Members are the official voting body that determines the winners for the Spirit Awards. To join Film Independent visit www.filmindependent.org/join

Your film must be uploaded to Vision Media by the deadline under which you are applying. If your film is not submitted by the deadline, later submission fees will be applied. Incomplete submissions may be disqualified.

Should you receive a nomination for the 2020 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 film screeners) to Spirit Awards Production **NO LATER** than **Friday, December 6, 2019**. Please visit the FAQ page on www.spiritawards.com for a more detailed list of required materials and specs.