AIU Kuwait International Film Festival

المهرجان السينمائي الدولي

الجامعة الامريكية الدولية في الكويت

2027 / 5TH EDITION

Submission Guidelines

Celebrating Five Years of Global Storytelling

Every great film begins with a story worth telling.

SUBMISSIONS OPEN

November 17, 2026

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

January 5, 2027

FESTIVAL / MARCH 21-27, 2027

American International University (Jahra)
Cinescape (360 Mall)

SUBMIT VIA FILMFREEWAY

aiu.edu.kw/film-festival

THE FESTIVAL

A celebration of cinema

At the AIU Kuwait International Film Festival (AIUKIFF), we believe voices have the power to inspire, challenge, connect, and transcend borders. We celebrate filmmakers who dare to tell meaningful stories, spark conversations, and share new perspectives with the world.

As we proudly launch our 5th Edition, we invite storytellers from Kuwait and across the globe to join us for our most ambitious festival yet. With expanded programming, exciting new initiatives, and fresh opportunities for filmmakers and audiences alike, AIUKIFF 2027 promises to be our biggest celebration of cinema to date.

About the Festival

The AIU Kuwait International Film Festival (AIUKIFF) proudly returns for its 5th Edition, continuing its commitment to celebrating bold storytelling, artistic excellence, and the power of cinema to connect cultures.

Since its inception, AIUKIFF has grown into one of Kuwait's leading international film platforms, welcoming filmmakers from around the world while championing local, GCC, Arab, and international voices.

Our Vision

To establish the AIU Kuwait International Film Festival as a premier international film festival that celebrates the richness of Kuwaiti cinema while serving as a cultural bridge between Kuwait and the global filmmaking community.

Our Mission

To promote cinematic excellence, encourage cultural exchange, foster meaningful dialogue, and support the continued growth of filmmaking in Kuwait, the GCC, the Arab world, and beyond.

Festival Programming

AIUKIFF celebrates a diverse range of cinematic voices, genres, cultures, and perspectives. We seek films that demonstrate artistic excellence, originality, and compelling storytelling while reflecting the diversity of global cinema.

Partner Cinescape
Sponsors Zain, Ali Alghanim & Sons, Al Jeel Al Jadeed

SUBMITTING YOUR FILM

Categories & eligibility

Shorts

Arab Fiction • Arab Documentary • International Fiction • International Documentary

Features

Arab Fiction • Arab Documentary

New Addition

Arab TV series • Student Films (Shorts) • AI in Film (Shorts)

Rules & Eligibility

• For all film categories except student films, the submission fee is $75/KD 23 for International submissions and $50/KD 15.5 for Kuwaiti film makers. The call is open worldwide.

• Student Films submission fees is $ 25/KD 7.

• Arab TV series submission fees is $50/KD 15.5.

• One submission per director.

• Films completed in 2024 or later only.

• Short Films: 4–30 minutes.

• Feature Films: 60–120 minutes.

• AI films must clearly state how AI is used. Refer to the AI Transparency Requirement and AI Involvement Classification in this guide.

• Foreign films must be subtitled.

• Entries not meeting technical specifications may be rejected.

Submission deadline: January 5, 2027 (11:59 PM Kuwait time)

Submit your film through **filmfreeway.com/KIFFestival**.

SELECTED FILMS

Screening requirements

Technical Specifications for Selected Films

Filename	SFP5_FilmTitle_FirstName_LastName
Video	H.264/MP4, 1920 × 1080, 16:9, 15 Mbps CBR.
Audio	LC-AAC Stereo or Dolby Digital AC-3, 48 kHz.
Subtitles	Embedded English and Arabic subtitles required as applicable.

If Your Film Is Selected

Selected filmmakers will be asked to provide a screening copy meeting festival specifications, a press kit, film poster, production stills, director biography, and trailer (where available).

Film Rights & Copyright

By submitting a film, the filmmaker grants AIUKIFF the non-exclusive right to screen selected films during the festival and affiliated screenings. AIUKIFF may use trailers, stills, posters, excerpts, titles, and filmmaker biographies for promotional purposes. No screening fee or travel/accommodation expenses are provided unless otherwise specified. The Festival reserves the right to amend its programme and screening schedule where necessary.

PILOT EPISODE REQUIREMENTS

Arab TV series

Technical Specifications for Arab TV Series

Eligibility: Open to pilot episodes of existing television and web series from 2024 or later only.

Episode Submission: Only the first episode (pilot) of a series may be submitted. Full seasons and subsequent episodes are not eligible.

Genre: All genres are accepted, including drama, comedy, thriller, documentary, animation, and experimental productions.

Production Status: Submissions must be completed productions. Trailers, teasers, scripts, and unfinished projects are not eligible.

Language: Non-English productions must include English subtitles.

Originality: Submissions must be original works, and applicants must hold the necessary intellectual property and screening rights.

Screening Rights: Selected applicants must authorize AIUKIFF to screen their pilot episode during the festival.

Selection & Awards: Eligible submissions will be evaluated based on originality, storytelling, direction, production quality, and potential for episodic development. Selection does not guarantee an award.

Technical Specifications & Materials

File name: SFP5_SeriesTitle_FirstName_LastName

Duration: Minimum 5 minutes and maximum 30 minutes, including credits.

Submission Materials: Applicants must provide a synopsis of the pilot episode, a brief description of the overall series concept, and production credits.

Please include the Series title, country of production, year of production, director/creator, production company (if applicable).

DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

AI transparency

AI Transparency Requirement

All use of generative artificial intelligence must be disclosed at the time of submission. Films in which more than 20% of the substantive creative content is AI-generated or substantially AI-assisted must complete the AIU Enhanced AI Disclosure, identifying the areas of AI use, the tools or platforms used, the approximate level of AI involvement, and a brief description of the human creative process and AI workflow.

What counts as creative content?

Substantive creative content may include screenplay/story, moving images or animation, performances or voices, music or sound, visual effects, and other material appearing in the completed film. Ordinary AI-enabled production utilities such as transcription, subtitle assistance, noise reduction, basic image cleanup, upscaling or stabilization do not by themselves count toward the percentage unless they generate or substantially alter creative content.

AI Involvement Classification

Level	AI Involvement	Guidance
0	No AI	No generative AI used in the creation of the submitted film.
1	Minimal AI Assistance: 1-20%	Limited AI use as a supporting tool. Human creative authorship remains substantially responsible for the final work. AI use must still be disclosed.
2	Significant AI Integration: 21-50%	AI-generated or substantially AI-assisted material forms a significant part of one or more creative elements. Enhanced AI disclosure required.
3	Major AI Integration: 51-80%	AI is a major creative or production component, while significant human direction, authorship and/or performance remain. Enhanced AI disclosure required.
4	Predominantly AI-Generated: 81-100%	Most visual, audio, performance, narrative or other substantive creative material is generated through AI tools under human creative direction. Full AI disclosure required.

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE

Award categories

Features

- Best Arab Fiction Film
- Best Arab Documentary

Shorts

- Best Arab Fiction Film
- Best Arab Documentary
- Best International Fiction Film
- Best International Documentary

Local

- Best Kuwaiti Short Film
- Best Kuwaiti Feature Film
- Best Kuwaiti Director
- Best Cinematography
- Best Actor
- Best Actress

Additional

- Audience Choice Award
- Honorable Mentions

New

- Best Pilot Episode
- Best Student Film
- Best Film using AI

FESTIVAL ATTENDANCE

Prizes & participation

Prize Eligibility (if applicable)

Monetary prizes are awarded to eligible Kuwaiti, GCC, and Arab award recipients in accordance with the Festival's funding and sponsorship guidelines.

International films remain fully eligible for Official Selection, Jury Awards, Festival Laurels, Certificates, Trophies, the Audience Choice Award, and Honorable Mentions.

Monetary prizes are presented to eligible award recipients attending the Festival. Alternative arrangements remain at the discretion of the Festival.

Travel & Accommodation

The AIU Kuwait International Film Festival is honored to welcome filmmakers from around the world. While we are currently unable to provide travel or accommodation support, all selected filmmakers are warmly invited to attend the Festival at their own expense and experience Kuwait's growing film community.

Above all, our goal is to discover and celebrate exceptional cinema, wherever it comes from. We look forward to sharing your story with our audiences.

Looking Ahead

2027 marks an exciting new chapter for AIUKIFF with expanded programming, industry activities, networking opportunities, and new festival experiences. We look forward to discovering your story and welcoming you to Kuwait.

Submit your story

Submit via FilmFreeway
aiu.edu.kw/film-festival
film@aiu.edu.kw