



POV Call for Entries: Submission Guidelines

Introduction

POV, public television's premier showcase for independent, nonfiction film seeks programs from all perspectives to showcase in its annual PBS series. POV accepts films in three different categories:

- **Standard:** For completed films & fine cuts. If you feel you have a strong rough cut, you can submit in this category.
- **Early Introduction:** For films still in production or development. We prioritize Standard entries for broadcast consideration but use the Early Introduction category to get films on our radar and for early rough cuts.
- **Short:** If your film is 35 minutes or less, please submit in this category.

Submission Protocol.

- POV encourages delivering your film online via [Vimeo](#). When you complete your online submission form, you can paste in your Vimeo link and password. POV will also accept content delivered on a USB flash drive.
- When you submit a Vimeo link, the file **MUST BE DOWNLOAD-ENABLED**. Please password-protect your link and **don't forget to include the password in the form**. All links and files received will remain confidential and are for internal use only.
- Any file submitted via USB flash drive must not exceed 2 GB in size and is preferred at 1280 x 720 (HD compression). We will not consider files that exceed 2GB.
- Non-English submissions **must have burned-in subtitles** to your link/file. We cannot consider your film if subtitles are not burned-in to the actual file (not overlaid in Vimeo).

Please Note, as of May 2018, we will accept submissions on a rolling basis.

Our broadcast season typically runs from June through October each year, and we program our season about one year prior. Films submitted before July 15th of the current calendar year, will be considered for the next broadcast season. Films submitted after July 15th of the current calendar year will be rolled into the consideration process for a future broadcast season.



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e.g. A film submitted on July 14, 2018 will be considered for the 2019 broadcast season. A film submitted on November 13, 2018 will be considered for the 2020 broadcast season.

Browser Requirements: The online submission form requires a JavaScript-enabled web browser. We recommend:

- Firefox
- Google Chrome
- Safari

Eligibility

POV considers work that meets the following criteria:

Non-fiction only. Works that integrate some fictional elements or create genre hybrids can be considered. **Please do not submit docudramas, reenactments, promotional, or performance pieces.** When in doubt, please email cfe@pov.org and include a phone number where we can reach you.

Works that have not been broadcast nationally. POV expects to provide the U.S. broadcast premiere of a program. POV will, however, consider a work when it is of special merit and has had only limited television exposure (such as broadcast on local public TV stations or on cable systems with limited geographical reach). If a film has been broadcast in countries outside of the U.S., it is still eligible for POV. When programming a film, we do take its digital distribution and accompanying exposure/press prior to broadcast into consideration.

Works by independent filmmakers. Works produced by filmmakers in association with a station or organization are acceptable if editorial control was entirely in the hands of the filmmaker. Instructional films, films made for a client, and sponsored films are not eligible.



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POV welcomes and encourages submissions by both domestic and international filmmakers. If your non-fiction film has not been previously broadcast in the U.S., and meets all other eligibility requirements, you may submit your film to POV. If your film is not in English, you must submit a version with English subtitles.

Works released within the past four years. POV will consider exceptional works completed before this date only if they have achieved significant recognition through festivals, awards or reviews. Eligibility of films released prior to the four-year cut-off date is solely at the discretion of the Executive Producers.

Films that are complete or near completion. POV considers completed work or fine cuts for standard acquisition. Samples, assemblies or excerpts usually cannot be considered for broadcast in the upcoming season and should be submitted in the category “**Early Introduction**”. See below for details.

Works not previously submitted to POV. If a film has been previously submitted to POV in non-final form (rough cut), the film can be submitted again if it is finished and/or the treatment has changed significantly since the previous submission. A small number of producers are invited to re-submit their films, but POV will contact directly.

Works of any length will be considered. Short films (35 mins. and under) are welcomed and encouraged to be submitted in the “Short” category. If acquired, please note that producers may be asked to cut works to comply with the POV/PBS broadcast format.

Works that comply with PBS underwriting guidelines. For details on PBS National Program Funding Standards and Practices, please visit the PBS web site at www.pbs.org/producers/

The Executive Producers reserve the right to make exceptions to these guidelines in special cases.

Early Introduction

Early Introduction is NOT for films seeking broadcast or funding. Please see [our website](#) for other funding opportunities.



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POV's programming team gets to as many markets, festivals and other industry events as we can. We want to stay in touch with filmmakers and be aware of projects as they evolve. Most of the films we encounter at an early stage will eventually submit through the Open Call for Entries process as finished works. Limited completion and co-production support is available on a case-by-case basis.

If you have a documentary project you'd like us to know about [please submit under the "Early Introduction" category](#).

Complete only the section of the submission form that applies to your project's current stage of production (research, development, pre-production). You may also submit a treatment, trailer or project proposal in this category. Please specify if you do not want information about your project passed along to other parties.

If you're unsure of where your project belongs please email cfe@pov.org

Submission Procedures

Please read the following guidelines carefully as you prepare materials to send to us. Failure to follow these instructions may result in disqualification.

Screening Copies: Filmmakers must submit **one** of the following:

- Vimeo link (Recommended). Upload your film to the Vimeo website at vimeo.com and include a password-protected link to your film in your submission form. Make sure your film is download-enabled (found under the 'privacy' tab of your Vimeo video).
- USB flash drive ("thumb drive") with a digital video file, in H.264 codec, preferred resolution of 480p and maximum file size of 2 GB. Please include your submission ID and film title in the video file name, for example: 2017_1_0567_my_great_film.mp4. Your submission ID will be provided to you once you submit your film, on the submission confirmation page.

Note: You must agree to the terms and conditions stated at the end of the submission form in order to complete your submission.

Liability: **USB flash drives will NOT be returned. Do not submit original material.**



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Fees and Rights

If your film is selected for a POV broadcast, POV licenses exclusive US public television rights and accompanying limited digital-streaming rights. We also develop community engagement campaigns with targeted goals. Our films are made available through the [POV Community Network](#), where we facilitate over 850 screening events annually. We work with organizations, educational institutions and stations to organize free community screenings and discussions. The work we do will not interfere with your non-theatrical revenue; if you have educational distribution, we will coordinate with them to identify any holdbacks. [We do not handle educational, theatrical or festival distribution](#), though many POV films have found success in all these areas.

While we typically seek PBS broadcast rights for [a period of four years, as well as U.S. web-streaming and PBS VOD Services](#), we understand that the media market is in flux and strive to work with filmmakers to both help ensure their distribution options and maximize the reach of public media funds. It is essential that POV and PBS maintain digital streaming windows around broadcast. Acquisitions funds do not apply to films funded by the [ITVS](#), [PBS](#), [the National Minority Consortia](#), or [CPB](#) (as a public television broadcast has generally already been licensed through that funding), or for a work that has already been broadcast. Exclusivity may be waived at the discretion of the Executive Producers and only under extraordinary circumstances.

Releases / Rights: PBS broadcast appearance releases, as well as PBS broadcast rights for all music, art, stills and stock footage must be secured by the producer prior to broadcast.

Final editorial control remains with the filmmakers, however POV retains the right to request changes in length and/or treatment.



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Selection Process

Each year, we have between 15-17 slots for features and 8-12 slots for shorts.

Selection of programs for POV will be made by the Executive Producers, in consultation with the programming team and the Editorial Committee (see below).

Works are pre-screened by experienced curators, programmers, producers and media professionals. Each submission is screened by at least two programmers. Submissions are evaluated on the basis of their potential impact on a national television audience, their aesthetic approach, directorial vision, contemporary resonance and compatibility with series priorities. All submissions remain confidential, and material is not shared outside of the POV programming team.

Due to the volume of submissions, POV staff cannot provide individual feedback on submitted work. Producers will be notified of the selection decision **approximately six months** after submission.

The final stage of the programming process for our feature films is a convening of the Editorial Committee (EdComm). POV's Editorial Committee is a unique working partnership between non-fiction independents and public television representatives, functioning as an advisory board to the Executive Producers. We will inform you if your film has been selected to advance to EdComm. Advancement to EdComm does not guarantee acquisition. Past members of the committee include:

Angad Bhalla, Independent Documentary Director

Steve Maing, Independent Documentary Director

Charlotte Cook, Principal Field of Vision and festival programmer

Garry Denny, Associate Director of Programming, Wisconsin PTV, Madison, WI

Ramona Diaz, Independent Documentary Director

Justin Harvey, Director of Content, NPT, Nashville, TN

Susie Hernandez, Associate Program Director, KQED, San Francisco, CA

Tom Holter, Executive Director of Programming, Twin Cities Public Television, Minneapolis, MN

Hildy Ko, Director TV Programming, Arizona Public Media, Tucson, AZ



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Grace Lee, Independent Documentary Director

Julie Goldman, Independent Documentary Producer

Loira Limbal, Vice President, Firelight Media

Sam Pollard, Editor, Independent Producer, Professor of Film and Television, New York University

Ron Pisaneschi, General Manager, Idaho Public Television, Boise, Idaho

Yoruba Richen, Film Director & Director of documentary program at CUNY Graduate School of Journalism

Dan Soles, Senior Vice President and Chief Television Content Officer, WTTW, Chicago, IL

Andrea Sosa, Director of Programming, KLRN, San Antonio, TX

Jean Tsien, Independent Documentary Editor, Director, Producer