2017 – 2018 North Country Student Film Festival

Entry Rules & Guidelines

Award Categories

The judges are looking for excellent storytelling, quality editing, and original work created by student teams.

The festival will recognize at least one film for each category:

* **Partnerships North of the 44th**
* **Life North of the 44th**
* **The Future We Envision North of the 44th**

Additionally, awards will be given to recognize these film characteristics:

* **Best Technical Merit:** Overall combination of film elements which include editing components of effective transitions, steady shots, and the use of audio and/or sound effects.
* **Best Cinematography:** Visual impact, composition, videography and framing of shots to contribute an overall dramatic effect while conveying a compelling message.
* **Best Picture:** Overall creativity, technical merit, sophistication and all-around excellence in production and storytelling.
* **Best Originality:** The film that showed something unanticipated and leaves the audience wanting more.

\*Award are subject to change depending on the number and quality films submitted.

Eligibility

Entry into the film festival is free and it is open to students in grades 4-8 from New Hampshire schools in SAUs 3, 7, 9, 20, 23, 35, 36, 58, 68, 77 & 84, as well as bordering schools in Vermont and Maine. Charter and private schools and home-schoolers from the North Country region are invited to participate. Other schools willing to travel to the festival may contact NCES about the possibility of being included.

Local Team Advisor Requirement

The local team adviser must be a member of the staff at the school. The adviser does not necessarily need to be skilled in making videos since this is a student production. A parent or community member can assist, but a school representative must serve as the official contact person. There can be more than one adviser in a school working with teams. However, if there is more than one local team adviser per school, the stipend (if available) may need to be split (this will depend on the total number of schools and the amount of funding available).

Teams/Film Crew

The size of the team, the film crew working behind the camera, producing, and editing, is recommended to be 2 to 4 students. The minimum is 2 students. It is preferred that the team consist of no more than 6 students, but that is at the discretion of local team adviser. The team can consist of students from any combination of grades, but a student can only be on one team. There is no limit on the number of teams per school. Only acting or appearing in a film does not count as being on a team; the student must be involved in the creation of the film (writing, producing, editing, filming, researching, etc. There is no limit on the number of teams per school. However, if more than 10 films will be submitted by the school, please consider holding a local contest to decide which films to submit.

This festival is an educational event. We encourage teachers, artists, and advisers to work with students, particularly in identifying and refining the focus of the film. However, production and editorial decisions must be made by students. 

Initial School Registration by December 15, 2017

The adult team adviser must register via the School Registration Form ([download here](https://drive.google.com/open?id=119_Ph61-K3LBHHu5FYSP-KSg7_n3PJDx)). Please submit the number of anticipated students/teams to help us plan accordingly. It is okay if the final submission groupings end up slightly different. If you miss this deadline, you can still participate, but complete the School Registration Form as soon as possible.

Film/Video Requirements

The actual video production and editorial decisions must be made by the students. Entries must have a run time of no longer than 2 minutes including the credits. An Entry Form must be submitted with each film (available soon).

Students may use whatever software, hardware and equipment they have available. The final entry must be in a format supported by YouTube ([see supported file formats](https://support.google.com/youtube/troubleshooter/2888402?hl=en)). The entire production must be the work of the student team entering the competition. There is no age limit for actors, documentary subjects, or musicians who may appear in the production.

**Films should NOT include the full real names of students within the film, including in the credits**. Use first names only in the credits. For minors appearing in the film, use first names only or fictitious names. These films will be posted on YouTube or other public shared site.

Films should conform to a "G" (preferably) or "PG" rating as described by the Motion Picture Association of America: <http://www.mpaa.org/ratings/what-each-rating-means>.

There are no minimums or limits on the number people in the film (the cast). We highly encourage the use of live video. We strongly discourage the sole use of a series of images/slides (because that's a slideshow, not a film). Live-action, animation, and stop-motion-animation, or a mix of these, are allowed.

Film Submission Deadline: Friday, February 16, 2018

Uploading deadline is midnight, February 16, 2018. Physical entries on a DVD or USB must be delivered to NCES by 4:00 PM on or before Friday, February 16, 2018.  Mailed films should be sent to Lori Langlois, Film Festival Entry, North Country Education Services, 300 Gorham Hill Road, Gorham, NH 03581 and must be post-marked by February 16th. Entries that are mailed and not received by the following week may not be considered.

Please note, at your discretion, you many use an earlier internal deadline if it coincides better with class schedules, semester or project periods. Each film, uploaded or submitted on physical media, must be accompanied by an entry form. The entry form can be completed online or on paper. Upload films here (link not active until February).

Permissions

The Local Team Adviser should collect and keep on file a signed [Talent Media Consent and Release Form](https://nces.squarespace.com/s/Talent-Consent-and-Release-Form.docx) from all talent/actors (parent signature for minors) appearing in the films. Obtaining this permission is to protect you and the school. When you submit a film, you as the Local Team Adviser are assuring that you have obtained these permissions.

Film Festival: Public Screening & Awards

The date for the festival will be a Saturday, March 24, 2018 from 10:00 to 12:00 at the Rialto Theatre in Lancaster, NH. Parents and families are welcome to attend and NCES will provide you with the invitations. Transportation will not be provided. Teams do not need to be present to receive an award.

Fair Use Guidelines for Educational Multimedia

Students are encouraged to use original music, copyright free music, or music they have obtained permission to use, however, use of copyright materials is allowable per the Fair Use Guidelines for Educational Multimedia. A reference chart is [available here](https://nces.squarespace.com/s/copyright_chart-h1vp.pdf).  
Please note: After the festival, winning video will be posted the NCES YouTube channel.  Copyrighted music is often stripped automatically by YouTube and this may result in the removal of all audio from a film using non-original music.

Terms & Conditions of Entry

By participating in the North Country Middle School Film Festival, you agree that, NCES reserves all the rights to screen or not to screen any film(s) for any reason it deems valid.  All films must be an original work of students. NCES retains all the rights to the films received and may show these for publicity and educational purposes anywhere in the world using any medium. The award decisions are final.

Changes

The rules herein are subject to change without prior notice. NCES shall make all reasonable efforts to inform participating schools of any change in these rules & guidelines, whether minor or major, but no guarantees are made or assumed that such intimation will be given.

You are requested to visit this page regularly to identify, read, understand and comply with any change in the rules & guidelines of this competition.

Contact

Film festival coordinator: Lori Langlois, lori@ncedservices.org, 603-466-5437.