



# ***THE SOUTH LONDON FILM FESTIVAL: COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVITY & ETHICAL PRACTICES***

*“Our Values & Policies for an Inclusive Film Industry”*

## 1. Diversity & Inclusion

Fostering diversity and inclusion is at the core of everything we do at The South London Film Festival. Our primary goal is to inspire the next generation of creatives by providing a platform for diverse voices to be seen and heard. We offer selections and awards across a variety of short and feature categories, including Narrative, Documentary, Advertisements, Experimental, Animated, International, Music Videos (reduced fees), and Student Films (with no entry fees).

We ensure that our programming team consists of independent and fair-minded individuals from various backgrounds, faiths, and industry experiences. Each team member undergoes an introduction with our founder and managing director to align with our ethos of inclusivity. No filmmaker is ever guaranteed a selection, and our programmers must not have any personal or professional ties to the films in competition. Our direct team members are also not permitted to submit films to maintain impartiality.

Being based in South London, we celebrate the diversity of our community by offering discounted submission fees for South London residents. Our mission is to amplify underrepresented voices locally and internationally, inspiring future generations of creatives. Beyond selections and awards, we encourage diverse audiences to engage with cinema, whether as creatives or viewers.

We are committed to ensuring our festival is a platform where all voices can be heard, particularly those from marginalised communities. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is not about ticking boxes, it is about recognising our responsibility to highlight the voices of the unheard and provide them with meaningful opportunities. We actively reach out to filmmakers from underrepresented backgrounds and strive for gender balance within our programming. We also collaborate with industry professionals, cultural organisations, and local initiatives to create opportunities for diverse voices to thrive. Additionally, we are dedicated to making sure our jury panel represents a broad spectrum of perspectives, ensuring fairness and inclusivity in decision-making.

Our devotion to championing inclusivity, goes hand in hand with our pursuit of recognising outstanding filmmaking. Every film is judged fairly, and selection is based on craft, originality and impact - not status, connections, or familiarity. We prioritise showcasing high-quality content that has the power to inspire audiences and future filmmakers. Our selection process is built on a commitment to artistic excellence,

storytelling impact, and innovative vision. Our goal is to provide an open and supportive environment where all creatives, regardless of background or experience, have an opportunity to develop and share their work.

Our philosophy is simple: **"Don't give people a rulebook, give them a platform."** We believe in creating an open, accessible space where all voices, regardless of background, have an equal opportunity to be seen and heard.

## 2. Accessibility

Our team includes a diverse range of creatives, some of whom have accessibility needs, including neurodiverse colleagues and those with long-term health conditions.

We are committed to making our events accessible to all. All partner venues provide step-free access to screening areas and we remain informed through guidance from industry leaders such as BECTU, RNIB, and the Film and TV Charity. This ensures we continually support and implement best practice in accessibility. We also share accessibility recommendations with filmmakers - for example, suggesting gold captions instead of white to improve visibility for audiences with visual impairments.

Additionally, we offer support to filmmakers who may lack industry experience by helping them create **Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) free of charge** if they are in need. These DCPs are then provided to the filmmakers to keep, ensuring their films are professionally formatted for screenings beyond our festival.

## 3. Community Engagement

The South London Film Festival collaborates with local councils, schools, and businesses to host events that support underrepresented communities. For example, hosting the **first-ever** large-scale LGBTQ+ event in the history of the borough of Bromley. Our **Pride Showcase**, in partnership with local businesses, provided a platform for LGBTQ+ filmmakers and fostered networking opportunities, making it a first-of-its-kind event in the community.

We also work with the Mayor of London's Borough of Culture initiative, supporting diverse programming across London. Through regular outreach events beyond our annual festival, we continue to spotlight voices that might otherwise go unheard.

Additionally, we regularly make an effort to keep in touch with filmmakers who are not selected where possible. We believe that every filmmaker's work deserves recognition, and we sometimes invite previous submitters, even if their films were not selected in the past - to screen their work at future events where their film may be a better fit for the programme.

Furthermore, we have supported filmmakers and charities by helping create affordable advertising campaign videos. These projects provide valuable industry experience for aspiring filmmakers while pairing them with previous award winners, fostering collaboration between emerging talent and established filmmakers. We also support other projects through development, screenings, Q&As, promotional efforts, and industry networking opportunities.

We think it's important to support and expand cinema audiences to ensure that independent films reach those who may not traditionally engage with festival screenings. We work with local schools, community centres, and cultural hubs to introduce diverse storytelling to new audiences and encourage broader appreciation of independent film. Our efforts extend beyond the festival, as we look for alternative screening venues to bring impactful films to a wide variety of spaces across London, making cinema more accessible and engaging.

## 4. Volunteer & Industry Support

The South London Film Festival is built on a foundation of collaboration and community, and we recognise the immense value our volunteers and team members bring to the festival. We are committed to providing an enriching experience that supports career development and professional growth. We ensure that each volunteer is matched with roles that align with their interests and skills, whether in festival production, event coordination, technical support, or industry networking. Our support extends far from the festival events. Through industry talks, networking sessions, and collaborations with partner organisations, we offer opportunities for practical learning and mentorship. We encourage open communication between team members and the festival director. As we continue to grow, we aim to introduce more structured training initiatives to help creatives develop key industry skills and expand their professional networks.

We believe in fostering a safe, respectful, and professional environment for everyone involved in The South London Film Festival. We have **zero tolerance for discrimination**,

**harassment, bullying, or any form of inappropriate behaviour.** Every member of our team is welcomed and interviewed prior to joining to ensure they align with our values of inclusivity and professionalism. We also communicate these values clearly to our volunteers, partners, and venues. Our partner venues work closely with us and our team leaders to ensure that **The South London Film Festival remains a friendly and safe atmosphere for all attendees, filmmakers, and team members.**

Whilst we work closely with our volunteers and partners to support career growth, we also encourage our team members to support each other in professional development. Many of our volunteers have gone on to secure roles in the industry, and we maintain ongoing relationships to provide further career support and networking opportunities.

While we are not yet in a position to pay volunteers, we actively work to cover travel expenses where possible and collaborate with partner venues to provide free or discounted food and drinks. Our long-term goal is to secure funding that enables us to implement a fair pay structure for all staff.

Until then, we continue to prioritise creating meaningful industry opportunities for our team, making The South London Film Festival not just a place to showcase films but also a gateway for professional growth.

## **5. Environmental Responsibility**

We take sustainability seriously and work closely with our partner venues to minimise our environmental impact. We:

- Use digital ticketing.
- Accept only digital film submissions (no physical discs, USBs, or paper scripts).
- Prioritise sourcing event materials from local independent and sustainable companies where possible.
- Recycle and reuse materials where possible, donating unused items to other organisations.
- Stay up to date with industry research and best practices to remain aware of the film industry's economic and environmental footprint and continuously improve our sustainability efforts.

Our **Climate Change Category** encourages filmmakers to create impactful films about climate issues, raising awareness and inspiring action.

## 6. Ethical Sponsorship

We partner with organisations that align with our values of diversity, inclusivity, and ethical responsibility. We prioritise partnerships that offer added value to our filmmakers and community. For example, our partnership with Raindance Film School provides our Student Film award winners with £1,000 in training vouchers, directly supporting their career development. We maintain full transparency regarding sponsorships, listing partners on our website, FilmFreeway page, and festival programming. While some sponsors may be invited to present a Jury Award, this process follows our strict ethical guidelines to ensure fairness and integrity.

## Conclusion

The South London Film Festival remains dedicated to fostering diversity, inclusivity, ethical practices, and sustainability. Our main goal is to inspire the next generation of creatives by providing a platform where diverse voices can be seen and heard. We are continuously evolving to ensure our festival remains a platform for positive change in the industry and our community.

We are committed to growth and evolution. We regularly review our practices, incorporating feedback from filmmakers, audiences, and industry professionals to improve our inclusivity and impact year after year.

Signed,



**Kyriakos Georgiou**

Founder & Managing Director

The South London Film Festival

Aug 2025

**THE  
SOUTH  
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