
Rules and Regulations

1. The Festival

1.1. About DOK Leipzig

The International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film – in short: DOK Leipzig – is an annual festival for documentary and animated film.

The festival is organised by the city of Leipzig. It commissions the non-profit Leipziger Dok-Filmwochen GmbH with the preparation, realisation and management of the festival.

The 69th edition takes place in Leipzig from 26 October to 1 November 2026.

1.2. Competitions and Premiere Regulations

The festival programme is organised into four competitions and other out-of-competition sections.

- International Competition Documentary Film**

(documentary films of all lengths)

World or International premiere is preferred, European premiere is required. For films up to 40 minutes, at least a German premiere is required.

- International Competition Animated Film**

(animated films of all lengths)

At least a German premiere is required

- German Competition Documentary Film**

(documentary films of all lengths, (co-)produced in Germany)

World premieres required, International premiere eligible for co-productions.

- Audience Competition**

(documentary and animated films over 40 min)

At least a German premiere is required

This year's documentary film programmes, which are part of the official selection and presented out-of-competition, are determined by the artistic director and the team of DOK Leipzig and will be announced later this year.

Changes to the premiere status of the submitted film must be communicated immediately to the programme department. These may affect the selection status of the film.

1.3. Young DOK

Young DOK presents documentary and animated films for children and young people in age-appropriate programmes of short and feature-length films.

Documentaries and animated films of all lengths from the production years 2025 and 2026 can be submitted via the official entry form. A premiere is welcome, but not required.

1.4. Juries and Awards

Films up to 40 minutes qualify for the short film awards, films over 40 minutes are considered feature-length films.

1.4.1. Golden and Silver Doves

In the **International Competition Documentary Film**, the jury awards one Golden Dove each for a feature-length documentary and a short documentary, as well as one Silver Dove each to a work by an emerging director (maximum third directorial work) for a feature-length documentary and a short documentary. The winning films of the Golden Doves in the International Competition Documentary Film qualify for nomination at the ACADEMY AWARDS®, provided they meet the Academy's requirements.

In the **International Competition Animated Film**, the jury will award one Golden Dove each for an animated short and feature film. The winning film of the Golden Dove in the International Competition Short Animated Film qualifies for nomination at the ACADEMY AWARDS®, provided it meets the Academy's requirements.

In the **German Competition Documentary Film**, the jury awards one Golden Dove each for a short and a feature-length documentary film.

In the **Audience Competition**, a jury consisting of regional audience representatives jurors from the region will award one Golden Dove to a feature-length documentary or animated film.

1.4.2. Partner Awards

The Artistic Director nominates a number of films for cross-sectional partner awards. The respective juries present the awards to the directors of the films.

You can find more information on the awards presented in 2025 here: [Partner Awards](#).

1.4.3. Payment of Awards

The award money (in EUR) for Golden Doves, Silver Doves and Partner Awards will be paid directly to the directors.

1.5. Promotion and Publication of Awards

The producers and distributors of selected and awarded films are obliged to include the participation at DOK Leipzig in future promotional material by using the official Laurel Leaves of the festival.

2. Film Submission

2.1. Submission Deadlines

Films can be submitted for the 69th edition of DOK Leipzig from 10.2.2026 to 1.7.2026. A late submission is not possible.

2.2. Requirements for Submission

The festival is open to documentary and animated films as well as animated documentaries and hybrid forms of documentary storytelling. Eligible are films of all lengths with a production year of 2025 or 2026 that have not been publicly screened before 1 October 2025.

Films that are going to be publicly available in Germany before the end of the 69th edition of DOK Leipzig (1.11.2026), e.g. on television, online or through a regular cinema release, do not qualify.

2.3. Submission Procedure

The submission form can be found at www.dok-leipzig.de/mydok from 10 February until 1 July 2026.

A valid film submission is only possible via this form. The submission is only complete once the submission fee has been paid (exceptions see section 2.5).

DOK Leipzig accepts only the submission of a film if the submitters are the owners of all rights of use to the film that are necessary for the submission and use of the film in the context of the participation in DOK Leipzig 2026 (see section 6) and they can also effectively grant these rights of use to DOK Leipzig.

The submitters guarantee that they have received clearance from the copyright holders of all copyrighted material included in the film and of all submitted photos relating to the film for all purposes for which the material is to be used, including the screening of the film, press and public relations work and listing in the DOK Film Market. By submitting the film, the submitters release DOK Leipzig from liability for any claims of third parties regarding copyrights or personal rights as well as residual claims or similar claims. The submitters are solely responsible for the clearance of all such claims.

2.4. Submission Fee

The submission fee is due after filling out the submission form and must be paid via the payment options indicated on the form. Submissions for which no submission fee has been received will not be processed.

The submission fee for short films (up to 40 minutes) is organised in three steps:

10.2.-31.3.2026	35 € (plus 7% VAT)
1.4.-31.5.2026	40 € (plus 7% VAT)
1.6.-1.7.2026	50 € (plus 7% VAT)

The submission fee for feature films (over 40 minutes) is equally organised in three steps:

10.2.-31.3.2026	40 € (plus 7% VAT)
1.4.-31.5.2026	45 € (plus 7% VAT)
1.6.-1.7.2026	60 € (plus 7% VAT)

The submission fee cannot be refunded under any circumstances. This also applies in the case of a multiple submission, a withdrawn submission or a rejected submission.

2.5. Entry Fee Discounts and Waivers

2.5.1. Films from Educational Backgrounds

Films made in the framework of training or studies can be submitted for a discounted submission fee of 10 € plus 7% VAT. The decision on granting the discount is at the discretion of the programme department. A right to the discounted fee cannot be claimed.

2.5.2. Countries of Production

The submission fee is automatically waived if the film was produced **exclusively** in countries included in the list below:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominica, DR Congo, Ecuador, Egypt,

El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Niue, North Korea, Pakistan, Palau, Palestinian Territories, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Samoa, São Tomé & Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Grenadines, South Sudan, Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Timor Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Co-Productions with countries not listed here do not qualify for a fee waiver.

2.6. Screener

A password-protected link (valid until the end of November 2026) for multiple viewings of the film must be provided in the submission form. Without a working link, the film cannot be considered for selection.

The link must be a streaming link (preferably with downloadable option) that does not require a paid registration for viewing the film.

2.7. Rough Cuts

DOK Leipzig allows the submission of rough cuts at picture lock stage. In the selection process, only the version of the film provided at the time of submission will be reviewed. The submission form must indicate which changes can be expected for the final version.

2.8. Language and Subtitles

For the selection process, the film must be available in German or English. If the original language of the film is not one of these two languages, subtitles in German or English must be included.

For screenings during the festival, the film must be subtitled in English. The Festival will not produce German subtitles for selected films. However, if German subtitles are available, please inform the programme department. Films are screened in their original language with English subtitles.

3. Festival Participation

3.1. Selection Process

The selection of films is made by the artistic director together with the DOK Leipzig selection committee. Films cannot be submitted for a specific section. The decision on this allocation is made by the artistic director of the festival.

The final invitations and rejections will be communicated by the programme department by email by the latest at the end of August 2026.

Films that are not selected for the festival programme will receive a rejection notice by email. However, if the film is considered relevant for the DOK Film Market, the contact persons will receive an invitation to register the film for the DOK Film Market (see section 5).

3.2. Participation Form

Selected films will receive an official invitation by email to the person indicated as contact in the submission form.

The invitation is issued for to a specific section, under conditions specified in the invitation letter.

A change in premiere status results in a review of the selection decision and/or the section in which a film is placed.

The invitation to the festival is non-transferable.

The submitted and reviewed film version is invited.

Returning the participation form means that the rights holders and all persons involved agree to participate in the festival under the conditions stated in the invitation letter.

All costs arising from the cancellation or modification of the original agreement will be borne by the rights holders.

All selected films will be made available to watch for accredited guests of DOK Leipzig on the festival's VOD platform for the duration of the festival, unless the rights holders expressly object in writing.

3.3. PR Material

With the invitation to the festival, the filmmakers will receive a „How to PR Guide“, a practical guide with all important information and deadlines to help prepare promotional material for this year's festival edition.

The festival accepts no liability for inaccuracies in the submitted materials. The film texts in the festival's publications are written by the festival team of DOK Leipzig.

3.4. Screening Copy

All films selected for the DOK Leipzig programme must be provided as unencrypted DCPs.

The screening of other formats requires the prior consultation and explicit approval of the programming department.

The screening copy of a selected film must reach DOK Leipzig via digital data transfer by 20/9/2026 at the latest.

Digital screening copies are irrevocably deleted no later than two weeks after the end of the festival.

It is also possible to send the film copy intended for screening to the festival office on a physical data carrier:

DOK Leipzig
Katharinenstrasse 17
D-04109 Leipzig
Germany

The costs of sending the film will be covered by the submitter. Return shipping costs will be covered by the festival. Return transport of screening copies will be handled by the festival's courier service partner.

Shipments from abroad must be accompanied by a pro-forma invoice. Items must be marked „NO COMMERCIAL VALUE, FOR CULTURAL/ FESTIVAL PURPOSES ONLY“.

3.5. Insurance

DOK Leipzig guarantees the rights holders insurance cover for the replacement value of the screening copy of the same type and quality for all copies sent in by post for the period from receipt by the festival to delivery to the first transport company for return shipment. This insurance cover exclusively includes the reimbursement of the costs for the production of a new film copy or the damaged file or, in the case of a digital data carrier such as a hard disk, the costs for the copying and the new data carrier. The costs to be charged must be substantiated by the rights holder and may not exceed the current prices of copying works and other service providers in Germany.

The insurance cover excludes the assumption of any costs for the production of (intermediate) negatives, (intermediate) positives, master tapes or other post-production costs by DOK Leipzig.

In the event of a malfunctions during a screening, the festival cannot be held liable for immaterial damages.

4. Hospitality

DOK Leipzig invites all directors of selected competition films to attend the festival and promote their film in Q&As. Directors and producers receive a free festival accreditation. The festival will cover the costs of accommodation for the directors (number of nights will be determined by the festival). DOK Leipzig additionally grants a travel allowance and assists in finding additional sources of funding.

5. DOK Film Market

All films selected for the festival programme that have been completed after 1.10.2025 can be included free of charge in the DOK Film Market. Accredited international buyers, distributors and festival programmers get access to view films via the online library for six months.

Additional films that are not part of the festival programme will receive an invitation to register for the DOK Film Market. For the admission of these films a fee applies. More information on DOK Film Market can be found here.

www.dok-leipzig.de/en/dok-film-market

6. Rights of Use

With the submission of a film, the submitters declare that they are the rights owners of the submitted work. For the purposes of these regulations, „rights owners“ are the authors of the subject matter or any other natural or legal person or group of persons who has acquired an intellectual property right in the subject matter which covers the acts referred to in these regulations and for which a grant of rights of use or a transfer to third parties is possible.

The submitters warrant that no legal claims of any kind may be asserted by third parties in respect of the materials made available. If third parties make claims against DOK Leipzig regarding the materials and works provided, DOK Leipzig will inform the submitters immediately. The submitters are obliged to clarify the matter with the claimants and to bear the full costs incurred by DOK Leipzig for the necessary legal defence.

The films selected for the sections mentioned in section 1.2 will be shown in up to five public screenings during the festival. Films in these sections are made available to the festival free of charge and without remuneration to the rights holders.

DOK Leipzig receives the right to use excerpts from the film of a maximum length of three minutes as well as the PR material provided by the rights holders (see section 3.3) for press and public relations work, free of remuneration and unlimited in terms of time and space (for the duration of the protected object). This also includes the distribution of the material to reporting media (television, radio, podcast, social media and other multimedia formats) for non-commercial use as well as the publication of the material on www.dok-leipzig.de and the festival's social media channels. DOK Leipzig guarantees that the length of ten percent of the total running time of the film will not be exceeded.

The festival stores a digital copy of the selected films for the internal archive. Commercial use of the archived viewing copies by the festival is excluded.

7. Data Protection Policy

With the submission of the film, the submitters agree that the basic film information will be retained in the DOK Leipzig database for archival and research purposes, even if the submitted film is not selected.

8. Final Remarks

Registration for participation in DOK Leipzig 2026 constitutes acceptance of the above regulations. The festival directors have the right to regulate all cases not provided for in the regulations as well as to allow exceptions in special and justified cases. The festival director decides on all questions not included in these regulations.

In the event of differences between the texts in different languages, only the German version of these regulations is binding.

Leipzig, 10.2.2026