



Festival requirements

Film, music video, screenplay, and pitch submissions must have been completed after January 1, 2025, and must not have been screened at a previous Sehsüchte edition. Virtual reality (VR) projects submitted to the virtual reality section are an exception. These must have been completed after January 1, 2023, and must not have been screened at a previous Sehsüchte edition.

Premiere status is not required, i.e., previous participation in a German or international film festival is not a criterion for exclusion.

The Sehsüchte Festival does not charge a submission fee. There may be costs incurred through the submission platform. Sehsüchte does not pay screening fees. Films in languages other than English must be submitted with English subtitles. Films submitted to the Future section must always be subtitled in English.

Rules

Regulations of the 55th International Student Film Festival Sehsüchte

1. Conditions of participation

The following are eligible for submission to the Sehsüchte Film Festival: short, medium-length, and feature-length films, music videos, VR projects, screenplays and exposés in the Schreibsüchte section, and digital media art exhibits in the Exhibition section. All submitted works must either a) have been produced by students or trainees, b) have been created in a university, school, or self-taught context, or c) be debut works by young filmmakers, young artists, or career changers. For self-taught individuals and career changers, the first three works as a director are eligible for submission.



2. Submissions

Complete online registration and submission of the film is required via www.festhome.com by January 12, 2026, at the latest. Submitted films must be available to the festival organizers via a download link.

To submit a film, the viewing files must be uploaded to www.festhome.com and the other required documents must reach the Sehsüchte festival office by January 12, 2026, at the latest. It must be ensured that the viewing file remains available online on the platform until at least May 12, 2026.

The Sehsüchte Festival reserves the right to extend the submission deadline (January 12, 2026) for all or individual sections.

For films submitted to the Focus: Social Impact: Storytelling and Producing section, additional requirements apply in addition to the above conditions (see section 4.4).

For films submitted to the Future section, additional requirements apply in addition to the above conditions (see sections 4.5 and 4.6).

Separate submission conditions apply to extended reality projects submitted in the Virtual Reality section (see section 4.7).

Separate submission conditions apply to films and videos submitted in the Music Video section (see section 4.8).

Separate submission requirements apply to screenplays and exposés in the Writing Addiction section (see sections 4.9 and 4.10).

For films submitted in the Experimental Film section, separate submission requirements apply in addition to the above conditions (see section 5).

Image or advertising films are not permitted.



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Note for debut filmmakers: For debut films, the corresponding section with “Debut” in the title (e.g., Feature Film Debut) should be used for submission on the submission platform.

3. Program and Competition

By submitting their work, entrants agree to the potential selection of the work in question for one of the competitions. If selected for the festival program by the program committee, a minimum of two accreditations per project will be awarded to the creators. There is no legal claim to selection for the festival program and competitions. In exceptional cases, the Sehsüchte Festival reserves the right to show submitted films outside of the competition, but within the framework of the festival.

Selection and programming

Each submitted work (film, music video, extended reality project, screenplay, synopsis, or exhibition piece) will be viewed for all relevant sections. The selection and programming of the works, as well as their assignment to the competitions, will be carried out by the program committee on the basis of the viewing files or screenplays, synopses, or exhibition pieces.

Only one section can be selected per film upon submission. Regardless of this, it is possible that the film will also be considered for other competition categories. The Sehsüchte Festival reserves the right to nominate a work for one or more prizes.

Notification of a screening within the festival program or participation in the competition is expected to be sent by email by March 15, 2026. Rejections are expected to be communicated via the submission platform or by email by March 20, 2026.

If the film submitted is selected by the program committee, screening copies (sections 8.1 - 8.6) and additional documents (section 8.9) must be provided.



4. Competition sections

4.1 Feature film

This section includes films with predominantly fictional content. Films in this section are eligible for the following awards: Best Feature Film (short, medium-length, and feature-length, awarded to the director) and Outstanding Artistic Achievement in a Feature Film (short, medium-length, and feature-length, awarded to cinematography, editing, original film music, sound design, screenplay, acting, scenography, or special effects). The feature films selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program.

If you have any questions about submissions, please contact programme@sehsuechte.de.

4.2 Documentary Film

This section includes films with predominantly non-fictional content. Animated documentaries may also be submitted. Films screened in this section are eligible for the following awards: Best Documentary Film (short, medium-length, and feature-length, awarded to the director) and Outstanding Artistic Achievement in a Documentary Film (short, medium-length, and feature-length, awarded to cinematography, editing, original film music, sound design, or screenplay). The documentaries selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program.

If you have any questions about submissions, please contact programme@sehsuechte.de.

4.3 Animated Film

This section includes films that were created primarily using animation or cartoon techniques. Films shown in this section are eligible for the Best Animated Film award. The animated films selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program.

If you have any questions about submissions, please contact programme@sehsuechte.de.



4.4 Focus: Social Impact: Storytelling and Producing

This section focuses on activist and socially critical films that make a special effort to initiate a change in consciousness and inspire sustainable action. The section includes films that open debates on human rights, sustainability, and the fight against injustice, that stimulate new ideas and engagement, and ultimately seek to drive social change. Feature films, documentaries, and animated films (short, medium-length, or feature-length) are eligible. Films in this competition have the chance to win the Best Engaged Film: Storytelling and Producing. The socially engaged films selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program.

Accompanying the film submission, a short letter (approx. 1 page) describing the personal motivation, artistic vision, and aspirations or impact goals of the film should be sent to impact@sehsuechte.de.

If you have any questions about the submission, please contact impact@sehsuechte.de.

4.5 Future: Kids

The films in this section are aimed at viewers aged 6 and above. Feature films, documentaries, animated films, and experimental films (short, medium-length, or feature-length) may be submitted. Films entered in this competition are eligible for the Best Children's Film award. The children's films selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program.

Special submission rules apply to this competition: All submitted films that contain dialogue must be subtitled in English. As the children's films are expected to be dubbed during the screening, a complete dialogue list in German (or English) is required for each invited film. Please note that after submission,



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the films will undergo an FSK rating (FSK 0 or FSK 6) based on the German Youth Protection Act (JuSchG) and the principles of the FSK (Voluntary Self-Regulation of the Movie Industry). Films submitted that are classified by the FSK as unsuitable for children cannot, unfortunately, be shown in the Future: Kids section.

4.6 Future: Teens

The films in this section are aimed at viewers aged 12 and above. Feature films, documentaries, animated films, and experimental films (short, medium-length, or feature-length) may be submitted. Films entered in this competition are eligible for the Best Youth Film award. The youth films selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program.

Special submission rules apply to this competition: All submitted films that contain dialogue must be subtitled in English. As the youth films are expected to be dubbed during the screening, a complete dialogue list in German (or English) is required for each invited film. Please note that after submission, the films will undergo an FSK rating (FSK 0, FSK 6, or FSK 12) based on the German Youth Protection Act (JuSchG) and the principles of the FSK (Voluntary Self-Regulation of the Movie Industry). Films submitted that are classified by the FSK as unsuitable for young people cannot, unfortunately, be shown in the Future: Teens section.

4.7 Virtual Reality

This section includes virtual reality (VR) projects with a running time of two minutes or more (360° films, cinematic and interactive virtual reality experiences, augmented reality experiences). The selected VR projects will be exhibited in a VR space during the festival.



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The Virtual Reality section offers the chance to win the Best VR Project award. Submitted projects must have been completed no later than January 1, 2023.

Projects must be sent as video files, Quest-3 APK, Apple Vision Pro, or PC-VR Build (for other formats, please inquire in advance, see also point 8.1) via file-sharing platforms such as WeTransfer, Google Drive, or MyAirBridge to virtualreality@sehsuechte.de and made available to the program committee. Works must be submitted by February 8, 2026, at the latest. In addition, the PDF registration form available on the website must be completed and also sent to virtualreality@sehsuechte.de by February 8, 2026. Submissions in languages other than English must be subtitled in English if the language is essential to understanding the work.

If the work is not yet completed at the time of submission, it must be ensured that the final file is available for jury review on March 15, 2026.

The files will be stored for the purpose of program selection. Only the festival team will have access to the files. Works that are not selected will receive a rejection notice and will be deleted from the festival database.

If you have any questions about the Virtual Reality section, please contact virtualreality@sehsuechte.de.

4.8 Music Video

This section includes works that translate a piece of music into film. Both live-action films and animated music videos can be submitted. The music videos must have been completed after January 1, 2025. Music videos with a maximum running time of 15 minutes may be submitted. If the director is not a student or in training, they may be up to 26 years of age. Submitted music videos have the chance to win the Best Music Video award. The music videos selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program.



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If you have any questions about the Music Video section, please contact musicvideo@sehsuechte.de.

4.9 Schreibsüchte: Screenplay

Screenplays submitted to the Schreibsüchte section have the chance to win the Best Screenplay award. All German-language, unproduced screenplays for feature films with a planned minimum running time of 25 minutes are eligible for submission. The screenplays nominated for the competition are expected to be read aloud in excerpts to an audience as part of Schreibsüchte: Kopfkino. Sehsüchte reserves the right to record the staged reading and publish it online. To apply, the registration form available on the website must be completed and sent by email to schreibsuechte@sehsuechte.de together with the screenplay by January 12, 2026.

4.10 Schreibsüchte: Pitch

Submitted exposés have the chance to win the Best Pitch award. During a pitch event at the festival, the nominated authors will present their concepts for a feature film, documentary, series, or format that has not yet been filmed. The presentation will take the form of a pitch in front of an audience and jury. The submitted German-language synopsis may not exceed 7 DIN A4 pages in length.

Nominees are required to attend on the day of the competition, which will take place during the festival period from April 22 to 26, 2026. Notification of the exact date will be provided with the invitation to the festival. Sehsüchte reserves the right to record the pitch event and



publish it online.

To apply, please fill out the registration form available on the website and send it together with the synopsis by January 12, 2026, by email to schreibsuechte@sehsuechte.de.

4.11 Additional Information

Films in other categories not listed above (e.g., dance films, erotic films) will be assigned to one of the above categories by the program committee and will have the chance to be nominated for one of the above award categories and shown in the festival program.

5. Section with possible awards

Experimental Film

This section is dedicated to cinematic works that deliberately break with traditional narrative styles, forms, and viewing habits. The section explores new possibilities of expression beyond genres and commercial conventions and presents the medium of film as a bold and open field of experimentation. The section includes films that challenge the audience to actively participate in perception, interpretation, and meaning-making. Films with a maximum running time of 20 minutes may be submitted. The films selected by the program committee will be shown in the festival program. In addition, the program committee reserves the right to award the audience prize in this section.

6. Juries, prizes, and awards

Independent juries consisting of experts and personalities from the film, culture, and media industries will decide on the awards and prizes. The best films in the Future section will be



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selected by a jury of children and young people. The program committee reserves the right to award the prize for the best experimental film as an audience award. The result will be based exclusively on the results of the audience vote.

7. Exhibition

The Exhibition section recognizes innovative works and exhibits of audiovisual and technology-based art that make creative use of modern technologies, either on site or digitally. The section explores the vibrant interface between art and technology and shows how their combination gives rise to new forms of creativity and experience.

We are looking for projects that use modern technologies such as extended reality, artificial intelligence, projection mapping, sensor-based systems, audiovisual performances, or web-based experiences in novel ways.

7.1 Projection Mapping

Do you dream of transforming empty spaces into living canvases—places where light, sound, and space merge into captivating stories? In this category, we are looking for innovative projects that transform locations on the festival campus into portals to alternative realities. Whether through 3D projections or orchestrated light compositions, this category offers the opportunity to rethink architectural structures.

We are looking for works with a duration of at least two and a maximum of eight minutes that combine narrative, aesthetics, and space into an immersive experience and expand the physical dimension of the location.

Interested artists are requested to contact us by email at exhibition@sehsuechte.de prior to submission to obtain information about the available projection surfaces. Concepts will be considered until the application deadline on January 30, 2026.



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Submissions must include the following documents:

- Email subject line: Submission 26 “Your title”
- A description of the planned work (in German or English) including photos and/or videos
- A brief description of the project (approx. 230 characters including spaces)
- A technical rider (layout, setup, equipment required)
- A short biography of the main participants (up to 150 words)
- A request for possible travel subsidies (subsidies may be available under certain circumstances)

The works should have been created after January 1, 2023.

7.2 Audiovisual Work

This category is dedicated to projects that merge image and/or sound into immersive worlds.

Whether through dynamic video compositions, abstract sound visualizations, or multisensory explorations, this category celebrates works that transcend traditional media boundaries. We are looking for works that explore new ways of combining art and technology—through manipulation, distortion, or harmonization of both spheres.

Submissions are open until January 30, 2026, and must be sent by email to exhibition@sehsuechte.de. They must include the following:

- Email subject line: Submission 26 “Your title”
- A detailed description of the planned work (in German or English) including photos and/or videos



- A brief description of the project (approx. 230 characters including spaces)
- A technical rider (layout, setup, equipment required)
- A short biography of the main participants (up to 150 words)
- A request for possible travel subsidies (subsidies may be available under certain circumstances)

The works must have been created after January 1, 2023.

7.3 Live Performance

Here we are looking for bold, unconventional projects that explore the relationship between sound, image, and human presence in real time. This includes experimental music performances, interactive audiovisual shows, or forms of digital theater. Whether through live visuals, immersive soundscapes, or spontaneous audience interaction, this category stands for experimental media art that unfolds in the moment.

Applications can be submitted by email to exhibition@sehsuechte.de until January 30, 2026, and must include the following documents:

- Email subject line: Submission 26 "Your title"
- A detailed project description (in German or English)
- A brief description of the project (approx. 230 characters including spaces)
- A technical rider (layout, setup, equipment required)
- A short biography of the main participants (up to 150 words)
- A request for possible travel subsidies (subsidies may be available under certain



circumstances)

The works should have been created after January 1, 2023.

7. 4 General information

The selected concepts are expected to be announced by February 20, 2026.

The final work must be submitted by April 1, 2026.

Files submitted as part of the exhibition will be stored solely for the purpose of program selection. Only the festival team has access to this data. Works that are not selected will be deleted from the festival database.

If you have any questions about the Exhibition section, please contact exhibition@sehsuechte.de.

8. Festival films

8.1 Screening formats

All films selected for the festival program, except VR films, must be provided as screening copies in DCP format. InterOp DCP and SMPTE DCP are permitted. The program committee reserves the right to request other formats of the submitted films (e.g., ProRes files).

In addition, a Full HD video file (1080p; .mp4;) must be provided.

VR films must be provided as video files compatible with common VR headsets such as Oculus or HTC Vive for screening in the 360° space. For possible online screening, an additional video file with stereo sound should be submitted that is optimized for streaming and works with common smartphone VR systems (e.g., Google Cardboard, Samsung Gear).



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8.2 Submission deadline and shipping of screening copies

All screening copies (DCPs and video files) of the invited competition entries must be received by March 22, 2026, at the latest. Ideally, screening copies should be sent via a file-sharing platform (e.g., WeTransfer, Dropbox, Google Drive). Alternatively, screening copies can also be sent by post.

The address is:

Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF

Sehsüchte – “Screening Copy”

Marlene-Dietrich-Allee 11

14482 Potsdam-Babelsberg

Shipments sent from countries outside the EU must bear the following note in order to keep customs duties as low as possible: “No commercial value, for cultural purposes only.” If a value must be entered, it should be as low as possible. Sehsüchte cannot cover any transport, customs, or other costs associated with shipping the screening copy and other documents. Costs incurred due to incorrect declarations will be charged to the sender. Screening copies can also be delivered in person to the Sehsüchte office at the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF by appointment.

8.3 Language version of screening copies

Screening copies in languages other than English must include English subtitles. All



non-English-language films in the festival program will be screened in their original language with English subtitles; non-German-language children's films may be dubbed simultaneously into German. All children's and youth films must have English subtitles. Subtitles should be at the bottom of the screen, not within a letterbox.

8.4 Return shipping of screening copies

Upon request, screening copies will be sent to the address provided on the submission form within eight weeks after the end of the festival. The Sehsüchte Festival will cover the cost of returning the screening copies. The festival participant is liable for the transport to, from, and onward transport.

8.5 Insurance of screening copies

The screening copies are provided on loan by the festival participant for the duration of the festival. The screening quality depends on the accuracy and completeness of the technical information about sound and format. Sehsüchte's insurance coverage for the copy is limited to the material value of the copy and is valid from the time of arrival at the festival office (download) until the copy is returned to the address specified in the submission form. Compensation for loss is based on the insurance coverage. In addition, Sehsüchte is not liable for slight negligence. The festival participant bears the risk of transport to, from, and onward.

8.6 General rights of use

The screening copies are provided by the filmmaker on loan free of charge for the duration of the festival. Sehsüchte does not pay any screening fees.

The works selected for the festival program may be screened publicly up to six times at Sehsüchte festival venues during the Sehsüchte festival.

The festival participant shall also make the screening copy available to the festival for up to



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six months after the end of the festival for possible retrospective screenings. Furthermore, Sehsüchte reserves the right to make the project available on an online platform for a certain period of time after the festival. The consent of the rights holders will be obtained separately if necessary.

Sehsüchte will immediately inform the submitter in the event of a claim by third parties. The festival receives further remuneration-free, spatially and temporally limited rights in accordance with the selection made in the submission form. The festival reserves the right to digitize all selected works for viewing and screening purposes.

The submitter confirms that, in the event of selection of the submitted project, all necessary rights for viewing and screening within the framework of Sehsüchte 2026 have been clarified and transferred to the organizers.

By submitting the work, the submitter declares that he/she is the copyright holder of the submitted work. The submitter warrants that the materials provided are free of third-party rights. In the event that third parties assert claims against the Sehsüchte Festival with regard to the materials and works provided, the submitter shall indemnify Sehsüchte against these claims and shall also bear the costs incurred by Sehsüchte for the necessary legal defense.

Furthermore, the submitter agrees that their selected work (in its entirety, partially or possibly edited) may be promoted by Sehsüchte without restriction in terms of space and time via channels deemed relevant. For this purpose, the media content specified in the submission process may be used to create advertising and marketing materials for Sehsüchte. The design of these materials is at the discretion of the festival organizers. In the case of film works, excerpts of up to 10% of the total running time may be used for advertising and marketing purposes. This also accounts for third parties.

8.7 Screenings for press and trade visitors:



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Accredited press representatives and trade visitors will be given the opportunity to view all festival entries on the basis of the screening copy upon request, provided that such a screening has not been expressly objected to in writing before March 23, 2026, at presse@sehsuechte.de.

8.8 Archiving of viewing files, further rights of use

The festival organizer is also granted the right to store viewing files for an unlimited period of time (regardless of format) and to use and archive them for internal, non-commercial purposes.

Furthermore, the festival organizer is granted the right, for an unlimited period of time, to show the films or excerpts thereof at anniversary or similar Film University events and, provided that the relevant rights have been granted, to use them in the context of reporting (by the festival itself, the press, the Film University).

8.9 Additional documents

If the film is selected for the festival program (further information will follow with the confirmation email), additional documents will be requested:

1. Screening copy (as specified in section 7.1)
2. Three stills from the submitted film (each in digital format, at least 1000x500px at 300dpi, jpg)



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3. One royalty-free photo of the nominee (digital, 600x800px at 140dpi, jpg)

4. Bio and filmography of the nominee

8.10 Online catalog and program booklet

Sehsüchte intends to publish the information provided in the submission form regarding the title, languages used, genre, running time, year of production, country of production, production company or institution, color, one or more film stills, a picture

and a biography, as well as a filmography of the director or other nominated persons from the film team, credits, and a contact address in an online catalog on the festival website (www.sehsuechte.de). Either the synopsis provided will be used in whole or in part for the short description, or a separate text will be written. Excerpts from the above information will be used for a possible program booklet.

9. Final remarks

Submitting a film, music video, VR project, exhibition piece, screenplay, or synopsis to the Sehsüchte Festival means you agree to the rules. The person submitting the entry has to make sure that anyone else involved in the production is okay with it being entered. There is no legal claim to selection for the festival program. The festival coordination team has the right to rule on all cases not covered by the guidelines and to grant exceptions in special and justified cases. The festival coordination team shall decide on all matters not covered by these regulations.