



**SAARC CULTURAL CENTRE
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA**

www.saarcculture.org

SAARC FILM FESTIVAL 2017 – INDIA
**A Powerful and Unique Experience in Cultural
Diversity**

1. Background

Since its inception in 2011, the SAARC Film Festival has been held in Sri Lanka, and with every year, has gained a reputation for promoting and featuring some of the best films from the SAARC Region. The SAARC Cultural Centre (SCC), in keeping with its mandate of promoting culture in the region through different modes of art, will once again showcase films from the Region as expressions of culture at its forthcoming SAARC Film Festival. This Film Festival is different from other Film Festivals, as the SAARC Member States nominate some of their art work which showcases the cinematic imagination of the SAARC Region, using the medium of Film. A reputed panel of international judges select the best films, and several awards are presented as an incentive to continue producing quality, thought provoking and representational films for the Region.

This year in 2017, for the first time, the SAARC Film Festival will take place in India. A country reputed the world over – among other things - for being an unstoppable and dynamic force in the world of Cinema. It is an event unique to the Region and one that has caused interest and excitement amongst the people of South Asia since 2011. We now want to take it to the world, through the portal of South Asia and India specifically, and build it into a truly magnificent and international festival experience. This year in 2017, the Festival hopes to expand further, with workshops and parallel

events that would enhance South Asian Cinema even more. The message of tolerance and the power of film is easily experienced through the screen with every Member State given the opportunity to screen and showcase some of their best creations and form a vibrant collage and tapestry of meaningful films from the Region. The Film Festival will focus on films first screened after May 2015, from all Member States, inviting directors of these movies to partake in workshops conducted to encourage and improve future productions.

We warmly invite you to join us as we explore the world of Film and Cinema indigenous to the SAARC Region, along with the expertise and vast experience we are privileged to receive from the host country of India. Please send in your nominations and benefit from the exposure this magnificent event will bring to the industry, artists, vision and creativity of the directors and movie makers of each valued Member State. Most importantly, be present as we showcase a very special part of culture and art within our varying and wonderfully diverse Member States.

As such, the SAARC Cultural Centre looks forward to receiving your valued nominations at your earliest convenience and no later than the specified deadlines. We warmly invite you to join us, as we resume our journey in 2017 to bring South Asian Film to the forefront of the International Film World.

2. Feature Film Category and Short Film Category

- I. There will be two competitive film categories at the SAARC Film Festival which are open for official nominations this year:
 - a. Feature Films and
 - b. Short Films
- II. All Member States are required to nominate **Two (2) Feature Films**, as well as **Two Short Films** (NOT DOCUMENTARIES) for submission to the SAARC Film Festival 2017.
- III. The qualifying period of screening should be Two Years before May 2017- ie: any film screened AFTER May 2015. This applies to both Feature and Short Films.
- IV. A Short Film is defined as a 'Short Fictional Film', for any duration UNDER 30 minutes. Documentary Films will NOT be considered in this category.
- V. As the aim of this SAARC Film Festival is to promote culture and embrace unity amidst the diversity of culture that is shared amongst the SAARC Member States, films nominated should aim to promote culture, foster friendship, and cultural harmony between Member States and not showcase films that would in any way be prejudicial to another Member State. Films that are prejudicial to another country, or that would highlight issues that would not be in keeping with the aim of promoting the Festival and fostering goodwill in the Region, will be disqualified. The organisers have the right to view nominated films prior to the festival, and disqualify any film that would go against the very objective of promoting peace and harmony through culture within the SAARC Region.
- VI. EACH Nominated film should be accompanied by the completed nomination form, which is attached to this Concept Note**

- VII. All nominated films from the Region that meet the relevant guidelines (Also See Sec 8), will be eligible for Awards as detailed in Sec. 6. The selection will be made by an International Panel of Judges.
The decision of the Judges will be final.
- VIII. All expenses pertaining to sending the Films in the required format - as detailed below in Sec 8 (IV), will have to be borne by the nominating Member State.
- IX. For Details re: Submissions and Deadlines, please refer Sec 9 below.

3. Open Category

- I. In keeping with tradition, this year too, the SAARC Cultural Centre will have an Open Category for Short Films (Under 30 minutes) from the SAARC Region. This is done with the aim of promoting the making of Short Films in the Region. The theme is restricted to "*Unity within Diversity*" and the organisers reserve the right to select suitable Short Films to be screened on the dates selected.
- II. Member States may nominate a maximum of **TWO (2) Short Films - Open Category**. All films nominated for this Category from the Region that meet the relevant guidelines (Also See Sec 8) will be eligible for the Award of *Best Film in the Open Category*. The selection will be made by an International Panel of Judges.
The decision of the Judges will be final.
- III. All expenses pertaining to sending the Films in the required format - as detailed below in Sec 8 (IV) - will have to be borne by the nominating Member State.
- IV. For Details re: Submissions and Deadlines, please refer Sec 9 below.

4. Masters Category

- I. In 2017, we will be introducing a new segment: The Masters Category. As the title suggests, we would be honoured to screen a selection of films made by Master Film Makers of the Region. As such, each Member State is encouraged to nominate **ONE (1) Film**, nationally accepted as being a Master work by a Master film maker of each esteemed Member State. This would give a broader spectrum to the Film Festival and allow the SAARC Cultural Centre to showcase the depth and value of the 'old' whilst celebrating and encouraging the 'new' and creating an environment which celebrates the wider spectrum of film making, showcasing quality that has endured through the ages and its invaluable contribution to life and culture, through the passage of time.
- II. All expenses pertaining to sending the Film in the required format - as detailed below in Sec 8 (IV) - will have to be borne by the nominating Member State.
- III. For Details re: Submissions and Deadlines, please refer Sec 9 below

5. Dates and Venue

The 2017 SAARC Film Festival will take place in India. The exact Dates and Venue will be confirmed as soon as possible following discussions with the esteemed host country of India and will run for a period of 5 days. Until then, we encourage each Member state to forward their Nominations without delay, in order to ensure maximum participation and exposure at this Cultural Event.

6. SAARC Film Festival Awards for 2017

The following Awards will be presented, following selection by an International Panel of Judges, at the end of the Film Festival.

The decision of the Judges will be final.

- I. Award for the Best Feature Film
- II. Silver Medal for the First Runner up - Feature Film Category
- III. Bronze Medal for the Second Runner up - Feature Film Category
- IV. Award for the Best Short Film
- V. Award for the Best Director
- VI. Award for the Best Actor
- VII. Award for the Best Actress
- VIII. Award for the Best Cinematographer
- IX. Award for the Best Editor
- X. Award for the Best Screenplay
- XI. Award for the Best Original Score
- XII. Award for the Best Film - Open Category

7. Call for Film Directors and other film Artistes

- I. The SAARC Cultural Centre also calls for the participation of Film Directors and/or other Artistes of the nominated films that would be screened at the Festival. The Directors and other Artistes will participate in a workshop intended to promote interaction within the film community of the Region, as well as serve as an educational and knowledge sharing opportunity for young film directors, film enthusiasts and film critiques. They are also invited and encouraged to participate at the Awards Ceremony scheduled to take place on the last day of the Festival.

- II. Each Member State can nominate a maximum of 4 personnel, including Film Directors and Film Artistes, to attend the Festival.
- III. Airfare of the nominated Film Directors and all nominated Artistes must be borne by the nominating Member State.
- IV. Nominated Personnel (up to a Maximum of 4) will be provided hotel accommodation on a full board basis in India by the SAARC Cultural Centre.
- V. For Details re: Submissions and Deadlines, please refer Sec 9 below

8 Technical and General Requirements

- I. All Member States can nominate a **TOTAL** of Seven (7) Films **for the entire Film Festival** (2 Feature Films, 2 Short Films, 2 Short Films – Open Category, 1 Film – Masters Category) to represent their specific country.
- II. **Each** nominated film has to be submitted with a completed nomination form, which is attached to the end of this Concept Note.
- III. Feature Films and Short Films nominated by the Member States should have been screened after May 2015.
- IV. All films submitted for the Festival (Feature Films, Short Films, Short Films – Open Category and Masters Category) should be submitted in DCP in 2K (D Cinema) format or Blu - ray format.
- V. All nominated films – including English Language films - must be subtitled in English. Films submitted without English subtitles, will be disqualified.
- VI. Please ensure that the films submitted are not defective, are in the required format as stated above in Sec 8 (IV), and are accurately labelled, including the name of the Film, nominating Member State, Category of Entry and running time of each film.

- VII. As the aim of the Festival is to promote culture in the Region, new trends and ideas, there are no restrictions on themes and topics, [With the exception of those in the Short Film - Open Category - See Sec 3 (I)]
- VIII. All Films will be sent to the approved local public performance board in the Host Member Country (India) for censorship prior to screening at the Festival in India.
- IX. Member States must deliver the final format as detailed above in Sec 8 (IV) for Festival screening, no later than 21st May 2017.
- X. For publicity purposes, please include a standard Press Kit with the required information, giving special consideration to the following:
- a) 100 word Synopsis of EACH Film submitted for the Festival;
 - b) Photo stills;
 - c) Headshots of Directors;
 - d) Biography of Directors;
 - e) Film trailers, clip reels, posters, post cards if available;
 - f) Film Reviews - to be sent in together with the names of the nominated films.
- XI. Please also email this information - as requested above in 8 (XI) - to:
documentation@saarcculture.org AND
research@saarcculture.org

9. Details for Submissions and Deadlines

- I.** Titles of the Nominated Films in all Categories (Short Films, Feature Films, Short Films – Open Category and Masters Category) along with their relevant details (including - but not limited to - a short 100 word synopsis of **each** film, the year of release, details of the Director, Crew and Production Team) should be sent through the Relevant Ministry concerned of the Nominating Member State, via their Foreign/External Affairs Ministries, to the SAARC Secretariat Kathmandu, to reach the SAARC Cultural Centre Colombo by the **14th of May 2017**

- II.** Names of the Film Personnel (up to a maximum of 4 Film Directors, Artistes etc in total) nominated to represent each Member State, should be sent through the Relevant Ministry concerned of the Nominating Member State, via their Foreign/External Affairs Ministries, to the SAARC Secretariat Kathmandu, to reach the SAARC Cultural Centre Colombo by **14th of May 2017**

- III.** Nominated Films In the specified format [See Sec 8 (iv)] and the relevant Publicity material and Press kits, as detailed in Sec 8(X), should be sent through the Relevant Ministry concerned of the Nominating Member State, via their Foreign/External Affairs Ministries, directly to the SAARC Cultural Centre Colombo, to reach the SAARC Cultural Centre by the **21st of May 2017**.