AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY CONFERENCE

2027 AIDC AWARDS
Submission Guidelines

Do you have a project or multiple projects you wish to submit to the AIDC Awards?
This guide provides you with all the information you need!

The AIDC Awards recognise the outstanding work of new Australian documentary and factual content. To reflect the needs and ever-changing trends in the sector, we have reframed two categories as well as updating eligibility criteria regarding public releases which are outlined below in more detail.

The 2027 Awards cover seven categories:

- Best Feature Documentary
- Best Documentary Series
- Best Factual Series
- Best Documentary / Factual Single
- Best Short Documentary
- Best Audio Documentary
- Best Digital First Documentary

Each category is designed to celebrate the talent and expertise of Australian documentary and factual content creators across long and short form documentary and factual content, as well as audio documentary, and other forms of digital first and non-traditional documentary storytelling through new and emerging media.

AIDC is inviting documentary and factual entries across the seven categories. All entries must be able to demonstrate a **public release** - which is considered a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**.

Each category will be adjudicated by an independent jury composed of Australian and International industry experts relevant to each category.

Categories that receive a high volume of submissions may also be reviewed by an AIDC appointed Pre-Selection Committee who will provide a long list for the Awards Jury in each category.

The AIDC Awards will be presented at AIDC 2027 on Thursday 11 March 2027.

Opening and Closing Dates

- **Opening Date:** Thursday 15 October 2026 at 9:00 AEDT
- **Regular Closing Date:** Sunday 22 November 2026 at 23:59 AEDT
- **Late Closing Date:** Wednesday 25 November 2026 at 23:59 AEDT

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Applications must comply with the **AIDC Awards Terms and Conditions**. Applications will not be accepted after the late closing date. Once submitted, applications can no longer be amended.

To make an application visit the **AIDC Awards webpage.**

For all questions, please contact **awards@aidc.com.au**.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for the AIDC Awards, applications needs to comply with the following:

PUBLIC RELEASE

Applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, the definition of a public release is outlined for each award in the category definitions below.

AIDC recognises the myriad of ways in which a public release can be defined and that the eligibility criteria may not cover all curated forms of public release particularly for less traditional forms. If you are in doubt about whether or not your release platform is eligible, please contact the AIDC team via **awards@aidc.com.au** prior to submission.

AIDC MEMBERSHIP

At least one key creative (producer, director, writer) on the production must be a current AIDC member. A current AIDC member is anyone who is a citizen or permanent resident of Australia who attended AIDC 2026 or has purchased an AIDC Membership in the last 12 months. You can purchase a membership by submitting an **AIDC Member Application Form**, along with a membership fee of $40.00 (GST inclusive). Once processed, payment confirmation will be sent to you via email and your membership will be valid for one calendar year from the date of payment. Please note that membership does not grant access to AIDC 2027.

APPLICANT STATUS

Applications can include official and unofficial co-productions, including projects that are 100 percent foreign funded. However, the production must include one Australian citizen or permanent resident as a key creative. For your application to be valid, proof of citizenship may be requested. Proof of citizenship includes: Australian passport issued in your name on or after 1 January 2000 that was valid for at least 2 years; Australian citizenship certificate in your name; or valid proof of permanent residency.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT IF NOMINATED

By default, each AIDC Award will recognise the title and production company as an entity. Alternatively, up to three people can be nominated to be recognised for the award instead of the production company). In this situation, AIDC encourages teams to include the key creatives. Where the production is a co-production, AIDC will recognise all production companies involved.

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

AIDC defines documentary and factual as a creative treatment of actuality other than a news, current affairs, sports coverage, magazine, infotainment or light entertainment program. See the **Australian Communications and Media Authority** documentary guidelines for further information. Other areas that are not eligible include live-performances with no creative treatment, talk shows, instructional and/or promotional programs. This definition will be applied across all categories of the AIDC Awards, including one-off titles and series, as well as less traditional forms.

Additional descriptions for individual categories are included below, however, if you are unsure if your submission is eligible, please contact the AIDC Awards Producer at **awards@aidc.com.au**.

BEST FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

An individual, stand-alone documentary, that is 60 minutes or more in length. Only one (1) version is to be submitted in this category.

To be eligible for the Best Feature Documentary category, applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, a public release for the Best Feature Documentary category is defined as any of the following:

- Broadcast on a commercial or public broadcaster in Australia or internationally
- Broadcast on a cable service in Australia or internationally
- Available on a streaming platform, Broadcast Video on Demand (BVA) and / or Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD), Advertising Video On Demand (AVOD) as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally
- Screening at a film festival in Australia or internationally
- Theatrical release in Australia or internationally

BEST DOCUMENTARY SERIES

Multi-part documentaries of no less than two episodes. Two (2) individual episodes of a series must be submitted, not the complete series. Series entries are eligible if any episode has screened in the release window listed in the eligibility criteria. Standalone episodes from a curated strand or series should be submitted in the Best Documentary / Factual Single category.

To be eligible for the **Best Documentary Series** category, applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, a public release for the Best Documentary Series category, is defined as any of the following:

- Broadcast on a commercial or public broadcaster in Australia or internationally
- Broadcast on a cable service in Australia or internationally
- Available on a streaming platform, Broadcast Video on Demand (BVA) and / or Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD), Advertising Video On Demand (AVOD) as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally
- Screening at a film festival in Australia or internationally

BEST FACTUAL SERIES

Factual episodic series of no less than two episodes. Two (2) individual episodes of a series must be submitted, not the complete series. Series entries are eligible if any episode has screened in the release window listed in the eligibility criteria. Standalone episodes from a curated strand or series should be submitted in the Best Documentary / Factual Single category.

To be eligible for the **Best Factual Series** category, applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, a public release for the Best Factual Series category is defined as any of the following:

- Broadcast on a commercial or public broadcaster in Australia or internationally
- Broadcast on a cable service in Australia or internationally
- Available on a streaming platform, Broadcast Video on Demand (BVA) and / or Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD), Advertising Video On Demand (AVOD) as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally
- Screening at a film festival in Australia or internationally

BEST DOCUMENTARY / FACTUAL SINGLE

An individual, stand-alone documentary or factual single; or a single stand-alone episode in a series or curated strand of between 20 and 59 minutes in duration. Only one (1) individual episode is to be submitted.

To be eligible for the **Best Documentary / Factual Single** category, applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, a public release for the Best Documentary / Factual Single category is defined as any of the following:

- Broadcast on a commercial or public broadcaster in Australia or internationally
- Broadcast on a cable service in Australia or internationally
- Available on a streaming platform, Broadcast Video on Demand (BVA) and / or Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD), Advertising Video On Demand (AVOD) as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally
- Screening at a film festival in Australia or internationally

BEST SHORT DOCUMENTARY

Individual stand-alone short documentary of under 40 minutes in duration. Only one (1) version is to be submitted. An individual, stand-alone documentary or factual single; or a single stand-alone episode in a series or curated strand of between 20 and 59 minutes in duration is eligible for **Best Documentary / Factual Single.**

To be eligible for the **Best Short Documentary** category, applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, a public release for the Best Documentary Short category is defined as any of the following:

- Screening at a film festival in Australia or internationally
- Theatrical release in Australia or internationally
- Online release through a recognised, curated third-party platform as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally (for example the New York Times Op-Docs, The Guardian Short Films)
- Available on a streaming platform, Broadcast Video on Demand (BVA) and / or Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD), Advertising Video On Demand (AVOD) as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally

BEST AUDIO DOCUMENTARY

Audio documentary entries including singles or series that demonstrate nonfiction audio storytelling with a documentary treatment. For Audio Documentary series, two (2) individual episodes must be submitted, not the complete series. Series entries are eligible if any episode has screened in the release window listed in the eligibility criteria. Submissions that are predominantly hosted podcasts, news reporting, fictional or conversational/entertainment or repackaged broadcast programs are not eligible.

To be eligible for the Best Audio Documentary category, applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, a public release for the Best Audio Documentary category, is defined as any of the following:

- Online release through a recognised, curated third-party platform as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally.
- Published (or self-published) content on channels such as YouTube, Facebook or other social media channels that have received funding through a screen agency, broadcaster or fund to ensure editorial oversight and compliance.

BEST DIGITAL FIRST DOCUMENTARY

Projects spanning non-traditional formats driven by emerging technology platforms including, but not limited to, linear, non-linear, web series, interactive, immersive or branching stories produced as a digital-first project that have received funding through a screen agency, broadcaster, cultural organisation or film fund to ensure editorial oversight and compliance. Series entries are eligible if any episode has screened in the release window listed in the eligibility criteria.

- One-off documentaries or series intended primarily for online platforms such as YouTube or other streaming platforms
- One-off documentaries or series developed for vertical / mobile first platforms such as Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook
- Interactive / immersive projects such as Extended Reality (XR), Mixed Reality (MR) or Augmented Reality (AR) platforms or other recognised digital-only platforms.

To be eligible for the **Best Digital First** category, applicants will need to demonstrate a **public release** - a premiere in Australia or internationally - between **1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027**. For the purposes of the AIDC Awards, a public release for the **Best Digital First category** is defined as any of the following:

- Online release through a recognised, curated third-party platform as an acquisition or commissioned work in Australia or internationally.
- Publish (or self-published) content on channels such as YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook or other social media channels that have received funding through a screen agency, broadcaster, cultural organisation or film fund to ensure editorial oversight and compliance.
- For interactive / immersive projects, a curated release such as displays in galleries, museums, festivals.

APPLICATION FEES & SUBMISSION PROCESS

To be eligible, the following application fees apply.

	Regular Closing Date (22 November 2026)	**Late Closing Date (25 November 2026)**
Best Feature Documentary	AUD $198 (inc GST)	AUD $298 (inc GST)
Best Documentary Series	AUD $198 (inc GST)	AUD $298 (inc GST)
Best Factual Series	AUD $198 (inc GST)	AUD $298 (inc GST)
Best Documentary / Factual Single	AUD $98 (inc GST)	AUD $148 (inc GST)
Best Short Documentary	AUD $48 (inc GST)	AUD $78 (inc GST)
Best Audio Documentary	AUD $98 (inc GST)	AUD $148 (inc GST)
Best Digital First Documentary	AUD $48 (inc GST)	AUD $78 (inc GST)

HOW TO SUBMIT

To submit an application please complete the relevant project form.

Please Note: To access the form, you will be prompted to log in to or create a free MY AIDC account. Please follow the prompts and email **info@aidc.com.au** if you have any issues.

An example of the submission questions can be found on Page 9 of this document.

SUBMISSION MATERIALS

In order for applications to be considered, AIDC requires the following materials:

- An online screener or link containing the **publicly released** version of the production. For environmental reasons, AIDC will not be able to accept physical screeners. Screeners (including password-protected links) must **remain live until Saturday 13 March** 2027. Please include the title of your production in the name of the digital file provided.
    - For film and television entries, please submit your production as a link that can be streamed or downloaded in full HD 1920 x 1080 with stereo audio as a MPEG-4 (.mp4) .
    - For audio documentary productions, please submit link/s that can be streamed or downloaded in .mp3 file format.
    - For immersive/interactive productions, please contact AIDC if the above is not suitable for your project and you'd like to submit in another way.

- Proof of public release within the release dates outlined by AIDC.

- A 30-second key scene/audio clip from the production (no trailers) that can be downloaded in full HD 1920 x 1080 with stereo audio as a MPEG-4 (.mp4).

- At least one key promotional image of the production for publicity that can be downloaded as a print resolution JPEG, saved at 300 dpi, A3 size, 297 x 210mm (file size between 2-5 MB). Please include clean still images with no logos, branding or design elements.

JURY PROCESS

- Juries will be selected by AIDC based on their merit within the category that they are adjudicating.
- The Jurors will either be currently working in the area they are evaluating or have significant experience in the field.
- Jurors will be vetted for all conflicts of interest prior to selection.
- Jurors will be announced alongside the nominated entries.
- Each category will have three jurors unless otherwise specified.
- Jurors for categories will evaluate all entries in their category.
- Jurors will only review the version/s submitted in the original submission. New or revised versions will not be accepted.
- Categories receiving high volumes of submissions may be adjudicated by an AIDC appointed Pre-Selection Committee who will provide a long list for the Awards Jury in each category.
- Pre-Selection Committee members will be vetted for all conflicts of interest prior to selection.
- An AIDC convenor will moderate all pre-selection and jury deliberation sessions.
- AIDC may amend some or all of the pre-selection and judging criteria and processes as required.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Jurors will be asked to deliberate against the following criteria:

- Originality of the subject
- Creative treatment of the subject
- Quality of the storytelling (including emotional engagement)
- Integration of craft & technical elements (editing, sound, design, etc.)

NOTIFICATION AND ANNOUNCEMENT PROCESS

Applicants will be notified via email by mid-February 2027 if they have or have not been nominated in their category. Applicants have the opportunity to decline their nomination within a three-day period after being notified of their nomination.

Nominees will be announced in a press release and invited to attend the AIDC Awards Presentation at ACMI on Thursday 11 March 2027.

KEY DATES

Opening Date: Thursday 15 October 2026 at 09:00 AEDT

Closing Date: Sunday 22 November 2026 at 23:59 AEDT

Late Closing Date: Wednesday 25 November 2026 at 23:59 AEDT

Applicants & Nominees notified: by mid-February 2027

AIDC Awards Presentation: Thursday 11 March 2027

For all enquiries, please contact **awards@aidc.com.au**

EXAMPLE - AIDC AWARDS APPLICATION FORM

The following provides an example of an AIDC Awards application form and may be used as a guide to drafting your application before making a submission. Please note that each category submission form may have different requirements.

1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides a description of the category.

2. APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY

Review and select one or more (as appropriate) of the following:

a. You or someone on your team is a current AIDC member.
b. One key creative is an Australian citizen/permanent resident.
c. The production has had a public release between 1 February 2026 and 1 February 2027.

4. YOUR SUBMISSION

Complete the following information:

- YOUR NAME
    - Email Address
    - Mobile Number
    - Country

- YOUR ROLE IN THE SUBMITTED PROJECT
    - Director
    - Producer
    - Writer
    - Financier/Broadcaster/Distributor
    - Other

- YOUR COMPANY/ORGANISATION

- PROJECT TITLE

- IF A SERIES, HOW MANY EPISODES?

  This applies only to:
    - Best Documentary Series
    - Best Factual Series
    - Best Audio Documentary; and
    - Best Digital First Documentary

- DURATION (IN MINUTES)

  If series, please enter the average duration of an episode.

- PRODUCTION COMPANY/COMPANIES

- COUNTRY/COUNTRIES OF PRODUCTION

- IF AUSTRALIA - PLEASE LIST ALL STATES OR TERRITORIES OF PRODUCTION

- LOGLINE (Up to 30 words)

- SYNOPSIS (Up to 100 words)
    - Select: IS YOUR ENTRY IN ENGLISH OR SUBMITTED WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES?

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5. MATERIALS

Please Note

All links must remain live until Saturday 13 March 2027.

For ***Best Feature Documentary***, ***Best Documentary Series***, ***Best Factual Series***, ***Best Documentary / Factual Single*** *and* ***Best Short Documentary*** entries, please submit your project as a link (or 2 links for each selected episode in the case of series) that can be streamed in full HD 1920 x 1080 with stereo audio as a MPEG-4 (.mp4).

For Best **Audio Documentary** entries, please submit links that can be streamed or downloaded in .mp3 file format (2 links for each selected episode in the case of series).

For **Best Digital First Documentary** entries please submit your project as a single link (or 2 links for each selected episode in the case of series) that can be streamed in full HD 1920 x 1080 with stereo audio as a MPEG-4 (.mp4) or a single link (or 2 links for each selected episode in the case of series) that can be streamed in full HD 1920 x 1080 with stereo audio as a MPEG-3 (.mp3).

- SCREENER LINK 1
- PASSWORD (IF REQUIRED)

  Only one link can be submitted for ***Best Feature Documentary***, ***Best Documentary / Factual Single*** *and* ***Best Short Documentary****. For* ***Best Documentary Series*** *and* ***Best Factual Series*** *up to two links must be submitted. For* ***Best Audio Documentary*** *and* ***Best Digital First Documentary****, up to two links may be submitted.*

- SCREENER LINK 2
- PASSWORD (IF REQUIRED)

- DOWNLOADABLE 30 SECOND CLIP (NO TRAILERS, TITLES OR BRANDING)
  Please upload a downloadable HD 1920 x 1080 with stereo audio as a .mp4 or .mp3 file for audio docs.

- PASSWORD (IF REQUIRED)

- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (OPTIONAL)

- PROMOTIONAL IMAGE
  Please upload a clean still image - ensuring no logos, branding or poster art - which can be downloaded as a print resolution JPEG, saved at 300 dpi, A3 size, 297 x 210mm (2-5 MB)

5a. PROOF OF PUBLIC RELEASE

- DATE OF RELEASE
  *Date of first public release must fall within **1 February 2026** and **1 February 2027**.*

- RELEASE PLATFORM
  - Broadcaster
  - Theatrical release
  - Streaming service
  - Film Festival
  - Other

- PDF DEMONSTRATING PUBLIC RELEASE.
  Please upload a .pdf demonstrating public release

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6. AWARD ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The AIDC Award is by default awarded to the title and production company listed above. Alternatively, please list the three roles to be recognised alongside the title, should the title be nominated. (Please note, in this case, the production company will not be recognised on the award).

- ROLE 1:
  - Select Role on Project
  - Name

- ROLE 2:
  - Select Role on Project
  - Name

- ROLE 3:
    - Select Role on Project
    - Name

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7. AGREEMENT

By selecting "I agree" the applicant is agreeing to the AIDC Awards Terms and Conditions for applying to the AIDC Awards as outlined on the AIDC Awards webpage, and to completing the payment information on the next page. Applications cannot be processed until payment is complete.

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8. BILLING INFORMATION

Payments vary according to the category selected.

- COMPANY NAME
- FIRST NAME
- LAST NAME
- ADDRESS LINE 1
- ADDRESS LINE 2
- ZIP CODE
- CITY
- STATE
- COUNTRY
- ABN

PAYMENT

Once you have completed the form and made payment you will receive a confirmation email and a link to your tax receipt (it's recommended that you check your spam or junk mail account if you do not receive these details via your nominated email address). If you do not receive this email within 24 hours, please contact **info@aidc.com.au**.

IMPORTANT - Once your application has been 'submitted', you will be unable to return to amend it, so please submit only when you have prepared your full submission.