

TIFF Next Wave Committee

2026-2027
Application Kit



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what is TIFF Next Wave?

TIFF Next Wave is the heartbeat of year-round programming for young audiences at the Toronto International Film Festival located in downtown Toronto. It includes a selection of youth friendly films that screen at the Festival in September, the TIFF Next Wave Film Festival in April, the 48-Hour Film Challenge in July, and TIFF Next Wave Presents — a monthly screening series for young film lovers, curated by the Next Wave Committee.

The TIFF Next Wave Film Festival features free movies for anyone under 25, including new releases from around the world, amazing guests and Q&A sessions, special events, industry workshops and talks, the ever-epic Battle of the Scores competition, and more!



what's happening at this year's festival?

The 15th edition of TIFF Next Wave returns April 16-19, 2026, bringing young audiences together to explore new voices and perspectives in cinema and celebrate the next generation of boundary-pushing filmmakers. Check out the festival lineup at: tiff.net/nextwave.



"This year's Next Wave Film Festival lineup emphasizes self-expression through passionate, diverse, and DIY modes of storytelling and provides a platform for rising voices who thoughtfully disrupt conventions and embrace experimentation. We want the festival to be a place for the celebration of life in motion and the chaos that comes with growing up in this current moment. There is something for everyone at Next Wave, and we can't wait for it to bring new opportunities for conversation, connection, and discovery." — 2026-2027 TIFF Next Wave Committee

what is the TIFF Next Wave Committee?

Founded in 2010, the TIFF Next Wave Committee is a group of 12 students ranging in age from 15 to 18 who are selected from a competitive pool of hopeful young film enthusiasts. Hailing from public, private, and specialized arts high schools across the GTA, the Committee members' tastes, opinions, and critical voices are as diverse as they are strong. Some are aspiring filmmakers, writers and actors; some are interested in learning the business of film and festivals; some like planning cultural events; and some just love movies. All have demonstrated a spirit that has impressed TIFF leaders.

With the guidance of TIFF staff, the Committee is charged with planning some major youth-oriented events at TIFF Lightbox, including the TIFF Next Wave Film Festival.



what will I do on the Committee?

The committee supports the planning and programming of all TIFF Next Wave events. They watch A LOT of movies, discuss them as a group and help select the ones that screen at the TIFF Next Wave Film Festival and as Next Wave-approved films at the Toronto International Film Festival in September. At both festivals, committee members get to do introductions and moderate Q&As with filmmakers, programmers, and guests. They get to connect and interact with people in the film industry, and conduct interviews with directors at TIFF's Content Studio. They also curate Next Wave Presents, a monthly screening series, and plan the annual 48-Hour Film Challenge, as well as other events for young film lovers and creators throughout the year. The committee meets every other Tuesday from September to June, plus weekends for screenings, and an optional two-week screening period at the end of July.



the application

the application consists of **2 parts**:

Part One: Fill in the [Google Form](#) with all your basic information and some questions to get to know you

Part Two: Choose option **a. or b.** and send this part to us at nextwave@tiff.net

a. An intro-video

- tell us about yourself: what you're into, what you like
- tell us why you want to join the TIFF Next Wave Committee
- please include things you find exciting about the opportunity and what you think you could bring to it
- tell us about why you love film and some of your favourites
- add anything else you want to share!

Get creative and have fun with it!

The video should be **1–4 minutes** long and can be shot on your phone, your computer, or a fancy camera, it's up to you!

b. A personal essay

- this is like a written version of the intro video
- tell us about yourself: what you're into, what you like
- tell us about your love of film: when you discovered it, why you're passionate about it, and why you want to join the committee
- share ideas about TIFF Next Wave outlining what you think you could bring to the committee and the programme as a whole
- add anything else you want to share!

We want to get to know you better, don't be afraid to stand out!

The personal essay should be **500-1000 words**.

deadline and submission details

Fill in the [Google Form](#) + send us your **intro-video** or **personal essay** to complete your application (see above).

Applications are due Monday, May 18

Submit by email to: nextwave@tiff.net



about TIFF

A global leader in film and entertainment, TIFF initiatives include the annual Toronto International Film Festival® in September; TIFF Lightbox, which features five cinemas, plus learning and entertainment facilities; the Donald Shebib TIFF Film Circuit, an innovative national distribution programme; and TIFF: The Market launching in 2026. The organization generates an estimated annual economic impact of \$240 million CAD. TIFF Lightbox is generously supported by contributors including the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, the City of Toronto, the Reitman family (Ivan Reitman, Agi Mandel, and Susan Michaels), The Daniels Corporation, and RBC. For more information, visit tiff.net.



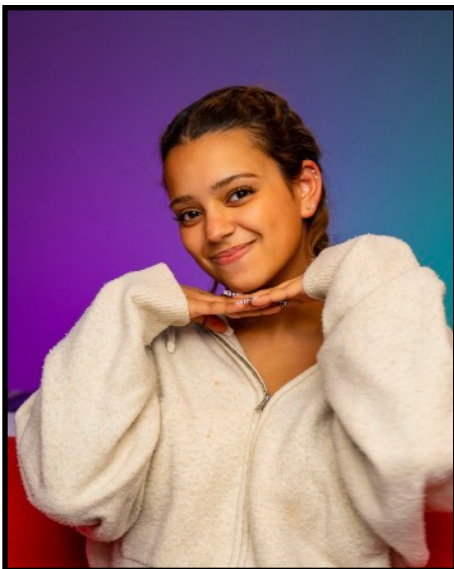
about Next Wave

TIFF Next Wave is a year-round initiative dedicated to engaging and empowering youth through film and creative exploration. Established in 2010, it provides young people with free and affordable access to screenings, workshops, mentorship, and hands-on industry experiences.

Next Wave removes financial and social barriers to participation in the arts, amplifies youth voices, and supports the next generation of filmmakers and cultural leaders. By centering youth curation and leadership, it ensures young people are not only audiences, but active creators and decision-makers within Canada's screen industry.

TIFF's Next Wave Film Festival is presented by Takis® and supported by the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Toronto.

TIFF Next Wave is supported by The Bennett Family Foundation, The Hal Jackman Foundation, The Kyle Brandon Traves Foundation, and The Rossy Foundation.



FAQs

“What do you actually do on the Committee?”

The Committee spends a lot of time watching films to program for the Next Wave Film Festival in April and to tag as “youth-approved” at the Festival in September. That takes up most of our meetings from July until April. Otherwise, we plan year-round screenings and events for youth like the 48-Hour Film Challenge, attend cultural events and other festivals in the city, like Hot Docs and Inside Out, and explore all things where youth and film collide. When we are not in full festival prep, the Committee is able to plan meetings and decide how things look!

“What does a typical meeting look like?”

Meetings vary depending on the time of year, but for the most part, we meet at TIFF Lightbox at 5pm, check-in, get to know each other, plan events for the festival, and share updates. Then we watch a film for programming and when it’s over, we record our feedback personally and then have a discussion as a group.

“How many people are on the Committee?”

There are a total of 12 people on the Committee.

“Can I share the films we are watching with my friends and/or tell them all about the movies we watch in meetings?”

As film programmers, we are required to keep everything completely confidential until it is officially announced. This includes all festival plans, the films we screen as a group, and confirmed guests.

“I live really far from downtown, is that ok?”

Yes! We have had Committee members from all over: Markham, Mississauga, Brampton, North York, Scarborough, and downtown. We assist with transit costs to support folks in getting to downtown Toronto for meetings and screenings, so if you are able to make it, we are very happy to have you. We would like the Committee to represent the entire GTA.

“What are you looking for in candidates?”

We are looking for all kinds of passionate and excited young people. There is no one kind of Next Waver - we strive to make sure it is full of different kinds of people with different interests, skills, and experience. We encourage people to be themselves in their applications and express what you find exciting about the opportunity!

“How many years can a person stay on the Next Wave Committee?”

If you join in Grades 9-11, you can stay on the Next Wave Committee for a maximum of two years. We check in with Committee members at the end of every year to make sure they want to stick around. It is not mandatory. If you join in your final year of high school, you'll be on the committee for one year.

“Do I need to be in high school to apply for the Next Wave Committee?”

Yes, you need to be in high school to be on the TIFF Next Wave Committee.

“Do I need a background in film or filmmaking experience?”

No! You do not need any formal training or experience in film or filmmaking, but a love or interest in film is a good start!

“I like ‘x’ type of movies; can I still apply to be on the Committee?”

Yes! No matter what kind of movies you love, you can definitely apply to be on the Committee. Coming-of-age, horror, drama, comedy, obscure genres that we haven't heard of - anything goes! The bigger the mix, the better.

“How many people apply to be on the Next Wave Committee?”

Generally we receive 60-70 applications for the Committee each year and have 7-9 spots to fill depending on the number of graduating members. If you don't make it this year, we encourage applicants to re-apply and/or volunteer with us!

questions? need support getting this done? get in touch!

who:

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Toronto International Film Festival

how:

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