



Buffalo International Film Festival Festival Programming & Marketing Fellow

Organization Mission Statement

Buffalo International Film Festival (est. 2006) is a nonprofit organization that champions regional, national, and international films that push the limits of independent cinema – presenting quality films from around the world to WNY residents and visitors. BIFF is committed to amplifying diverse voices and exhibiting cutting-edge programming in narrative, documentary and experimental film. A proud supporter of local filmmaking and the arts; BIFF also offers workshops, seminars, industry panel discussions, fiscal sponsorship and professional development opportunities, as well as an Offscreen series of art, music and performance.

Program Overview

Buffalo Int'l Film Festival's primary program is the annual, multi-day film festival. From October 9-16, 2025, BIFF19 will showcase over 150 features and short films from around the world and region, with special attention towards amplifying historically underrepresented voices and enabling them to tell their stories. During the festival BIFF will also present art, music and performances through our Offscreen series; as well as present workshops, industry and academic panels, artist talks, filmmaker Q&As, and more!

BIFF serves the WNY public and visitors alike, with audiences as diverse as our programming- presenting everything from family friendly films to pique the interests of future cinephiles, to world renowned independent, genre, and art house cinema; BIFF has something for every film lover. BIFF provides affordable access to a diverse offering of high quality programming.

BIFF also serves local and global media arts communities and lovers by offering a diverse offering of free screenings, panels, workshops and events; discounted and free submission categories; occasion for networking with a global arts community; and fiscal sponsorship, honoraria (and other support whenever possible) and professional development opportunities for filmmakers, students and youth. BIFF works hard to provide a quality platform for exhibiting and discussing work.

What kinds of projects could you work with a fellow on? What will they learn by the end of their time with you?

The proposed Springboard Fellowship curriculum/work plan will help the participant to develop an array of different arts management skill sets, and will offer professional development opportunities in media art programming and marketing. The curriculum will focus on staff guided Offscreen art and industry/academic panel programming and marketing activities.

With staff mentorship and training, the participant will learn how to evaluate media art and performance lineups, and film-adjacent programming (panels, roundtables, workshops, etc) based upon artistic merit and how well this programming compliments and deepens BIFF's film programming. They will learn how to dissect the anatomy of an art piece, performance or presentation by assessing categories such as: concept / content, originality / creativity, feasibility, production value / artistic value, structure, and more. This work will improve their understanding and ability to evaluate, curate, produce and promote media artworks; and will improve writing and communication skills as well.

The participant will learn how to interview filmmakers and artists (and publish interviews on BIFF's blog), and will write about and market films, art and industry/academic programming through structured learning activities. In addition to conducting interviews, they will assist the directors in communicating with filmmakers, artists and distributors remotely as well as during the festival.

The Springboard Fellowship participant will learn how to prepare marketing assets, and how to develop and implement marketing plans as well. Additionally, the fellow will gain firsthand experience during the festival working behind the scenes with staff to make sure this multi-tiered, week-long event is a success.

Who will the Fellow primarily be working with? How is this person qualified to provide the mentorship/training you expect to offer?

The Fellow will primarily work with Executive Director Anna Scime and Artistic Director John Fink, though they will interface with all of the board, staff, filmmakers, artists, and many volunteers especially during the festival October 9-16. Both directors have over a decade each of experience teaching at the university level and since 2019 have run BIFF's internship program, working with 8-10 interns annually in structured learning programs focused on programming, marketing and production; and 4-8 teen 'Next Gen: Youth and Teen-Made Shorts' film curators per year through our education and workforce development partnership program with Squeaky Wheel Film & Media Art Center. BIFF also participated in ASI's 2023 Springboard Fellowship program and has hosted two additional festival fellows funded through their universities since then.

What is the estimated timeline for the proposed work? Please include when you anticipate this individual would begin and end their work with you.

The timeline for the proposed fellowship work will begin in early September 2025 and run for a twelve week period until November 2025. (detailed breakdown attached) The festival fellow will be expected to meet with BIFF's Executive and Artistic Directors once a week, and to work for 10 hours a week at a pay rate of \$20/hour over the twelve week period.

Are there any restrictions or considerations for this position regarding physical ability, access to transportation, etc.?

There are no restrictions or considerations for this position regarding physical ability, and/or access to transportation. All of BIFF's programming takes place in the City of Buffalo and is accessible by all means of transportation, public and private. All venues are ADA compliant. The only inflexible requirement is that the Springboard Fellow commit to being present to help at the festival October 9-16, 2025 for at least four hours a day (hours will spike during Week 6 as a result but will be decreased Weeks 11 and 12 to compensate).

WORK PLAN
10 hours a week for 12 weeks

General expectations;

- Watch and review approximately five films (feature films), and write short filmmaker interviews for publication
- Meet with Executive Director, Artistic Director, and Committees (advisory board and staff) to help to organize and curate offscreen media art installations/music/performances and panels (Dates TBD)
- Research film and media arts programming, and marketing strategies from other festivals
- Assist in final scheduling and communications with artists, musicians, panelists, filmmakers and distributors
- Assist in outreach to community partners, program-specific audiences, and stakeholders
- Organize images and marketing materials for the website and social media
- Assist in creating press releases and marketing assets
- Help with the festival October 9-16, 2025
- Weekly meetings with Executive Director and Artistic Director early September-November 2025 (Dates TBD)

Timeline of Responsibilities

Week 1: Programming & Marketing

- Meet to review, discuss and organize arts programming for BIFF's Offscreen media art installations/music/performances/industry/academic panels.
- Assist in any remaining scheduling and communications with filmmakers and distributors, collect and organize EPKs (Electronic Press Kits, Exhibition Screeners, and Press Clippings from filmmakers for accepted films.)
- Help to create film descriptions and marketing assets (social media assets, press releases, outreach templates, etc.)

Week 2: Programming & Marketing

- Meet to review, discuss and organize arts programming for BIFF's Offscreen media art installations/music/performances/industry and academic panels.
- Assist in any remaining scheduling and communications with artists, panelists, filmmakers and distributors, collect and organize EPKs (Electronic Press Kits, Exhibition Screeners, and Press Clippings from filmmakers for accepted films.
- Help to create film descriptions and marketing assets (social media assets, press releases, outreach templates, etc.)

Week 3: Marketing

- Watch three selected features, and write and conduct interviews with two
- filmmaking teams participating in the 2025 festival for publication.
- Assist in creating and distributing social media assets, and assist with direct outreach to special interest groups.

Week 4: Marketing

- Watch two selected features, and write and conduct interviews with two filmmaking teams participating in the 2025 festival for publication.
- Assist in creating and distributing social media assets, and assist with direct outreach to special interest groups.

Week 5: Marketing & Festival Production

- Assist in creating and distributing social media assets
- Assist with direct outreach to special interest groups.
- Assist with filmmaker and artist support and communications.
- Assist with audience support via social media.

Week 6: Festival Week

- Monitor social media and directing inquiries to the correct staff member/department.
- Be present for at least four hours a day at the festival to assist with: social media, live stream events (including quality control); patron/filmmaker/volunteer management and assistance (as needed).
- Post-production/editing of assets for quick sizzle reels, award assets, and wrap-ups for social media

Week 7: Marketing & Post-Production

- Festival wrap-up - help to log footage and sync sound. Cut together thank you reel and help create sharing assets.

Week 8: Marketing & Post-Production

- Festival wrap-up -- Finish cutting together thank you reel and sharing assets.

Week 9: Marketing & Development

- Fun(d)raising - Giving Tuesday social and copy, and prepare Year-End assets

Week 10: Marketing & Development

- Fun(d)raising - Giving Tuesday social and copy, and prepare Year-End assets

Week 11: Programming & Marketing & Festival Production

- Festival review meeting. 2026 festival planning meeting.

Week 12: Programming & Marketing

- Prepare 2026 submission launch assets

Objectives:

- Become familiar with film and art submission platforms and interfaces
- Become familiar with film and art exhibition platforms, spaces, and interfaces
- Become familiar with contemporary trends in film festivals and media art; and documentary, narrative and experimental features and shorts
- Assist in the creation of social media and video assets
- Improve communication and writing skills through supervised filmmaker interviews, press releases, and marketing copy (multiple platforms)
- Improve organizational skills through film and asset collection and filing