LITTLE FESTIVAL 2026

COMPETITION FOR SHORT FILMS
MADE BY CHILDREN AND TEENS
XIX edition regulations

Article 1 - Entry

The contest is open to live-action or animated short films produced in any setting - such as schools, workshops, free time, universities, or film schools - by children and teens aged 3 to 19 from around the world.
Entry to the competition is free and open to all, with no restrictions on residence or citizenship.
Short films produced in Padova and its surrounding areas will be featured out of competition in the “Km0” section, with the authors’ attendance required.

Article 2 – Sections and Categories

The competition is divided into four sections:

- BY 3.7 – films produced by authors aged 3 to 7 (non/early readers)
- BY 8.10 - films produced by authors aged 8 to 10 (Primary Schol readers)
- BY 11.13 - films produced by authors aged 11 to 13 (Intermediate School)
- BY 14.18 - films produced by authors aged 14 to 18 (High School)

Each section will include short films in two categories:

- ANIMATION
  short films created using any animation technique (traditional, stop motion, pixilation, 2D, CG, 3D, etc.)

- LIVE ACTION

live action fictional narrative short films. Documentaries are also accepted. Picture sequences (such as slideshow) will not be accepted.

Short films produced in Padova and its surrounding areas will be featured out of competition in the “Km0” section.

Article 3 – Works

Work’s requirements:

Author’s age:
Films must be made by children or teens. Adul help is allowed.

Duration:
Maximum duration: 10 minutes. Longer short films may be accepted only if of exceptional quality or relevance.

Production year:
There are no restrictions on the production year. Older films are also eligible to participate.

Language
The competition accepts works with different characteristics depending on the audience’s age.

BY 3-7 (ages 3-7)
- Without dialogue
- With dialogue in Italian

BY 8-10 (ages 8-10)
- Without dialogue
- With dialogue in Italian
- With simple dialogue in another language*

BY 11-13 (ages 11-13)
- Without dialogue
- With dialogue in Italian
- With dialogue in another language*

BY 14-18 (ages 14-18)
- Without dialogue
- With dialogue in Italian
- With dialogue in another language*
- With dialogue in English*

** Films spoken with languages other than Italian must be accompanied by subtitles in one of the following ways:*

- *Subtitled in Italian*
- *Subtitled in English via an .srt file along with a version of the film without subtitles, so the festival organizers can translate it into Italian*

The festival reserves the right to exclude any film spoken in a language that is not understandable by young children.

Theme
The theme is open. The program or jury may give special attention to shorts that address important topics for the festival, including intercultural dialogue, the celebration of cultural diversity, and the ideals of Creative Commons.

Article 4 – How to enter

You can enter the competition in two ways:

1. on-line WEBFORM 2025 at https://airtable.com/app7wfKLKLOByxRhw/pagzOqYAGM26I0aZm/form

2. FILMFREEWAY at https://filmfreeway.com/CortiaPonte-piccolofestival

Deadline: **September 30, 2025**

Submitted films won't be returned. They will become part of the festival Archive.
The organizers reserve the right to include invited works in the competition.

Article 5 – Selection

Films will be selected by a Selection Committee based on artistic and educational quality as well as cultural value, promoting participation from different countries.
The selection process will give special consideration to Creative Commons shorts.

Shortlisted authors will be contacted via e-mail. If additional materials are required, authors will have 10 days to complete the documentation and submit the projection files (film and .srt subtitles). Films will be selected as finalists only if the documentation is complete.
Authors of non-selected works will not receive a notification.

The list of finalists will be published on the festival website.
Selected short films will become part of the Festival's Archive.

Article 6 - Milestones

Call opens: June 10, 2025
Submission deadline: **September 30, 2025**
Short list: December 10, 2025
Program: January 1, 2026

Jury announced: January 10, 2026
Festival: May 4-16, 2026

Article 7 – Screenings

Selected films will be screened during the “Corti a Ponte” festival, in front of an audience made of 3-18 years old children and teens, divided into 4 age groups.
Each film will be included in the program for the most suitable age group audience, with no strict connetion to the age of the authors.

Article 8 – Juries and awards

Each section will be awarded by several Juries, composed of education professionals as well as children or teens. The Juries will be announced on the festival website.
Each section will be given also an AUDIENCE AWARD.

Special awards will be given by special Juries:

- CIAS AWARD (Coordinamento Italiano Audiovisivo Scolastico)
- UNICEF JURY CERTIFICATE OF MERIT FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS EDUCATION (UNICEF - comitato provinciale di Padova)

The competition has educational goals. No cash prizes will be given.

Award ceremonies will take place during the “Corti a Ponte” festival in Ponte San Nicolò (Padua).

Article 9 – Km0

The non-competitive "Km0" section welcomes short films produced in the Padua area and surroundings. This section is out of competition and aims to give young local filmmakers the opportunity to share their work in person with peers within an educational, artistic, and high-quality environment, free from competitive pressure.

Selected works will be screened as part of the Piccolo Festival program, with the mandatory attendance of the authors.

Short films must have a maximum duration of **5 minutes**. Longer films will be considered only if they demonstrate exceptional quality or significance.

To submit a Km0 short film, please write to kids@cortiaponte.it

Article 10 – Autorization

By submitting his/her short film to the competition, the author

- authorizes its screening during the festival or during events related to the festival.
- declares to own all the rights concerning the use of the submitted work, bar none; that the work contents do not violate any law nor third parties' rights (e.g. privacy or copyright)
- authorizes the festival to share the film and the authors contacts and data with its partners (children festival, …) listed in the page of the festival website dedicated to partners.

Article 11 – Regulations

Participation to the festival is conditional upon the complete and unrestricted acceptance of the present rules.
The organisers may amend this Regulation by reason of force majeure or beyond their control, for technical and organizational problems, in order to make improvements or in case this is required by unexpected circumstances.
Notice of all adjustment will be given through the festival's website cortiaponte.it.

Additional information is available by e-mail:

kids@cortiaponte.it (competition)
info@cortiaponte.it (general enquiries on the festival)

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