

University Partnership

2026–2027 Edition



UniReel Istanbul · 2026–2027

The World We Want to See

Your fiction film starts on your phone



University Partnership · Academic Partnership and Sponsorship

Your students film every day. Put your university on the screen

An invitation to universities to join the UniReel Istanbul network.
An international festival of short fiction films written and directed by university students and shot on a phone.



A letter to universities

The phone is the door.
The university is the bridge.

On every campus, there is a student carrying a story in their pocket that deserves to become a film.
What they lack is not a camera but a framework: a screenplay with a deadline, guidance, a jury, a screen and an audience.

UniReel Istanbul provides that framework, and puts your university's name next to every film your students make, in front of an international network of universities.

A competition, a lab and a closing ceremony in Istanbul

01

International online competition

A short fiction film shot on a phone, on the theme “The World We Want to See”.
For university students and those who graduated in the past 12 months, individually or in teams of up to five.

02

UniReel Lab

A development lab for the ten finalists.
Advanced workshops, professional mentoring and introductions to the partner network.

03

In-person closing ceremony, streamed live

The main ceremony and awards in Istanbul on 29 April 2027.
With the audience and finalists in the hall, and a live stream followed by universities around the world.

First-edition targets

40–60 participating universities	**15+** countries represented
150–250 eligible films	**24–30** films in the Official Selection

Planning figures for the first edition, not results achieved.



First-edition theme

The World We Want to See

A fiction story about the world students dream of, fear for, or want to change: a human relationship, a small moment that reveals something big, or an imagined future.

A story, not a report

We are looking for a short fiction film based on a written story or screenplay, with characters and events portrayed by actors.
Reports, interviews and documentaries are not eligible for this competition.

International reach

A call that reaches students in their own languages

We aim for the festival's campaigns to reach millions of students in many countries,
through their universities and our ambassadors, with an official website in seven languages.

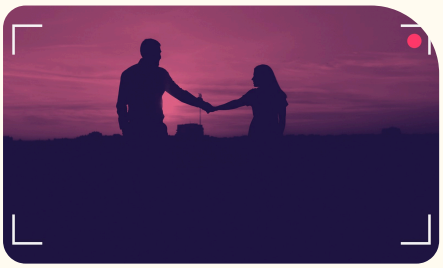
العربية | **English** | Türkçe | فارسی | کوردی | Français | Deutsch

Specialist jurors from several countries

An independent international jury of specialists in directing, screenwriting, editing, criticism and film education.

Most Participating University Shield

Awarded to the university with the most films eligible for the competition; the winner is announced at the ceremony.



Idea



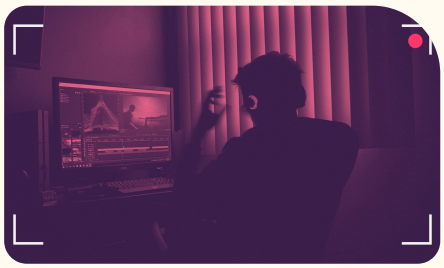
Writing



Shooting



Directing



Editing



Screening

Value for the university

What your university gains by joining

Your university's name alongside its students' work

Each work is registered under its maker's university, whose name appears in the official list, screenings, ceremony and media coverage.

A practical project that fits into courses

A real deadline, clear rules and an international jury: a ready exercise for media, film, design and digital marketing courses.

An international network that grows every year

Collaboration with universities in other countries and with lecturers, jurors and producers, opening the door to academic exchange and joint projects.

Inspiring student stories that support recruitment

One of your students in the Official Selection or on the Istanbul stage: authentic content for admissions campaigns.



Value for students

What your students get

01

A screen and an international jury

A fiction film shot on a phone, screened in Istanbul and on the live stream, and assessed by an international jury.

02

Official Selection certificate

A verified certificate and an “Official Selection” badge that students can add to their professional portfolio.

03

UniReel Lab

The ten finalists train with professional mentors and meet the partner network.

04

Awards and production support, subject to approved funding

The Grand Prize, the Special Jury Prize, the Student Jury Prize and the Audience Award.

05

Open remote workshops

Screenwriting, phone cinematography, sound and editing, with practical examples.

06

Open to everyone

Reduced submission fees, and no high-end phone required. The story is what counts.

STUDENT — FILM — SELECTION — LAB — ISTANBUL

A short fiction film shot on a phone

Type of film	Short fiction: a story or written screenplay, with characters and events played by actors
Theme	“The World We Want to See”, approached in any fiction style
Shooting device	A smartphone or tablet of any model
Running time	1 to 5 minutes, including titles and credits
Aspect ratio	Horizontal 16:9 or vertical 9:16, as the filmmaker chooses
Footage shot by other means	Drone, action-camera and archive footage up to 10% of the running time
Accessories and editing	Microphones, lights, stabilisers and add-on lenses are allowed; editing on any device
Subtitles	English subtitles attached if the dialogue is in another language
Proof of shooting	The model of the shooting device and a behind-the-scenes photo



Horizontal 16:9



Vertical 9:16

Two possible formats: filmmakers choose the one that serves their story, and the directing style is their call.
All films compete in a single competition.

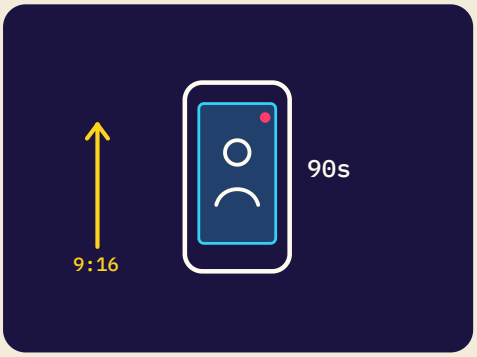
Three ready-made exercises for courses



EXERCISE 01

One scene, three angles

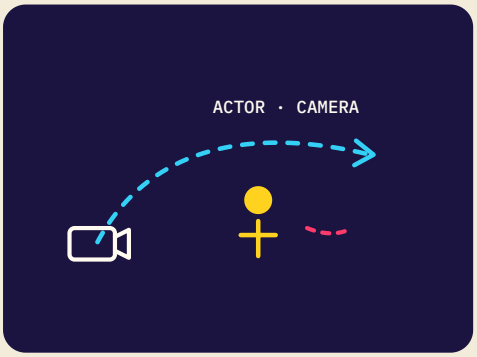
Shot breakdown and building a dramatic scene from a short screenplay.
For directing and screenwriting courses



EXERCISE 02

A story in 90 seconds

Writing for the vertical screen and the rhythm of social platforms.
For digital media and marketing courses



EXERCISE 03

Directing actors and camera

Designing actor and camera movement within a scene.
For cinematography and theatre courses

FOR THE ACADEMIC COORDINATOR

We send the academic coordinator a sheet for each exercise, covering its aim, steps and assessment criteria.
The criteria match the festival's official judging criteria.

Judging

Five criteria with published weights

25% — **Idea and message**
How clear the idea is, how it connects to the theme, and how strong and affecting its message is

25% — **Storytelling**
Story, characters and conflict, and how well the storytelling engages the viewer

20% — **Creativity and originality**
An inventive approach and a fresh artistic vision

20% — **Technical quality**
Camera work, lighting, sound and editing

10% — **Use of form**
How the horizontal or vertical frame serves the story

Total 100%. The same criteria apply to every film.

Individual scoring first

Each juror scores the works alone on a digital form before the deliberation meeting.

Conflict-of-interest declaration

Every member signs a declaration before receiving the works, and scores no work from their own university.

The Audience Award is separate

Audience votes do not count towards the Grand Prize.

No sponsor influence

No sponsor may influence selection, judging or the ranking of winners.

The competition fits into the academic calendar

17 NOV
2026 · LAUNCH

Launch
Submissions open on International Students' Day, with an info session at the university.

DEC
STORY & SCREENPLAY

Story and screenplay
Writing and developing the story, supported by remote workshops.

JAN–FEB
PRODUCTION

Directing and shooting
The course project in production, supervised by the lecturer.

15 MAR
2027 · DEADLINE

Submission deadline
The final date for receiving films, which can serve as the course-project deadline in coordination with the university.

1 APR
FINAL SELECTION

Final selection
The films shortlisted for the final selection are announced.

29 APR 2027
ISTANBUL
FINAL NIGHT

The main ceremony
The ceremony and awards in Istanbul.
Coinciding with Viral Video Day

Four levels, the first with no financial commitment

PARTNER

Partner university

1

No financial commitment

A one-page cooperation letter: the university shares the call, names an academic coordinator and opens the door to its students.

ACADEMIC PARTNER

Academic partner

2

In-kind contribution

Hosting a workshop or a screening stop, lecturers contributing to mentoring, or a student volunteer team.

ACADEMIC SPONSOR

Academic sponsor

3

2 to 3 places

A scholarship or an award bearing the university's name, or sponsorship of UniReel Lab sessions.

HOST

Host university

4

One place

The closing ceremony on its campus, its name linked to the festival, and a seat on the steering committee.

The academic sponsor's contribution will be set once the budget is approved.

Partner university · No financial commitment

A simple commitment, a clear return

GIVE

What the university provides

- Sharing the call on its official channels
- Naming one academic coordinator
- Optionally integrating the competition into a course or student activity, in coordination with the academic administration
- Nominating one or more student ambassadors

UNIREEL

GET

What it receives

- Its name on the partner universities page of the website
- A dedicated info session for its students
- A dedicated registration link to track its students' participation
- A ready materials pack in the festival's branding
- Two invitations to the closing ceremony
- A participation report within 30 days of the ceremony
- A chance to win the Most Participating University Shield

Academic partnership and sponsorship opportunities

ACADEMIC PARTNER · IN KIND

Academic partner

Provides: hosting a workshop or an Official Selection screening stop, mentoring lecturers, a student volunteer team, or a studio and equipment.

- All partner university benefits
- Logo on the ceremony screen
- The university's name on the workshop or screening it hosts
- 4 ceremony invitations, and certificates for mentors and volunteers

VS

ACADEMIC SPONSOR · FINANCIAL

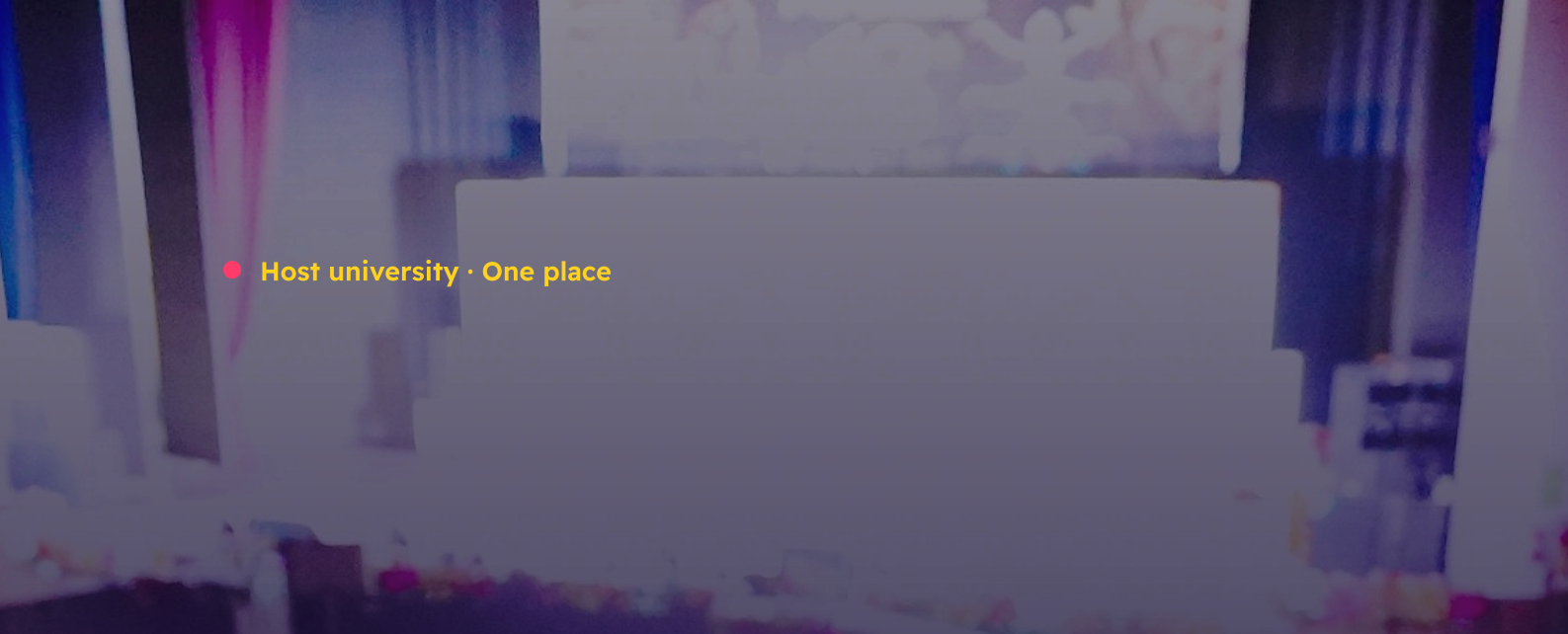
Academic sponsor

Provides: a scholarship for one of the winners, an award bearing the university's name, or sponsorship of UniReel Lab sessions.

Sponsorship example

“UniReel Lab Grant, supported by [Your University]”

- All academic partner benefits
- Presenting the award or grant on the ceremony stage
- An information stand in the ceremony venue
- 6 ceremony invitations



Host university · One place

Only one university will be the heart of UniReel Istanbul 2027

“UniReel Istanbul in partnership with [Your University]”

What the university provides

- The ceremony and screening hall
- Rooms for UniReel Lab workshops
- Logistics and security support on campus
- An organised student team for operations and filming

What it receives

- Its name as the festival's official host in media and promotional materials, while preserving the founding partner's exclusive visibility and naming rights
- A seat on the steering committee
- An opening address by the university's president
- Finalists and guests from several countries on its campus
- Presenting an award on the ceremony stage
- Documented volunteer hours for students, in coordination with the university
- First option to host the second edition

The levels at a glance

Benefit	Partner university	Academic partner	Academic sponsor	Host university
Type of contribution	No cost	In kind	Financial	Campus and facilities
Name on the universities page and an info session	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Dedicated sign-up link and participation report	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Logo on the ceremony screen	—	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Presenting on stage	—	—	Award or grant	Award
Presence in the venue	—	—	Stand	Hosting festival events on campus
Ceremony invitations	2	4	6	As agreed
Seat on the steering committee	—	—	—	**Yes**
Competing for the University Shield	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**



UniReel Ambassadors programme

One motivated student can move a whole faculty

The ambassador's role

- Organise an info session at their university
- Answer classmates' questions
- Encourage teams to submit before the deadline

What they get

- Remote training and a ready materials pack
- A verified ambassador certificate
- Priority invitation to the ceremony when funding allows
- The best ambassador recognised on the ceremony stage

Recognition

Moments on stage for universities and their students

UNIVERSITY WITH MOST ELIGIBLE FILMS

Most Participating University Shield

For the university with the most films eligible for the competition.
A shield shaped like the frame corner, announced at the ceremony.

STUDENT JURY

Student Jury

An independent jury of students from partner universities gives its own award.
No member scores a film from their own university.

OFFICIAL SELECTION

The Official Selection

24 to 30 films screened in Istanbul.
Every film credited to its maker and university, with a verified certificate.



Awards and development programme

From a competition to a professional opportunity

01

Festival Grand Prize

For the best film of the festival: a production grant or in-kind support, an invitation to the ceremony in Istanbul once funding is approved, mentoring, a distribution plan and media exposure.

02

Special Jury Prize

For an outstanding work chosen by the jury: in-kind support, mentoring sessions and media exposure.

03

Student Jury Prize

For a work chosen by the Student Jury from the Official Selection: a special certificate, media exposure and a publicity package.

04

Audience Award

For the film with the highest result under a published, tamper-protected voting system: media exposure, a publicity package and a chance to work with a digital partner.

05

Most Participating University Shield

For the university with the most eligible films: a shield shaped like the frame corner, announced at the ceremony, and priority to host the next edition's meeting.

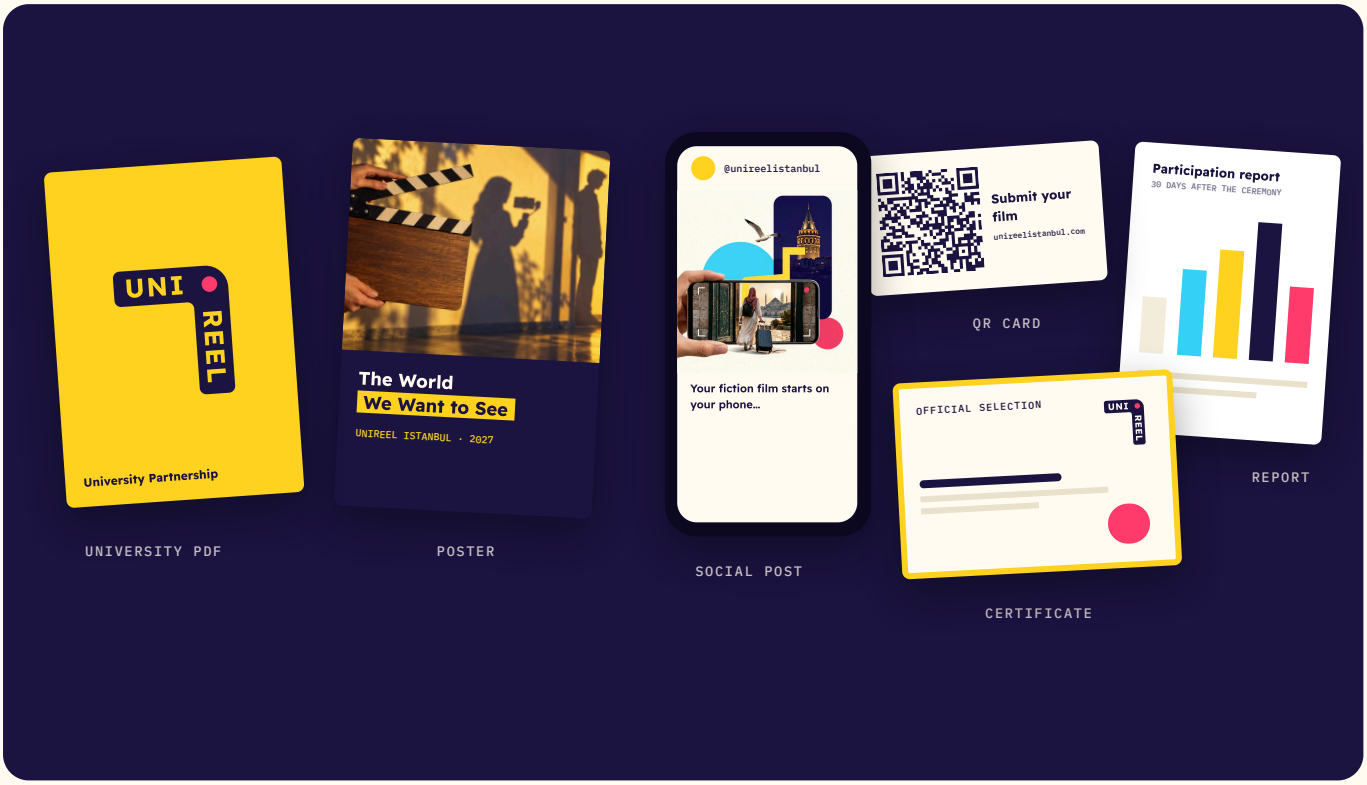
06

UniReel Lab

For the ten finalists: advanced workshops, professional sessions, profiles and networking opportunities with the partner network.

Award details and values will be announced once approved. No cash value has been approved yet.

Everything the university needs, ready from day one



The university pack

- A one-page cooperation letter setting out both sides' commitments
- A short profile and simplified rules ready to publish, plus a course proposal with ready exercises
- Ready brand materials: posters, social posts, slides and a sign-up QR code

Participation report within 30 days of the ceremony

- Your students' registrations, submitted and eligible works, Official Selection entries and awards
- Indicators of the university's participation in the network, and its visibility in media coverage and the live stream
- Photos and clips ready for the university's channels

Join us

Three steps, and your university is in the network

01 Sign the one-page cooperation letter

02 Name an academic coordinator and a student ambassador

03 Set the date of the info session for your students

On launch day, universities that sign before 17 November 2026 will be announced as founding universities.

Join now

unireelistanbul.com/en/universities

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