

REGULATIONS
DOKUBAKU IDFF 2026 | STELLAR CIVILIZATION
05 – 11 OCTOBER
☆☆☆

Directorate of the Festival:

DokuBaku is the first and only independent International Documentary Film Festival in Azerbaijan, which holds the competition for non-fiction.

October 2017
Imam Hasanov
Founder / Director

Festagent

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1. General

1.1. The Founder of the Festival:

DokuBaku IDFF (hereinafter the Festival) was founded by Imam Hasanov. He is director of the festival. Organizers:

"Free Art" and (AZ), "DokuBaku International Documentary Film Festival" (AZ)

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Str. 103 Shamil Azibayov

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1.2. Status of the Festival/ Venue:

The 10th DokuBaku IDFF is to be held in Baku, capital of Azerbaijan, **on 05-11 October, 2026.**

The Venue of the Festival will be announced in the **August 2026, on www.dokubaku.az**

1.3. The objectives of DokuBaku:

- Promote the development of an independent documentary film industry in Azerbaijan, encouraging local aspiring, amateur and professional filmmakers as well as cinema lovers*
- Create a platform for documentary films screening and exchange experience between local and international professionals*
- Support making new local documentaries*
- Promote the creation of potential international products*

1.4. DokuBaku Organizing Committee:

Arrangement and administration of the Festival will be carried out by the organizing committee headed by the Festival director. The Committee Representatives are appointed by the Festival director. Organizing Committee is formed by the Director of the Festival and the Program Manager.

1.5. Selection Committee:

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The films submitted to the Festival are selected by the Selection committee. Selection committee consists of independent Azerbaijani and foreign professionals. All members of the Selection committee (including election director) is selected by the Organizing Committee. The Selection committee is headed by election director of the Festival. The decisions of the Selection Committee are final and come into force immediately after their adoption and assent.

2. Program

2.1. The Festival program consists of six main sections:

- *DokuTam – Best Feature Documentary Film***
- *DokuShorts – Best International and Local Short Documentary Film***
- *DokuBox – Best Debut Film – First or Second Films, Experimental, Non-Traditional Documentaries***
- *DokuKids – Best Documentary Film for and about Children***
- *DokuEcho – Best Documentary about Music, Dance, Rhythm***
- *DokuMuse – Best Documentary about Nature, the Ecosystem of our Mother Earth***

International films from all over the world and local films may be submitted for competition in different categories.

Submission in most categories is chargeable.

The films are assessed by the Jury of the Main and Short Film Contests appointed by the Organizing Committee in an apart competition for the local films.

The number of sections of the Festival program may vary yearly.

The number of films selected may be increased or reduced upon the decision of the Organizing Committee.

The program of the Festival is to be published in **August 2026**, via www.dokubaku.az after the list of finalist is announced.

Festival only contacts the submitters of selected films on the Program.

Submitted films for inclusion to the Festival program (each year chosen by the Organizing Committee) should correspond to the topic of the Festival.

The topic of 2026 is "Stellar Civilization"

2.2. Competition Program:

The competition program consists of:

The Main Contest – Full-Length documentaries – over 60 minutes

Short Film Competition – Short documentaries – up to 30 minutes

2.3. Out-of-Competition Program:

Out-of-competition program is compiled by the Organizing Committee.

Within the non-competition program, thematic (corresponding to the main topic), as well as retrospective films' screening can be taken into account before or after the Festival. The Festival covers Baku and the regions of Azerbaijan.

2.4. Master-classes:

Arranging 3-5-day workshops are considered for local cinemagoers, amateurs, or professionals who want to make a film.

2.5. Accompaniment Program (side events):

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The accompanying program can include exhibitions, performances, concerts, creativity nights and other events related to the documentary film section.

3. Submission guidelines

3.1. Admission Requirements for the Competition Program:

Applicants can submit their application via <https://filmfreeway.com/DBIDFF> until 13 June 2026 to participate in the Festival.

The submitted films should comply with the following requirements for participation at **the 10edition** of DokuBaku IDFF:

The production date of the film should be **no earlier than January 1, 2025**.

The film should not be in a TV-format, "talking heads", voice over, informational, portrait, interview-reportage, advertisement etc., or in a similar format.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Dear SUBMITTERS,

We want to express our gratitude for your interest in submitting your films to DokuBaku 2026. As we gear up for another exciting festival, we'd like to remind you of some important regulations to ensure a smooth submission process:

Screening Fee Notice: DokuBaku is an independent film festival, and unfortunately, we are unable to provide screening fees to sales agents, independent filmmakers, film productions, producers, etc. We kindly ask for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

Support for the Festival: Your participation in DokuBaku not only enriches our festival but also supports our mission to celebrate independent cinema. We appreciate your support by submitting your film and refraining from requesting waiver codes.

Respect for Our Work: We deeply value the effort and dedication that go into creating each film. Rest assured, we hold immense respect for your work and are thrilled at the prospect of showcasing it at our festival.

Thank you for your attention to these regulations. We look forward to receiving your submissions and celebrating the art of filmmaking together at DokuBaku 2026.

With respect,
DokuBaku Team

3.2 The following films are accepted for the Festival:

Films that solve or show ways to solve some of the most important social, political, global problems

Film-essay

Experimental films

Artistic "non-fiction" films with a powerful, strong story, a film of human fate

The person who presented the film (director, producer, or other authorized person) informs that he/she is entitled to have the right on the film and plenipotentiary to the screening of the film in the Festival.

All films in order to screen in the Festival are accepted digitally in accordance with technical parameters that mentioned in the "Application Form": In 2026, each participant is able to send only one

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film to the Festival.

The selection committee has a right to define films independently that presented to the Festival under one or another program, category or section and inform the film's authorized representatives about it in advance.

All films participating in the competition will be screened in their original language, with Azerbaijani and English subtitles. The authors shall also provide subtitles in English with the film.

Notification on selected **films will be announced on August 13, 2026** on the Festival's website and social media. The submitters will also be informed via email.

3.3. Copyright:

The Festival participant (director, producer, or other authorized person) is considered to agree the realization of following rights by submitting films to DokuBaku:

Screening of the film by agreement of both parties within or outside the Festival

Using parts of the documentary in the festival's commercials, videos and television reports, as well as other audiovisual products aimed at broadcasting the Festival

Using the frames and characters in the public materials (catalog, site, etc.) of the Festival

Keeping the film in the archives of the Festival

The copyright of the competition films is regulated in accordance of the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

3.4. Participant obligations:

The authors of the program will be contacted and additional materials (photos, information on a film, director, etc.) will be required for the catalog of the Festival.

After announcing the program, the film submitter or other person holding the rights, cannot withdraw the film from the program or apply for a film retracting.

The films selected by the Festival must remain strictly confidential between the Festival Management and the Participant until the Festival decides to make an official announcement in this regard.

Only the festival organizer reserves the right to make any advertisement.

Note:

Authors of selected films can participate in the Festival voluntarily. Therefore, they can contact the embassy of their country in Azerbaijan for assistance or additional information. Please, take into account that the Festival is realized by cinema lover volunteers and professionals filmmakers. The Festival is not intended to make a profit.

4. Awards

The Jury members select the winners in six categories.

Best Documentary Film – iMystic – Main Award, iHuman – Special Mention

Best International and Local Short Documentary – iMystic – Main Award, iHuman – Special Mention

Best Documentary for Kids (DokuKids) – iMystic – Main Award, iHuman – Special Mention

Best Documentary about Music, Dance, Rhythm – iMystic – Main Award, iHuman – Special Mention

Best First or Second Debut Films – iMystic – Main Award, iHuman – Special Mention

Best Documentary about Nature, the Ecosystem of our Mother Earth – iMystic – Main Award, iHuman – Special Mention

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The **"Audience Award"** is selected by the Festival audience, rather than by the Festival jury or a group of critics.

The **10th edition of DokuBaku IDFF** does not intend to establish cash prizes. Organizing Committee and founders retain a right to change this decision during the Festival. Furthermore, the Organizing Committee may provide the right to sponsors to establish their own award. The winners are announced by the Jury or Organizing Committee at the Closing Ceremony.

5. The Jury/ Audience

5.1. The Jury:

International jury is elected by the Organizing Committee. The jury selects winners in five categories. The jury consists of 3-5 persons in each category. In all sections – full-length and short-length film contests- jury is selected from local and international film industry. The Organizing Committee and the Election Commission may participate in the discussions of the jury without the right to vote.

5.2. Audience:

DokuBaku is a public Festival. DokuBaku's public audience includes ticket buyers, or those invited by the Festival organizers.

5.3. Guests of the Festival:

DokuBaku IDFF organizers do not undertake expenses of Festival guests and participants in 2026. During the organization of the Festival, the Organizing Committee and Founder reserve the right to change this rule for some guests.

Only the festival organizer reserves the right to make any advertisement.

6. Conclusion/ Final provisions:

These **Regulations** are compiled in the Azerbaijani and English languages.

The text in the Azerbaijani language is preferred when there is a contradiction among the texts of the regulations. Participation in **DokuBaku IDFF** involves accepting the terms and conditions unquestionably that is used in this Regulation. Any questions and disputes arising during the preparation and implementation of the Festival are resolved amicably by the Festival Organizer on the basis of mutual consent. If an amicably settlement of disputes is not achieved, any dispute shall be resolved in accordance with the legislation of the **Republic of Azerbaijan**.

STELLAR CIVILIZATION
SEE YOU at DOKUBAKU IDFF 2026!

