

Tehran Pitch Forum: School Stories

The Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS), organizer of the Tehran International Short Film Festival (TISFF), is proud to launch the second edition of the Tehran Pitch Forum, an international platform dedicated to developing, presenting, and supporting short film projects.

Founded in 1983, IYCS is the oldest and largest organization in Iran devoted to the education, production, promotion, and development of short cinema. Through its nationwide network of branches, educational programs, production support initiatives, and international activities, IYCS has played a significant role in discovering and nurturing generations of Iranian filmmakers and promoting short film culture both nationally and internationally.

As the organizer of the Academy Award®-qualifying Tehran International Short Film Festival, IYCS continues its mission to support emerging voices and encourage creative dialogue through cinema by creating new opportunities for filmmakers to develop and present their projects to professional audiences.

The second edition of Tehran Pitch Forum is presented under the theme School Stories and aims to support short film projects focusing on children, adolescents, schools, educational environments, and the challenges and aspirations of younger generations.

The initiative is inspired by the tragic missile attack on Shajareh Tayyebah School in Minab, Iran, which resulted in the loss of students and educational staff. Beyond this specific event, School Stories seeks to encourage cinematic reflections on the universal experiences of children and young people and to promote dialogue around education, safety, dignity, resilience, and hope.

Applicants are kindly requested to carefully read the Rules and Regulations before submitting their projects.

Theme of This Year

Submitted projects should address school-age children and adolescents, educational environments, or related subjects, including but not limited to:

- Student life, friendships, learning experiences, and everyday moments within schools.
- The relationships between students, teachers, families, and educational communities.
- Personal growth, identity, creativity, ambition, and the challenges of growing up.
- Safety, well-being, emotional resilience, and mental health in educational settings.
- Educational justice, equal opportunities, inclusion, and access to quality learning environments.
- The experiences of children and adolescents facing social change, conflict, crisis, or other contemporary challenges.

Who can apply

Film professionals who seek producing, co-producing, funding, and development opportunities for their current or upcoming short film.

Eligible participants must hold an educational degree in a filmmaking-related field, such as film directing, producing, screenwriting, or a related discipline, and/or have completed at least two short films that have been officially selected and screened at international film festivals.

Applicants must upload supporting documentation as part of their submission, such as a copy of their educational degree or certificate, festival selection confirmations, official festival program pages, screening certificates, or other verifiable evidence. Applications submitted without the required proof may be considered ineligible.

Participants from all countries are eligible to submit their short projects.

Event Format

Tehran Pitch Forum is conducted entirely online and in English.

Following the submission deadline, a selection committee composed of film professionals will review all applications and select finalist projects in both sections.

Selected participants will be invited to present their projects during the online pitching sessions, which will be held during the Tehran International Short Film Festival.

The finalists will pitch their projects before an international jury panel and invited industry professionals. The event aims to provide visibility, networking opportunities, and support for promising short film projects.

The winning projects will be officially announced and awarded during the Closing Ceremony of the 43rd Tehran International Short Film Festival.

How to Submit

Submit your project via the FilmFreeway platform before the deadline.

Filmfreeway.com/TehranPitchForum (Submission fee waiver code: TPF2026)

Awards & Prizes

First place Award – USD 1300

First place Award – USD 700

First Edition Winners:

1. Spotted Yellow — Baran Sarmad
2. PsyChicken — Ata Mojabi
3. Bystander — Mohsen Bagheri Dastgerdi

Rules & Terms

- Fiction, documentary, animation, and experimental short film projects are eligible.
- Projects may be at any stage of development, pre-production or post-production.

- The completed film must not exceed 30 minutes in length.
- Each applicant may submit a maximum of two projects.
- Applicants must hold all intellectual property and copyright ownership of the submitted project.
- Secured funding by third parties is not an obligatory condition to submit a project.
- Applicants must be able to present and pitch their projects in English during the program.

Obligations of Awarded Projects

Projects receiving awards through Tehran Pitch Forum agree, upon completion of the film, to:

1. Include the phrase “In Memory of the Victims of Minab School” in the end credits.
2. Display the logos of the Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS) and the Tehran International Short Film Festival (TISFF) in accordance with the organizers’ guidelines in the film credits and promotional materials.