

Locarno Film Festival

# OPEN DOORS CONSULTANCY

Guidelines and Regulations 2024

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Member of Swiss Top Events

## 1. Preamble

The Locarno Film Festival (LFF) offers a service called Open Doors Consultancy, an Open Doors initiative of Locarno Pro, in collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the Federal Departments of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

The organization of the section is guaranteed by the Festival, which consequently also allocates people responsible for the project.

The LFF reserves the right to change the Guidelines. Please check our website ([www.locarnofestival.ch/opendoors](http://www.locarnofestival.ch/opendoors)) for the latest version.

## 2. Goals

Open Doors Consultancy's overall objective is to contribute toward the growth and development of a local and regional filmmaking scene in less represented regions of the world, where film production is particularly fragile.

More particularly, it aims at assisting directors and producers from the Open Doors focus regions (cf. chapter 4) by providing specific advice to selected film projects and creative teams.

## 3. Program Offer

Open Doors Consultancy is a project-based service intended as a continuous activity taking place during the year, beyond the core days of Locarno Film Festival.

Following a selective process, selected film projects and creative teams will benefit from online consultancy by a pool of international experts on (maximum) one of the following subjects:

- screenwriting
- producing (co-production, funding and development strategies, career development as a creative producer)
- editing
- international distribution (sales, festival and distribution strategies)
- audience design
- legal aspects & contracts

The program foresees 1 deadline for submissions in 2024 (see below for more details).

Only the first 30 applications will be considered on a first come, first served basis and 10 projects will be selected to access an online consultancy with an international expert.

The consultancy will start during the month following the announcement of the selection, according to the expert's and the project-holder's/producing team's schedule. The consultancy will be given through online meeting applications such as Skype or Zoom (free choice, according to everyone's availability) and will last 5 hours.

Both the expert and the project-holder / producing team are requested to send a detailed report after the meeting summarizing the main learnings and recommended next steps discussed together.

- **Important**

The Open Doors team must be informed about any possible change brought to the submitted project during the selection process.

The selected applicants will be informed about the positive outcome approximately three months after the end of the call.

The Open Doors Consultancy differs from the Open Doors "Hotline" service. You can use the latter to directly send requests to the Open Doors team by email, simply by writing to [opendoors@locarnofestival.ch](mailto:opendoors@locarnofestival.ch), submitting more general or punctual questions not necessarily linked to a project.

## 4.Target

The consultancy service is designed for directors and producers / creative producing teams who are citizens or originally from the following Open Doors focus countries:

Central America: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua.

Caribbean Islands: Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

South America: Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Venezuela.

## 5. Entry Conditions

- Submission and consultancy are free of charge.
- Directors and producers that are citizens or originally from the eligible countries (cf. chapter 4) can apply. A proof of citizenship through an identity document will be requested.
- Professionals that have been previously selected in the Open Doors programs in Locarno (i.e. alumni from the Projects' Hub, Producers' Lab or Screenings) are eligible to apply.
- Professionals that have previously applied to the Consultancy (and/or to other Open Doors programs) and that have not been selected can apply again.
- Professionals that have never applied to Open Doors are invited to apply.
- Only dossier of **feature-length** projects (fiction, documentaries, animation, hybrid) are eligible.
- Only projects that have a clear correlation to the author's home country (cf. chapter 4) will be taken into consideration.
- Projects at all stages are eligible, if it applies specifically to the above-mentioned fields (cf. list at point 3).
- One professional / creative producing team can send only one entry form/project and can apply for only one field of consultancy.
- The selection committee and the Open Doors team can decide to attribute a consultancy to a project/producing team on a different field than the one originally applied for, if the chosen field isn't relevant for the project.
- The documentation must be presented in English. The script can be sent additionally as a second version also in Spanish, if there is a better version available, with notes on the different versions. If the applicant's knowledge of English is not good, please send us an email beforehand and include it as a note in the application.
- *Only relevant for the producing career development field:* despite the consultancy will focus on the producing team, the applicant must at least have one feature project in development in their slate; the project is going to be discussed during the consultancy as a working basis; the producer should also have at least two previous short films (fiction, animation, documentary, hybrid) that have premiered in festivals.

Cf. chapter 7 for an exhaustive list of requested documentation for submission.

## 6. Application procedures and deadlines

The application process will be structured as it follows:

- **June 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, 2024:** submissions open for 24 hours only from June 4<sup>th</sup> at 09:00 AM to June 5<sup>th</sup> at 09:00 AM (CEST). A communication with the exact dates will be sent out around mid-April 2024.
- **Early September 2024:** the selected applicants will be informed and will start the 5-hour Consultancy with an expert. The meetings with the expert can be spread over several months but they must not exceed 5 hours.
- **Mid-end of September 2024:** the non-selected applicants will be informed.

One submission is completed through three steps:

- **Prepare in advance your dossier** with the complete and finalized documentation. The documentation must follow the order as in chapter 7.
- A document called “**How to prepare A Good Film Project Dossier**” is available in English and in Spanish on our free online learning and knowledge-sharing platform, the ToolBox (Menu > Development). Access to the resource (free registration) at: <https://bit.ly/43s3lgq>
- **Fill in the online entry form** that will be available on the Consultancy web page <https://bit.ly/3kxS1de> (available only from June 4th, 2024 at 9:00 AM CEST).
- **Upload the PDF file prepared in advance** at the end of the entry form. You must gather all documents into one single PDF file of **maximum 20 MB**.

## 7. Requested material for application

Note: **All documents are mandatory (if not differently expressed) and must be provided in English.**

### 1. Screenwriting

- A specific note explaining what challenges you are facing and what are your expectations regarding this consultancy. What kind of strategy do you need to move on, and why? What are the specific steps you believe need a support?
- Synopsis (max 2 pages)
- Director's Visual Concept (in form of a description)
- CV, biography, picture, copy of ID and filmography of the director, of the co-writers (if any) and the producer(s), if any (max 2 pages)
- Director's and co-writer's (if any) statement/ note of intention
- Production company-ies profile(s), if any, and line-up of projects in development (including names of directors of each project)
- Producer's statement(s)/ note of intention
- Estimated budget plan (in Euros and/or USD)
- If applicable, screening links to 2 previous films by the director subtitled in English (shorts and feature length fictions/documentaries are both accepted). All links and passwords must be available until the end of the selection process and possibly be shared through Vimeo or Google Drive to avoid advertisements. Links copied in the text shouldn't exceed one line of length (otherwise you can use link shortener programs like bitly.com)
- Full script or advanced treatment (treatment: min. 10 pages or 15.000 characters). **An English version must be included.** You can additionally include a Spanish version, if it's more advanced than the English one (please add an explanatory chapter highlighting the differences between the two versions)

### 2. Producing (co-production, funding and development strategies, career development)

- Note: If you are applying specifically for career development field, this field is intended to support creative producers/producing teams to understand production being a delegate producer not only overseeing the financial aspects but also working together with the director and the whole team, contributing to the creative process, especially during development and post-production stage.  
The tasks of a creative producer include: closely working with the director on the development of the script, overseeing an application as creative process, actively and closely participating in pre-production, shooting and post-production stages, as well as finding decent co-production partners, preparing the project and the director for workshops and co-production markets, finding the right strategy for festival distribution, sales and international and domestic marketing.
- A specific note explaining what challenges you are facing and what are your expectations regarding this consultancy: what kind of strategy do you need to move on, and why? What are the specific steps you believe need a support? For the creative producers: where do you stand with the project and what are the most significant weaknesses your team is facing with during the creative process of development and financing? What are the weak and strong aspects of your career as a producer linked to the chosen project?

- Synopsis (max 2 pages)
- CV/biography, picture, copy of ID and filmography for the director and the producer(s) (max 2 pages)
- Production company profile(s) and line up of projects in development (including names of directors and country of each project)
- Director's and co-writer's (if any) statement/ note of intention
- Producer's statement/ note of intention
- Top sheet budget in Euros or USD (i.e., one-page estimated budget with main development/production/post-production budget lines)
- Foreseen financing plan (in Euros or USD) and financing strategy
- Foreseen schedule including development (various script versions, funding applications), production, post-production and distribution stages (which international and national festival premieres? Ideal domestic release date/period)
- If available, financing agreements and/or letters of intent from financing partners and co-production / cooperation agreement(s)
- Screening links to 2 previous films by the producer (see below)
- If applicable, screening links to 2 previous films by the director subtitled in English (shorts and feature length films are both accepted). All links and passwords must be available until the end of the selection process and possibly be shared through Vimeo or Google Drive to avoid advertisements. Links copied in the text shouldn't exceed one line of length (otherwise you can use link shortener programs like bitly.com)
- Full script of the chosen feature project you want to use as a working basis (thanks for sending us the most updated and recent document). **An English version must be included.** You can additionally include a Spanish version, if it's more advanced than the English one (please add an explanatory chapter highlighting the differences between the two versions)
- **For career development:** Preliminary marketing, distribution and festival strategy – engagement plan, mood board, reference images and/or other visual material. If available, teaser and other audio-visual material

### 3. Editing

- A specific note explaining what challenges you are facing and what your expectations are regarding this consultancy. What kind of strategy do you need to move on, and why? What are the specific steps you believe need support?
- Synopsis (max 2 pages)
- Rough cut - first edited version of the film. Two different rough cuts can be considered if you need advice on two different versions
- Potential additional editing material including sequences or rushes you are facing problems with and that you would like to solve
- CV, biography, picture, copy of ID and filmography of the director, of the editor, of the producer(s) and Crew list (max 2 pages)
- Director's statement/ note of intention
- Producer's statement/ note of intention
- Directors and current editor's note of intention, explaining at which stage of the editing you are. The editor's note is not mandatory but highly recommended
- Production company profile(s), filmography and line up of projects in development (including names of directors of each project)
- Financing plan of the movie and detailed post-production budget in Euros and/or USD (i.e., one-page estimated budget with main development/production/post-production lines)
- A list of service providers (post-production labs, etc.) and post-production timeline
- If applicable, screening links to 2 previous films by the director subtitled in English (shorts and feature length films are both accepted). All links and passwords must be available until the end of the selection process and possibly be shared through Vimeo or Google Drive to avoid advertisements. Links copied in the text shouldn't exceed one line of length (otherwise you can use link shortener programs like bitly.com)

- Full script (please send us the most updated and recent document) in English. If an English version is not available, you can include the one in Spanish

#### 4. International distribution (sales, festivals and distribution strategies)

(only projects with a completed development status / in late production & financing or rough-cut status will be accepted for this field)

- A specific note explaining what challenges you are facing and what are your expectations regarding this consultancy. What kind of strategy do you need to move on, and why? What are the specific steps you believe need support?
- Synopsis (max 2 pages)
- **For pre-production projects:** full script (please provide us with the most updated and recent document). **An English version must be included.** You can additionally include a Spanish version, if it's more advanced than the English one (please add an explanatory chapter highlighting the differences between the two versions)
- **For post-production projects:** full script. Depending on the status, rough cut, first edited or final version (please provide us with the most updated and recent document)
- CV, biography, picture, copy of ID and filmography of the director and the producer(s) (max 2 pages)
- Director's statement/ note of intention
- Producer's statement/ note of intention
- Production company profile(s) and line up of projects in development (including names of directors for each project).
- Complete list of Cast and Crew
- Visual elements (pictures, trailers, ...) used to promote the film and information about previous films' distribution strategy
- Budget top sheet in Euros and/or USD (i.e., one-page estimated budget with main budget development/production/post-production lines)
- Full financing plan (in Euros and/or USD) and full financing strategy
- If available, sales/ distribution agreement(s) and Letters of Intent(s)
- A note on your strategy for distribution before this consultancy: have you already sent the film to festivals? Which ones? Are you already in touch with sales agents and distribution companies?
- If applicable, screening links to 2 previous films by the director subtitled in English (shorts and feature length films are both accepted). All links and passwords must be available until the end of the selection process and possibly be shared through Vimeo or Google Drive to avoid advertisements. Links copied in the text shouldn't exceed one line of length (otherwise you can use link shortener programs like bitly.com)

#### 5. Audience Design

- A specific note explaining what challenges you are facing and what are your expectations regarding this consultancy. What kind of strategy do you need to move on, and why? What are the specific steps you believe need support?
- A chapter on whether or not you have had a previous experience in audience design in your career and with the project attached to the dossier
- Long synopsis (max 2 pages)
- CV, biography, picture, copy of ID and filmography of the director and the producer(s) (max 2 pages)
- Director's statement/ note of intention
- Producer's statement/ note of intention
- Production company profile(s) and line up of projects in development (including names of directors for each project)
- Visual elements (pictures, trailers, ...) used to promote the film and information about previous films' distribution strategy
- Foreseen budget top sheet in Euros and/or USD (i.e., one-page estimated budget with main budget development/production/post-production lines)

- Foreseen financing plan (in Euros and/or USD) and full financing strategy
- If available, sales/ distribution agreement(s) and Letters of Intent(s)
- A note on your foreseen strategy for distribution, festivals, if any
- Treatment (if available)
- Script (if available)
- If applicable, screening links to 2 previous films by the director subtitled in English (shorts and feature length films are both accepted). All links and passwords must be available until the end of the selection process and possibly be shared through Vimeo or Google Drive to avoid advertisements. Links copied in the text shouldn't exceed one line of length (otherwise you can use link shortener programs like bitly.com)

#### 6. Legal aspects & contracts

- A specific note explaining what challenges you are facing and what are your expectations regarding this consultancy. What kind of strategy do you need to proceed, and why? What are the specific steps you believe need support?
- Synopsis (max 2 pages) and advanced treatment (min. 10 pages or 15.000 characters). Thanks for sending us the most updated and recent document. **An English version must be included.** You can additionally include a Spanish version, if it's more advanced than the English one (please add an explanatory chapter highlighting the differences between the two versions)
- CV, biography, picture, copy of ID and filmography for the director, the producer(s) and potential co-producers (max 2 pages)
- Production company profile(s) and line up of projects in development (with list of filmmakers)
- Top sheet budget in Euros and/or USD (i.e., one-page estimated budget with main development/production/post-production budget lines)
- Foreseen financing plan (in Euros and/or USD) and financing strategy
- Foreseen schedule including development (various script versions, funding applications), production, post-production and distribution stages (which international and national festival premieres? Ideal domestic release date/period)
- If available, financing agreements and/or letters of intent from financing partners and co-production / cooperation agreement(s) including international sales
- If applicable, screening links to 2 previous films by the director subtitled in English (shorts and feature length films are both accepted). All links and passwords must be available until the end of the selection process and possibly be shared through Vimeo or Google Drive to avoid advertisements. Links copied in the text shouldn't exceed one line of length (otherwise you can use link shortener programs like bitly.com)

**Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered for selection. All information will be kept confidential.**

All requested material necessary for the application must be submitted **in English** language and through our online platform, following the instruction provided (cf. chapter 5).

## 8. Selection criteria

**Project criteria:** artistic value of the project, international potential, application profile, quality of application documentation, clarity of content and description of the challenge to be addressed, and urgency of the request.

**Professional criteria:** track record of professionals, company profile and business challenges depending on the nature of the request (career development, company development), quality of documentation, clarity of content, description of the challenge to be addressed and urgency of the request.

**Consultancy criteria:** to make sure that the request is relevant according to the stage of development / production of the project. **It must be clear that the team needs this specific consultancy to improve its project / to strengthen the skills of the creative team or to answer some of the needs and/or problems.** The selection committee will pay a special attention to the relevance and coherence of the request.

The selection for the Open Doors Consultancy will be made by a committee composed of international professionals active in the international film industry in different capacities.

## 9. Follow-up

After the participation in the Open Doors Consultancy program, the Open Doors team will send to the project-holder / producing team a form to be completed by the selected applicant with a detailed description of the consultancy experience.

We kindly ask to keep the Open Doors team informed about any evolution of the project / team using the Open Doors "Hotline", available throughout the year by writing an email to [opendoors@locarnofestival.ch](mailto:opendoors@locarnofestival.ch). We are especially interested in receiving updates about production status, date of national release, festivals selections (national and international), award nominations and prizes, any details regarding national or international distribution (including agreements with sales agents).

If the project-holder wishes to do so, a written mention of the Open Doors Consultancy service can be added to further documentation and to the credits of the completed film.

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