

APPLICATION INFORMATION FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2026/2027 IN CINEMATOGRAPHY



1. Admission Requirements

Admission to study at the DFFB depends solely on successfully passing the entrance exam. Admission is based on the applicant's artistic aptitude, not their technical skill. Applicants to the DFFB must be at least 21 years old at the beginning of their studies. An applicant can apply to the DFFB a maximum of two times, regardless of the specialisation (screenwriting, directing, producing, cinematography, or picture and sound editing).

The DFFB curriculum is focused on practical filmmaking, but students are also required to understand the theory behind the practice.

2. Training and Programs

The first year is a foundational year with a curriculum based on the concept of the well-rounded filmmaker. This means that the curriculum is the same for all students; students are not yet assigned to their chosen specialisations. All students become familiar with the most important trades of film production—screenwriting, directing, producing, cinematography, and picture and sound editing. The culmination of the first-year studies is a short film.

At the DFFB, the boundaries between specialisations are fluid. This means that students become filmmakers in the best sense of the word; they study and understand film from many angles. The goal of the DFFB is for students to develop an understanding for the many complex and varied processes that contribute to the creation of films, while also specializing in a specific field. Students learn about filmmaking from development to distribution, while delving into theory and applying this theoretical knowledge to their films.

3. Entrance Exam

The entrance exam consists of two parts. First, there is a pre-selection process. Next, if the applicant is pre-selected, they then get invited to the DFFB in Berlin for a week of exams. The list below details the submission materials required for the pre-selection phase. After reviewing the applications, the jury selects a shortlist of candidates who are invited to Berlin for the exam week.

A maximum of eight students per specialisation are admitted to study at the DFFB each academic year.

The following works and documents must be submitted for pre-selection:

I. A curriculum vitae (CV).

Your tabular CV should demonstrate the extent to which you have already been involved with film. This involvement can include internships, your own film work, studies in related fields, etc.

Please also include information about your personal background, such as social or cultural engagement, formative experiences through projects or travel, educational background, etc.

Upload as PDF (tabular CV; maximum of 1 page of continuous text, in Arial font size 12; page margins 2 cm on the left and right)

II. Briefly explain why you want to become a cinematographer?

Upload as PDF (maximum of 0.5 page of continuous text, in Arial font size 12; page margins 2 cm on the left and right)

III. Create a photo series on the theme “ON THE OTHER SIDE” using 5 photos that you have taken.

Upload the images in JPG or PNG format only (maximum 5 MB per image file)

IV. Create another photo series on the theme “A GAIN” using 5 photos that you have taken.

Upload the images in JPG or PNG format only (maximum 5MB per image file)

V. Write down your impressions of the last concert you visited.

Upload as PDF (maximum of 1 page of continuous text, in Arial font size 12; page margins 2 cm on the left and right)

VI. Create a 3-minute short film with the title "Yearning".

You can work within any film genre to create your film. For example, you can work in a fictional, non-fictional, hybrid, essayistic, or experimental mode. You must write the screenplay, the documentary script, or the concept yourself. You must also do your own cinematography. Someone else can direct the film.

It is important that the film's length does not exceed 3 minutes. Longer works will not be viewed by the jury.

We do not specify the production format.

(use max. resolution: 1920x1080, aspect ratio: 16:9 / 4:3, Data format: Quicktime (mov) or MP4, max. data rate 7MBit/s, max. file size: 150MB, video codec: H.264 / H.265, audio codec: MP3, AC3, AAC)

VII. Describe the process of developing and creating the short film you submitted, and explain which aspects of its production interested you the most as a filmmaker.

If you worked with a team, please include a list of the cast and crew. This list should contain the main contributors to your film.

Upload as PDF (maximum of 2 pages of continuous text, in Arial font size 12; page margins 2 cm on the left and right)

Please submit only your own original work. Films, photos, or written work in which others have played a significant role may not be submitted.

4. Application Process and Deadlines

Complete the application online on the DFFB website from **September 16, 2025**:

<https://bildgestaltung.application.dffb.de>

Please register online by **November 17, 2025**, at 6:00 p.m. at the latest.

The submission deadline for your full application is **December 8, 2025**, at 6:00 p.m. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

The DFFB charges a fee of **30 Euros** to process application documents. Please transfer this amount to the DFFB bank account by December 8, 2025. Include the following information: "Application 2026, study program **CINEMATOGRAPHY, SURNAME**".

Bank: Berliner Sparkasse, IBAN-No. (International Bank Account Number): **DE86 1005 0000 0630 0276 68**, **BIC or SWIFT:** BELADEBEXXXX, **Bank Code:** 10050000, **Account No.:** 0630027668, **Account Name:** Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin GmbH.

The processing fee is non-refundable.

Your work can only be submitted to the jury if payment is made on time.

Due to the large volume of applications, the jury is unable to provide applicants with feedback on their applications (for example, the reasons they were not admitted to the DFFB).

Pre-selection and Exam Dates:

September 16, 2025

Applicants can register and start filling out their application online.

Applicants must register by **November 17, 2025**. Registration is required so that an application can be submitted. Merely registering does not constitute an application. Registrations without a completed application will be deleted after the end of the application period.

December 8, 2025	All application documents must be received online by 6:00 p.m. on this date. Late submissions will not be accepted.
End of February 2026	The jury reviews each application and decides which applicants will be invited to take the exam at the DFFB in Berlin. The DFFB will inform applicants of its decision by email.
April 20 to 30, 2026	<p>Exam week</p> <p>Candidates will be informed of the exact dates of their exam schedule ahead of time, so that that they can prepare and make travel plans if necessary.</p> <p>Candidates must attend the on-site exam period in person.</p> <p>If a candidate requires a visa to enter Germany for the exam period, they must organize their visa with the relevant authorities ahead of time. Please make an embassy appointment well in advance (even if you are not yet sure if you are invited for the exam week).</p>

5. Language Skills

Studying at the DFFB is only possible if you have a good command of written and spoken German. The second language at the DFFB is English. We require all applicants to have a good command of English.

International applicants should note that the B2-level certificate from the Goethe Institute (or equivalent) must be presented at the beginning of the second part of the application, i.e. the exam week in Berlin. The written application and the oral/practical exam can be completed in English if a candidate's German language skills are insufficient at that time.

For information on DFFB tuition, other costs, and funding opportunities, please visit our website: www.dffb.de/en/.