

HUIS VAN DE VLAAMSE FILM

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Regulations VAF Next Generation 2026

1. General: VAF Next Generation: Wildcard and Booster Card

- The VAF issues Wildcards and Booster Cards for fiction, documentary, animation, Filmlab. Based on the graduation films of the master's programs, a jury selects the most promising talents.
- Thanks to the VAF Wildcard, a recently graduated filmmaker receives script and a production support to make a new film. This is done outside of the usual selection system of the VAF. The Wildcard winner chooses the subject of the new film, as well as the format, the carrier, the length; taking into account an imposed minimum and maximum duration; the artistic employees, the cast, the team, the production structure, the locations, etc.
- Thanks to the VAF Booster Card, a recently graduated filmmaker receives an advisory and coaching program at the VAF, which will include several relevant workshops. These can help prepare for a first funding application at the VAF.
- The official presentation of the VAF Next Generation takes place during the International Short Film Festival Leuven. The winning films will be projected during the festival, as part of the Competition (see www.kortfilmfestival.be).
- The VAF issues in principle one fiction wildcard and booster card, one documentary wildcard and booster card, one animation wildcard and booster card, one Filmlab wildcard and booster card.
- A fiction wildcard and animation wildcard is in principle worth 60.000€. In principle, a documentary and Filmlab wildcard are worth 40.000€.
- With this amount, the wildcard winner must realize a new work. Other financing is permitted according to the normal criteria of the VAF. Additional VAF support is not possible.
- The new project must belong to the same category as the selected thesis (either fiction, documentary, animation or Filmlab).
- The wildcard process consists of two phases: a script phase and a production phase.

- During the script phase, the Wildcard winner is guided by a coach chosen in consultation with the VAF. The coach may also guide the Wildcard winner during the production phase, although this is the exception rather than the rule. If necessary, a production coach can also be appointed.
- The wildcard winner works with an experienced producer to produce the project. The person in question is also chosen in consultation with the VAF.

2. Target group

VAF Next Generation fiction, documentary, animation en Filmlab:

- Master students who meet the following cumulative conditions can apply for a VAF Next Generation:
 - Candidates for the fiction, documentary or animation Wildcards and Booster Card completed a master's degree in audiovisual arts during the 2025-2026 academic year at one of the four Flemish film schools [RITCS, KASK, LUCA campuses Sint-Lukas Brussels or C-Mine]. They completed their full master's program at this film school in one of the following specializations:
 - RITCS:
 - Directing
 - Animation Film
 - KASK:
 - Film
 - Animation Film
 - LUCA campus Sint-Lukas Brussels:
 - Film
 - Animation Film
 - LUCA campus C-Mine Genk:
 - Television – Film
 - Animation Film
 - Candidates for the Filmlab Wildcards and Booster Card completed a master's degree in audiovisual arts during the 2025-2026 academic year at one of the four Flemish film schools [RITCS, KASK, LUCA campuses Sint-Lukas Brussels or C-Mine] in one of the aforementioned specializations, or at one of the Flemish arts universities of applied sciences [Sint-Lucas Ghent, Sint-Lucas Antwerp, PXL-MAD School of Arts, HISK]. They completed their full master program at this institution.
 - The candidate realized a fiction film, a documentary, an animation film or an experimental single screen work (Filmlab) as the final project.
 - The candidate is the director of the final project. You cannot apply with a group work.
- Flemish students at foreign film schools offering an education similar to the aforementioned Flemish film and art schools can also apply for VAF Next Generation.
 - The candidate must demonstrate that he/she/they graduated from a university of applied sciences within an education similar to the ones available at the aforementioned Flemish film and art colleges.

- The candidate obtained a master's degree at this school during the 2024-2025 academic year. They completed their entire master at this school.
- The candidate has produced a fiction film, a documentary, an animation film or an experimental single screen work (FilmLab) as a thesis.
- The candidate is the director of the final project. You cannot apply with a group work.

3. Registration

VAF Next Generation fiction, documentary, animation and FilmLab:

- The registration procedure happens completely online, via MyVAF and FilmFreeway
- The registration deadline is Wednesday 23th of September 2026 at 12.00 am (time of application on MyVAF). Any form of delaying the deadline is not possible. It is therefore recommended not to postpone the registration until the last minute. Only directors can submit their own final work. Teachers and schools cannot submit films from their students. Fellow students cannot submit each other's films.
- STEP 1:
 - Go to MyVAF (<https://my.vaf.be/>)
 - Register or log in (if you are already registered).
 - Select 'my applications' in the menu at the top
 - Then click the '+create' button in the center of the screen
 - Choose 'Start your application' ○ Choose 'Film'
 - Choose 'Talent Development'
 - Choose 'Wildcards'
 - Choose 'Wildcard' once more
 - Select the deadline Wednesday 23 September 2026
 - Fill in everything and submit your application
 - Once you receive this confirmation and password (and only then), you can proceed to step 2: submitting your film on FilmFreeway.
- The submission deadline on FilmFreeway is Sunday 27th of September 2026. 11.59 pm.
- STEP 2: ○ Register on FilmFreeway via "Sign Up". This registration is free.
- STEP 3: ○ Enter all required data via "My Projects": Project information, Submitter Information, Credits, Specifications, Screenings / Distributions. Definitely enter the title, director, synopsis (mandatory!), Cast, technical info, ...

- Choose "yes" under "specifications" next to "student project". Save everything (important!).
- STEP 4:
 - Add a downloadable (vimeo) link from your movie.
 - You can also upload your movie to FilmFreeway. This is free. You can find more information about uploading your film via this link: <https://filmfreeway.com/help/category/3969/projects-and-videouploads>.
 - Wait. Your movie is being converted. This could take a day, depending on the size of your film – which cannot be larger than 10 GB .
 - After the film has been converted, check the uploaded file. If you are not satisfied, you can upload a new version via "Edit Project". If you are satisfied with the upload, send in your film for the VAF Next Generation.
- STEP 5:
 - The link for VAF Next Generation cannot be found by browsing at “Festivals”, but can only be reached via: <https://filmfreeway.com/VAFWildcards>. Click on "Submit Now", select your film, choose the correct category, enter the password that you received from the VAF (STEP 1) and don't forget to answer the questions.
 - Include at least 1 and maximum 2 links to previous work (include any passwords to view the material) and answer the other questions.
 - Click on "add to cart" (free). You will receive a confirmation email.
 - The jury members will view this entry.
 - Attention: if you also want to register your film (fiction, documentary or animation) for the Flemish competition of the International Short Film Festival, you must do so via this link: <https://filmfreeway.com/festival/LeuvenInternationalShortFilmFestival> (deadline 15 September 2025).
- You do not have to create and send a DVD.

4. Selection

- The VAF assembles five juries, one for each category.
- The jurors review the submitted film and the candidates' previous work.
- The juries can seek additional advice from the film school of the candidate.
- In exceptional cases, the juries can advise the VAF to issue more or fewer wildcards of booster cards and/or adjust the premiums.

5. IP rights

- The Flemish Community and the Fund have the right to non-commercially distribute and communicate to the public all or part of the winning films of the VAF Next Generation for one-off specific cultural actions at home and/or abroad at the earliest two years after their first public screening, after prior consultation with the rights holder in the framework of any exclusive commercial rights that may still be in force.

The Fund is entitled to communicate, reproduce and distribute the winning films of the VAF Next Generation to the public free of charge, in whole or in part, within the specific framework of the promotional activities it organizes itself (in the first instance via its Flanders Image promotion unit), or in which it participates.

The Fund has the right to include the winning films of the VAF Next Generation that received production support from the Fund in the Archive for Education managed by the organization meemoo, the Flemish Institute for Archives. Their use is strictly limited to school-based educational purposes in Flanders and will be under the supervision of meemoo.

- The VAF has a partnership with [T-PORT Market](#) to promote the winners of the VAF Next Generation.

The winners of VAF Next Generation therefore grant the non-exclusive rights to T-PORT to upload and disclose the winning films to the users of T-PORT via the website.

Users of T-PORT are professionals active in the international film industry. Streaming through T-PORT is protected against piracy and does not change a title's premiere status.

The winners of VAF Next Generation also give permission to T-PORT to include title and information about the winning films in communications.

6. Further trajectory

VAF Wildcard fiction, documentary, animation en Filmlab:

- The wildcard winner decides for him or herself how, with whom and within which framework he realizes his new project. This is, however, subject to consultation with the coach and the VAF.
- A fiction film lasts a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 25 minutes, a documentary a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 25 minutes, an animation film a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 25 minutes, a Filmlab film a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 25 minutes.
- Coaching guidance is advisory. Neither the coach nor the VAF have any liability with regard to the project and the persons who implement it.
- The wildcard winner can request support from the film schools. The schools determine themselves, in consultation with the wildcard winner, whether and how they participate in the project.

- The wildcard winner and/or his/her producer have the right to seek more resources for the realization of the new project. In principle, they cannot claim extra VAF support.
- The new project cannot be realized in the context of education.
- Laureates commit to living and working in the Flemish Region or the Brussels-Capital Region during the entire scenario and production phase of their Wildcard film.
- Winners are required to participate in a number of workshops organized by the VAF during the scenario phase.

7. Timing

VAF Wildcard fiction, documentary, animation en Filmlab:

- The scenario phase will in principle be started in the course of 2027 and will last a maximum of 6 months.
- The production phase is then started.
- In principle, the new film will be delivered no later than 2 years after winning the VAF Wildcard

8. Contract and payment

- A contract is drawn up between the winner and the VAF for each VAF Wildcard. This includes all rights and obligations of both parties (with regard to the payment modalities, the modalities regarding reporting, spending control, possible distribution of operating receipts, etc.). In the event of non-compliance with the agreements, the VAF can withdraw all or part of the wildcard.
- A contract is drawn up between the VAF and the producer of the new project for the production phase. All rights and obligations of both parties are included in this contract (with regard to the payment modalities, the modalities regarding reporting, spending control, possible distribution of operating receipts, etc.). In the event of non-compliance with the agreements, the VAF can withdraw the VAF Wildcard in whole or in part.
- The VAF gradually transfers divided payments depending on the progress of the project and the reporting.
- The method of mentioning the VAF Wildcard in the credits, publicity and other, with regard to the work, is laid down in a contract.

9. Screening

- The wildcard holder and the producer involved decide for themselves when, where and within which framework the new project will be shown. However, consultation with the VAF / Flanders Image is recommended.
- In the context of its general mission, the VAF has the non-exclusive right to non-commercial exploitation of the films. In that context it can, for example, show the films in public, duplicate them, send them in for festivals, etc.

10. Liability

- As the VAF vzw does not act as a producer, it is in no way liable for the project and the persons who implement it, on condition that the VAF itself fulfills its contractual obligations.

For more information:

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<https://www.vaf.be/subsidies/vaf-wildcards>