

Official Rules “Documentary” 2026



PREMISE

The Università Cerca Lavoro (UCL) Cultural and Social Advancement Association has designed and promoted since 2007 the artistic project “Tulipani di Seta Nera” International Social Festival of Cinematic Arts (FTSN). The aim is to bring stories about diversity (disability, world of work, poverty, ethnicity, gender, points of view and sustainable development) and fragility of people and places to the attention of society, media, and institutions through the immediacy of short films, documentaries, video clips and digital series.

For nineteen years we have pursued the goal to overcome any pietistic approach, transforming the Festival into a genuine moment of cultural growth through cinema and entertainment, capable of interrogating the national and international community on the themes of integration, sustainability, and social justice. Our purpose is to bring out the essence of human diversity, enhancing talents and hopes, promoting dialogue between different visions, and narrating social issues on the big screen.

1. EVENT VENUES AND DATES

The Festival will take place **from 7th to 10th May 2026**, in Rome (Italy). The Promoters reserve the right to communicate later venues, programme and notices, which will be published on the official Festival website www.tulipanidisetanera.it.

The Promoters also reserve the right to change the dates of the Festival if necessary. In particular, in compliance with the anti-Covid regulatory provisions, the event could be subject to changes and postponements of dates.

Contest deadline: the **documentaries** must be submitted by **12nd February 2026**, except in case of extensions, which will be announced on the Festival website www.tulipanidisetanera.it.

Corrections and replacements: should defects be found in the files or materials after registration, it will be possible to send corrected or updated versions no later than **28 February 2026**.

Withdrawal: contestants who intend to withdraw their application may do so by the same deadline, **28 February 2026**.

2. PROJECTS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The “Tulipani di Seta Nera” International Social Festival of Cinematic Arts reflects on the themes of **diversity and fragility**. The event aims to promote the works of accomplished or budding filmmakers who could be film school students or graduates, as long as authors are capable, by means of their work, not only to **“tell stories about one kind of fragility, but to value the core of diversity, protecting people and places from violence, discrimination, and marginalization”**.

The Competition is open to documentaries **without any duration limits**. The Artistic Direction does not prescribe or indicate any preferential form (docufilm, documentary, biopic, etc.), but requires that the works remain coherent with the social themes of the Festival.

Participants will have to submit the Documentary, both with and without subtitles, attaching all the required documentation listed by our office and communicated via email once the participant has

“L’Università Cerca Lavoro”

University Student Association

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Website: www.universitacercalavoro.org

“Documentary Registration” Office: **344.15.99.261**

completed the online registration form on the website www.tulipanidisetanera.it.

Works without Italian subtitles (useful for the accessibility to the work of deaf people) and which do not respect the above norms will not be taken into consideration and will be excluded.

3. HOW TO PARTICIPATE

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The “Tulipani di Seta Nera” International Social Festival of Cinematic Arts is open to everyone.

Only 3 works per author and/or director are accepted.

The Participants can pre-register their work, filling out all the required fields of an Entry Form on the website www.tulipanidisetanera.it.

Once the pre-registration request has been received, our office (iscrizione.tsn@gmail.com) will provide by e-mail the list of the required documentation necessary to complete the registration process.

Please remember to follow the instructions and feel free to contact the festival office at (+39) 344.15.99.261 (also via WhatsApp), if necessary.

The Documentaries, in **.mp4 file format, both with and without subtitles**, must be accompanied by:

- 1) **Registration form and release form**, which you will receive by e-mail once the pre-registration has been completed;
- 2) **Documentary poster** (A4 paper size) in jpg / tiff / jpeg image format;
- 3) **Picture of the director** of the work in jpg / tiff / jpeg image format
- 4) **The trailer of the documentary**, with a maximum length of **1 minute 30 seconds**;
- 5) **The Technical notes** of the work, which will be sent to you by email, once the pre-registration has been completed;
- 6) **A valid ID document** of the owner of the work.

Works from all over the world are accepted to the Contest and will be examined by the Artistic Committee directed by the Artistic Director during the selections.

The works must be equipped with subtitles in Italian language; the absence of subtitles will be a reason for exclusion from the competition.

4. SUBMISSIONS

No payment is necessary to enter the Contest.

To pre-register the documentary it is necessary to complete the entry form on the website www.tulipanidisetanera.it.

The Participants will receive the instruction on how to finalize the registration process by e-mail (segreteria@tulipanidisetanera.it) a few days after the pre-registration.

The works must be provided in two versions: **one without subtitles, and one with impressed subtitles**.

Audiovisual materials (documentary, subtitled version, and trailer) must be uploaded **exclusively via our dedicated WeTransfer service**, which will be provided in the Festival communications. **All other materials** (forms, posters, technical sheets, etc.) must be sent by **email as attachments**.

Once the email sent by the Festival office has been received the documentaries and all the required documentation must be sent as soon as possible.

Incomplete registrations imply the exclusion from the competition. It is important to respect the deadlines communicated by the Festival office for the submission of all the required documentation.

Contest deadline: the documentaries must be sent by **12nd February 2026**.

Only works that respect the technical parameters guidelines in these regulations, and accompanied by the required documentation, as per art. 3, on pain of exclusion from the contest, are accepted. The material sent will not be returned and will become part of the historical archive of the TSN Festival.

The Winners will be announced on the website www.tulipanidisetanera.it.

The Entries must be sent to the following email address segreteria@tulipanidisetanera.it in **mp4 video format**, using our dedicated WeTransfer service, respecting the following requirements:

- **FILE DETAILS**

File Format: Codec: H264

Resolution: 1920 × 1080

Frame rate: 25 fps (progressive, 25p)

Video bitrate: 10 Mbps

Audio: Stereo, 2 channels

Maximum audio peak: -3 dB

Titles and Subtitles must be inside the safe area; files must be named as follows:

Title_director.mp4.

Please, send the files to the email address provided by Tulipani di Seta Nera.

N.B. the works must be sent both with and without subtitles.

5. JURIES AND AWARDS

The works submitted will be judged by two Juries: the “Documentary” Jury, and “Cinema, Entertainment and Third Sector” Jury. The members of both the Juries will be nominated after the registration deadline in order to avoid conflicts of interest.

On the “Documentary” Jury there will be experts in the fields of cinema, writing, entertainment, communication, sociology, and music; this Jury will confer the Award Plaques for the following prizes:

- Best Editing
- Best Technical-Artistic Contribution (photography, sound, production)
- Best Direction

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They will also declare the winner of the

- Best Documentary Award

The Artistic Director acting in concert with the Jury, reserves the right to modify or eliminate the prizes, depending on the works submitted, and to establish additional prizes or special mentions.



On the "Cinema, Entertainment and Third Sector" Jury there will be members coming from the world of cinema and entertainment, with a strong interest in the social and third sector. They will have the task of assigning the following prize:

- "Sorriso Cinema Entertainment and Third Sector" Award

The Documentaries will be also eligible for the **Sorriso Rai Cinema Channel Award – Documentary**, the **web audience prize**, which will go to the work that will receive the highest score from the public of the Internet on the platform on which the said works will be published (**from the first days of April to 11st May 2025**).

During the **“Tulipani di Seta Nera” Gran Gala of Social Cinema, which this year will take place on 11st May 2025**, the **“Tulipani”** (‘tulips’) trophies will be awarded to the best short film, to the best documentary, to the best #SocialClip and to the best digital series. The same award will be granted to the best film and to the best fiction of the year. Besides, the special award **"SORRISO DIVERSO"** (‘different Smile’) will be assigned to five exponents from the world of work, entrepreneurship, journalism, sport, and territorial planning.

The television format of the “Tulipani” Gran Gala of Social Cinema will highlight the way in which cinema is able to represent stories of everyday life and, at the same time, how the “Sorriso Diverso” winners’ lives inspire great cinematographic masterpieces

If, among the works received, documentaries will be identified that reflect the mission of the cultural partners **ANCOS, ANMIL, ASviS, Cooperativa Sophia, UniVerde Foundation, Movimento per la giustizia art. 3, and UNICEF**, or of the sponsoring ministries: Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security, Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, Ministry for Disabilities and Family, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry, the latter will be able to establish further themed prizes, with plaques or in cash.

Additionally, the corresponding logo will be applied on the poster and possibly on the other registration materials of the works selected.

6. JUDGING CRITERIA

In addition to evaluating the technical quality of the Entries, the Judges will give a positive assessment to the documentaries that:

- Talk about the fragility of people victim of violence/discrimination/marginalization.
- Deal with the theme of diversity and fragility of people and places in a natural and original way.
- Foster awareness of diversity and fragility and above all value them, focusing on overcoming prejudices.
- Foster awareness on themes such as ecology, sustainability, and climate changes.

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- Talk about the relationship between humanity and nature, with particular attention to the concept of sustainable development.
- Underline clichés and stereotypes in the collective imaginary.
- Enhance diversity as a resource.
- Maintain the right to be different, expressing it also with creativity and irony.
- Identify a pathway for integration and inclusion of the outcasts.
- Express the variety of the points of view, proposing solutions for coexistence.
- highlight the current educational deficiency of fathers and mothers who neglect their children, influenced by unfiltered content on cell phones and digital platforms. This negligence results in adolescents becoming either prey or predators. The goal is to form a conscience and to distinguish good from evil, virtues from vices, altruism from selfishness, heroism from malice.
- Talk about the value of legality, intended as a set of rules aimed at building the common good, through an educational path for young people and for people who have committed a crime.
- Debate delicate and actual topics such as safety at work, irregular work, organized crime, illegal recruitment, and jobsite safety, bringing to the audience attention, through cinema, new ideas of prevention.
- Deal with the theme of immigration, telling with sensitivity and authenticity the stories of those who cross geographical and cultural borders, enhancing the right to mobility, hospitality, and dignity.

Contestants are required to specify in the Synopsis (filling on the corresponding field inside the Festival Participation Form) what kind of diversity and/or Categories’ topic their work is about. The absence of the Synopsis and the required documentation will be reason for exclusion from the Contest.

7. SPECIAL CATEGORIES

“Tulipani di Seta Nera” International Social Festival of Cinematic Arts also opens up to specific areas of interest through the Special Categories:

- *World-class Tulipani – Budding Talents*

This Special Category collects and awards a prize to those works produced in the context of schools of all levels. The projects can be the result of the collaboration of students, teachers, directors and both professional and amateur technicians. These projects have to be aimed at creating a documentary focused on social themes.

The TSN Festival aims to bring the attention of the audience to the value of the scholastic contribution not only in teaching notions, but also in raising students’ awareness to social debate, to the culture of legality and inclusion.

8. MAIN THEMES

"Tulipani di Seta Nera" International Social Festival of Cinematic Arts promotes the realization of documentaries capable to tell stories representative of the social mission of its cultural partners:

- The life of the deaf people and the dynamics of integration between them and the territorial services quality.
- The 17 Goals approved by the United Nations Member States according to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- The life of persons with disabilities caused by injuries on the job site, and the quality of the services in favor of them and of their family.
- The protection of territories, culture and ecology, and the development of the green economy.
- Global hunger and economic inequality as a limit in the access to the fundamental goods for people.
- Civic education in favor of a culture which values the wellness, the safety, and the prevention for the worker.
- The enhancement of Italian places and landscapes, a destination for international tourism, also telling stories of travel.
- The life of migrant people and their commitment to integrate into the host territories, respecting local customs and contributing to social life, with attention to the protection of rights, dignity, and the enhancement of plural identities.
- The promotion of a culture of legality, social justice, and peace among peoples, through educational, training, and cultural paths aimed at young people and communities.
- The enhancement of volunteering, intergenerational solidarity, and social cohesion, with particular attention to the well-being of fragile people and the protection of rights.

Regarding the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the participants will be able to choose the Main Theme of their work from a menu, during the pre-registration. Then, up to a maximum of two Objectives may be indicated in combination, in order to indicate a specific relevance between these and their contents. We list the combinations below:

MAIN THEMES	17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Immigration	10. Reducing Inequality; 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth; 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
Bullying	4. Quality Education; 10. Reducing Inequality
Eating Disorder	3. Good Health and Well-being
Homophobia	10. Reducing Inequality
Disability	3. Good Health and Well-being; 10. Reducing Inequality

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Gender Stereotype	4. Quality Education 5. Gender Equality; 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth; 10. Reducing Inequality
Environment	6. Clean Water and Sanitation; 7. Affordable and Clean Energy; 12. Responsible Consumption and Production; 13. Climate Action 14. Life Below Water; 15. Life on Land
Society and Technology	7. Affordable and Clean Energy; 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities; 12. Responsible Consumption and Production
Racism	4. Quality Education; 10. Reducing Inequality; 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
Social Inequality	1. No Poverty; 2. Zero Hunger; 4. Quality Education; 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
Historical memory	4. Quality Education; 10. Reducing Inequality; 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
Culture of legality	8. Decent Work and Economic Growth; 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities; 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; 17. Partnership for the Goals
Undeclared work (organized crime, illegal recruitment, etc...)	8. Decent Work and Economic Growth; 10. Reducing Inequality; 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

The “main theme” selection is not mandatory, but it will be useful to identify a pertinence between the documentaries and the missions of our cultural partners and patronizing bodies. The Artistic Director reserves the right to create additional or different combinations after viewing the documentary.

The participant will be able to declare more themes for the documentary, writing them in the "Notes" field of the Entry Form.

Further information about the 17 Goals and target, are available at this link: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

9. PRIVACY POLICY

By registering their work to the competition, Contestants will allow to process their personal data,

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pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 196 / 2003 and as to per Art. 13 of the European Regulation 2016/679 - GDPR.

The participants authorize the Cultural Association "Università Cerca Lavoro" (UCL), founder of the Tulipani di Seta Nera Festival, or the Company chosen by said Association, to publish the images, photos and videos released during the Festival on its website, on catalogues, and/or other supports, and during public and private events, without compromising personal dignity and decorum. The participants also confirm that this Authorization does not infringe any contractual term and/or right of other representative Agencies, relieving the “Università Cerca Lavoro” Association, or the Company chosen by said Association, from any claim by third parties. The Contestants authorize the use of the image/s and music, which is to be considered as free of charge.

The participants, pursuant to Legislative Decree 196/2003 and Article 13 of the 2016/679 European Regulation - GDPR., declares to be fully informed about the purposes and methods of processing personal data and authorize to collect this material in the FTSN Festival Archive.

All personal data and those protected by the privacy Law are and will be processed accordingly to principles of correctness, lawfulness, and transparency, protecting your rights, for the purposes and with the methods described in the informative report of TULIPANI DI SETA NERA, available in the dedicated area of the website <http://www.tulipanidisetanera.it>.

The participants declare to hold the right of use and the exploitation right of the works registered to the Festival in accordance to the Law No. 633/1941.

The Promoters reserve the right to use all the material received and the works submitted to the Judges, for the purpose to promote the social message related to the festival. Consequently, they may be screened during promotional events or public events set by the UCL Association, or the Company chosen by said Association.

10. FESTIVAL ARCHIVE

The works sent for the pre-selection will not be returned, but will become part of the Archive of the TSN Festival. The U.C.L. Association, founder of the Festival, or the Company chosen by said Association, reserves the right to use this material only for the non-profit purpose to promote the message related to the Festival. By submitting an Entry, the author and/or the right holders of the work authorize its use for the screenings during the Festival and/or film exhibitions, for the sole purpose of promoting the event. They also authorize the use of part of the work submitted (up to 20%) for the promotion of the Festival also on television networks.

11. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Entering the Festival implies full acceptance of the above Regulations.

The “Tulipani di Seta Nera” International Social Festival of Cinematic Arts aims to make the works submitted (their directors and casts) more visible to journalism, television and the world of Cinema. For this reason, the Promoters reserve the right to exclude from the competition those works which participate to other Documentary Contests with similar purposes, in conjunction the period of the Festival. The winners commit to including in the opening credits of their works the Festival name

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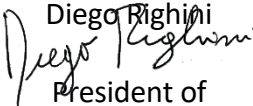
"Tulipani di Seta Nera International Social Festival of Cinematic Arts" and logo.

All works of a racist, pornographic or defamatory nature and/or which violate the Law will be automatically rejected. Prizes will be awarded only in the presence of the winning director or his official representative. The secretariat will not send any prizes. The decision of the Judges is unquestionable.

12. CONTROVERSIES

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Entering into the Contest constitutes an acceptance of these Regulations. The Promoters reserve the right of final decisions on everything not specified in these Rules. The Court of Rome shall be the Court competent for the resolution of any controversies.

Diego Righini

President of
Tulipani di Seta Nera Festival

Ilaria Battistelli

President of
UCL Association

Christian Carmosino Mereu

Artistic Director
Documentary

