

Kitale Film Week opens call for submissions

The Kitale Film Week has officially opened its call for submissions of films for its maiden event scheduled for next year.



Source: www.unsplash.com

The Kitale Film Week is a week-long film festival which is attempting to position film as a strategic factor for sustainable development in Trans Nzoia.

The festival organisers include young men and women born and bred in Kitale, some of whom have worked at the top of the film industry in Kenya and abroad.

The main events in the festival include film screenings which have been integrated with conversations on key community issues and are moderated by local filmmakers and students from Kitale; school film events geared towards developing filmmakers and film critics from primary and secondary school level; filmmaking workshops with top industry professionals seeking to develop socially engaged filmmakers locally; and an ambitious short film fund which the festival hopes can help two projects by upcoming local talent to get produced in Trans Nzoia.



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20 Oct 2022



It also involves a competition for top awards which is only open to Kenyan and Ugandan filmmakers, to enhance artistic collaboration between western Kenya and Kampala. Short films from Trans Nzoia and the North Rift are curated in collaboration with the Eldoret Film Festival.

Future plans include an extension of the festival to South Sudan filmmakers, further integration of community development issues in the film spaces, and a push to get Kitale to become a Unesco creative city for film.

The film week, a seven-day festival that will take place in Kitale, Trans Nzoia, seeks to curate strands of cinema for the cosmopolitan audiences of Trans Nzoia, giving prominence to the voices of the North Rift and Western Kenya.

It also features a competition which will be open only to Kenyan and Ugandan films, as the organising team seeks to build industry relations between the two countries. Kitale is close to the border of Kenya and Uganda, making it easy for artistic exchange and collaboration. The competition is led by Kenyan film producer Wangui Ngunjiri, with support across the border coming from Ugandan film executive Joel Tugainyo. A festival jury is expected to be announced in late October.

“It is a pleasure for us to be able to open this window. The growth of our film industry and our towns will not happen without the effective participation of filmmakers. Our hope is to get as many Kenyan and Ugandan films submitted,” Ngunjiri said.

Submissions are to be received on the online portal Film Freeway under the event title “Kitale Film Week”.

The festival kicks off its pre-festival programme this September with outdoor screenings of Biko Nyongesa’s comedy feature, *Get Some Money* (2017), seeking to introduce the event to the rural communities of the county. Nyongesa is himself a Trans-Nzoia native who has directed other films such as *Napunyi* (2020), among others. Deadlines for festival submissions are set for the end of November while calls for applications for workshop participants will be announced in due course.



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Kitale Film Week is born out of the belief in the power of cinema and heritage, and on the backdrop of successful film events in Kitale and elsewhere in Kenya by the organising team, which has previously planned and managed the Festivals of Dots (2016, Nairobi) and The Hip Hop Film Festival (2018, Nairobi). Bwire also launched the award-winning short film, *Raised* in Kitale, in March 2022 which was well attended by an enthusiastic crowd.

The Kitale Film Week will take place from 19-23 February 2023. The submission deadline is 30 November. Filmmakers can submit their films via Filmfreeway [here](#).

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