

Asidisi Vidumaga School Creative Competition
Guidelines for the Scriptwriting Competition and Short Film
Competition

Guidelines for Scriptwriting

1. Title: The script shall have a clear and meaningful title that appropriately reflects the theme of the story.

2. Theme and Message:

- The script shall closely align with the competition theme and communicate a clear and meaningful message.
- The intended message should emerge naturally through the story itself, rather than through exaggeration or overt moralising or didactic narration.

3. Originality:

- The story must be the original work of the participant.
- It shall not infringe the copyright of, or constitute plagiarism of, any other work.
- Creative and innovative ideas are strongly encouraged.

4. Story Structure:

A complete story should generally include the following elements:

- Introduction (setting and characters)
- Inciting incident
- Rising action/conflict
- Climax
- Resolution or conclusion

Even within a short film of **10–15 minutes**, the story should have a clear beginning, middle and ending.

5. Characters:

- Characters shall be relevant to the story.
- Their actions and dialogue shall be consistent with their personalities.
- The inclusion of unnecessary characters should be avoided.

6. Dialogue:

- Dialogue shall be natural and realistic.
- It shall be concise and purposeful.
- It shall be appropriate for school students.
- Long speeches and unnecessary exposition should be avoided.

7. Visual Storytelling:

- As cinema is a visual medium, the screenplay should **show rather than tell**.
- Actions and visual cues should be incorporated wherever appropriate.
- Dialogue should be used only where necessary.
- Settings, facial expressions and visual elements should be used effectively to convey the story.

8. Scene Breakdown:

Each scene shall clearly specify:

- Scene number
- Location
- Time (Day/Night)
- Brief description of the action
- Dialogue
- Important sound effects or visual actions (where applicable)

Example:**Scene 3 – School Library – Day**

Amal gently places an old notebook on the table. Nadeesha notices a photograph inside it.

Nadeesha: "Where did you find this?"

Amal smiles without replying.

9. Feasibility:

The screenplay shall be practical for production by school students. Participants should avoid writing scripts requiring:

- Expensive visual effects
- Numerous filming locations
- Large casts
- Dangerous stunts
- Complex equipment

10. Appropriate Language and Content:

- Language shall be appropriate to the story and its events.
- Scripts shall not contain hate speech, discriminatory content, obscene language or inappropriate material.
- They shall not promote violence, drug use or other harmful behaviour.
- Scripts shall be culturally sensitive and inclusive.

11. Emotional Impact:

The story should emotionally engage the audience through:

- Relatable and realistic characters
- Meaningful conflict

- Genuine emotions
- A satisfying conclusion

12. Technical Script Format:

The screenplay shall include:

- Title page
- Character list
- Scene headings
- Action descriptions
- Dialogue
- Camera directions only where absolutely necessary (unnecessary technical instructions should be avoided)

13. Length: A screenplay of approximately **10–15 pages** is generally appropriate for a **10–15-minute** short film. *(This is a guideline rather than a strict page limit.)*

14. Educational and Social Value:

The screenplay should promote:

- Positive values
- Critical thinking and creativity
- A sense of social responsibility
- Unity, diversity, environmental awareness, innovation, or other constructive themes

Guidelines for the Short Film Competition

The Scriptwriting Guidelines above shall apply equally to the Short Film Competition. In addition, the following guidelines shall also apply.

1. General Eligibility:

- The short film must be produced specifically for this competition.
- Each school may submit a maximum of **two (02)** short films.
- The film shall be produced entirely by students of the participating school. Teachers may provide guidance and supervision but shall not undertake creative or technical production roles.
- The film shall be an original work and must not have been submitted to any previous competition.
- All persons involved in the production shall be school students.

2. Duration: The duration of the short film shall be **10–15 minutes**.

3. Language:

- Films may be produced in Sinhala, Tamil or English.
- Films produced in Sinhala or Tamil shall include **English subtitles**.

4. Format:

- Submission in **MP4 or MOV format** is strongly recommended.
- Video quality shall be clear.
- A **16:9 landscape aspect ratio** is preferred.
- Audio quality shall be clear and intelligible.

5. Opening and Closing Credits:

Opening Credits

- Film title
- Name of the school

Closing Credits

- Cast
- Production crew
- Acknowledgements (where applicable)

6. Content Guidelines:

The film:

- Shall promote positive social values.
- Shall respect cultural and religious diversity.
- Shall avoid discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability or any other characteristic.
- Shall not contain hate speech or defamatory, abusive or offensive language.
- Shall avoid explicit violence, nudity, sexual content or graphic scenes.
- Shall not promote alcohol, tobacco, narcotic drugs or other harmful substances.
- Shall not promote political parties or election campaigns.
- Shall avoid commercial advertising or unnecessary product placement.

7. Production Guidelines:

The film must be entirely the original work of the participants.

Where any of the following are used, participants shall own the relevant rights or obtain the necessary permissions:

- Music

- Photographs / images
- Video footage
- Graphics
- Animations
- Sound effects

The unauthorised use of copyrighted material may result in disqualification.

8. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools may be used only as supporting tools during the **pre-production** or **post-production** stages, for example:

- Subtitle generation
- Noise reduction
- Colour correction

AI shall not replace the creative work of the participants.

9. Safety:

Participants shall not:

- Perform dangerous stunts
- Handle firearms or other weapons
- Endanger themselves or others
- Damage public or private property
- Disturb wildlife
- Violate any law or school regulation

Under no circumstances shall a film be produced at the expense of student safety.

10. Privacy:

Participants shall obtain all necessary permissions before filming:

- On private property
- Members of the public
- Schools
- Government institutions
- Protected or sensitive locations

The organisers shall bear no responsibility for obtaining such permissions.

11. Submission Requirements:

Each submission shall include:

- A completed application form
- The screenplay (script)
- A synopsis
- A list of the cast and production crew
- A copyright declaration (*where applicable*)
- Consent forms (*where applicable*)