

# How To Host A Short Film Festival





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# What is a Short Film Festival?

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Film is everywhere. In all the world's major cultures people watch films. One of the reasons for the popularity of this medium is that it elicits reactions—powerfully evoking thoughts, feelings and longings. It engages both our minds and our hearts.

A Short Film Festival is an outreach that leverages the power of film to provide a fun, relational and non-confrontational way to enter into meaningful conversations with people.

Many of these short films are intended to help spark spiritual conversations, so listen carefully for those who are open to immediate or future discussions.

Whether your event is in-person or virtual, our hope is that you will have some great dialogue while building relationships.



# Preparation

## Step 1

### Choose A Time And Place

- Consider choosing a place that feels “neutral” like a coffee shop or classroom rather than a church. The more convenient the location, the better.
- The venue should be able to accommodate the necessary AV equipment, and be generally suitable for viewing films (able to get dark enough, etc.).
- The venue should also be conducive to small-group discussion (small tables rather than bench seating and with good acoustics).

### Virtual Events

Some of your success is dependent not upon location, but the leader’s familiarity of the conference platform (i.e. Zoom, Google Meetup, etc.) and its features. Make sure you include in your invitation, instructions for accessing the meeting.

For larger groups you may want to recruit help for the following roles: Tech Manager, Emcee, Breakout Facilitator, Chat Manager and more.

Don’t try to use every film suggested or the event could last up to three hours with discussions. Seven films is a good number.

## Step 2

### Gather The Necessary Equipment

- A projector and a large screen, if necessary
- A computer, the short film files, and the necessary cords/adapters
- Enough seating
- Snacks and drinks, if serving
- Something to block out light, if necessary
- Visually appealing content on each table that lists the short films

### Virtual Events

- Choose a background for yourself that is not distracting. Make sure you are in a quiet place, free from interruptions.
- If you are hosting, we recommend getting help for the tech and discussion leader roles. Make sure you have the ability to share a film from your screen and the ability to mute people during the films.
- Test your platform to ensure it is working. Turn off wifi for nearby devices to maximize your connection speed. An ethernet cable is best to avoid any lag.
- Ensure the films are already downloaded. Check the quality of the films and determine if high quality or lower quality loads/plays better.

# Preparation (cont.)

## Step 3

### Promote Your Event

- Let people know about the event! Do this in a way that is appropriate to your context, whether by having people post on social media or by personal invitation.
- It's recommended you use a registration tool such as Google registration, to collect attendee's contact information before the event, for easy follow up.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

Any content that is included in this digital resource is the intellectual property of Jesus Film Project®.

You may use the images included only for the purpose of promoting your film-showing event.

Altering or manipulating the Images beyond standard cropping and resizing requires permission from Jesus Film Project.

## Step 4

### Prepare Your Volunteers

- Prepare volunteers to facilitate discussion groups. Ideally, it is best to have a ministry leader facilitating each discussion group. They should be familiar with the films, and be briefed on what they should and should NOT say in their discussion groups.
- Your goal in asking these questions is to create a conversation that pinpoints deeper needs and helps identify those who are interested in spiritual matters. It is usually not appropriate to share the full gospel at the film festival; rather, it is a time to build a bridge to spiritual topics that you can explore with them at a later time.
- Keep track of which films they liked most (maybe with a quick vote) and which questions generated the best conversations.
- Note if someone says something spiritual, or something you'd like follow up with later.

### Virtual Events

- Determine how you will provide response/follow up cards virtually.
- Most attendees will not bother giving contact information once they sign off. Try to get it before the end of the meeting, perhaps even at the start.
- Never leave the ball in their court to respond or you may never get a chance for follow-up.





# Program Flow



**WELCOME EVERYONE  
AND INTRODUCE  
THE EVENT.**  
( 5 Minutes )

**INTRODUCE THE  
SHORT FILM**  
( 1-3 Minutes )

**WATCH THE  
SHORT FILM**  
( 3-5 Minutes )



**SHARE DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS  
AND DISCUSS IN  
SMALL GROUPS**  
See page 8 for questions  
( 10 Minutes )

**REPEAT STEPS  
2 THRU 4  
FOR ALL THE  
SHORT FILMS**



**HOST INVITES EVERYONE**  
To fill out comment cards or  
other forms of feedback  
( 5 minutes )



**HOST THANKS EVERYONE**  
For coming and closes the event  
( 3 minutes )



# At The Event

Plan 20–30 minutes for socializing and snacks. Give a two-minute warning before you start.

## ▶ I. Introduce yourself/group.

In this outreach, explain that you are partnering with a film company that makes short films to inspire cross-cultural and spiritual conversations. Mention that we all have shared common themes in our lives. And that we'd like feedback on whether we've captured those themes well in these films.

## ▶ II. Give a brief overview of your time.

Explain that you are going to show six to eight short films and discuss them in small groups in between each showing.

## ▶ III. Show the first film.

After the film ends, raise the lights and transition to your discussion time. The discussion leaders will present the questions to their groups.

Give participants time to discuss in their groups.

The host will keep track of time and close the discussions when appropriate by asking everyone if anything stood out. Or they can just move on to the next film.

## ▶ IV. Transition to the next film

by simply introducing it with the film's name and running time. Go through the steps above just as you did for the first film.

## ▶ V. Close out the festival

and get contact information. Thank the participants for coming. Now, be social! Make sure there are enough snacks and beverages for this time. This is the best time to get contact information from those with whom you wish to follow up. Set up a time to get together again. Or, if you have comment cards, you can remind them to fill them out and then socialize for a while.



# Sample Questions for a Short Film Festival

All of the films listed below can be found at [Jesusfilm.org](https://jesusfilm.org), and on the Jesus Film Project® app. All films on both platforms include questions that can be used as part of a film festival outreach.

## 01

### Delight

A pastry chef labors to put the finishing touches on his elegant cake. **Duration: 1:23**

- How did the film make you feel? Why?
- Which character do you most relate to? Why?
- Have you ever felt loved like that? By whom?

## 02

### Venia

A man uses signs to show his father all the ways he has hurt him. **Duration: 4:34**

- What did you think of the quote at the end?
- What does “Enlarge the Future” mean?
- Why do you think the son waited to write the last card?
- Is it common to ask for forgiveness, or to say I forgive you? Why or why not?

## 03

### Doll Face

A lifelike machine tries to attain an impossible beauty standard. **Duration: 4:13**

- What do you think this film is about?
- How do you relate to this film?
- Where do people look to find fulfillment?

## 04

### Jätku Leiba

Johanna, a single mom, is reminded of hope during a desperate situation. **Duration: 7:31**

- When do you think the story turned around?
- Do you agree with the note “Nothing is broken forever”? Why or why not?
- How do people in your culture/city deal with “brokenness”?



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## 05

### Ctrl Z

When a computer malfunctions, an office loner takes the chance to magically undo some regrets. **Duration: 6:04**

- What did you like about the film? Why?
- Can you relate to the moment the keyboard was being repaired? How?
- What motivates us to want to redo things in our lives?
- How do people in your culture handle regret (talking, escapism, religion, etc.)?

## 06

### La Liberté

A man in a small windowless cube finds freedom. **Duration: 5:04**

- Where did the man's freedom come from?
- How did the man respond at first to what he was discovering? Why do you think his response changed as the film went on?
- What are things that make people feel trapped?

## 07

### Flow

A man has two sources of water, his sink and his toilet. Which one will he choose to drink from? **Duration: 4:03**

- Why does the man use the toilet water rather than the sink water?
- Metaphorically, have you seen people drink "toilet water"? What do you think motivates them to do this?
- How do you get a friend to see they are drinking bad water (doing something that isn't good for them) when something better is available?

## 08

### Vinyl

A slightly obsessive vinyl record fanatic searches for his missing favorite. **Duration: 4:12**

- Why does losing something, or being lost, cause such a feeling of panic?
- What have you lost that would cause you to throw a party if you got it back?
- If you were lost, how would you feel if someone searched for you like this?
- How do you find comfort when you experience loss?



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09

## Breathe

A young woman frantically searches for life-giving medicine. **Duration: 1:51**

- What do you think happened at the end?
- What do you think are the desperate needs we are facing today?
- What about life is important to you?

10

## Be Me

A young woman struggling with life's challenges, finds a phone app that changes everything. **Duration: 3:26**

- Why do you think Jane uses the app?
- If you used this app what would be your go-to label?
- How would a loving father react to seeing his daughter make all these attempts to be accepted?

# Comment Cards

We're glad you came!

What stood out to you during the Film Festival? What did you like?

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If anything, what would you change about the Film Festival?

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I would like to talk more with someone about what was discussed in our discussion group...

Yes  Not interested  Maybe

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_



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