

DISTRIBUTION & PROMOTION



Now you have your final film, you want the world to see it. There are many different ways you can get your film in front of audiences, either digitally or in person, the advantage is this can be done on a zero to low budget, it just takes your time. It is important to be consistent, try many approaches and always be on the lookout for opportunities to share or screen your film.

Start by writing a **short synopsis** of your film. This will be useful for anywhere you digitally upload your film as well as for introducing it to different media or NGO partners and audiences. Identify the key messages and include **keywords** and searchable terms, but keep it broad enough so that it still entices audience members to watch your film. Be engaging and topical but don't tell the whole story. If you have a call to action, you may want to include it at the end of your synopsis.

If it is a longer piece, you may also want to create a **teaser** of your film to include in social media pr partners packs. Aim for between 30 - 60 seconds.

Uploading to a digital platform

Youtube is by far the most popular digital platform for self-publishing short films, but you can also use Vimeo. You can set your film to unlisted or private until you choose a **release date to publicly launch**. Choosing the best date and time to launch your film will help maximise its first views and reach. You may want to launch it alongside an event, on a specific international or cultural day, or even with a report by a partner NGO. Whatever date you decide you will need materials for its promotion and partners to help you amplify your film.

The promotion

If you are self-releasing your film on your own platform or under your organization, it helps to have the support and networks of partner organizations and media outlets.

Sharing with partners

Send your bio and teaser trailer to your network and connections with the date you have decided to launch on. It is also smart to send a social media pack (see more below). If a partner is interested you can further suggest co-creating a blog article/ media piece or even a press release with a ngo.

Social Media is a great tool to share your film with your network and to reach new audiences.

- Step 1: identify your target audiences that align with key themes of your film. Aim for around 3 or 4 that you can align your outreach strategy with.
- Step 2: write some sample Tweets for Twitter and a post that can be used for Facebook and Instagram.
- Step 3: Identify some Hashtags - an important way to link your film to wider social or environmental movements
- Step 4: make sure you include the link
- Step 5: Add some images or your short trailer
- Step 6: Post at the perfect time, remember to tag any relevant parts

When you are sending this pack to partners make sure to include all the relevant links, some suggested posts, images and promotional material.

See here for an example:

Some things to consider when writing communications

Just as in your story development you want to consider your audience when pitching or promoting your film. If it is through an email, a social media, or a blog post, your communications will often be the first interaction someone has with your film; you want it to be as engaging as possible. Remember your goal here is for your audience to click the link and view your film.

Consider:

- The technical language you use
- The level of knowledge your audience has
- What do you want your audience to feel?
- The mood/ tone of your posts i.e. positive or negative?

Film festivals

Film festivals can help you reach new audiences, test the film with an audience, and can even help you network and learn from other filmmakers. You may not want to publish the film until you have submitted your film to any local or international film festivals. Before releasing your film check any film festival guidelines that you are considering submitting too. Some film festivals will allow you to submit your film if it has already had a digital or in person release, but some will not.

Many film festivals are free to enter others have a cost for submission. A good directory to explore is: <https://filmfreeway.com/> and XXX.

In person screenings

A great way to test your film with audiences and to get more people to act is to put on an event to screen your film. Think about who you would like to show these films to, your family? Your fellow students? Your community? Your work? Remember it is often more effective to aim for a smaller but engaged group. Be realistic about the time you can invest in organising a screening, maybe find a friend or colleague to help you.



See more information at:

<https://ifnotusthenwho.me/guide-screening-films/>

- Prepare a short synopsis (100 - 200 words) for your film
- Write some short and engaging posts for different social media platforms (bonus/ stage two: and for different audiences)
- Identity 4 partners or movements that will help you distribute your film

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Photos: Joel Redman / If Not Us Then Who.