



FIIN

ATLANTIC INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

**VOLUNTEER
HANDBOOK
2018 EDITION**

Welcome to the 2018 FIN Atlantic International Film Festival. This handbook offers information meant to assist volunteers through their experience.

Each year more than 250 individuals share their time and talent with us – and this contribution has firmly established an incredibly vibrant festival. Here’s just a slice of the success we’ve built together:

- In 2017 30,000 saw nearly 200 films, at 127 total screenings;
- Films were made or set in over 30 countries, including: Sweden, France, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, Netherlands, Japan, Mongolia, Syria, Spain, India, Mongolia, South Africa, Brazil;
- Films were presented in over a dozen languages, including: Persian, French, German, Finnish, Spanish, Norwegian, Mandarin, Arabic, Swiss and American Sign Language;
- 42% of films presented were by female filmmakers (38% in 2016);

FIN provides an immersive escape and celebration for movie lovers, filmmakers and industry professionals. We are a champion of Atlantic and Canadian independent film, increase access to the best in international independent movie making, and proud that we’ve been named by *Movie Maker* magazine as one of “50 Film Festivals Worth the Entry Fee” 2017 was a record-breaking year for many of the films screened at FIN, going on to receive regional, national and international accolades and awards.

None of this would be possible without our volunteers – THANK YOU for being part of the team! As a charitable cultural organization, we simply couldn’t offer such a broad range of year-round film-based initiatives without the skills and commitment of volunteers like you.

This handbook will provide some essential information, that will be useful as a quick reference before and during the Festival. You will find information about the Festival, the volunteer program, as well as a guide for some commonly asked questions about volunteering with FIN. Not finding the answer to a question you have? Reach out directly by emailing volunteer@finfestival.ca

It is our mission to continue improving the volunteer program to give you the best experience possible, so please feel free to share your feedback with us, either through the volunteer survey circulated post festival or by reaching out directly to your volunteer team.

We look forward to working with you during another momentous year at FIN Atlantic International Film Festival – happy volunteering!

-FIN Atlantic International Film Festival Volunteer Team

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ABOUT FIN

FIN began as a tiny, grassroots operation in St. John's, Newfoundland in 1981, relocating to Halifax the following year. Nearly four decades later, FIN is firmly established as one of Canada's premier film festivals and is now a year-round celebration of the artistry, education and industry of independent film.

The scope of FIN's programs and activities are developed to be expansive in their audience reach; engage and inspire volunteer and community partners; foster interest in film as a creative medium for storytelling, creative expression and career possibilities; celebrate and recognize excellence in filmmaking, and nurture unparalleled opportunities for economic and cultural development in Nova Scotia.

FIN's year-round programs and activities include:

FIN Atlantic International Film Festival – Presentation platform for 200+ independent films from Atlantic Canada and around the world; FIN increases cultural access and is a champion of creativity and innovation.

FIN Partners (formerly Strategic Partners: International Co-Production Market) – Canada's top international co-production/co-financing market, focusing on film, television, and digital fiction. FIN Partners strengthens the film industry with a focus on developing Nova Scotian content with 150 top regional, national and international industry players.

FIN Kids (formerly ViewFinders: Atlantic Film Festival for Youth and other school-age targeted initiatives) – Strengthens and expands cultural education for young people across Nova Scotia. FIN actively promotes equity, cultural and social awareness through its touring SCO-compatible film program, hands-on media workshops with regional film professionals, and Youth Film Competition.

FIN Outdoor (formerly AFF's Outdoor Film Experience) – Free summertime outdoor screenings taking place at locations across HRM, enabling participants to see their city and familiar spaces through a different lens, consider the potential and possibilities of their community, and their ability to contribute to it.

FIN Makers (formerly Atlantic Filmmaker Focus, Atlantic Filmmaking Awards, Script Development Program, Script Pitch Program) – Nurturing Nova Scotia's film Industry through development and recognition initiatives.

FIN Campus (formerly North of 49) – Strengthens and expands awareness of regional filmmaking through *Campus Movie Night* and other post-secondary targeted initiatives.

WHY VOLUNTEER?

Volunteering is defined as an unpaid activity where someone gives their time to help a not-for-profit organization. Most non-profits and social organizations simply could not exist without the support of volunteers.

There are lots of reasons to volunteer:

- Volunteering is vital for strong and connected communities;
- Volunteering builds the capacity of organizations, and is essential to their relevance, vitality and sustainability;
- Dedicating your time as a volunteer is about building relationships, supporting the causes and communities they care about, and can help you make new friends and boost your social skills;
- Volunteering with FIN gives you free access to local, national and international filmmaking;
- Through volunteering you can build new skills, expand your professional networks and add new experience to your résumé.

VOLUNTEERING WITH FIN

As a volunteer, you'll be part of a team of nearly 50 staff and over 200 volunteers that bring the best in local, regional, national and international films to Halifax. Nearly 30,000 film fans, filmmakers, producers, students and more join FIN each year for eight unforgettable days and nights of film. Films that that might make you laugh or cry; films that share a new perspective or challenge yours; films that transport you to an unexpected place or time; films that showcase the creativity and imagination of some of the worlds best story tellers.

This year's tag line is "Binge on Us!", we want FIN Festival goers to indulge in everything FIN has to offer. Faces will become familiar to you as film fans make the Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane home from September 13-20, 2018. One of your volunteer perks is movie access; when you're not volunteering, we hope to see you over and over again at the movies!

YOUR VOLUNTEER PROFILE

[Better Impact](#) is FIN's volunteer database, your place to create a profile and login to find out about volunteer opportunities, sign up for shifts and receive updates. If you have any questions or need help filling out the application, please contact the volunteer coordinator at volunteer@finfestival.ca or 902-334-1429.

Your volunteer profile will provide us with all necessary information we will need – who you are, what experience or interests you might have, your availability, and what sort of volunteer roles you might be interested in with FIN.

Whether it's a behind the scenes role or public facing; volunteer roles that draw from existing skills and interests or provide you with the opportunity to develop new ones; the more you tell us about what you're looking for, the better job we can do at matching you to a volunteer role that suits you and provides a positive volunteer experience.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A step-by-step outline of how to volunteer with FIN, from pre-Festival registration to post-Fest volunteer wrap party.

Pre-Festival:

- Read up on the volunteer program, FAQs and volunteer opportunities at www.finfestival.ca/volunteer;
- Attend an information session (schedule is posted on the FIN website);
- Register or update your volunteer profile on [Better Impact](#);
- Check your email for your 'Welcome Message' which confirms your registration has been successful;
- Sign up for and attend an information session – meet fellow volunteers, the volunteer management team and Festival staff;
- Look for updates on Better Impact and your email about volunteer opportunities available based on your interests;
- Sign up for and confirm volunteer shifts;
- Check that you have enough shifts to earn your desired volunteer benefits;
- Become familiar with the Festival program by perusing the FIN Program Guide or going to www.finfestival.ca;

- Let your friends know about the Festival (and encourage them to volunteer with you)!

Before your first volunteer shift:

- Pick up your volunteer package (t-shirt, volunteer badge, vouchers, schedule) from Volunteer HQ;
- Attend volunteer training as required (some positions only require training at the beginning of your first shift, while others require training prior to your first shift).

First day of volunteering & beyond:

- Check your email for daily updates, urgent volunteer requests and day-of film suggestions;
- Your volunteer badge gives you free transit access – grab a bus or hop on the ferry;
- Grab a snack from Volunteer HQ prior to your shift;
- Arrive on time for your shift and check with your staff supervisor. This is REALLY important;
- Remember to wear your volunteer t-shirt and volunteer badge;
- Wear comfortable shoes and if your volunteer shift takes you outdoors, bring suitable clothing;
- Be respectful of your fellow volunteers, staff and patrons;
- Be on task and perform your role to the best of your abilities. Please don't hesitate to ask staff or the volunteer team questions if you need more guidance;
- Check in with your on-site staff supervisor when your shift ends. Do not leave before your shift ends without permission from staff supervisor. This is REALLY important;
- Use your volunteer benefits and go to movies (when you're not volunteering, of course);
- Have fun!

Post Festival

- Complete your volunteer survey. Let us know what we did well, and what we can do better;
- Celebrate Festival success with staff and volunteers at the volunteer wrap party!

For any questions / comments / concerns about the volunteer program, please do not hesitate to contact the Volunteer Coordinator volunteer@finfestival.ca

VOLUNTEER BENEFITS

The minimum commitment required to volunteer with the Film Festival is two shifts (shifts vary in duration, depending on role and time of day). Volunteers that commit more than five shifts or take on 'leading roles' are eligible for additional benefits. All film-going benefits can be picked up from Volunteer HQ.

Supporting Role (2-4 Shifts): 2 All-Access Vouchers & 5 Rush Vouchers
Starring Role (5+ Shifts): 4 All-Access Vouchers & Rush Vouchers for all screenings
Leading Role (Leaders): Volunteer Pass for any screening (excluding Opening Night, Closing Night, & 6:30PM galas) & 6 All-Access Vouchers

All-Access Vouchers: Access to any screening (including galas). Excludes opening night. Will be stamped "Valid for All Screenings."

Rush Vouchers: Rush seating access to any screening (including galas). Excludes opening night. May only be exchanged in the rush seating line-up. Will be stamped "Rush for All Screenings."

A generous number of seats are held for pass holders for each screening, and priority is given to them until that allotment has been reached—or 20 minutes prior to screening time, at which time Rush Tickets become available

Additional Benefits

All volunteers who commit to a minimum of two shifts are entitled to:

FIN AIFF Volunteer T-Shirt:

All volunteers are eligible to receive a volunteer t-shirt, which is yours to keep. The volunteer t-shirt identifies you as volunteer to our patrons and staff and are only to be worn on shift.

Volunteer Badge:

Your badge that identifies you as volunteer, provides volunteers with free Metro Transit during FIN AIFF (September 13-20, 2018) and is used at box office and in theatre to attend movies.

Snacks:

Light snacks and beverages are available during your volunteer shift; they can be picked up at Volunteer HQ or, if space permits, at your Festival venue. Volunteers should plan to accommodate their own dietary needs as what we are able to provide may not meet the needs of everyone.

Additional Benefits:

Two tickets to FIN Atlantic International Film Festival closing night party
An Invitation to Post-Fest Volunteer Celebration activities

VOLUNTEER HQ

Volunteer HQ is conveniently located in the Lord Nelson Hotel (1515 South Park Street), home to our film industry co-production conference, FIN Partners and just steps away from Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane, where all screenings take place. Volunteer HQ room location will be confirmed just before the Festival and communicated via email.

Below is a list of the services volunteers can expect to find at Volunteer HQ (and a list of a few requests that are best made elsewhere):

Volunteer HQ can:

- Provide you with your volunteer t-shirt;
- Print your schedule;
- Issue you your volunteer badge and screening vouchers;
- Issue you a FIN AIFF program guide;
- Make changes to your profile or schedule;
- Provide snacks/drinks;
- Help you with your questions/concerns;
- Assist you in finding the correct venue for your volunteer shift.

Volunteer HQ cannot:

- Redeem screening vouchers for movie tickets (this is best done at the Box Office – a short walk from Volunteer HQ)
- Sell tickets (also best done at Box Office)

Volunteer HQ hours:

Wednesday, September 12	3:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Thursday, September 13	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Friday, September 14 – Saturday, September 15	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Sunday, September 16	11:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Monday, September 17 – Wednesday, September 19	12:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Thursday, September 20	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

FIN CONTACT INFORMATION

Kat Felix
Volunteer Manager
902-334-1429
volunteermgr@finfestival.ca

Cydney Proctor
Volunteer Coordinator
902-334-1429
volunteer@finfestival.ca

FIN KEY VENUES, PARKING AND TRANSIT

Key Festival Venues

It is common for patrons to think that FIN AIFF only takes place at one cinema and that we only screen films, in fact, we operate at a number of different venues throughout the eight days of the Festival, including a number of industry events. Aside from our two main venues (Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane and Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites) we also operate out of FIN offices and several delegates-only networking events, conference activities and exciting events at the following venues:

FIN Offices
1892 Hollis Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane
5657 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Rebecca Cohn Auditorium,
Dalhousie Arts Centre
6101 University Avenue
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites
1515 South Park Street

FIN AIFF Box Office
Park Lane Mall
5657 Spring Garden Road

All Festival venues will be published in the FIN AIFF program guide and on finfestival.ca, available in early September. Every volunteer posting includes the venue address.

Volunteer Parking/Transportation

As a non-profit, we simply don't have the resources to pay for parking or taxis for staff or volunteers. Most FIN activities take place within the Halifax core, making them accessible through several low-cost options, including:

Bus and Ferry - Metro Transit provides free transit access during FIN Atlantic International Film Festival (September 13- 20, 2018) when you present your volunteer badge. There are numerous bus routes that stop on the corner of Spring Garden and South Park Streets (1, 10, 9, 17, 18, 21, 23, 80, 81, etc). [Google Maps](#) provides bus route directions from your home to FIN Festival venues.

Parking Metres/Parking Lots - there are numerous parking metres and paid lots within a short walking distance of Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane/Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites. Both offer free or reduced rates on weekends or on weeknights after 6PM (subject to availability).

Cycling - there are numerous bike racks located in the Spring Garden area

FIN VOLUNTEER CATEGORIES / ROLES

FIN offers a range of volunteer opportunities in support of nearly all departments. Whether you're looking for a behind the scenes role or enjoy mingling with filmgoers; a role that utilizes your existing skills, or helps you develop new ones, there is a volunteer role that fits what you're looking for!

Some roles require training prior to the start of the Festival, including Social Media Crew, Photography Crew, and Front of House Crew/Managers. Many roles only require on site training - provided by your staff supervisor - at the start of your first shift. Details such as specific skills, equipment, and requirements, along with training information can be found as part of each role description, available in Better Impact.

Below is a list of volunteer opportunities (based on 2017 data), further details can be found on Better Impact or by reaching out to the volunteer team for more information.

Box Office & Registration - Box Office Runner, Registration Assistant

Front of House (Theatres) - Front of House Crew, Front of House Manager

General - Office Support, Event Support Crew, Festival Preparation Support, Shorts Program Tech Review, Volunteer Program Assistant, FIN AIFF Media Launch Support

Marketing & Communications - Social Media Crew, Set Up Crew, Media Centre Assistant, Photography Team

Special Events - Front of House Crew, Production Assistant, Registration Assistant, Command Centre Assistant

Transportation

Airport Hospitality Crew, Dispatch Operator, Driver, Transport Liason, Transport Runner

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Information sessions are held on a regular basis, throughout August and early September, running about an hour and providing nearly everything you might want to know about volunteering with FIN. You'll also meet your FIN volunteer coordinators, FIN staff, as well as other volunteers.

Information sessions will take place at or near FIN Offices

Go to the [FIN website](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Linkedin](#) for details.

We always appreciate any social media support, please like, share, retweet and comment on any of our social media channels. Please tag us in any posts you write so we can see them and put them up on our channels – for example, you could get retweeted to over 11,000 people! Don't forget to use the hashtag #FINAIFF.

FIN VOLUNTEER POLICY

Staff and volunteers are FIN's greatest asset; it is important to remember that you are an ambassador of FIN when you volunteer. The following policies should be read, understood, and adhered to when volunteering.

When volunteering, you should expect to:

- Wear your FIN AIFF Volunteer T-shirt + badge when on duty; maintain a clean and casual appearance;

- Arrive on time, and remain for the duration of your shift, or until your staff supervisor relieves you;
- Treat all FIN stakeholders: patrons, visitors, Festival staff, delegates and fellow volunteers with civility;
- Attend volunteer training sessions – as required by your specific volunteer role – prior to the Festival or on-site during the Festival;
- Never use volunteering as an opportunity to pitch scripts or projects to industry delegates or seek autographs while volunteering.

In return, you can expect FIN staff to:

- Provide you with the necessary training to feel confident in your role;
- Provide a safe and supportive environment;
- Appreciate and celebrate the value of your contributions to the organization.

Should you feel uncomfortable at any time or have any questions or concerns, you are encouraged to contact your volunteer management team or a staff member at large.

SHIFT RULES

Do not show up to volunteer if you are not scheduled. We schedule for the volunteers we need - extra hands are not always helpful.

Unless indicated, volunteers are asked to sign in at the Volunteer Headquarters at the Lord Nelson Hotel before each shift. This way the Volunteer Coordinator can answer any questions you may have and give you a snack and a bottle of water.

- Arrive when scheduled for your shift (no more than 30 minutes prior) and remain at your post for the duration of your shift, unless instructed by your supervisor.
- Dress appropriately – dress clean and presentable. Some shifts take place outdoors, so any type of weather is possible. Check the forecast and dress for rain, snow, wind and dropping temperatures over the course of the evening.
- Wear your Volunteer T-shirt and ID when on duty and take them off when off-duty. Volunteers should maintain a clean and casual appearance. In some cases, we have asked that you wear black pants or skirt. This will be indicated in the role description.

A Prepared Volunteer

1. Checks Better Impact regularly to stay updated on new shifts, events and program changes.
2. Makes sure your contact information is correct and up-to-date, including your phone number.
3. Provides us with at least 48 hours notice if you cannot make your shift.

HARASSMENT POLICIES

FIN is committed to promoting a healthy, safe, and respectful workplace that values diversity and where all persons are treated with respect and dignity. It is the right of all staff members and volunteers to work in an environment free from harassment, sexual harassment, violence, inappropriate behaviour and discrimination based on the protective characteristics set out in the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*.

There will be no discrimination or harassment against an individual or class of individuals on account of age; creed; sexual orientation; gender identity; physical or mental disability; ethnic, national or aboriginal origin; marital status; source of income; political or religious belief, affiliation or activity or lack of affiliation; that individual's association with another individual or class of individuals having characteristics referred to above; or any other prohibited grounds as outlined in the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*.

FIN Atlantic International Film Festival will neither tolerate nor condone behaviour that is likely to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of an individual, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Should you feel uncomfortable at any time or have any questions or concerns, you are encouraged to contact your volunteer management team or a staff member at large.

DISMISSAL POLICY

We appreciate the time that every volunteer dedicates to FIN. However, we have two criteria for dismissal that we take seriously: attendance and behaviour.

- If you will be late or unable to make a shift, contact the Volunteer Coordinator right away by phone.

- If more than one shift is missed without a minimum 24 hours notice, or just-cause, volunteer benefits will be revoked, their online account made inactive, and the volunteer kindly asked to leave their position with the Festival.
- The above also applies if two or more shifts are not completed as scheduled.
- Any volunteers in violation of our Volunteer Policy may face dismissal.

Q&As

Below is a list of frequently asked questions, covering a range of subjects. Don't find the answer you're looking for? Reach out to your volunteer team!

Q. I trained last year, do I need to attend training / crew meetings again?

A. Volunteers must attend training in order to feel comfortable in their role. Each year, there are changes to volunteer roles, so even for returning volunteer it's important to get updates on software, meet new staff and your fellow volunteers.

Q. Why does the Festival not provide parking?

A. There are upsides and downsides to hosting FIN AIFF in the core of the city. One of those downsides is that parking can be expensive and as a non-profit charity, we financially cannot provide this perk. Your badge does provide you with free Metro Transit, with numerous bus stops just metres from FIN's key Festival venues. Biking, walking and carpooling are also options.

Q. Why do we have to wear a volunteer t-shirt?

A. We ask volunteers to wear their t-shirts while on shift so you are easily identifiable to patrons and staff looking for assistance. The t-shirt says that you are knowledgeable, approachable and ready to help regardless of whether you know the answer or not. Alternatively, we ask that you DO NOT wear your t-shirt when you are not on shift. This is to avoid patrons asking you questions when you're trying to enjoy a film or event. At the very least, you can turn your shirt inside out.

Q. Why can't I just sneak into a movie while I'm on shift?

A. Although there may be opportunities for you to watch certain portions of films while you are on shift, this should not be an expectation you have. Often, even though it seems quiet and there may be little for you to accomplish, Volunteer Leaders and Festival staff will need you in place for the next wave of audiences and trying to locate you in a dark theatre is not an option. The best way to make sure you see a movie you've been waiting for is to get a ticket and go when you're off-shift.

Q. Are there requirements to volunteer?

A. Some volunteer positions have specific requirements, including:

- Transport Drivers: a current driver's license and current driver's abstract
- Social Media Crew: experience on social media platforms, smartphone with working camera and a data plan, for real-time posting
- Volunteer Photographer: must own/have access to a quality DSLR camera with a lens and a flash, and the knowledge and ability to operate their camera manually, with a minimum of 16 GB storage

Beyond that, we are always looking for people who are:

- 19 years of age or older;
- Customer service-oriented with a friendly and helpful demeanor;
- Conscientious and reliable.

Q. Is volunteer training required?

A. Training depends upon the volunteer role; training requirements are outlined in each of the role descriptions listed on Better Impact, with many of the volunteer roles requiring only brief training at the start of the volunteers first shift.

Front of House (Theatre) volunteers are required to attend a more comprehensive training session, taking place at Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane and offering insight into ticketing hardware/software, theatre procedures, and an opportunity to meet and mingle with fellow volunteers and staff prior to the busy-ness of the Festival.

Social Media volunteers are required to attend training sessions to overview the Festival's social media platforms, messaging, and meet other members of the crew/staff.