

2024 CALL FOR ENTRIES



BEST OF THE MIDWEST MEDIA FEST

Early Bird Deadline: January 5
Final Deadline: January 26, 2024.

Community Television and LPFM Radio Producers!
It's time to get your entries ready!

The Best of the Midwest Media Fest, sponsored by Wisconsin Community Media, is **THE** Fest to enter if you're working at the community level through PEG access media centers or LPFM stations.

All award-winning producers will be celebrated at our banquet and show **on Thursday evening, May 16, 2024 in Eau Claire at the Lismore Hotel**. The banquet is part of a two-day conference sponsored by WCM and the Midwest Region of the Alliance for Community Media. Join us for the whole conference!

Questions? Contact the WCM Executive Director, at exec@wisconsincommunitymedia.com.

More information about the Conference is posted at <https://wisconsincommunitymedia.com/annual-conference>

More information about the Fest is posted at <https://wisconsincommunitymedia.com/media-fest>

Purpose of the Fest

To recognize the outstanding video and radio programs that are produced by Midwestern professionals and amateurs who use PEG media centers or low-power FM stations to produce and/or distribute their programming. The Fest also seeks to encourage excellence in community programming by providing constructive feedback on each entry.

Judging

Four-person judging panels evaluate the entries. Professional entries are judged by two community media center staff and two media professionals, who work outside the access television field. Amateur entries are judged by two access television staff and two community access producers with several years of experience. LPFM radio entries are judged by two access television staff whose centers operate LPFM radio stations and two judges drawn from the professional radio field. Our judging panels typically review about 200 entries.

Eligibility

1. The producer must reside in Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Missouri, Nebraska or Kansas.
2. Programming must have had its world premiere in one of these states through a PEG (public, education, or government) media center or an LPFM radio station. Video programming may have debuted on a cable channel, a website, OTT site, podcast, or social media app in calendar year 2023.
3. An entry does not qualify if it is a re-edit of a program that had its world premiere in a previous year.
4. At least 60% of the running time must be locally produced so that judges may critique the camerawork, audio, and directing of a program.

Entry Levels (if you have doubts about what level to enter, contact the Fest)

Amateur: The program is mostly created by and mostly reflects the technical expertise of individuals who have never earned more than \$15,000 per year from video production. Amateurs may elect to be judged as professionals.

Professional: The program is mostly created by and mostly reflects the technical expertise of individuals who currently earn or have in the past earned more than \$15,000 per year in the video field.

Entry Fees/Deadlines

Early Bird Rate: Enter using Film Freeway by *Friday, January 5, 2024*: WCM Members - \$35; Non-Members - \$55

Regular Rate: Enter using Film Freeway by *Friday, January 26, 2023*. WCM Members - \$40; Non-Members - \$60
\$10 from each ACM-member entry goes to the ACM Midwest Region. Invoices will be accepted.

Banquet & Show

The Media Fest Banquet and Show will be held on Thursday evening May 16 in Eau Claire, Wisconsin at the Lismore Hotel. This event is part of the annual two-day WCM/ACM Midwest conference. The Exhibitors Reception begins at 5:00 pm and the Banquet and Show follows at 6:30 pm. Tickets to the Exhibits, Exhibitors Reception, Banquet and Show are \$50 and can be purchased online. During the show, Significant Community Program producers, Excellence Award winners, and Best in Show recipients are invited to say a few words about their programs after a clip is played. Producers receiving an Achievement Award are recognized with a still of their program during the Show. Merit Award winners are recognized with a PowerPoint during the Banquet.

How to Enter Online <https://filmfreeway.com/BestoftheMidwestMediaFest>

STEP ONE: ENTER YOUR SHOW ONLINE USING FILM FREEWAY

When you go to the Film Freeway site, you will sign up to use the site. Once you sign up you will be directed to the "Add Project" page. (A "project" is a show in Film Freeway.) Simply fill out this simple one-page form and save. You're now ready to submit your program to the Best of the Midwest Media Fest and other festivals!

If you have several shows, go to My Projects > Add New Project, and add as many shows as you like.

As soon as you create a project (show) in Film Freeway you will be directed to your Project Page where you can easily upload your project file – either video or audio (up to 10GB) -- or link your video via Vimeo or YouTube. To submit with Vimeo or YouTube, go to 'My Projects' > 'Project File', then enter your video URL and password. You can update this link at any time.

To view a Project Page on Film Freeway, go to My Projects in the main menu, then click View next to the appropriate project. You can easily edit your project information any time you like. Just go to 'My Projects' > 'Edit'. Don't forget to save any changes you make.

Supporting documents: Email supporting documents to exec@wisconsincommunitymedia.com with the subject heading "Fest Supporting Document." Include the producer name, program name, and entry category in your email along with a description of the document you have attached.

STEP TWO: PAY FOR ALL OF YOUR ENTRIES

You will pay through Film Freeway.

Invoicing. You may use a purchase order and pay through Film Freeway up to two weeks after the final deadline.

Scoring and Feedback from Judges

Criteria are weighted differently for professional and amateur entries, meeting coverage, animation and programs that were produced using virtual meeting tools. Radio shows are scored using criteria tailored to the medium. After four judges score the program, the highest and lowest scores are discarded and the two middle scores are averaged to create the final score. See "Judging Criteria" for more information about scoring. Producers will receive both numeric feedback and written comments about their entry from each judge. Media centers will receive a copy of the judge feedback sheets.

Recognition Levels

To explain the recognition levels, we borrow from the Olympics. The equivalent of a "gold medal" is an **Excellence Award**. This award is bestowed on entries reaching a specific score or better, normally the top 15% - 20% of entries. An **Achievement Award** is the equivalent of a "silver medal." Last year, 52 programs reached this level of recognition. **Merit Awards** honor the notable work of our "Bronze" scoring entries. Not all producers receive one of these awards, but typically three-quarters of our entries do. **Best in Show in a Subject Category:** The top-scoring amateur program and the top-scoring professional program in every Subject Category will also receive a Best in Show Award. To qualify, the show must have received a Merit, Achievement, or Excellence Award. See below for an explanation of Subject Categories.

Entry Categories

All categories are open to both LPFM and video programs. All programs must have premiered either on cable TV or an LPFM radio station or podcast **unless** the Entry Category has an asterisk (*). If it has an asterisk (*), it may have also premiered on a website, a social media platform, or an OTT site. If it has a (“V”), feel free to enter “virtual” versions of these programs.

1. **Short-Form Documentary/Feature.*** Non-fiction documentary or feature short. Programs in this category must be fifteen minutes or less.
2. **Public Service Announcement.*** Programs promoting a non-profit organization, government function, PEG access facility/channel, LPFM opportunity, community media, community event, or positive social behavior. Programs cannot exceed **5 minutes** in length.
3. **Local Events. V** Programs covering local events and activities happening in the community such as parades, civic events, church services, etc. Producers should enter “Performing Arts” if the subject is music or another type of performance; “Meeting Coverage” if it is a meeting. See #13 and #15.
4. **Series. * V** Your program has been produced and distributed on a weekly or monthly basis. Any format. Any distribution outlet. To enter, submit three shows. Note: On Film Freeway you will enter the three episodes separately and be charged 1/3rd the cost of entry for each episode.
5. **Talk Show. V** Programs with discussions and/or interviews between two or more people, designed to inform or educate.
6. **LIVE. * V** Programs that originally aired “live” with no post-production. Entrants must submit a continuous, non-edited excerpt as originally cablecast or broadcast. This category excludes meeting coverage and sporting events. See #15 for details on submitting meetings and #14 for submitting game coverage.
7. **Station ID or Promo, Community Media Promo, Program Promo, Paid Sponsorship Spot.*** An up to 1-minute promo that promotes a specific program, a PEG access center, an LPFM radio station, community media generally, or an underwriter/advertiser.
8. **Computer-generated/Animation.*** Programs, a segment of a program, or an “intro” or “outro” to a program in which original computer generated images and/or sound are presented with artistic intention. Submit ONLY the animation.
9. **Documentary/Feature.** Non-fiction documentary or feature program about a person, place, event, organization, or subject; these entries are more heavily edited.
10. **Entertainment.** Programs designed to amuse or entertain. (Enter “Performing Arts” if the program documents a performance for an audience. See #13.)
11. **How to/Instructional Programming.** Programs that instruct or demonstrate a craft, skill, or hobby.
12. **Magazine Format/News. V** Programs with segments that include in-depth features or coverage of different topics.
13. **Performing Arts.** Programs presenting/documenting a play, concert, dance, or other performance.
14. **Sports.** Programs covering sporting events, live or not.
15. **Meeting Coverage. V** Programs that are only comprised of meeting coverage footage. Entries in this category will not be judged on originality/creativity. (WCM encourages entries in this category!)
16. **Significant Community Program Award (honorific):** These programs *do not* go through the judging process but have the same entry fee. Significant Community Programs are programs recognized by the Conferences Committee upon the recommendation of a media center manager. This award generates broad recognition for important programs produced through community media centers or LPFM stations. Either amateur or professionally produced shows may be nominated for consideration by the Conferences Committee. Contact your community media center manager if you would like your center to nominate a program for this award. The program must meet the following standards:
 1. The program debuted in 2023.
 2. The program is submitted to Film Freeway and a letter emailed to exec@wisconsincommunitymedia.com from the media center manager stating why this program was nominated and what kind of community impact it had, such as increasing volunteerism, increasing understanding of an issue, elevating the profile of a local non-profit organization, or providing a much needed service to a segment of the community. A portion of the letter will be read during the Fest Show. **On the email subject line put “Significant Community Program Nominee Letter.”**
 3. The Significant Community Program is accompanied by an entry fee.

During the show, a representative of the center will introduce the producer and a clip of the program. The producer may choose to talk about the program. Each honoree receives a certificate. The media center may also choose to purchase a personalized plaque or statuette. Significant Community Programs may be entered separately for judging.

Subject Categories

Besides an **Entry Category**, you also enter your program in one **Subject Category** that best applies to your program. Each top-scoring Amateur and Professional entry in each Subject category is awarded a “Best in Show.” Only programs receiving a Merit, Achievement, or Excellence Award will be considered for the “Best in Show” award.

LPFM Program. All LPFM and podcast entries will enter this Subject Category.

Client: Government. Your program has been produced by and for a municipality, county or other gov’t subdivision.

Client: Schools. Your program has been produced by and for a school district or higher education facility.

Public Access Program. Your program has been produced by a member of the community and distributed or produced through a community media center.

Produced by Seniors. Your program has been produced by seniors 62 and older. **Amateurs only.**

Produced by Youth. Your program has been produced by youth, 18 years old or younger.

Produced by College Student. Your program has been produced by a college student.

Cultural/Ethnic. Your program has been produced to celebrate our differences and enhance our understanding of diverse cultural or ethnic groups within communities.

Small Station. The program has been produced with the assistance of a station with a budget of \$50,000 or less. (WCM can confirm. Enter if you think you may qualify. Amateurs are encouraged to enter in this category.)

Judging Criteria

The following table shows how programs are judged. Programs are given a score of 1 – 10 for each of these criteria. The chart shows how each criterion is weighted. Because we want the Fest to be an educational experience for those who enter, judges make a special effort to write constructive comments for each entry. More on criteria can be found online.

Criteria	Amateur Video&Virtual	Professional Video&Virtual	Meetings All	LPFM Amateur	LPFM Pro
1. Overall Quality	10%	5%	10%	5%	5%
2. Audience Engagement <i>(Judges consider support materials submitted. In “Personality” entries, this criterion reflects the talent and any promotional efforts.)</i>	20%	10%	10%	15%	10%
3. Originality/Creativity	10%	10%	0%	10%	10%
4. Camerawork/Composition (Video) Delivery/Presentation (LPFM); Participant Coaching (Virtual)	10%	15%	15%	10%	10%
5. Audio	10%	15%	25%	15%	20%
6. Graphics <i>(Weighted more heavily in “Computer-generated”)</i> ; Thoroughness of research (LPFM)	6%	10%	15%	10%	10%
7. Lighting <i>(Graphics are assigned this percentage in “Computer-generated”)</i> ; Effectiveness (LPFM); Adaptation (Virtual Video)	5%	5%	5%	15%	15%
8. Editing/Direction (Video & LPFM); Virtual Environment Facilitation & Direction (Virtual Video)	10%	15%	10%	10%	10%
9. Subject matter	19%	15%	10%	10%	10%

Plaques, Statuettes, and Certificates

Producers may choose to purchase plaques, statuettes, and certificates for their award-winning shows. Online order forms will be available on the WCM website. One certificate for every award-winning program is provided at no cost. These awards will be presented at the Media Fest Banquet and Show. If a producer is not able to attend the show and no one is available to pick up their items for them, WCM can package and mail them for a \$10 per item fee.

Use of Your Program by WCM

By entering the Fest, you agree to allow WCM to use stills and footage from your video to promote PEG and the Fest on the WCM website, social media channels and WCM’s YouTube Channel. Whenever possible, WCM will use your URL.