

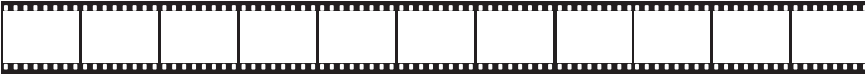
Ontario Teachers' Federation

Fédération des enseignantes et
des enseignants de l'Ontario



ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL
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FESTIVAL GUIDE





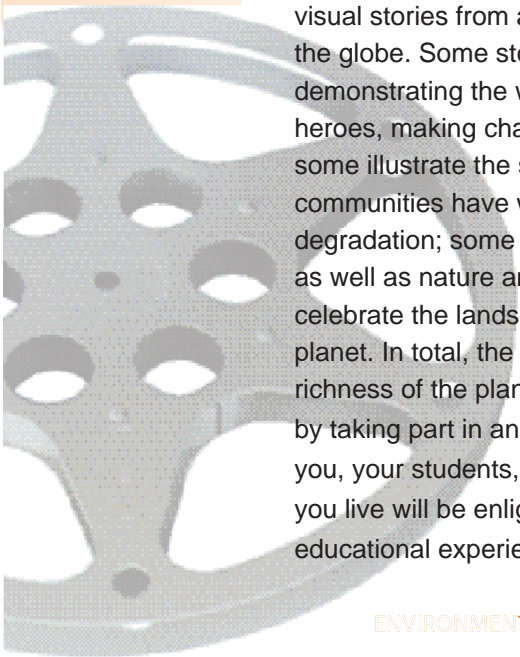
GOAL

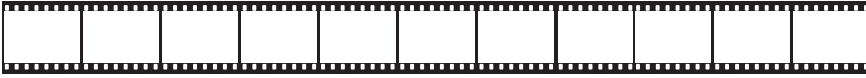
To inspire, educate and motivate your school, your community and the world at large to environmental awareness, action and change.

Good stories are at the heart of great cinema. The exploration of environmental issues through cinematic stories is one of the most effective ways to mobilize individuals and communities to make change.

We need only look at the impact of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* as an example. Yet, there are thousands of environmental stories – focusing on water, energy, wildlife, food, the polar world, desertification, and oceans, to name a few – that tell a deeper and richer story about the state of our planet.

Planet in Focus hosts Canada's largest environmental film and video festival annually in Toronto. The International Environmental Film and Video Festival showcases powerful visual stories from across Canada and around the globe. Some stories are triumphant, demonstrating the work of unsung eco heroes, making changes in their communities; some illustrate the struggles individuals and communities have while stopping environmental degradation; some look at species extinction as well as nature and wildlife interaction; others celebrate the landscape and beauty of our fragile planet. In total, the myriad of stories speak to the richness of the planetary story. We believe that by taking part in an Environmental Film Festival you, your students, and the community in which you live will be enlightened by this cultural and educational experience.





Getting Started

Before you start, it is important to determine the goal of your film festival.

The OTF/PIF Environmental Film Festival is a unique opportunity to bring your school and community together, inspire environmental awareness, encourage dialogue and celebrate powerful world cinema.

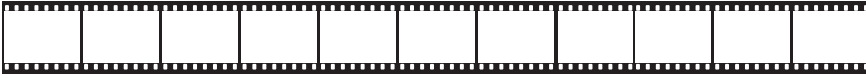
The following is a suggested outline for creating an Environmental Film Festival.

TIMING

We recommend that you allow at least four months to plan your Environmental Film Festival. You will need time to assemble a planning team, select your films, find a venue, collect the necessary equipment and promote the event to your community.

CREATE A CRITICAL PATH

Once the date for your festival is set (see Designing the Program), prepare a document or table with the tasks and their deadlines. It should be timed backwards from your festival date.



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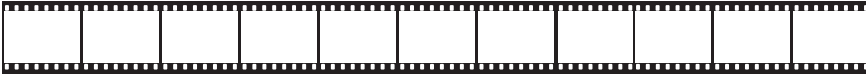
ASSEMBLE A PLANNING TEAM

Members of the planning team can consist of teachers, students and members of the greater community. Consider creative people who enjoy films, care about environmental issues and can commit to this project on a part-time basis. Team members should be willing to help with selecting the films, offering creative ideas on how to augment the programs (such as bringing in guest speakers) and promoting your Environmental Film Festival in economical and creative ways. The more creative minds on your team, the more successful your festival will be.



When assembling the planning team, it is useful to know the skills each member brings to the table and the tasks each will fulfill. Some to consider:

- Writing ability
- Drawing/graphic talent
- Leading teams of volunteers
- Marketing/public relations (PR)
- Co-ordinating events
- Computer competence
- Audio/visual expertise
- Public speaking (Master of Ceremonies)



Here is an example of how your planning team might be divided to ensure that all festival tasks are evenly distributed:

Your planning team should then be divided into committees, each responsible for one area (film selection, marketing plan, etc.) so that all tasks are evenly distributed amongst the members of the committee.

- Marketing (business teacher)
- Promotion (art teacher)
- Film selection (environmental science teacher, school librarian, social justice teacher or any teacher who has a particular interest in environmental issues)
- Box Office (accounting teacher)
- Technical needs (media/graphic arts teacher, computer teacher. Consider using appropriate school clubs such as AV club or stage crew.)
- Volunteer co-ordination (school council members)
- Student engagement - ensure students are engaged at all levels

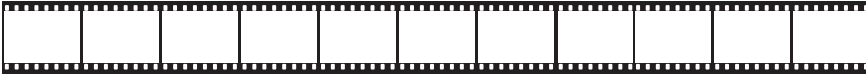
VENUE

Most likely you will be using your school's auditorium or gymnasium as a venue for your Environmental Film Festival. You will want to select a space that can comfortably accommodate a large number of people.

EQUIPMENT

Here is a list of equipment you will require:

- Projector
- DVD player and laptop computer
- Screen - size appropriate to venue or blank white wall



- Sound system/speakers
- Large-format TV (if a small event is being held)
- Microphones (portable and stationary)
- Table and chairs for a panel discussion

OTF will cover the cost for the Planet in Focus staff to provide the films and technical support. There are costs associated with the festival that you will need to consider.

FESTIVAL COSTS

They may include:

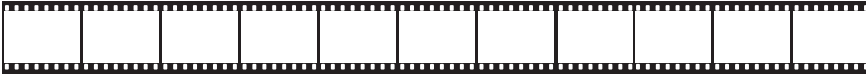
- Technical rentals - a projector or sound equipment (if the school does not have one)
- Printing/office supplies
- Food and beverage - to offer to volunteers or guest speakers that attend the festival

POTENTIAL REVENUE STREAMS

To raise funds for your Environmental Film Festival:

- Consider approaching small companies/businesses in your community for cash or in-kind sponsorships or donations. In-kind support may come in the form of printing supplies, free advertising or food and beverages.
- If you are selling tickets and are raising funds for a charity, you may wish to give a percentage of money raised to that charity and put the rest toward festival costs.
- If you are not selling tickets, you may





wish to add a charitable component to your film festival by asking for a “pay what you can” donation upon entry to each film.

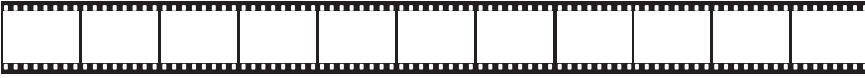
- Food/drink concessions can be a very effective way of raising funds, particularly if the food and beverages are donated! You should check your school/board policy on fundraising.
- Involve your school council.

Know your audience! What age group are you targeting? Do you have a family audience? Is the audience made up of high school or elementary school (primary, junior or intermediate level) students?

DESIGNING THE PROGRAM

You will have an opportunity to screen up to six feature length (over 45 minutes) films. Traditionally at Planet in Focus each feature film is preceded by another short film (about 15 minutes or less). You may wish to run your film festival over two days (offering three films each day) or three days (with two films each day). Planet in Focus will provide you with a list of films from which to choose. The films will cover a broad range of environmental themes. You may decide to focus on one theme (such as water or wildlife) or perhaps you will want to exhibit a broad range of issues. Selecting films can be a bit tricky; however, encouraging debate among your team members is an effective way to make your final selection.

We advise that your selection committee consist of students and educators, but have no more than five members.



Finalize your choices at least six weeks before the event. Remember this advice when creating your critical path.

If you have environmental experts in your community, you could assemble a panel discussion of two to four members to enrich your festival experience.

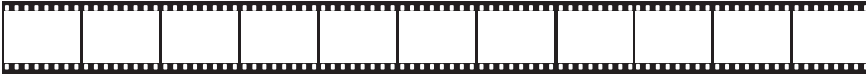
Consider pre-festival and follow-up activities that would engage students and/or the community to sustain environmental awareness and action. Setting up a blog site or forum for users to interact and dialogue may be beneficial.

Will your audience include individuals with direct knowledge of the subject matter or from locations and communities featured in the chosen films? Can they participate in a panel discussion or in some other way enrich your film festival?

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

There are many ways to promote your event including E-newsletters which are very economical and environmentally friendly, posters/flyers, press releases for local media, principals' newsletters, and school council newsletters. Consider using community newspapers, free entertainment newspapers such as SNAP, View etc. and the community television station if one exists.

Promotional materials (flyers, posters, etc.) may take a significant amount of time to design and print. Keep in mind that they should be complete and ready for distribution at least a month prior to starting the



marketing campaign and you should allow at least three weeks to promote the event. These are two more deadlines for your critical path.

Planet in Focus will supply film descriptions, promotional stills and biographies of the directors for the films you select. These materials will help promote your Environmental Film Festival, especially if local newspapers decide to write an article about your event.

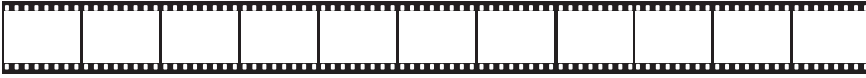
Planet in Focus will also provide a template for a program book for your festival. Traditionally program books list all the pertinent information about the event, including films, synopses, dates, times, locations, special guest speakers, contact information and ticket prices (if applicable). You can also use this book to promote your school by adding some background information on the school.

STAFFING YOUR FILM FESTIVAL



These roles may include:

- Official Voice/Spokesperson - answers all questions that the media or audience may have related to your film festival.
- Print Traffic Coordinator - ensures all the DVDs have arrived safely and tests them on your projection system to ensure everything runs smoothly.
- Technical supervisor – oversees technical needs from sound to projection
- Projectionist - runs the films during the screenings and monitors the sound system.



As you gear up for your festival, your Volunteer Co-ordination Committee will have to fill important roles to ensure things run smoothly.

- Venue Coordinator - helps to ensure that all your film festival's venues are properly equipped and in working order.
- Front of House - sells tickets, collects ticket stubs at the door, hands out program books, helps people to their seats.
- Guest Services - has contact information to reach guest speakers for your event and is the point person.
- Volunteers - It's always good to have a few extra pairs of hands around for last minute, unforeseen things that may pop up.
- Master of Ceremonies or host of each screening

Here are some of the ways you can encourage your guests to reduce the environmental impact of your film festival.

MAKE YOUR FESTIVAL GREEN

- Reuse or recycle program books, boxes and waste
- Use a carbon calculator to determine the carbon footprint of your event.
- Have a green raffle or door prizes
- Consider serving local food and other environmentally conscious options.
- Discourage one-time-use cups, plates, utensils, etc.
- Encourage people to share program books with each other and return them after each screening for reuse and eventual recycling.

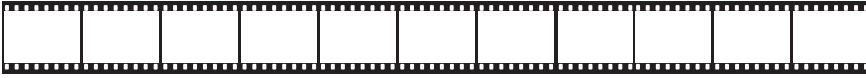


Although we have carefully outlined the basic steps of creating a film festival, organizing an event like this can be a very organic process and you may discover your own tips and tricks along the way.

Ultimately, if you remember your goals, follow our guidelines and remain open to the flow of thoughts and ideas that are bound to blossom on this journey, you will have a great festival.

***SO JUST RELAX
AND HAVE FUN!***



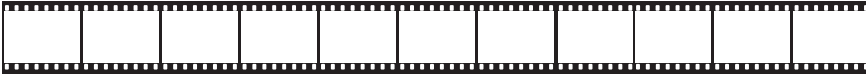


CHECKLIST

Here is a suggested checklist:



- Determine the goal of your film festival
- Pick a date for your film festival
- Create a critical path
- Recruit a planning team
- Assess your audience and use this knowledge to select a fitting program
- Design and produce promotional materials
- Source sponsors
- Ensure all your technical needs are met, e.g., projector, DVD player, screen, sound system, microphones, etc.
- Promote, promote, promote!
- Seek volunteers to help promote, promote, promote!
- A few days before the festival, do a technical check of all the films to ensure everything is in working order
- Make sure you have staff/volunteers (and back up volunteers) for the event, e.g., stage crew, AV crew, cleanup crew
- Have a great time!



NOTES

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