



Artwork commission for the 40th Leeds International Film Festival

Introduction

As part of the celebrations for the 40th anniversary edition of Leeds International Film Festival, we are commissioning artwork from a Leeds-based artist. The artwork will be used on the front cover of the printed LIFF Guide which is a very popular 100-page free publication circulated throughout Leeds and across Yorkshire. The full artwork and elements of it will also be used in outdoor advertising, on posters, on our website and social media, on screen during the film festival, and in other marketing.

The commission ties in with Leeds commemorating a remarkable milestone in 2026 - 400 years since receiving its first Royal Charter from King Charles I on 13 July 1626. This historic moment marked the beginning of the journey for Leeds towards self-governance and city status.

Brief

We want to commission striking and vibrant artwork that represents a celebration of film, festivals, Leeds, and the history of the city and LIFF, and reflects the diversity and global scope of the LIFF programme. Additionally, you can consider for your idea some of the reasons why our audience loves LIFF, including: escaping in the world of film with us; the communal, friendly and inclusive experience; the huge variety of films that they can't see otherwise; and that it takes place in the autumn/November. Also, the owl is the symbol of Leeds and is associated with LIFF.

Links for reference:

- [LIFF website](#)
- [LIFF 2025 Guide](#)
- [Link to previous artwork commission for the 30th anniversary](#)

LIFF social media: @leedsfilmfest on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn

How to apply, timeline and fees

- Please submit a short summary of your idea for the commission, a link to your online portfolio of existing work, contact details, and confirmation that you are an artist living or working in Leeds by **Thursday 30 April** on the following form:
<https://forms.gle/Tf1zpriGX7cUmnmy6>
- If you have any queries, please contact lee.bentham@leeds.gov.uk
- Three artists will be shortlisted by Thursday 7 May to develop their ideas further and sketch concept visuals – each shortlisted artist will be paid a fee of £150. We will provide more details about format and inclusion of logos and any text, dates, etc. to the shortlisted artists.
- The artist to be commissioned will be selected by Thursday 11 June and the poster is to be completed by Tuesday 30 June. The fee for the commission is £850.
- The artwork will be launched in July and the 40th Leeds International Film Festival will run from 5-22 November 2026.

About Leeds International Film Festival (LIFF)

Organised by Leeds City Council, LIFF is one of the UK's largest film festivals, with an epic and diverse programme of discovery, featuring around 260 films from more than 70 countries. LIFF fills Leeds with film over 18 days every November, presenting more than 300 screenings and events at venues including Vue Leeds at The Light, Everyman Leeds, Howard Assembly Room, Hyde Park Picture House, Cottage Road Cinema, and community and social venues. As well as screening previews of some of the most-anticipated films of the year, LIFF has a major focus on new and emerging British and international filmmakers. A qualifying film festival for the Oscars, BAFTAs, and British Independent Film Awards, LIFF presents 11 competitions for feature films and short films.