2027 Sundance Film Festival Opportunities for Local Partnerships Including the Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival Program

ABOUT SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

Sundance Institute is an arts nonprofit organization that is dedicated to the nurturing and development of independent storytellers and global audiences. Sundance Institute was founded in 1981 by Robert Redford to support emerging filmmakers and uplift new, authentic voices within the medium. Through its programs, Sundance Institute seeks to discover, support, and inspire independent film and media artists from the U.S. and around the world, and to introduce new audiences to their work.

We uphold and push forward our mission through three major initiatives:

Sundance Institute Year-Round Artist Programs:
Our artist programs are our driving force, providing dynamic support at every step of the creative journey for individuals with distinct voices in film and episodic storytelling. Each program consists of labs, grants, intensives, sessions, and ongoing resources for artists to nurture their projects and sustain their careers. Through year-round activities, we provide the space for artists to create and share their stories with the world. Michelle Satter, the Founder of the Artist Programs, leads the Artist Programs today.

Sundance Collab:
Sundance Collab is Sundance Institute's digital learning hub for emerging and established filmmakers to learn, grow, and connect within a global filmmaking community. The community is made up of over 100,000 members who congregate each month to learn, share, and connect around the art and craft of storytelling.

Sundance Film Festival:
Sundance Film Festival is the leading film festival of international discovery. The Festival is the ultimate gathering of original storytellers and audiences seeking new voices and fresh perspectives. Since 1985, hundreds of films launched at the Festival have gone on to gain critical acclaim and reach new audiences worldwide.

ABOUT SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

We are excited to be bringing Sundance Film Festival to Boulder for the first time January 21–31, 2027! We're overwhelmed by the warm welcome we are receiving, and we can't wait to partner with local Boulder businesses to make this Festival a success.

The Festival is a 10-day ticketed event that showcases 100 independent films that will be premiered — many for the first time globally — at the start of the festival season. We receive over 15,000 feature film, episodic, and short film submissions from new and established filmmakers around the world, annually. Many of these films secure distribution in the days and weeks following their premiere at the Festival. Directors, producers, actors, and other talent often attend Q&As following screenings of their films, offering attendees rare insights into the filmmaking process.

Additionally, the Festival hosts a series of engaging public panel discussions that enhance that insider experience. The Festival also hosts a series of private events that recognize and celebrate emerging artists — a fundraising gala and awards presentation, an opening press event, a directors brunch, parties and awards for various filmmaking communities from shorts to parties and awards for various filmmaking communities, and a closing Festival awards celebration.

WHO SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL AUDIENCES ARE

The Festival attracts audiences from around the host state, country, and world. With an average of 100,000+ visitors per year, Festival attendees join us to enjoy the experience we create for them, the local community and businesses they engage with, and sponsor-led activities.

In our move to Boulder, we are building a Festival experience that will engage the Colorado community by providing fresh, meaningful experiences, as well as welcome our longtime communities in the film industry, Institute supporters, global press, creators, and film lovers from around the state and the world.

HOW SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL WORKS WITH NATIONAL SPONSORS

Sundance Film Festival engages national and global brands as sponsors and partners. Sponsors are offered the highest level of presence and integration into the Festival experience and are often 10+ year exclusive relationships by category of business. Brands choose Sundance Film Festival both to support our mission, and to engage in activities that support their marketing initiatives.

Sponsor activations are core to the Festival experience. Sponsors offer public and private programming that engages Festival attendees through a range of experiences, including dedicated fully branded interactive "houses," presentation and underwriting of official Festival programming, and panel discussions. Many secure their own venues for their activations.

Updated by the Sundance Institute as of October 19, 2026

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLORADO BASED BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS, COLLECTIVES

We look forward to welcoming global Festival audiences to the local retail, nonprofit and service communities. Our goal is to work with you in a way that is a win for your business, enhances the Festival experience, and supports the sustainability of both the greater Boulder community and Sundance Film Festival.

Sundance Film Festival is thrilled to be a part of the Boulder community. Our first Festival here is bound to be a special moment in our history and the history of Boulder itself. We want to celebrate this moment together. We have developed information and guidelines for community businesses and non profits so they can share the excitement of our first Sundance Film Festival in Boulder. As we grow and evolve together, so, too will these guidelines.

These guidelines are designed exclusively for Colorado based community partners. That is, Colorado based retailers, restaurants, collectives, community groups, allied organizations and non profits. A 'Colorado-based' business is defined as one with physical and ongoing operations within the state, rather than a mere headquarters designation.

Please note that while “Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival” status recognizes your valued support, it does not grant or imply any rights, license, or authorization to host, sponsor, or conduct outdoor pop-up activations, marketing events, or physical installations within the official Festival footprint in Boulder, Colorado.

“OFFICIAL FRIEND OF SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL”

For the first ever Sundance Film Festival in Boulder, and as a Colorado based business or non profit, we would like to welcome you as an “Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival”.

Benefits of Participation:

- “Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival” signage/window cling for storefront/restaurant window
- Rights to identify your business as an “Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival” in store and on your wholly owned and operated digital platforms and social channels during the Festival time period
- You will be provided with the “Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival” digital media tool kit to be used for your marketing
- Your business will be included in the “Official Friends of Sundance Film Festival” listing on the Sundance Institute website
- You will receive two (2) tickets to an “Official Friends of Sundance Film Festival” private screening during the second week of the Festival (tickets distributed on a first come first serve basis until sold out)

- If applicable, you will have the opportunity to sample products/offer coupons in Sundance Film Festival gift bags (limited to a select quantity; on a first come first serve basis at the discretion of Sundance Institute)

“Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival” Cost of Participation:

For Colorado based retailers, restaurants, collectives, community groups, allied organizations and non profits, **there is no fee for participation**. We simply ask that you follow the following guidelines.

These guidelines are designed to protect our ability to maintain the value of Sundance Film Festival sponsorships. This investment is vital to both the financial health of the Festival and our ability to pursue our non profit mission-driven work to support emerging filmmakers.

“Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival” Guidelines:

- You sign up with us through the community agreement with Sundance Film Festival
- You agree to work only with official sponsors and partners of the Festival
- You agree that clients who rent your space will not bring in businesses or brands who market themselves, and are not official sponsors of Sundance Film Festival. You can inquire for more information about specific sponsors by contacting friendsofthefestival@sundance.org
- If you own a space, you agree to include a line in your client event agreement that states that your client's event will only include businesses or brands that are official Sundance Film Festival sponsors
- For any programming during the Festival, you agree to work with the Sundance Institute Corporate Partnerships Team to collaborate on any planned talks, panel topics, screenings, etc. to avoid counter programming in competition with Festival programming
- Your business cannot be competitive with our category exclusive sponsors (list in addendum below)

Contact us here for more information on becoming an Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival.

LOCAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:

Sundance Film Festival works with Official Providers from across the Country. “Official Providers” are national and local companies that provide goods and services to Sundance Institute and Sundance Film Festival as a tax deductible 501(c)(3) donation. We welcome local businesses across all categories to be a Sundance Film Festival Official Provider. If you are interested in working with us as an Official Provider of Sundance Institute and Sundance Film Festival - Contact us here for more information.

As an Official Provider, you will receive:

- Line listings (no logos) on both Sundance Film Festival and Sundance Institute websites and in Artist Program lab books.
- Festival tickets, quantity determined by value of donations.

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RENTING YOUR BUSINESS AS A VENUE–OR NOT

Part of the Sundance Film Festival experience is the parties and programming put on by our Official Sponsors. You may be approached by our Official sponsors who are interested in your venue as a possible location for their brand activations. These relationships are entirely between you and the Official Sponsor. The decision of whether you stay open and enjoy the surge of customers, or rent your space, is fully yours. If you choose to rent out your venue, we hope you have chosen to be an “Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival” and will therefore honor the guidelines of working only with Official Festival Sponsors.

To confirm whether a brand is an Official Sponsor, contact us at friendsofthefestival@sundance.org. If the brand is not an Official Sponsor, please suggest they contact us and we will invite them to become one! We are here to welcome all. Let’s do this together!

To help connect venue owners with Sundance Institute and official Sundance Film Festival partners seeking activation locations, we've partnered with the Boulder Chamber to facilitate this process. If you're interested in making your space available, please visit the Sundance Film Festival Partner Hub and select the "Lease Your Existing Space" form to share details about your property. Once submitted, your information will be reviewed and you may receive a follow up with potential opportunities.

IMPORTANCE OF WORKING WITH OFFICIAL SPONSORS

We are a community of individuals, companies and organizations that win together–engaging our passionate global Festival attendees, supporting the Boulder community and businesses, and furthering our mission-driven work of showcasing emerging storytellers. As a nonprofit, we count on your support to host a financially successful festival. A successful Festival allows us to support artists and emerging filmmakers with year-round services such as education, mentorship and grant support.

What do we welcome?

We like to say that there are lots of ways to “Fest” —that everyone enjoys their own unique Festival experience. We celebrate that energy and welcome private parties and dinners hosted by individuals, filmmaker teams and brands. We have a stable of Official Sponsors available to work with those seeking to host a private dinner or event in your venue. However, any external signage or branding is reserved for Official Sponsors.

What do we not welcome?

Status as an “Official Friend of the Sundance Film Festival” is in recognition of your valued support of the Sundance Film Festival and Sundance Institute. However, please understand that becoming an Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival does not grant you any rights or authorization to seek outside financial sponsorships, host, or conduct outdoor pop-up brand activations or installations for another unofficial brand or vendor in the exclusive sponsor categories.

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- *Example: A local restaurant is welcome to have a pop-up activation with their own food for others to purchase, but agree not to feature an unofficial, conflicting brand.*

Those that come to Boulder to benefit from this Festival environment and community without financially supporting the Festival do not further our mission of supporting artists. This is why the Official Friends of Sundance Film Festival membership requires that you work with our Official Sponsors only. You can inquire for more information about specific sponsors by contacting friendsofthefestival@sundance.org.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL OFFICIAL SPONSORSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP GUIDELINES:

1. External branding and activation within our Festival Footprint are rights that are reserved for Official Sponsors.
2. Sundance Institute and Sundance Film Festival trademarks cannot be used by any individual, company or organization that is not an Official Sponsor or Partner of Sundance Institute.
3. Many Official Sponsors increase their financial support of our work in order to be the exclusive sponsor in their product or service category. This generosity helps Sundance Institute execute on its mission. We monitor and enforce that exclusivity as a priority.
4. Official Sponsors of the Festival do not bring other sponsors or partners to their events without Sundance Institute's involvement.

We are here to welcome you. To inquire about the Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival program, please complete this interest form. For all other opportunities with the Corporate Partnerships team, please complete this interest form.

Last Date to Apply for the Official Friends Program: Thursday, January 7th, 2027

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ADDENDUM

NATIONAL SPONSORSHIP CATEGORIES

Our sponsor relationships are large, long term, multi-year and exclusive by category of business. Sponsors invest in exclusive “Official” Festival designation and we protect and enforce these exclusivities as a priority.

We do welcome private “hospitality experiences” (VIP ticketing and private screenings) outside of these exclusivities, and there are opportunities to work with Sundance Institute and Sundance Film Festival outside of the Festival time period across all categories of business.

Current Exclusive National Sponsorships:

- Audio Entertainment
- Automotive
- Beauty
- Cameras
- Entertainment Database
- Fragrance
- File Hosting & Collaboration Services
- Financial Services (All Categories)
- Footwear
- Hotel / Accommodations
- Insurance
- Liquor
- Outdoor Apparel
- Rideshare
- Telecom
- Water
- Wellness

Available Exclusive National Sponsorship Categories:

- Coffee/tea
- Food
- Insurance
- Real Estate
- Rideshare
- Travel (Destinations, Luggage, Gear)
- Telecom
- Water (no plastic bottles)

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Non Exclusive Sponsorship Categories
These are categories and areas where we welcome multiple partners.

- Film Industry
- Non Profit
- Media
- Tech–Adobe is the Official Editing Solution of Sundance Film Festival. All other categories within the technology sector are non exclusive.

Categories outside of Sundance Institute Partnership Guidelines:
Sundance Institute aligns to guiding principles that were set by our Founder and remain core to our organization's values. We work with premium brands that align to our guiding principles, and support and enhance Sundance Institute's leadership position. These categories fall outside our guidelines:

1. Single Use Plastic
2. Soft Drinks
3. Petroleum / Oil / Drilling
4. Pharmaceuticals
5. Guns/Firearms/ Military Equipment
6. Fast Food
7. Fur
8. Multi-Level Marketers
9. Gaming
10. Political Organizations
11. Tobacco/Vaping
12. Chemical Companies (including toxic cleaning products but organic or environmental-friendly products are determined on a case-by-case basis).

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Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival

Local Business FAQ Guide

Important Notice Regarding Program Scope:
Status as an “Official Friend of the Sundance Film Festival” is in recognition of your valued support of the Sundance Film Festival and Sundance Institute. However, please understand that becoming an Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival does not grant you any rights or authorization to seek outside financial sponsorships, host, or conduct outdoor pop-up brand activations or installations for another unofficial brand or vendor in the exclusive sponsor categories listed below:

- *Example: A local restaurant is welcome to have a pop-up activation with their own food for others to purchase, but agree not to feature an unofficial, conflicting brand.*

Last Date to Apply for the Official Friends Program: Thursday, January 7th, 2027

General Eligibility Guidelines

- Exclusive Sponsor Categories
    - **Automotive**: All dealerships, used car shops, camper van shops, etc.
    - **Financial & Technology**: All banks, online file hosting, and telecom.
    - **Hospitality & Rideshare**: All private home rentals and standard rideshare services.
    - **Regulated Goods**: All tobacco, pharmaceuticals, energy drinks, kombucha, soft drinks, and national water companies.
    - **Religion & Politics**: Formal religious organizations and political organizations.
- Open Categories with Sundance Institute Approval
    - **Food & Dining**: All non-fast-food restaurants, grocery stores, catering, food halls, food trucks (local), specialty markets, bakeries, and ice cream.
    - **Beverages**: All coffee/tea cafes, tea houses, and animal cafes.
    - **Local Hotels, Services & Events**: All hotels, local trade services, printing services, event planners, event spaces, local adventure companies, non-profits, museums, libraries, music producers, and local production studios/photographers.
    - **Professional & Advisor**: Local insurance, local real estate, local wealth advisors, and local marketing/PR/creative agencies.
    - **Healthcare & Medical**: Local hospitals, physical therapy, med spas, dermatologists/dentists, holistic medicine, and sports medicine labs.
    - **Health & Wellness**: Local independent gyms, local yoga/pilates studios, local spas/salons, local IV bars, local massage studios, and local therapy practices.
    - **Local Art, Education, and Nature**: Local art galleries, education programs, adoption programs, summer camps, linguistic programs, florists, garden centers, nature care, pet boutiques, and veterinarians.
- Categories with Specific Classifications
    - **Alcohol & Nightlife**
        - Approved: Local, small breweries, distilleries, tasting rooms, and wineries.
        - Not Approved: National craft breweries, distilleries, tasting rooms, wineries, and single-brand liquor promotions.
    - **Clothing, Accessories, and Jewelry**
        - Approved: All that sell multiple brands. Local, small brands.
        - Not Approved: National, large-scale brands.
    - **Fragrance**
        - Approved: All that sell multiple brands.
        - Not Approved: National, large-scale brands.

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Program Eligibility & General Participation

What does a one-year commitment entail, and how do renewals work?
Participation in the Official Friend Program is an annual commitment tied to the specific Festival year (e.g., 2027 Sundance Film Festival) and Festival timing (January 21-31, 2027). At the conclusion of each Festival, the program is evaluated, and businesses have the opportunity to renew for subsequent years.

Can our business participate if we already have non-Festival events or non-profit partnerships booked during the Festival dates?
Yes. Pre-existing events or partnerships (such as hosting local non-profits) do not disqualify you from joining the program. However, these events must not be marketed as affiliated with the Sundance Film Festival or Sundance Institute. We encourage any non-profit partners hosting events in your space to apply for the Official Friends Program as well.

We want to maintain our normal operating hours and only host private events on a limited basis. Is this program right for us?
Yes. Joining the Official Friend Program does not entail giving up control of your venue or schedule. You retain full control over when and how you make your space available. If you decide to rent out your space for a private party during the Festival, we simply ask that you notify us and ensure the client complies with program guidelines regarding branding and affiliation.

Venue Rentals, Private Events & Non-Festival Bookings

Can we rent our space to non-affiliated businesses or host standard private events (e.g., holiday parties, private dinners) during the Festival dates?
Yes. You may continue to rent your space to non-affiliated third parties or private guests provided the event is not marketed or promoted as affiliated with the Sundance Film Festival or Sundance Institute.

To maintain program integrity, venue owners who are part of the Official Friends Program agree to include a clause in their client agreements stating that private events during the Festival window must not feature unauthorized branding or imply Sundance Film Festival affiliation.

Are we allowed to rent our venue to independent filmmakers or producers once film selections are announced in late December?
Yes. Renting your space to official Sundance Film Festival filmmakers, producers, or cast teams is permitted and encouraged. The list of films within the program will be released to the public, our partners/sponsors, and Official Friends in early/mid December with no exceptions.

How do we vet event inquiries to confirm if a prospective client is an official Festival sponsor?
If you receive an inquiry and are unsure of the client's official status, please email us directly at friendsofthefestival@sundance.org. Because sponsor lists are finalized leading up to the Festival, our team will review the inquiry and confirm their status for you.

What are the guidelines around hosting events (e.g., author talks, panels, screenings) during the Festival window?
To avoid counter-programming that competes with Sundance Film Festival events, any planned public programming (talks, panels, screenings) hosted during the Festival dates must be shared with the Sundance Institute Corporate Partnerships Team for review. If an event takes place outside the Festival footprint or is entirely unassociated with the Festival and not marketed as affiliated, it typically does not present a conflict.

How can local venues submit their space to host official sponsor or filmmaker events?
You can submit your venue details through the "Lease Your Existing Space" form available on the Sundance Film Festival Partner Hub via the Boulder Chamber. Venue profiles are shared with the Festival team and sponsors looking for space. As films are not invited and announced until early/mid December, many artists, teams and companies will not be booking their events until they are confirmed to attend the Festival. Most will be booking in December and January.
Please note: Submitting your space does not guarantee a booking.

Exclusivity & Corporate Sponsorships

How does category exclusivity work for Official Friends, and does it apply year-round?
Category exclusivity applies only during the 10 days of the Festival window, not year-round. It is important to note that this is a Community Program and *not a Corporate Sponsorship Tier.*

- Existing Year-Round Sponsors: If your business has existing sponsors or partners that compete with our official Corporate Sponsors, that is acceptable, provided those sponsors do not execute Sundance Film Festival activations or branding during the Festival period.
- Local Retailers & Restaurants: Having an exclusive sponsor in a specific category does not always prevent local businesses (such as sports bars, breweries, or restaurants) from joining the program. If you have any questions on eligibility, please feel free to contact us.

Where can we view the current list of official Festival sponsors?
Our partner roster evolves each year. You can view the previous year's confirmed partners on our official website. Updated sponsor lists for the upcoming Festival are finalized and published annually on the website in the fall.

Vendor, Hospitality & Culinary Opportunities

Are there opportunities for mobile vendors, pop-up booths, or outdoor installations?
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Those that come to Boulder to benefit from this Festival environment and community without financially supporting the Festival do not further our mission of supporting artists. This is why the Official Friend of Sundance Film Festival membership requires that you work with our Official Sponsors only when hosting a Festival-related event. You can inquire for more information about specific sponsors by contacting friendsofthefestival@sundance.org. Broader activation rights are reserved strictly for Corporate Sponsors and Partners.

How can local businesses get involved beyond standard membership?
Businesses offering high-quality goods or services can explore becoming an Official Provider:

- Official Provider Status: Local businesses able to provide essential goods or services (typically at a minimum $5,000 value) may qualify to support the Festival as an Official Provider.
- How to Apply: Submit an inquiry via the Sundance Institute Corporate Partnerships Interest Form.