



Documentary Producers Alliance

April 2021

Open Letter to Film Festival Programmers, Marketing Directors and Publicists,

We are reaching out to you as the Documentary Producers Alliance (DPA) in the hope that we can turn a new page.

Over the past five years, we have contacted many of you personally, to ask that you include documentary producers, for both features and shorts, in your festival announcements, press releases and catalogs. While we are immensely grateful to all those who have responded to our requests—DOC NYC, Sundance, Tribeca, and others—we want more film festivals to include producers in their listings and in the full film festival experience.

Producers are the unsung linchpins holding documentary projects and the field together. This normalized absence of recognition for the role we play has wrought genuine harm to our careers, our livelihoods, our mental health and our imaginations. Your collective recognition will go a long way toward supporting our profession and helping us to be seen as the filmmaking collaborators that we are.

Many people do not understand what producers do. Alongside directors—but often independently—producers develop stories; secure access to participants and locations; write proposals and create decks; raise money; hire DP's, editors and other creatives; conduct interviews and oversee shoots; ensure that our productions are healthy and safe; mitigate legal risk; liaise with funders, advisors, distributors and sales agents; submit to film festivals; launch and manage impact campaigns, and more.

Producers Are Filmmakers Too.

To recognize the “day-to-day” producers who receive the “Produced By” or “Producer” credit at the time of submission, we ask that you:

- Include producers in your festival announcements and programs - *in advance of and during the event, in print, social media, on your website and onstage*
- Extend us a badge or pass and include us in our films' Q&A's
- Include us in your travel and accommodation budgets - we love to support our films in-person
- Invite us on panels to speak with audiences about the work we do
- Organize producer gatherings and meet-ups during your festival
- Include producers in the awards announcements for awards like Audience Award and Best of Fest, and consider adding awards and/or recognition specifically for producers

Producers and festivals are partners in this magical but messy field of documentary film, and we need each other, deeply, to survive. We are your loyal and faithful champions.

We hope that you will commit to standing with us, too.

With kind regards,

The Documentary Producers Alliance (DPA)

Established in 2016, the Documentary Producers Alliance (DPA) is a diverse coalition of more than 450 members worldwide, ranging from emerging to Academy Award-winning producers.

The DPA sets standards for inclusive, sustainable and equitable business practices; amplifies the voice of all documentary producers; and educates the industry about producers' essential role as filmmakers.

documentaryproducersalliance.org



This letter is endorsed by



Film Festival Alliance is a not-for-profit organization serving film festivals and the people who run them.

We foster a collaborative global community for mission-driven film festivals, advocate for a sustainable and inclusive environment within the cinema exhibition ecosystem, and create a powerful collective voice for our industry.