NOW SHOWING!

Scotland's Screen Community Guide to Screening Films

Welcome to NOW SHOWING – a guide to screening films for Scotland's Screen Community: so that's anyone who's thinking about starting up film screenings in their community or is already screening films and might need a refresher. If that's you, you're part of Scotland's Screen Community!

Watching movies on the big screen in your local venue, with your family, friends, and neighbours, can be a special occasion, and often the social side is as important as the film itself. This guide offers practical information, guidance, and further links aimed to help you plan, deliver, and continue to offer your audiences a fun, entertaining, but also achievable cinema experience for all.

The guide has been created in partnership by the four leading national organisations supporting all sizes of cinemas in communities. It covers as much as we can in general terms, but we are all here to variously offer advice, funding, training, support through networks, film programming ideas and offers, and a friendly expert ear, so please feel free to contact us when you have specific questions about your screening plans:

Regional Screen Scotland Advice, networks, funding
www.regionalscreenscotland.org

Film Hub Scotland
Funding, training, networks, programming advice www.filmhubscotland.com

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Screen Scotland
Funding, sector support, advice
www.screen.scot/audiences

Cinema For All (UK-wide)
Programming ideas, funding, training
cinemaforall.org.uk

THE ORDER OF THINGS

An Overview of the Whole Process

Look out for **inspiring examples** of screen activity from Scotland's Screen Community in purple boxes

Like any project, there is a suggested timeline for planning your screenings. If you're new to screening films, you might want to start at the beginning and if you have screened films before, you might want to just dip in and out of the process. Below is an overview of the process to see what stage you're at and there's a checklist on page 3…

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THE ORDER OF THINGS

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WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE?

Minimum 2 months before

Asking questions about what you want to achieve through your screenings can be really useful – whether you're planning your first event or your 21st event. We've suggested two key questions below that can help you focus your planning conversations and hopefully make the most of your valuable time and resources.

Who is Your Audience?

This may seem obvious and you may already know and/or work with the people who would like to come to your screenings. However it's always worth taking the time to think about who you're hoping to attract: what other social and cultural activities do they enjoy; how accessible are those other activities (e.g. what space do they feel comfortable in, are they used to paying for a ticket, who do they like to socialise with). Also do they already go to the movies or is it just not an option for any reason?

> "A significant number of our members live alone and have said they love going to see films but would not go to the cinema alone. At Colinsburgh however they are guaranteed to meet friends."
>
> **Colinsburgh Community Cinema**

You could discuss this with your colleagues in the context of your organisation's aims for the screenings. And if you already have connections, speak directly to your potential audience to find out more. Try not to make assumptions about them: there may be people you might not have thought would like to come.
Here's a link to a useful **Guide to Audiences** by the Independent Cinema Office: 'Get to Know Your Audience'

What Cinema Experience Do You Want To Offer?

To create a truly welcoming community cinema experience, use what you've learned about your audience to choose the right venue and design your screenings:

- ★ what movies might they be interested in watching;
- ★ what would make your screenings special for them;
- ★ do they have specific access needs, e.g. mobility in the venue, dietary requirements, film access support such as captions or audio description.

Community cinema screenings can offer a lot around the film. Think about how your audience are made to feel when they arrive at the door. You may not be restricted like a multiplex cinema so you can ensure everyone is comfortable in their community space (beanbags anyone?). And what special extras can you offer with the film – e.g. themed food, activities for families, a chance to find out more about the film with a guest afterwards. What makes your event unmissable **and** universal? For some films like Star Wars, the distributor needs to agree what you're planning. But think big, then start to figure out what you need to make it happen…

> For their event 'Film Feels: Hopeful' on the island of Jura, **Screen Argyll** worked in partnership with a local arts collective to offer talks and time machine-building craft workshops with the screenings!

HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN

Minimum 2 months before

You will know better than anyone about how much capacity and resource you have to plan and deliver a successful screening. What we can offer in this guide is an indication of the likely costs and who might help make it happen for you.

More detail on each cost is available at the relevant section throughout this guide.
Contact Regional Screen Scotland for an excel budget template

EXPENDITURE: Costs Involved

Venue hire – If you don't own the venue, this may be a regular cost for each screening
Venue licences – PRS licence for music + Licence for premises depending on frequency
Film licences – Permission to screen your chosen film (separate from venue licences)
Film materials & transport – Costs to buy the bluray/DVD and postage to receive it
Technical costs – Hiring in kit, purchasing own kit, paying someone to show films
Film access costs – So everyone can enjoy the film, e.g. captions, audio description
Activity around the screening – Enhancing with extra activity if the distributor allows it
Marketing & Publicity – Materials to promote your event to your target audiences
Ticketing costs – Some ticket sellers, e.g. Eventbrite, can charge fees for their services
Staff / Coordinator costs – Paying staff to deliver the event
Volunteer expenses – Covering expenses incurred to volunteer for your screening
Evaluation – Costs associated with gathering audience & staff feedback, e.g. surveys

INCOME: Funding Sources – Click on direct links for eligibility details

Box Office Income

If you are charging for tickets (see page 12 for advice on this), you will have money coming in from your box office and this should be added as income to your budget.

Film Hub Scotland

Pitch Pots: Micro-grants up to £1000 / For cultural cinema activity / Until Dec 2022
Additional funding is usually available for access costs, training, cultural programming.

Cinema For All

Coaching Bursaries: A range of funding for community cinemas at different stages

National Lottery

Awards for All Scotland – Up to £10,000 / Inc. purchasing equipment / Ongoing

Screen Scotland

Film Festival and Screening Fund – £10,000 - £60,000 / Deadline 31 Jan 2023

Trusts and Foundations – Check if your activity/location fits with funders' aims

Scotland's Towns Partnership Funder Finder – Updated monthly
Foundation Scotland – Matching communities to managed funds
SCVO Funding Scotland – For charities, community groups, social enterprises
Creative Lives – Funding opportunities page for volunteer-led groups in Scotland
Youthlink Scotland – Funding directory for groups working with young people
Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Scotland – Open to former coalmining communities

Making Your Funding Case for Community Cinema

If you're applying for funding for your community screenings, you'll want to make the best case possible and there is a growing bank of evidence, data and arguments for the benefits of coming together to watch films in community spaces:

First and foremost, community screenings can contribute to a sense of **Community Wellbeing**, bringing people together in an informal and friendly environment. But that means they can also contribute to the well-documented movement committed to achieving a Wellbeing Economy.

The Scottish Government has adopted a **Place Principle** and community cinemas can make a valuable contribution to a positive sense of place: creating shared local memories, providing opportunities for people to meet informally, and contributing to the local economy by keeping spending local.

For those reasons, community film screenings also have a role to play in the Scottish Government's ambition to develop the concept of **20-minute neighbourhoods**: the idea that all our immediate needs should be able to be accessed within a short walk or cycle ride.

And of course, developing such local services and opportunities also has a positive **environmental impact** by reducing car journeys, especially in areas where public transport is inadequate—there's lots of advice on working towards Net Zero Carbon from Creative Carbon Scotland.

All these measures contribute to the Scottish Government's **National Performance Framework** and it's always worth keeping this framework in mind, as all public bodies in Scotland are working to achieve its outcomes.

What you want to screen may also be relevant to funders. For example Film Hub Scotland supports programming for young people (aged 16+), or screening archive films, or screening films that widen the diversity and inclusion of your programme.

Regional Screen Scotland (RSS) works with many **national agencies** in the fields of health and wellbeing, community development, and town centre regeneration, and they all have an appreciation of how community cinema can help them to meet their own objectives.

In 2016, RSS commissioned the report **Your Cinema, Your Community** which, through extensive independent surveys, demonstrates the personal and social benefits of having a local cinema or film society in your community. This research resulted in the creation of **Your Cinema, Your Community, Your Impact** - a toolkit designed to help you make the case for how much your cinema matters to your community, by measuring and understanding the social impact value you have. It will help you improve the way that you gather information on your performance and impact.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

2 months before

Forming a team is important for the smooth running of your screenings.

Supporting Group Structures
You can operate your screenings under different structures that exist within your current organisation or you can build your own if you are an independent group. There are many different forms of structures from an unincorporated association (club, society) with a constitution run by a committee of volunteers to a charity with board of trustees and operations and volunteer team, and many more.

If you're thinking of setting your group up as a social enterprise, then Social Enterprise Scotland is the source for advice. You might want to partner with a local Development Trust, or be considering a Community Asset transfer for a local building in which case Development Trusts Association Scotland is the place to go. Or find out at Scotland's Towns Partnership if you have a local Business Improvement District, whose members will be keen on activities promoting the use of local retail and catering outlets alongside the Scotland Loves Local campaign.

For further advice and access templates on setting up a structure for your group/ community cinema visit the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Scottish Community Development Centre, and Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) websites.

Who's On Your Team?
Here are the key team roles you can consider. Some roles can be done by one person and others benefit from having a small group of people working in that role:

- **Programmer** – Chooses and books the films
- **Projectionist** – Sets up and oversees the projection of the film
- **Marketing team** – Designs graphics, writes copy, social media and print
- **Treasurer** – Keeps track of finances and banking
- **Front of House** – Greeting audience, selling refreshments, setting up room, taking tickets

Communication – Decide how you are going to keep in touch as a team e.g. monthly meetings to help share out tasks, reflect on past screenings and plan for the future. You could also have a private Facebook group or use an online workspace such as Slack. Chat together and see what works best for everyone.

Recruiting and managing volunteers – Cinema For All have created a useful guide to working with volunteers in community cinema which will be available soon. Are there any friends and family that could help you with your screenings? You could do a call out for volunteers for the roles above at local colleges and universities, and volunteer centres such as Volunteer Scotland and Creative Lives. Volunteer Scotland has resources dedicated to managing volunteers plus a network. SCVO have a directory of networks supporting voluntary organisations locally.

VENUE CHOICE + REGULATIONS

6 weeks before

Choosing a venue or checking your own venue is ready for screenings is an important step before **agreeing on a date**. Use this handy checklist of things to think about when deciding on a suitable venue or if your venue is ready for screenings:

Consideration:	**What to check:**
Capacity	How many people can you seat inside comfortably and are there sufficient fire exits? The gap between the screen and the front row is determined by the projector position and you should take wheelchair access into account. Seating layout is usually fan-shaped to enable the best view for the most. This informs how many tickets you might sell, which helps you understand your costs and potential income.
Room Dimensions	It's important to match with your screen size, e.g.the height of the ceiling and the height of the legs for a flat-fold screen.
Premises licence or Exemption Certificate	In order to show films to the public, your venue/premises needs to be licensed either (1) as a Cinema with your local authority or (2) if films are to be screened by a constituted group operating on a not-for-profit basis a Cinema Licence Exemption Certificate can be requested from the Scottish Government. Community cinemas are often eligible for option (2). Find out more on the RSS website.
TheMusicLicence – from PRS and PPL	This licence covers you for all music in your chosen film, plus any additional music (recorded or live) you might want to play as the audience are entering or leaving. Depending on how the screening is operated there are two Music Licence options: (1) Entertainments & Attractions Music Licence (2) Charity Event Music Licence
Venue hire costs	Is the venue hire affordable? If it costs more, does this include equipment or marketing support? Cinema For All recommend paying less than £100 per screening depending on your budget.
Insurance	Whether you own the venue or not, it is advised to have your own public liability insurance to cover your film screenings e.g. your equipment, your team, your audience. Cinema For All can help with this. And ask the venue about carrying out a risk assessment with you.
Accessibility	Is the venue accessible to Deaf and Disabled people? Also consider your own accessibility: can you gain access easily as the organisers?
Visibility	Check to see if you can see the screen easily from different seating positions. Is your screen raised on a stage or on legs? Is there tiered seating? Would you see subtitles or captions and the screen okay?
Sight	Does the venue have windows/skylights needing blacked out? Are there light switches? Are there 'auto sense' lights? Can you test a Bluray/DVD in the venue in advance to check the screen brightness?
Sound	What are the acoustics like? Test it with a clap - if there is reverb use mats/carpet on floor and sides, filling the room with people helps too!
Comfort	Does your venue have chairs, are they comfy? Are facilities accessible to all – e.g. toilet facilities, a kitchen for serving refreshments, car parking? Consider the temperature, is the space warm enough? If not be sure to encourage your audience to wrap up warm.

EQUIPMENT CHECK + OPERATION ON THE DAY

6 weeks before

Equipment can be an expensive and overwhelming element of showing films in your local community. However, in order to ensure audience satisfaction and consistency of projection it's important to know well in advance if you have reliable equipment that will screen films to a cinematic standard. Whether you are high or low on funds there are some items you should always make sure you have.

When showing films in a multi-purpose space like a community centre or a communal hall, there are 6 essential pieces of equipment/considerations you will need:

Screen Front or rear projection? Choose a size to fit your room	**Projector** Remember to make space for it! A short 'throw' helps in small room	**Player** Blu-ray or DVD player, or Laptop – with cables, storage rack	**PA System** 3 speakers and amplifier. Stereo or Surround 3.1/5.1?	**Film** e.g. DVD, Blu-ray or Digital file	**Making Your Screening Accessible*** Equipment and/or event format

*__Accessibility__: Check with your venue whether they have specific accessibility equipment installed, e.g. a Hearing Loop. There's lots you can do to ensure all your audience members feel welcome, such as film access materials like subtitles, captions, audio description. You might also want to explore running a Relaxed Screening, designed for people who prefer a less intense cinema experience. Here are three great resources to start you off:

Matt Kitson of **Driftwood Cinema** supports the network of community cinemas across South West Scotland. Read more about his trial of equipment to open up access to hearing impaired audiences.

- ★ Deaf and Disabled Accessibility Guide by SQIFF (Scottish Queer International Film Festival) – commissioned for Film Hub Scotland's Access Forum
- ★ BFI FAN Inclusive Cinema – signposts to practical examples of accessibility
- ★ Sidecard, led by Matchbox Cinesub - online database of film access materials

Some questions to consider when organising equipment for your screening:

- Does your venue already have some equipment that you can use? Someone with experience of live music can be really helpful
- Is the equipment permanently installed? Or do you need to plan in time to set it up?
- If you own equipment, remember to have equipment insurance to protect against damage, loss or theft. Your insurer will require you to have safe storage.
- If you do not have any equipment in your venue, can you borrow or hire some from another organisation, venue or group nearby?
- Be sure to test your equipment with your team before your screening, so you can check quality and also all feel more comfortable using it.
- Might you want to consider seeking funding for a screenings provider such as Cinemor77, Driftwood Cinema or NEAT to bring their kit and help you book a film?

Pre-day test + On the day

Creating a Cinematic Atmosphere
Tips from community cinema veteran, Neil Chue Hong:

The lighting in your venue can greatly affect the quality of your presentation. By making sure that there is darkness at the front once the film starts, you will improve the projection.

Keeping the area around the screen dark will also make it easier to focus on the image. To generally increase darkness in your venue it may also be worth investing in some blackout blinds/material for any windows that let light in. Bear this in mind when choosing your venue – a room with lots of large windows will present a challenge on light summer evenings.

Having control of the lights in the room can also be useful. A light on the screen and light on the audience before the screening can help create a cinematic feel. Lights that can be dimmed are also useful here.

Making an effort to not show the DVD menus will make a big difference. To do this you can either use the projector's blanking function, the player's pausing function or even by just putting a piece of cardboard in front of the projector. If you invest in a laptop, you can switch between sources more seamlessly. If you have dedicated presentation software such as QLab this will allow you to play music and have images on screen before the film starts. You might also want to think about advertising upcoming films, local businesses, or other similar events. And don't forget your Bluray/DVD player will go to sleep if it's inactive (i.e. not playing a film)!

Things to ask yourself when testing before the screening day:

- ★ How does the screen look to the audience? Make sure the DVD menu is hidden.
- ★ How does the film start? When does sound/image come in? When is the first speech? Make sure you know these points so you can check the sound levels.
- ★ If showing a foreign language film do you know where the subtitles appear? Are they on screen, visible to everyone (check the sightlines from seats), or have they slipped off the bottom?
- ★ When should the house lights be on/dimmed/off/raised? Who will do this?
- ★ What order are you playing pre-film material/shorts? Make a running order for your projectionist with timings, e.g. duration of each film.
- ★ Do you have announcements to make before the film? Let your projectionist know.
- ★ Keep in communication with your staff/volunteers. Make sure everyone knows where to be and what to do.

On the Day - Arrive early! (or the day before if you have access)
If you're setting up any kit yourselves, give yourself 2 hours before doors open.
If kit is already installed and tested in advance, give yourself 1 hour before doors open.

If there is a technical problem during a screening, try to keep calm and:

- ★ Try to remember the last thing you did
- ★ Work backwards from the end output
- ★ Try one thing at a time, swap one thing at a time
- ★ Most things do not catastrophically fail, apart from bulbs and fuses
- ★ Other things will have failed for a reason, e.g. accidentally pulling something out or switching something off

FILM PROGRAMMING

6 weeks before

"Film programming is the process of choosing and booking films to screen to audiences." – Independent Cinema Office's Programming Guide for Communities

Choosing The Right Film

When choosing your film, think back to page 3 here in the guide and your thoughts about what you want to achieve with your screenings and for whom. Think about the audience you want to screen it to e.g. families, youth group or adults. You may want to reach out to a part of your community that is currently underserved, under-represented or who could benefit the most from a shared space. Things to consider:

- **Research**: You could research and ask your communities what types (or genres) of films they enjoy the most to help you narrow down your choice. Some community cinemas select three films they know are available from a distributor and ask their audience to vote which one of the three films they'd like to see. You could use a Facebook page for the vote. Connect with different parts of your community and form partnerships to help further your reach and make genuine connections e.g. local LGBT+ hub, dementia support groups, autism support groups, youth group, refugee associations, and other local groups or charities.
- **Accessible**: You want your screening to be welcoming and accessible for people to enjoy and it can help to choose something that has recognisable movie stars, local interest or good reviews. Every audience is different though so this is why asking your community is the best place to start. Often it's about striking a balance across a series of screenings, combining films with a wide appeal (e.g. *The Greatest Showman*), firm home-viewing favourites (e.g. *Frozen*), and great films you won't see at the multiplex (e.g. Disney's *Queen of Katwe*).
- **Confidence**: Choose a film you are passionate about as this helps your confidence when it comes to marketing your screening to others. Seeing the film beforehand will make marketing your screenings easier and more engaging.

Is Your Chosen Film Available To 'Book'?

No matter what kind of film screening you plan to run (whether it's free or you're charging for tickets), if you are going to show a film to an audience **you must apply and pay for a film licence** from the film distributor who owns the rights to show that film. This is called "booking" the film. Note that the film licence is separate from the venue licences detailed on page 9. You'll need to arrange both for each screening.

For the vast majority of films made by major film studios, there are some great 'one-stop-shop' **film booking services** (see next page) working on behalf of distributors to offer access to films that have completed their cinema (or "theatrical") release. So be prepared that you won't be able to show brand new films screening in cinemas.

It's worth noting that not all films ever made are available to book. The rights owners to some films can be lost in the mists of time or can take time to track down. On pages 15-16, you'll find a further list of distributors of archive, documentary, international films – a wide selection of good and perhaps rarer films.

5-6 weeks before

How and Where Do I Select and Book The Film?

Here is the golden rule of film programming: **Always secure your film licence before advertising your films so that you know it is definitely available for your screening.** This involves following the process below about 5-6 weeks before your event, but is much preferable to being stuck at the last minute due to lack of a correctly licensed film.

1 Agree your event date And decide if your film is: - Free or Charged entry - Public or Closed	This will dictate which type of two film licences you need: ★ Single Title Screening Licence (STSL) allows you to charge for tickets and advertise the film publicly ★ Public Video Screening Licence (PVSL) is only for free screenings advertised within your venue – usually only applicable in closed education and care settings
2 Make a selection of films	Having a few titles will give you more availability options
3 Contact or search film booking service websites to check availability* of your chosen films and quoted cost of licence	★ Filmbankmedia: need a £150 deposit to join, has widest range of Hollywood studio films ★ Cinema For All: need to be a member for their tried and tested selection of good non-Hollywood films ★ MPLC: Similar to Filmbank's service and film access ★ Moviola: smaller selection than Filmbank and MPLC but could have that little gem you're looking for
4 Based on availability, choose your final film and submit booking request	This is done directly with the film booking services. Please note a response is not immediate! A confirmation of your booking could take **up to 2 weeks** so please plan for this.
5 Film booking service confirms your booking	**NOW** you can start advertising your film screening! Film booking services often email you the film's official poster.
6 Purchase the film on Bluray or DVD	The cheapest and simplest way to do this is to buy it yourself from any good Bluray/DVD seller or online store.
7 Your screening happens	Keep a note of how many people attended. Some distributors also ask what you charged and your overall box office takings (the total money from ticket sales).
8 Film booking service sends invoice based on their original quote	A film licence usually costs between £90 and £160, depending on the distributor you get your film licence from. Some distributors charge either a minimum guarantee (e.g. £100) or 35% of your box office instead. In this agreement, they will charge whichever is greater.

*** Key to Filmbank film availability notes you might see on their website:**
NOTIFY ME = film not available on Bluray/DVD yet (it may still be screening in cinemas)
SPECIAL APPROVAL REQUIRED = complete a form + allow more time for decision
WITHDRAWN = check the latest list of films that may be temporarily unavailable

MARKETING + TICKETING

4 weeks before + lead-up

Getting The Word Out

You've confirmed the best venue, checked your equipment, chosen, booked and confirmed the film(s) you're screening. It's time to invite people to enjoy it with you. Here are some tips to help promote your screenings and grow your audience:

- ★ **Design an eye-catching poster**. This can be used digitally on your social media, newsletters, website and print versions (such as posters and flyers) can be placed around your local area. Canva offers an easy way to design posters. To ensure your marketing is accessible remember to use a minimum of size 12pt font, contrasting colours (e.g. dark blue text on a cream background). Include if your film has something extra, e.g. a popular film star or it's a sing-a-long. To avoid disappointment, best to include the film's official British Board of Film Classification certificate on your poster.
- ★ **Send an informative and exciting mailout**. You could use websites like Mailchimp to set up a mailing list. This is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as people can sign up and unsubscribe themselves.
- ★ **Create a list of places to distribute your marketing:**
  - → Your own organisation's outlets (if existing) reach the people you are already in contact with, making them aware that you are now screening films.
  - → Chat to local organisations and businesses where you could put up your poster or leave some flyers e.g. post office, cafes, libraries etc.
  - → Consider local press and publications such as the local newspaper, noticeboards etc. and other organisations' newsletters help spread the word.
- ★ **Set up or use a social media account that feels right for the audience you're trying to reach and that you feel comfortable using.** Make your posts stand out with engagement opportunities, e.g. a competition for free tickets, countdown to the screening or 'guess the film' game.

Ticketing

When promoting your event, make it easy for people to book their tickets in advance. It lets you know how many to expect so you ensure you have a safe, legal number of people in your venue without turning anyone away on the day.

> "Online ticket sales have been a big game changer for us as we struggled to have somewhere to sell them prior to screening. In saying that, it's something that costs money and has to be worked towards."
>
> **Kelty Community Cinema**

Your ticket price is what **you** feel your audience will pay. Look at similar local activities, though don't sell your event short with the value of what you're offering by comparison. It might make it more affordable if you wanted to explore a sliding scale or "Pay What You Can".

Selling in-person: Place a number of paper tickets with a friendly local hub or shop with opening hours convenient for your audience. And you can sell what's left on the door.

Selling online: This can be handy but note that if you're charging for your screening, online ticket agencies will charge your audiences a % of your ticket price. For example: Eventbrite (10%), Ticket Source (7% + VAT, min. 25p), Citizen Ticket (2.7% + 20p).

FRONT OF HOUSE (OR THE CINEMA EXPERIENCE)

3 weeks before + lead-up

On the day

Thinking back to the cinema experience you want to offer your audience (page 3) and the team you've gathered for your screenings (page 4), your front of house planning is where you can let your imagination run free to create a fun and pleasurable screening for both audiences and organisers, within your capacity and resources.

Take time in advance to consider your audience's experience at your event:

- ★ Do they know where to arrive? Make sure there's signage at the venue entrance.
- ★ Who will welcome them, check their ticket, and point out the facilities?
- ★ What is their first impression coming into the screening space – warm, nicely lit (with fairy lights, spotlights?), comfy seats, smiling faces, smell of baking?
- ★ What can they do before/after the screening – have a refreshment (don't forget to arrange your alcohol licence if you need it), do a planned activity?
- ★ How will they know the film is about to start – by an introduction to the film?
- ★ Is there space to move out of their seat (e.g. to use the facilities) during the film? Set-up the chairs so there are handy aisles and keep fire exits clear.
- ★ They've taken the time to come out to your screening so afterwards publicly thank them and everyone who has worked hard to organise the event.
- ★ Invite them to share their feedback about the event afterwards (see below).
- ★ Make sure they are safely on their way home.
- ★ And then there's the final space tidy up and taking down the equipment.

Think of it all as an enjoyable form of customer service with the level of care and welcome expected by your audience. You want them to return to your next screenings and it will give you and the team a warm glow to see the joy of your cinemagoers. Here are links to three inspiring examples from Scotland's Screen Community:

Skye Community Cinema
Filmmaker Q&As

Lochwinnoch's Films 4U
Transforming a venue

North East Arts Touring
Dracula-themed festival

Evaluation
While you're planning the lead-up to your screening and on the day, be sure to collect evidence of all your activities to help you plan your next screening and for sharing with funders - **survey** your audience using SurveyMonkey. **Take pictures** of your screenings, put together **budgets** and **marketing materials**, collate **audience testimonials** and **audience reaction** scores. A little work here will go a long way.

REVIEWING HOW IT WENT

Post-Screening

After your screening take some time as a team to evaluate how your first screening went. Here are some questions you could ask to help evaluate your screening:

- ★ What went well?
- ★ What did each team member enjoy?
- ★ What feedback did you receive from your audience?
- ★ What marketing worked well for the team and for the audience? Is there anything you might change for next time?
- ★ What could be improved for your next screening?

With each screening you and your team plan, deliver and evaluate, there will be things to learn and build on for your future screenings. Hopefully you can all get into some form of a rhythm of your roles, processes and checks as detailed in this guide so your operations will become smoother in time.

Opportunities and challenges will arise and you're not alone in these. If you or a colleague use Facebook, you're welcome to join the private Scotland's Screen Community Facebook Group along with nearly 400 members who screen films across the country in venues of all shapes and sizes. No question is too big, small, or unusual and someone will likely have some good advice from their own experience.

Scotland's Screen Community Facebook Group

Challenges You Might Experience

Hopefully this guide helps you and your team to recognise and go some way to overcome the challenges you may experience in your early screening activity. Here are some common ones along with ideas and approaches for dealing with them:

- ★ Screening films in a venue that isn't purpose-built for screening films can mean a different/perceived reduced experience than a regular cinema. **Focus on a strong relationship with your venue partners and emphasise to your audience how flexible their community cinema is for the price.**
- ★ Equipment isn't easily accessible and can often cost the most in your budget. **Talk to us (see the front page for our contacts) and to other community cinemas in your area to explore sharing equipment and best practice tips.**
- ★ Trying to cover your costs for a screening that is free and accessible to all isn't likely to be sustainable. **Funding links in this guide (page 4) include community development funding which is often for the express purpose of opening up activity as access to all.**
- ★ The last few years especially have reduced the capacity of both staff and volunteers along with a more challenging community support environment. **Try scaling your activity to what is achievable with the resources available to you.**
- ★ Defining your audience and choosing the "right" film doesn't always happen at every screening. **Read on for more ideas to expand your film choices…**

Post-Screening

BUILDING ON WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

As well as refining how you plan and deliver events, you might well notice or want to pursue **opportunities** from your screening activity. These might include:

- How your audience attend events like yours. Maybe they like to focus their time over one day, so a double bill or even a manageable themed film festival over a weekend could be of interest.
- You receive requests for specific films that members of your audience want to share with their community. These suggestions might offer a chance to represent a diverse group of people you're not already reaching, e.g. young people, Black and People of Colour, LGBTQ+ themes, D/deaf and Disabled people.
- Audiences – possibly likely families and children – prefer shorter films.
- You receive interest in attending from an unexpected audience in your community, e.g. a local care home or school.
- Showing more of your local area on screen, both past and present.
- Local filmmakers would like to screen and talk about their work.
- Local businesses see an opportunity to advertise at your screenings in exchange for an agreed fee to your group.
- An interest in broadening the range of films you screen

Making The Most of Opportunities
Making the most of opportunities often requires a different approach which can involve a bit more thought, planning, funding and collaboration but are often incredibly rewarding, strengthening your team and partnerships to develop more long-term screening activity.

There are many useful resources and training opportunities which can help provide ideas, momentum, and real-life human interactions to help you on your way:

WIDENING FILM CHOICE: OTHER FILM DISTRIBUTORS

Along with the four previously mentioned 'one-stop-shop' film booking services of Filmbankmedia, Cinema For All, MPLC, Moviola and the selection of cultural programming available from Film Hub Scotland (join up to receive newsletters about these!), you might want to look at other sources of films to respond to audience requests, widen the choice of films you can offer your audiences, or show that film you've maybe heard good things about.

Here's a selection of other film distributors to make your own investigations into licensing a film easier:

ICO (Independent Cinema Office): You'll have seen the resources that have been referenced in this Guide. As a distributor their special interest is in uncompromising new work, re-issues of key works of world cinema and artists' films.

BFI (British Film Institute): Distributes new independent features and classic re-releases.

Park Circus: Distribution company based in Glasgow providing information, ideas, licences and screening materials for a wide range of classic films.

Showing **short films** before a feature can add context and diversity to your programme. Festival brochures and websites like Glasgow Short Film Festival or Discovery Film Festival in Dundee are a helpful resource, and many community cinemas are increasingly sourcing short films through Vimeo and social media, which allows you to approach filmmakers directly to request the appropriate permissions. Cinema For All also offers a selection of award-winning shorts.

Archive material can also be a great addition to your programme, adding a sense of local interest and community. It also offers a great way of introducing film education into your programming. The National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive is Scotland's collection of over 100 years of recorded film history. A great example of a film featuring archive footage that has been popular in community cinema screenings is From Scotland with Love (distributor: Park Circus).

FOUR JOIN-UPS FOR USEFUL DISCOUNTS + SUPPORT

1. CINEMA FOR ALL is the UK's national organisation for support and development of volunteer-led cinema. There's lots of great advice on the website: cinemaforall.org.uk. For an annual fee, you can join as a Member to access benefits including:

- ★ Low-cost film licences for a range of films through the Booking Scheme
- ★ Discounted equipment hire located in Scotland
- ★ Discounts on public liability and equipment insurance
- ★ Your £150 Filmbankmedia deposit waived
- ★ Access to training programmes designed for community cinemas

2. FILM HUB SCOTLAND is part of the Film Audience Network, set up by the BFI (British Film Institute) to build a vibrant and varied film exhibition sector throughout all of the UK. Again, you'll find lots of helpful info on the website: filmhubscotland.com.

You can join the Film Hub Scotland network for free and benefits include:

- ★ Opportunities and funding for discounted film licences on selected films
- ★ Access to funding for cultural film programming activity
- ★ Tailored advice sessions and funding surgeries with experts
- ★ Bursaries for development, e.g. training, conferences, 'go and see' trips
- ★ Regular very useful newsletters and friendly online 'coffee mornings

3. REGIONAL SCREEN SCOTLAND was funded by **SCREEN SCOTLAND** to deliver the two-year funding programme A Cinema Near You addressing gaps in cinema provision across Scotland. The programme ended in June 2022 and from it has grown a network of **screen networks** in eight geographical areas each coordinated by local independent film exhibitors who are experts in planning and delivering screening activity.

Each screen network brings exhibitors in that area together to share knowledge and resources and to provide strength in numbers when booking films so can offer discounted licences. Below is a list of where the screen networks are located. Contact RSS to get in touch with the network coordinator in your area or, if you're based outwith these areas, to see how you can receive networked support:

- ★ Aberdeenshire
- ★ Angus
- ★ Argyll and Bute
- ★ Glasgow
- ★ Highland
- ★ Inner Hebrides
- ★ North Lanarkshire
- ★ Moray
- ★ Outer Hebrides
- ★ Renfrewshire
- ★ South Ayrshire
- ★ South Lanarkshire
- ★ South West Scotland

4. INTO FILM puts film at the heart of the educational and personal development of children and young people across the UK. They primarily help schools that want to screen films. Community cinemas can become a venue for Into Film Festival and access their discounted film licences and free online resources. Find out more here: www.intofilm.org.

TWO CONFERENCES TO CONSIDER ATTENDING

We all know how much time a conference can take out of an already busy schedule so here's the two key in-person events that can go a long way to help you feel less on your own when you're screening films and have a bit of fun at the same time. The Film Hub Scotland bursary can also offer some funding to attend:

1. 30 November – 1 December 2022: THIS WAY UP in Dundee

Delivered by the BFI Film Audience Network (so through the Film Hub Scotland Team), *This Way Up* is the annual conference for people working in UK film exhibition; a space to bring the sector together to share new ideas, celebrate our work, and collectively imagine the future of cinema-going for audiences across the UK. *This Way Up* is a great way to step back from the everyday and be refreshed in your thinking, planning and delivery through the inspiration of other film exhibitors.

2. 25-26 February 2023: CINEMA FOR ALL CONFERENCE in Sheffield

Join Cinema For All in celebrating some of the amazing achievements made across volunteer-led cinema over the last twelve months and looking forward to what's to come. It's an opportunity to meet and feel connected to the wide network of from around the UK and toast the future of community led film exhibition. The event will comprise of screenings, workshops, discussions and seminars with special guests from the community cinema sector and beyond! The red carpet will also be rolled out for the annual Film Society of the Year Awards.

NOW SHOWING GUIDE - CREDITS

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Credits for images on page 13 (left to right):
Skye Community Cinema
Linstone Housing Association
North East Arts Touring (NEAT)