IRONSTONE IMPACT FILM FESTIVAL 2026

Official Rules and Details

For participating charities: everything you need to make your film and take part.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, IMPACT!

Welcome to the Ironstone Impact Film Festival! Ironstone Impact is back, and this year your charity gets to tell its story on the big screen. Make a short film about your mission, get Londoners voting for it, and your charity could be one of the top charities celebrated at a live, gold-carpet premiere at the Grand Theatre. The grand prize is $100,000.

PICK YOUR GENRE

Every film must be one of these four genres. Choose one and make it yours.

COMEDY	DRAMA	MYSTERY	ACTION
Make us laugh	Move us	Keep us guessing	Get our hearts racing

SCHEDULE

DATES	WHAT HAPPENS
Monday, October 5 to Friday, November 6	Submissions open, closing at midnight (11:59 PM) on Friday, November 6
Tuesday, November 10 to Sunday, November 29	Public voting, with new categories each week (see Public voting below)

HOW IT WORKS

1. Make your film
Pick one of the four genres and create a 3 to 5 minute film that tells the story of your charity's mission.

2. We select
Once submissions close, our team reviews every film and selects the ones that move on to the public vote. How many advance depends on how many we receive.

3. London votes
If your film is selected, it goes up on the Ironstone Impact website, where Londoners vote each week in new categories. The public vote narrows the field to the top charities.

4. The premiere
If your charity is one of the top charities, you'll be celebrated at a live, gold-tie premiere at the Grand Theatre on Monday, November 30, where the winners are announced.

YOUR FILM

- **Genre:** your film must be one of the four genres: Comedy, Drama, Mystery or Action. A skit based on a favourite movie, TV show or pop-culture moment is welcome, as long as it fits your chosen genre.
- **Your mission:** whatever you choose, your film has to tie back to your mission, the people you serve and the difference you make every day.
- **Length:** 3 to 5 minutes, including titles and credits.
- **Deadline:** midnight (11:59 PM) on Friday, November 6. Submissions open Monday, October 5.

WHAT TO SUBMIT

- **Your film:** an MP4, 3 to 5 minutes long (see Technical specs).
- **A short paragraph on the funding:** if your charity wins, where would the funding be used in your organization? Tell us in a few sentences. Our judges will read it as part of their decision.
- **Your music source:** where your music came from (royalty-free or properly licensed).

MADE BY YOUR TEAM

Your film must be made by your own organization: your staff and volunteers.

- Unpaid volunteers, including film students, are welcome, as long as they are part of your team and not outsourced.
- No production companies, paid crews or hired videographers.
- If any part of your film is produced or filmed by an outside company or crew, Ironstone Impact reserves the right to disqualify it.

NO AI

Every part of your film must be made by people: written, filmed, performed, voiced and edited by your team. AI-generated video, images, voices, music and scripts are not allowed. Everyday editing tools, like colour correction, stabilization and captions, are fine.

GREEN SCREEN AND PRACTICAL EFFECTS: GO FOR IT

Green screen, props, costumes, makeup and practical effects are all welcome. Anything you put behind a green screen needs to be your own footage or properly licensed, and not AI-generated.

MUSIC AND CLIPS

- Use royalty-free or properly licensed music only, and tell us where your music came from when you submit.
- Acting out your own version of a movie or TV scene is great. Real clips from a movie or show, or a show's music, are not allowed.

TECHNICAL SPECS

SPEC	REQUIREMENT
Camera	Cellphone only (iPhone or Android preferred)
Resolution	1080 HD is standard; 4K is preferred
Frame rate	24 fps is standard; 30, 60 or higher are optional
Aspect ratio	16:9 only, filmed horizontally. Turn your phone sideways before you hit record.
Audio	Your phone's built-in mic
Optional accessories	Lens attachments and audio accessories are permitted, and so are third-party camera apps like Final Cut Camera or Blackmagic Camera
Length	3 minutes minimum, 5 minutes maximum
Export	Send your finished film as an MP4, at the resolution you filmed in

Not sure about any of this? Our optional filmmaking workshop the week of October 5 covers storytelling, filming, sound and editing.

PUBLIC VOTING

If your film is selected, it will be posted on the Ironstone Impact website for public voting. Each week, Londoners will cast their votes in new categories, from Best Concept to Best Picture. Public voting runs from Tuesday, November 10 to Sunday, November 29, so share your film and get your supporters voting!

Week 1: Tuesday, November 10 to Sunday, November 15

BEST CONCEPT / CREATIVITY

The film brings an imaginative, creative concept to life, finding unique and innovative ways to share your charity's mission and leaving a lasting impression on the audience.

BEST WRITING

The most compelling and engaging storytelling. Strong writing and narrative connect with the audience and tell the story of your charity and its mission, with lasting impact.

Week 2: Tuesday, November 17 to Sunday, November 22

BEST CREATIVE USE OF GENRE

Uses your chosen genre (Comedy, Drama, Mystery or Action) in the most creative and effective way to showcase your charity and its mission.

BEST EMOTIONAL IMPACT

Creates a strong emotional connection with the audience through inspiring, meaningful moments.

Week 3: Tuesday, November 24 to Sunday, November 29

BEST PICTURE / MOST INSPIRING

The most powerful and inspiring film, through its story, its message and its connection to your charity. It moves people to act and shows the meaningful difference the cause can make.

THE PREMIERE: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, LIVE AND IN PERSON

The top charities will be announced once public voting closes on Sunday, November 29. If your film is in the public vote, please save the date.

Ironstone Impact will celebrate the tremendous impact the top charities make in our city, and we will roll out the gold carpet for the big premiere at the Grand Theatre. More details to follow.

JUDGING

Final funding decisions will be made by our panel of judges, informed by the public vote and based on predetermined criteria, including:

- Community impact
- Strength of mission
- Demonstrated need
- How your charity would use Ironstone Impact funding
- Storytelling
- Creativity
- Connection between your film and your charity's purpose

PRIZES

$100,000 GRAND PRIZE

LIGHTS, CAMERA, IMPACT!

Whether your film is heartfelt, inspiring, funny, creative or unexpected, this is your opportunity to show the community what your charity is all about. We can't wait to see your story on screen.

The fine print: Ironstone Impact reserves the right to disqualify any film that does not follow these rules. **Questions?** Contact Scott Rigmond at srigmond@drewloholdings.com or 519-868-0507. Details at ironstonebuilt.com/ironstone-impact.