

# 2024 SKILLSUSA DIGITAL CINEMA CONTEST GUIDELINES

## Contest Description:

Teams of two contestants are required to create an original short film incorporating an assigned theme and creative elements with a finished runtime between 4 to 5:00 minutes, as well as an additional on-site challenge to be completed at State.

## Contest Scope:

- Pre-Production packet containing a script and a storyboard for the film
- 4-minute (minimum) to 5-minute (maximum) film that will be filmed and edited prior to the contest date using the assigned theme and additional creative elements.
- **An additional challenge to be revealed on-site at SkillsUSA State**
- Interview with Judge(s)

## Project Elements:

Contest entries must do the following:

- Complete and submit a pre-production packet containing a script in standard screenplay format and storyboard for the film
- Incorporate the assigned theme: **Avoid the Shadows**
- Include the following line of dialog: **“Nobody would believe us!”**
- For timing purposes and to ensure fairness in judging entries
  - Place a standard editor’s countdown at the beginning of the sequence to indicate the start of the film (3-2-1 then one second of black then film). This should be 4-seconds long and IS NOT INCLUDED in the time limit of the film. (Example: your project, including the countdown, could be up to 5:04 in length)
  - Include an on-screen graphic with the words “The End” at the conclusion of the film (this graphic does not count in the length of your film)

## Project Submission:

- 4 copies of the Pre-production packet must be submitted:
  - 4 copies of the printed screenplay
  - 4 copies of the printed storyboards
- Film entries must be submitted as H.264 video files at either HD 1080p, UHD 2160p, or 4K DCI resolution using the following naming convention on a USB thumb drive:
  - Team Designation.mp4 (example: Team A.mp4)

## **Additional items that MUST BE BROUGHT to the contest:**

There will be an additional hands-on challenge on-site, therefore the following items must be brought to SkillsUSA State:

- One editing computer (laptop or desktop) with editing and/or compositing software (video, audio, etc) If bringing a desktop system, bring everything necessary (monitor, keyboard, mouse, etc)
- All raw video/audio footage files used in the production of your film for this contest must be pre-loaded on the computer (make sure the computer has the proper codecs to read/edit your files)
- Properly licensed or public domain music beds (bring a wide variety)
- Properly licensed or public domain Sound Effects library
- 2 Headphones and one headphone splitter (so both contestants can hear the same audio)
- Audio Recorder, microphone, and cable (to record narration on-site)
- Media necessary for Audio Recorder that can be imported into editing computer
- Powerstrip, notepad, pens/pencils

We cannot tell you what the challenge will be until the contest orientation. Just be prepared to produce something on location and then export it. **YOU WILL NOT USE OR NEED A CAMERA FOR THIS ADDITIONAL CHALLENGE.** This will primarily be an editing assignment with some script writing and audio recording.

## **Prohibited Elements:**

Films are to be original work. No copyrighted visual materials (stock footage/images) may be used. In addition, the following are prohibited and will result in a score of zero.

- On-screen explicit depiction of substance abuse (illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, smoking/vaping)
- On-screen depiction or display of nudity, sexual acts
- On-screen display or audio containing profanity, racial slurs, derogatory terminology
- On-screen depiction of gratuitous gore/violence

## **Interview with the Judge(s):**

Contestants should be prepared to answer a wide range of questions about their film (technical, theme, creative process, etc.). Before viewing the video, teams will pitch the video to the judges and briefly explain what they're about to see. After viewing the video, judges may ask the contestants to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the production. Questions from the judges will occur pre/post-viewing each video and will include details from each team's pre-production packet.