



The UNIMED Award 2026 at the 83rd Venice International Film Festival

September 2-12, 2026, Venice, Italy

1. The UNIMED Award

The UNIMED Award, collateral prize of the Venice International Film Festival, results from the collaboration between UNIMED- Mediterranean Universities Union and La Biennale of Venice, which organizes one of the most prestigious international film festivals worldwide.

The aim of the Festival is to raise awareness and promote international cinema in all its forms as art, entertainment and as an industry, in a spirit of freedom and dialogue. The Festival also organizes retrospectives and tributes to major figures as a contribution towards a better understanding of the history of cinema.

The award, launched in 2017 and now at its 10th edition, was created in memory of Prof. Franco Rizzi, former Secretary General and founder of UNIMED, for his life-long commitment to the cooperation among Euro-Mediterranean universities.

A jury of international students coming from UNIMED associated universities assigns the Award to the movie of great artistic value which at the same conveys a message in line with UNIMED's principles: diversity, integration, tolerance, respect, dialogue, equality, freedom.

Since its foundation, UNIMED has been committed to use education as a global force and a vehicle for mutual understanding. The UNIMED Award aims to promote exchanges and discussions between people of different cultures and religious beliefs, to fight racism and discrimination, to reveal the complex causes of violence and to support meaningful and constructive debates.

2. Jury selection criteria

The international jury will be composed of about **20 students** selected among the **UNIMED associated members**, thus representing both the diversity and the complexity of the Mediterranean.



All jury members must be enrolled in one of the UNIMED-associated universities and have an **academic background in cinema and visual arts**, including but not limited to: film and theatre studies, cinematography, film production, direction, screenwriting, animation, post-production, sound design, interactive media, film history, experimental film, media arts, virtual reality and augmented reality. Applications from unrelated academic fields will not be considered.

The call is open to students **enrolled in undergraduate and master's programs**. Please note that applicants must remain enrolled at the time of the Festival (2–12 September 2026). Students graduating before this period will not be considered.

Applicants who have already participated in a previous edition of the Award are not eligible for reselection, in order to ensure equal opportunity for new applicants.

All the movies will be screened in their original language and subtitled in English. Therefore, it is compulsory for students to have a **good command of English**.

Students wishing to apply must submit their application to the International Relations Office of their university. The university is responsible for the initial selection of applications. After the first internal screening, the university must send a maximum of two CVs to UNIMED, which will handle the second stage of the selection process. CVs submitted directly by students to UNIMED will not be accepted. All received CVs will be evaluated by UNIMED in close collaboration with UNINT- University of International Studies of Rome.

UNIMED encourages applications from all qualified candidates, regardless of gender, nationality, religious or ethnic backgrounds, and from people with disabilities.

3. Role of the jury

The jury members are asked to watch all the selected projections and to participate in the meetings which are organized in Venice.

Moreover, students are to contribute to the promotion of the event through the production of press releases and news, photos and videos which will be published on the UNIMED social networks and used for the post-event communication.



Lastly, students need to elaborate an individual report after the week in Venice, explaining in detail the activities carried out (1 page).

The jury selects the best movie after all movies of the Official Competition have been watched. The decision of the jury as best film is strictly confidential, only the President of the Board will be informed. This decision will remain secret and no information will be publicized or disclosed before the Award Ceremony. Any attempt to influence the decisions of the jury will result in disqualification. The jury assumes the responsibility and the duty to watch all the scheduled movies under penalty of exclusion of the initiative and in that case to reimburse UNIMED for any costs incurred for his/her participation in the event.

4. Costs

UNIMED is working to secure external funding to support the cost of the students' participation. Depending on the extent of funding secured, UNIMED will inform interested candidates of the costs to be covered.

We especially encourage nominations from universities on the Southern shore of the Mediterranean. Should funding be confirmed, covering participation costs for students from this region, including accreditation to the Festival, travel, visa fees where applicable, meals and accommodation, will be our first priority.

For this reason, we invite all interested universities to submit applications regardless of their current financial capacity. The application is not binding at this stage, and we ask institutions that foresee difficulties in covering participation costs to make this known when submitting their nominations. This information will help us allocate available resources where they are most needed.

All financial efforts potentially sustained by your university will be duly compensated by the prestige and the visibility that the potential participation of your students to this major event will bestow on your institution. Furthermore, for students in visual arts and cinema this is surely a great professional and human experience to be included in their CVs.

5. Dissemination of the Award



The results of the competition, the experience of the jury and its motivation will be disseminated through several channels.

- UNIMED website, social media and newsletter.
- Website, social media and newsletter of the jury members' universities.
- Online magazines.

6. Deadlines

The 83rd edition of the Venice International Film Festival will be held **from Wednesday 2 September to Saturday 12 September 2026 in Venice, Italy.**

Interested students must send their application to the International Relations Office of their university. Then, the University will make a first selection and send a maximum of 2 CVs to UNIMED, which is responsible for the second stage of the selection.

Students are invited to submit their CVs to the universities well in advance to allow sufficient time for the internal selection process. Universities must send their preselected candidates to UNIMED by May 20th, 2026.

All curricula received are evaluated by UNIMED in close collaboration with UNINT•University of International Studies of Rome.

7. Questions?

For any questions related to the UNIMED Award feel free to reach out to unimed@uni-med.net

You can find further information on the previous editions and enjoy the UNIMED Award video [here](#).