

SPI STORIES 2026 – I WONDER IF OUT THERE...

The Spi Stories Short Film Festival reaches its fourteenth edition. The competition, created by the publisher LiberEtà and the CGIL Pensioners Union, has chosen the title "Chissà se fuori..." ("I wonder if out there...") for this edition. You can participate to the competition by creating a video with a maximum length of eleven minutes, released in 2025. The Spi Stories Short Film Festival reaches its fourteenth edition. Created by the publishing house LiberEtà and the CGIL Union of Retirees, this year's competition takes on the title "I Wonder If Out There... Telling Stories of Solitude, Rediscovering Community."

This edition focuses on solitude—whether chosen or endured—on community, and on the ties that hold us together. There are moments when each of us feels vulnerable. Not only when the body slows down, but when something cracks in our connection with others: when our voice no longer finds an answer, when the world seems to move forward without us. Solitude and fragility are not exceptions; they are part of the human condition. They cross generations, hide behind lives that look busy and fulfilled, and reveal a fundamental need we all share: to be seen, heard, acknowledged. "I Wonder If Out There..." was born to tell these stories. To give shape and voice to what often remains in the shadows—or is mistakenly thought to belong only to certain people: the sick, the elderly, those living on the margins. But solitude has many faces, and fragility does not belong to one stage of life. There are young forms of fragility—lives that struggle to find a place in the world. There are collective solitudes that inhabit crowded cities. There are lives full of noise but empty of presence.

The competition invites filmmakers to explore that subtle space between the "inside" and the "outside": those who remain within the boundaries of community, those who are pushed out, those who step outside in search of air, those who get lost, and those who find their way again thanks to a gesture, a word, a glance.

"Outside" is not only what separates us—it can also be what reconnects us. Outside is the square, the street, the group, the voice calling our name. Outside is the threshold where encounters can begin again. Fragility is not a weakness but a possibility. Those who acknowledge their own fragility are already "outside" a world that demands strength and self-sufficiency at all costs. They choose to remain open, to welcome others, to build relationships. In this sense, fragility becomes a political act: it forces us to rethink how we live together, how much room we give to care, listening, and solidarity.

"I Wonder If Out There..." does not ask for pity, but for awareness. It calls on participants to tell—through any form of visual language—the story of fragile lives that endure, of solitude seeking a passage, of the need for community that runs through our everyday lives. It is an invitation to open the door, to look at what lies outside—and perhaps also at who we are leaving outside.

Participants can enter the competition with a video of up to eleven minutes, produced after January 2025.

Who can apply to Spi Stories 2026?

The competition is open to all videomakers, filmmakers, creatives, and audiovisual professionals, regardless of age or geographical origin. Participation is open to anyone wishing to express an original and critical vision of the proposed theme, with particular attention to the ongoing challenges and changes.

Participation requirements for Spi Stories 2026

Short film length

Each short film must have a maximum duration of 10 minutes, including credits. Works exceeding this limit will not be considered.

Production date

Short films must have been released in 2025 onwards.

Original content

Short films must be original works. If the work is inspired by an existing multimedia product (film, video, video game, artwork, etc.), the author must explicitly cite the referenced work or the inspiration that led to the creation of the short film.

Format and quality

Short films must be submitted in digital format (preferably .mp4 or .mov), with visual and sound quality suitable for public screening. The files should be easily readable and compatible with most devices.

Language and subtitles

If the language of the short film is not Italian, subtitles in Italian or English are mandatory.

Creation of meaningful content

Although there are no specific limits on genre, style, or approach, the short films must address the proposed theme in a coherent and meaningful way, using the audiovisual form to explore the social, cultural, and technological implications of the theme.

Deadline for submitting short films to Spi Stories

Works must be submitted no later than 15th February 2026. Applications received after this date will not be considered. You may submit your work at any time before the deadline.

Selection and Awards

A selection committee composed of film industry experts, critics, and technology professionals will evaluate the short films based on the following criteria:

Awards will be presented during the awards ceremony at the end of the festival.

Terms and Conditions Spi Stories 2026

Acceptance of the competition rules: Participation in the competition implies full acceptance of these rules and the final decisions of the jury.

Use of the works: The festival organisation reserves the right to use excerpts from the selected short films for promotional, advertising, and festival dissemination purposes, with the authors' consent.

Copyright: Authors retain the copyright of the works presented but grant the festival the right to screen and use the works for promotional purposes without profit.

Responsibility: Authors are responsible for the content of the works submitted and guarantee that they do not infringe upon intellectual property rights or third-party rights.