

AMERICAN FILM MARKET®



THE AFM PITCH CONFERENCE GUIDE

2023

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Overview

The AFM Pitch Conference gives attendees the opportunity to watch film and television script pitches in action and learn how to effectively pitch ideas themselves.

The Pitch Conference is structured in the following way:

- If you are selected to pitch, you will be heard by an audience of over 300 people, mostly industry professionals.
- Each selected pitcher has EXACTLY two minutes to pitch their film or limited series television script idea to a panel of distinguished producers on our in-person stage.
- Panelists then take a few minutes to provide an honest critique.

To be considered to pitch at The AFM Pitch Conference, you will need to submit a two-minute video pitch by **October 16, 2023**.

Past Participant Insights



The AFM Pitch Conference was a great opportunity to not only refine my pitching capabilities but also expose me to a breadth of different pitching styles and types of stories. Participating in the pitch conference helped me gain the confidence to tell my story to a large group of people and refine how I articulate my vision.

Curtis Matzke

I'd say first and foremost, this is an educational exercise, not a promotional opportunity. That being said, I would focus on the benefits of honing your craft in pitching, rather than refining the project/material that you're actually working with.



I would consider pitching a project that is not even real, but would garner the kind of reaction from the judges and audience you want, and showcase your individual skill set as a pitcher. You'll also be less biased to their reaction that way and can think more clearly about the content and form of your pitch.

Victor Lord



I received very positive feedback from the panelists, and helpful tips to tweak it a little more to make it shine. The audience was wonderful, and it was nice to see such a variety of people, voices, and projects presented.

C.M. Conway

What types of pitches are accepted at the AFM Sessions?

Storytelling can take on many creative forms. AFM accepts original pitch projects in the following formats:

- **Narrative feature film scripts in any genre**
- **Long-form television “Made-for-TV” film scripts in any genre**
- **Narrative television scripts for a limited series in any genre (New!)**

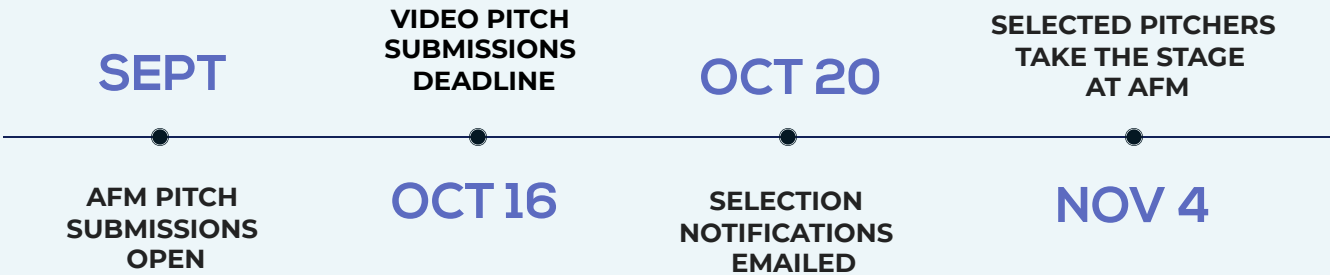
Please note that we do not accept pitches for documentaries, traditional TV shows, or short form content.

Narrative Feature Film
Motion picture that tells a fictionalized story

Made-for-TV Feature Film
Long-form film project intended for exhibition on television

Limited Series
TV project with a few episodes that tell a complete story

Submission Schedule 2023



Video Pitch Structures

It's completely up to you to determine the best way to pitch your project. That said, here are a few video pitch structures you can contemplate to help you address the necessary points in an effective pitch:

THE CLASSIC PITCH

"Hi, my name is [NAME]. My project is a [GENRE] in the vein of [TONALLY SIMILAR PROJECT]. It's called [TITLE] and it's about [LOG LINE]. The project follows [MAIN CHARACTER AND SUPPORTING CHARACTER] as they [SECOND ACT ACTIVITY]. Problems occur when [MIDPOINT COMPLICATION OR SECOND ACT LOW POINT]. Now they must [THIRD ACT STRATEGY] or face [CONSEQUENCES]."

BLAKE SNYDER

"Hi, I'm [NAME] and I'm from [LOCATION]. On the verge of a [STASIS = DEATH] moment, a flawed hero [BREAKS INTO TWO] with the [B-STORY], but when the [MIDPOINT] happens, he/she/they must learn the [THEME] before [ALL IS LOST] to defeat the [OBSTACLE / ANTAGONIST]."

THE PIXAR

"Hi, my name is [NAME]. I'm a [OCCUPATION] and I live in [LOCATION]. My project is a [GENRE] called [TITLE]. Once upon a time_____. Every day_____. One day_____. Because of that_____. Until finally_____."

A pitch is really meant to give our esteemed panelists and myself an idea about what it is that we're talking about exactly, and more specifically for this two-minute scenario, in the most abbreviated, immediate and impactful way possible.

- Lee Jessup, Pitch Expert & Conference Moderator



Rehearse + Record

In order to effectively deliver a pitch on camera, you have to rehearse. Pitching out loud helps you notice problem areas, clarify sentence structure, and fix any components of the pitch that might not be working.

Try to remember...as uncomfortable as you might be watching yourself on video and pitching to an empty room at first, industry panelists can always tell the difference between someone who has practiced their pitch and taken the time to rehearse before submitting their video and/or pitching live onstage. Here are some tips and suggestions related to creating and rehearsing your video pitch:

Step 1: Choose Your Ideal Practice Listener

No matter what the subject is, pitching to a camera can be challenging. To make it easier, identify a person in your life, who's not only a member of your project's target audience, but someone you'd feel comfortable delivering your video pitch to. This person does not need to be in the actual room when you're pitching, but you can visualize them or imagine they are listening to the pitch while you practice. The idea is to replicate the kind of comfortable and conversational style you'd have with a friend.

Step 2: Read Out Loud

Start by reading aloud while looking at your actual pitch notes. Read it a few times...then time yourself. You'll start to realize if you're running over two minutes and can work to make sentences shorter or more concise, as needed. You'll also find areas that sound more natural when expressed as sentence fragments, rather than complete sentences.

Step 3: Write on Notecards

Write out your verbal pitch on notecards - on one side write one paragraph of your pitch, and on the reverse side, write a header for that paragraph or the first few words as a mental marker.

Step 4: Memorize and Revise

Thoroughly memorize your text and keep polishing! Cross out words, underline where you want emphasis, and add any other notes that might help you during the pitch.

Step 5: Rewrite Notecards

Now that you've honed your pitch, rewrite the text on brand new notecards to create a clean copy. The act of writing out your script can be hugely helpful in memorizing it.

Step 6: Pitch to Camera

Deliver your pitch on camera. Remember to visualize the person you chose in Step 1, the person to whom you can pitch most casually and comfortably. Do not read from a script!

Please note that it is obvious to us when pitch submissions include reading from a teleprompter or computer screen during the recorded pitch video. Though we understand it can be nerve-wracking, you won't be able to read from a script if selected to pitch onstage. We take reading your pitch on screen into consideration when pre-selecting pitchers to participate in the conference.

Step 7: Watch Yourself

We know. It's painful. But try to observe where you speak too quickly, where you may need to vary your tone, and where you need to improve on eye contact.

Step 8: Pitch to Camera Ten Times

Pitch to camera ten times in a row. This might sound a little mind-numbing, but after the first five times, you'll get so bored that something magical will start to happen—you'll know your script well enough to improve your performance without having to "do" anything.

Step 9: Record Your Polished Pitch

By this point, you're ready for "Action!" - Record your two-minute video pitch and follow the instructions below to submit it for consideration.

The Complete AFM Pitch Conference Guide, which includes instructions on how to actually submit your pitch video file, will be emailed to participants along with their badge order confirmation.