



What is The Big Tell?

The Big Tell is a regional filmmaking contest offering grants of \$5,000 each to ten filmmakers to produce 5-minute mini-documentaries that feature stories of California's six-county Central Valley.

Who can enter?

Professional, amateur, or student filmmakers working on their own, or on behalf of a community benefit organization or nonprofit. Women, people of color, amateurs, students, emerging filmmakers, and people from or living in the Central Valley are encouraged to apply.

Is there a fee to apply?

No. Applications can be found at www.TheBigTell.org, and are due by midnight on Friday, June 7, 2019.

Can I use a film that I already made?

This grant is for the production of new, non-fiction material. We will not accept completed films or work that has been publicly viewed. You may use footage that you already have on hand, but the film must have been completed in 2019.

What kind of films are you looking for?

Films will be authentic, original, non-fiction, mini documentaries, not less than three minutes and not more than five minutes in length, including credits. The stylistic or artistic approach and techniques are at the discretion of the filmmaker.

What about rights, ownership and permissions?

The film becomes shared property between the filmmaker and CVCF, and cannot have prior ownership. Additionally, your project cannot be publicly available or viewed publicly or commercially before the CVCF release date at The Big Tell Showcase on October 25, 2019, and only afterward with consent of or in partnership with CVCF.

CVCF reserves the right to unlimited and non-exclusive broadcast or sharing of your film for purposes that include but are not limited to marketing, promotions, fundraising, or coalition-building. Filmmakers will sign a contract with CVCF that further outlines the terms of the agreement.

Filmmakers assume liability for the mini documentary's content and are expected to take all steps necessary to secure proper permissions for copyright, as well as location and talent releases and permits.

What are the timelines/deadlines?

April 15	Applications open
May 8	Q&A at CMAC: CVCF and CMAC staff will be on hand to answer questions
June 7	Applications due at midnight. Includes application and story concept via storyboard, 30-second concept video, draft narrative, script, or outline
June 24	Award notification
July TBD	In-person meeting for filmmakers and Sascha Rice at CVCF
October 11	Final films due to CVCF
October 16	CVCF reviews films and notifies grantees of necessary edits
October 25	The Big Tell Showcase: Red carpet event screening all 10 films at Tower Theatre in Fresno's Tower District

Filmmakers and their teams/partners will also participate in media events as well as one-on-one mentoring sessions (1 in person and at least 1 via phone/Skype) with Emmy-nominated documentarian Sascha Rice. Those dates have yet to be determined.

I'm not a filmmaker but I have a story to tell

You can work with a filmmaker to produce your story. You will need to solidify that partnership before applying since the application asks for information about the filmmaker's experience. Grant funds can be used to pay the filmmaker you select. Please note that there are no additional funds to cover added expenses, and that agreement is between you and your filmmaker, not CVCF.

If you're interested in becoming a filmmaker, this is a great time to join CMAC and receive the training and tools you need to share your story!

CVCF staff can provide connections to local filmmakers who may be interested in producing your work (see next question).

I'm a filmmaker and am looking for stories to tell

Contact CVCF staff as we may have applicants who are looking for filmmakers to tell their stories (see previous question).

Do I have to have my own equipment?

No. [Community Media Access Collaborative](#) (CMAC) in downtown Fresno is offering access to training and tools including production studio, private editing suites, meeting rooms, classroom space, and a computer lab, along with a variety of portable production gear. Note: CMAC requires a \$50 membership fee for individuals and organizations (1 person; or \$100 for 3 people) to access training and equipment (\$25 fee for students). Some equipment requires completion of training before use. This fee is incurred at the grantee's expense. Please visit www.cmactv.com to learn more about available resources. Partnership with CMAC is not required, but encouraged for filmmakers who can benefit from it.

Do I have to live in the Central Valley?

No. But your story must be about a person, place, or activity in at least one of the counties in CVCF's service area (Merced, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, and Kings). Extra consideration will be given to filmmakers that live in or have a direct connection to the Central Valley.

How will the winning mini-documentaries be presented to the public?

On October 25, 2019, CVCF is hosting a screening of all 10 mini docs at the Tower Theatre in Fresno. Each filmmaker will have three minutes to introduce their film. Films will be shown in succession all in one evening. There is a possibility of other film screenings in other, small-scale locations after October 25, although those have not been determined at this point.

What is required of a winning applicant: media appearances, etc?

Winning applicants are expected to participate in a variety of publicity and media events including, but not limited to: radio and TV appearances, press conferences, features in print and electronic media, and participation in the October 25, 2019 Big Tell Showcase film screening at the Tower Theatre in Fresno's Tower District neighborhood. Filmmakers will also participate in a group and Q&A on stage after the screenings at the Showcase. We require that all films recognize CVCF and any program sponsors in the credits. Guidelines for credit recognition will be provided to the ten finalists.

Filmmakers will also participate in one-on-one mentorship with acclaimed filmmaker Sascha Rice. This includes a minimum of one in-person meeting in July with the other filmmakers as well as two phone calls (up to one hour each). Dates TBD.

Failure to submit a completed film by October 11, 2019, will result in forfeiture of grant funds and the applicant will be expected to return the full \$5,000 to Central Valley Community Foundation.

Failure to participate in mentorship activities, or public events can result in similar sanctions, at the discretion of Central Valley Community Foundation.

When do I get the money and what can I use it for?

Funds will be made within three weeks of contract signing. This is partially dependent how quickly filmmakers return their signed contracts to processing and administration of the check. Roughly, expect a check in early August.

There is no restriction on the use of the funds, but be advised that **no additional funds will be administered for any reason**. You will sign a contract with CVCF that details funding information. Funds can only be disbursed from CVCF to a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization. If the applicant is not a nonprofit organization, the applicant can use CMAC as their fiscal agent at no fee. A check will be cut from CVCF to CMAC, and then CMAC will cut the check to the applicant. Note that this may delay the time that you receive the check. You may use any eligible nonprofit to be your fiscal agent, however the terms of that agreement and any fee charged by that nonprofit is entirely between the applicant and their nonprofit partner.

Who can apply: Teams, companies, individuals, nonprofits, filmmakers?

All of the above. Because this is a grant, you must be a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization or have one as your fiscal agent to receive the funds. If you do not have a fiscal agent, you may use CMAC at no cost. Only one applicant will be named on the application (for ease of communication), but we will ask about the members of your team.

How do I apply?

Applications can be found on the CVCF website at www.TheBigTell.org and are due by midnight on Friday, June 7, 2019.

For more information or answers to any questions, please contact Laura Ramos at ramos@centralvalleycf.org or 559-226-5600.