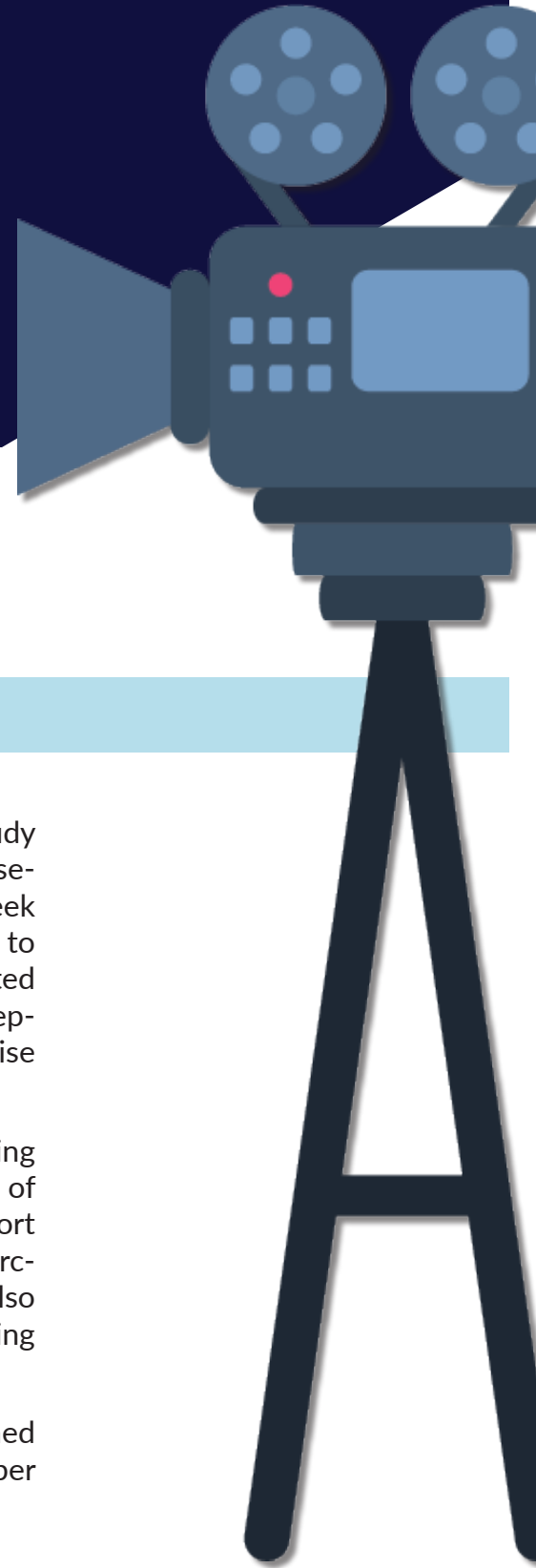


CONCOURS 2017-18

POLIDOC

2017-18 CONTEST



1. WHAT IS THE POLIDOC CONTEST

- PoliDoc is a contest organized by the Centre for the Study of Democratic Citizenship (CSDC), aimed at Quebec post-secondary students in the context of Canada' Democracy Week 2017. To participate in the contest, students are asked to submit a short documentary film proposal on topics related to democracy, civic engagement, political participation, representation, diversity, and other topics related to the exercise of democracy.
- Two winning projects will be selected: one English-speaking project and one French-speaking project. The two winners of the PoliDoc contest will have the chance to direct their short documentary, with the financial support and human resources provided for by the CSDC and its partners. They will also receive a \$1000 stipend (along with travel expenses totaling \$600).
- The finalized short documentaries will then be screened during the following year's Democracy Week, in September 2018, on multiple platforms.

2. CONTEST GUIDELINES

- The call for documentary proposals is made public during Canada's Democracy Week, September 15-21, 2017. **Students will have until Friday, December 15, 2017 to submit their proposal. Winners will be announced by January 31st, 2018.**
- The final short documentaries must be 7 to 15 minutes in length, so students proposing a documentary idea must bear in mind that the topic must be appropriate for this format.
- Here is a list of general themes that would be considered for this contest, though this list is not exhaustive and only indicative of general areas of interest:
 - * *Political participation and youth politics*
 - * *New forms of political engagement*
 - * *Canadian and Quebec democracy and democratic institutions*
 - * *Quebec in an historical context*
 - * *Internet and social media's relation to democracy*
 - * *Demographic changes and political dynamics*
 - * *Canada and Quebec's First Nations*
 - * *Gender and Democracy*
 - * *Diversity, immigration, multiculturalism*
- These topics can be approached through a variety of documentary styles: observational documentary ("fly-on-the-wall"), character-driven documentary, interview-based, video essay, strong narration, journalistic video report, etc.
- Following the announcement of the winners in early 2018, initial production meetings will be organized to set-up the production schedule. From this point, the winners will benefit from the CSDC and its partners' expertise, equipment and financial support to produce top-quality work.
- The final documentaries must be completed before the end of August 2018 to be screened in September 2018.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- To be eligible to participate in the PoliDoc contest, you must be enrolled full time in a Quebec Cégep or undergraduate university program, and you must be aged between 16 and 25 years old, at the moment of applying. Winners will be asked to show ID to establish age and student status.
- To be eligible, you must submit a complete application, written in French or English. Incomplete applications will be automatically disqualified.



4. APPLICATION AND DOCUMENTARY PROPOSAL

In order to apply for the contest, you must fill out the form available on our website and send a PDF copy of your documentary proposal at the following address: alexandre.sheldon@mail.mcgill.ca. Your documentary proposal must include the following sections:

BRIEF SUMMARY (5-10 lines)

- » *Upon reading this summary, we must understand what and who we'll see in this movie, why it's interesting and what angle you are planning to give to the story.*

DETAILED SYNOPSIS (1-2 pages)

- » *This is where you can give us more details about your topic, your character(s) and your point of view. Your synopsis can be written in many different ways. It can be written as an essay or as story. It can be very informational and give us all of the background info that give depth and meaning to your topic. Or it can be written as a "scene-by-scene" account of what we will see.*
- » *Your synopsis should give us a sense of what will drive the documentary (ie. the narrative arc). Is there a story we will follow with a beginning, a middle and an end? Is there an issue we will tackle, questions we will ask and for which the documentary will seek answers?*
- » *Your characters or experts should be presented in such a way that we want to learn more about them. This means you need to go beyond who they are in terms of their job, their project, and their expertise. You need to give them depth and personality.*

DOCUMENTARY STYLE (1 page)

- » *In this section, you need to explain how you will present your topic, from a cinematic standpoint.*
- » *Is this a guerrilla-style documentary film where we follow characters with a hand-held camera? Is this rather a documentary made of formal sit-down interviews? Are you hoping to use archival footage (stills and/or video)? Animations?*
- » *No matter how you choose to construct your film stylistically, you need to be able to justify your choices. Sometimes, even a shaky and unstable camera serves a purpose. Sometimes, an image that is too perfect does not lend well to a given topic or scene.*
- » *You are encouraged to give examples taken from other documentaries and even fictions to explain your vision.*



4.1. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The proposals will be reviewed by a jury composed of the CSDC's Knowledge Mobilization Committee. The jury will select the winners based on the following criteria:

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

- » *Is your topic related to democracy, politics, civic engagement, social issues, and such?*
- » *PoliDoc is not a partisan contest, your documentary pitch can tackle many different topics, but this is not the occasion to formulate an endorsement for a specific political party. This does not mean you should refrain from presenting a strong point of view.*

ORIGINALITY OF THE PROPOSAL

- » *Your topic shouldn't be too general, it should be focused and precise. It should be presented in a new light, or through the life and experience of characters that will be interesting to follow and listen to. Is your proposal offering anything new to a given topic? Are we with characters and ideas that are likely to draw our attention?*
- » *Your documentary should not only focus on the information we might learn while watching it. Good documentaries are not solely informational in nature, they introduce us to people and ideas we would have never encountered in our daily lives.*

FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT

- » ***Can this documentary be filmed during the Winter and Spring of 2018?*** (i.e. Does the feasibility of your topic rely on it being filmed in the Summer, does it cover something happening in the news in 2017 that might be gone/solved in 2018...)
- » ***Can this idea be filmed on a low budget, with minimal travel and minimal days of filming?*** (i.e. If you need to travel to Syria to produce this documentary, PoliDoc won't be able to help...nor if you wish to film a character every week over a 6 month period... nor if you need to purchase vast quantities of archival footage from CBC)
- » ***Are the characters and experts featured in the documentary likely to participate?*** (i.e. Are you planning to interview both Donald Trump and Justin Trudeau to ask them the tough questions...our jury might feel this is a tad unrealistic)
- » ***Are you trying to tackle a topic that is too broad in scope, and that would not be adequately addressed in the context of a short movie, and over a short production cycle?*** (i.e You're probably not going to be able solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict nor the ills of capitalism in under 20 minutes...)

GENERAL QUALITY OF THE PROPOSAL

- » *Your proposal should be well written. Upon reading it, we should be able to visualize the movie you are describing.*
- » *It should be thorough and cover all the bases. What is the topic? Why is this relevant? What will we see? How will it be covered?*
- » *It should be well presented. This means it should be orderly, well structured, and include visual cues when appropriate.*



You have until Friday, December 15, 2017 at 5:30 pm to submit your proposal. Use our online form to complete your application. If you have any questions, you can reach out to the PoliDoc contest coordinator:

alexandre.sheldon@mail.mcgill.ca

Good luck!



CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

www.csdc-cecd.ca

Contest coordinator:

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