

# A Study of Edmonton Short Film Festival: Engaging Youth in Short Film Festival Participation

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## Abstract

The Edmonton Short Film Festival (ESFF) aims to address the lack of youth engagement in its events by determining methods to increase short film submissions and audience attendance among the Generation Z demographic. By understanding the target's preferences and barriers to participation, the research objective is to identify strategies to increase visibility, reduce submission intimidation, and address financial and preference concerns for ESFF's prospective youth filmmakers and audience members. The study employed a mixed-method design, where we first interviewed 4 participants. In the second research stage, we used a stratified sampling technique with electronic surveys distributed to students, filmmakers, and arts community members in Edmonton via email and social media. The final sample comprised 55 valid responses, categorized into filmmakers (12) and audience members (43). Our major findings include the following. Low marketing visibility and limited outreach efforts have significantly contributed to low ESFF awareness and participation (viewership/festival attendance) among audience members. Nevertheless, such visibility challenges have less impact on filmmakers. Instead, within the filmmaker community, internal word-of-mouth is a stronger indicator of awareness and participation (short film submission). For filmmakers, intimidation and fear of rejection are significant barriers to filmmaker participation, decreasing the likelihood of submission to ESFF. However, a sense of competition among peers increases submission rates. While flexible submission criteria encourage participation, offering genre variety or the promise of streaming/hybrid event screenings does not significantly impact submission likelihood. Financial considerations, such as providing cash incentives for submission, have also proven to be a strong motivator, increasing submission likelihood. Even so, free submission forums do not increase the likelihood of submitting. For audience members, virtual and hybrid film screening preferences, popularized in the post-pandemic era, have reduced in-person attendance, decreasing audience engagement with ESFF. Similar to filmmakers, financial considerations impact audience member engagement, too. Some audience members prioritize affordability, while others view the experience as a worthwhile investment, creating two distinct subgroups with unique viewership participation: cost-conscious viewers and value-driven spenders.

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## Problem Definition

### *Edmonton Short Film Festival Overview*

Hosting its first screening in 2012 in partnership with Groove Soldier Productions, the Edmonton Short Film Festival (ESFF) debuted as a local independent film production company offering a professional screening and celebration venue for local independent filmmakers in Alberta's film community. ESFF has since expanded internationally and virtually, maintaining a spotlight on Alberta's independent filmmakers during their annual events. ESFF accepts a wide range of

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short film projects, including drama, horror, comedy, documentaries, music videos, and 360° virtual reality, providing a platform for various unique and fringe works. In addition to the flagship film festival and gala, ESFF hosts year-round workshops, events, and in-person and online screenings to facilitate broader audience viewership and improved film accessibility while developing strong connections with local arts organisations for collaborative screenings and community events. The introduction of ESFF's Long Shorts program in 2021 saw the festival feature films up to 60 minutes in length, and from international filmmakers, for the first time since the organisation's inception. In 2023, ESFF launched the Local Heroes Film Festival, dedicated to underrepresented communities, and in 2022, created the Alberta Screenwriter Accelerator Program to support local screenwriters. Other popular programs include The Film Career Development Program (FCDP), 48 Hour Mobile Film Challenge and Filmmaking class. ESFF's demographic is predominantly Albertan, represented by majority female attendees (64.3%), aged 45-54. ESFF continues to prioritize such local talent while also fostering an inclusive, international community through its growing online presence of over 5,000 social media followers and press coverage from major local news outlets. ESFF's blend of local celebration and international reach positions the festival as a unique and inclusive event in the global film festival landscape.

#### *Problem Background: Audit, Environment, and Context*

To help meet ESFF's objective to increase youth participation within their events, we sought to uncover, through comprehensive examination, the origin and nature of the problem stated in our initial interview conducted with the festival's decision maker. The decision maker explained that the low submission rate and audience member turnout from youth at the festival's screening events emerged as the main issue leading to their decision to act and seek marketing research assistance. Engagement in this context has historically been an issue for ESFF, who has built a loyal community of Edmontonian filmmakers and viewers aged 35-55 from the onset, yet has continually struggled in attracting participants below 35 years of age. The older, devoted participants seem to make up for the lack of youth in the space, as the decision maker explained that many of these loyal participants submit for multiple festivals and return to ESFF's screenings annually, sustaining an active community. Analyzing ESFF's past information, legal/economic environment, and operational environment, we discovered that the festival struggles with gaining visibility and awareness among younger demographics, who also face barriers to participation related to financial constraints, and for filmmaker's specifically, emotional blocks like intimidation and fear. An analysis into ESFF's Meta social media analytics point to insufficient marketing efforts, which have been unable to reach younger age groups. The festival's active social media marketing channels like Facebook and Instagram obtain limited engagement, with interaction occurring most notably among Edmonton-based 35-55-year-olds and with a higher degree on Facebook. The decision maker explained in the interview that resource scarcity is a significant issue ESFF faces and that allocating proper monetary and human capital has proven challenging overall, especially regarding outreach/awareness and marketing initiatives. As a result, ESFF's marketing department often must work with limited resources. Legal and economical factors affecting ESFF account for the contingency of certain ventures (expansion, etc) on offered and obtained funding opportunities. Such funding is also scarce, shared among the other prominent Edmonton independent film

organisations (Rainbow Visions, Edmonton International, Winter Cinema, Broadview, Jewish Film Festival, Greek Film Festival, etc). The festival operates in a post-pandemic environment in which youth have grown accustomed to digital media. Still, there's a renewed interest in live events.

Recent industry reports highlight the “rise of independent filmmaking” (Inside Pulse, 2024). Younger generations are integral to the sector's growth, driving 80% of ticket sales in 2023. This demographic's preference for diverse casting and unique genres was emphasized, as well as a desire for niche content and convenient viewing experiences (shorter run times and streaming options). Furthermore, social media played a significant role in raising awareness for new films. Given these findings, we aimed to understand to what degree Edmonton youth observed these behaviours and, thus, ways in which ESFF could better reach them. Understanding the target audience's motivations and limitations for short film festival participation was central to answering this question. As such, we framed our research questions around uncovering these observations. Potential actions we were likely to suggest based on our findings would feature marketing strategies for outreach and education that resonated with youth in hopes of increasing participation in both short film creation and viewing. Alternative courses of action for ESFF could consider expanded virtual event offerings and partnerships with potential educational institutes.

### *Management Problem*

After an interview with ESFF's decision maker, the current management problem was detailed and clarified. The festival sought to increase short film creator submissions and short film audience viewership for their annual festival and other events, specifically among young adults. This challenge aimed to identify effective implementation strategies for ESFF to increase submission numbers and audience sizes from the Generation Z age cohort. It was paramount to understand the motivations and barriers that impact these youths' inclination to participate in their community's short film collective as a creative and/or audience member. The goal was to open doors to creativity, self-expression, and enjoyable leisure time for youth in the local area through ESFF's already diverse community of filmmakers and viewers.

### *Marketing Research Problem*

The initial marketing research problem (MRP) focused on increasing youth filmmaker and audience member participation with ESFF by evaluating prospective Edmonton youth likely to engage with the festival. However, the qualitative findings through first stage exploratory research and in-depth interviews with the target market, particularly local filmmaker and audience member youth, revealed that key barriers, such as feelings of intimidation among filmmakers and financial constraints among both groups, significantly impact youth engagement with film festivals like ESFF. Therefore, the revised MRP sought to identify strategies to increase visibility, reduce submission intimidation, and address financial and preference concerns for prospective youth filmmakers and audience members. To understand the barriers and motivations for participating versus non-participation with ESFF and other short film festivals, and to explore ways to increase youth participation, we circulated two surveys among local Edmonton youth—one targeted filmmakers and the other aimed at film viewers. Our approach

to the revised problem was explored using our “Youth Participation Model,” an analytical model that graphically and verbally describes a set of chosen variables and their interrelationships.

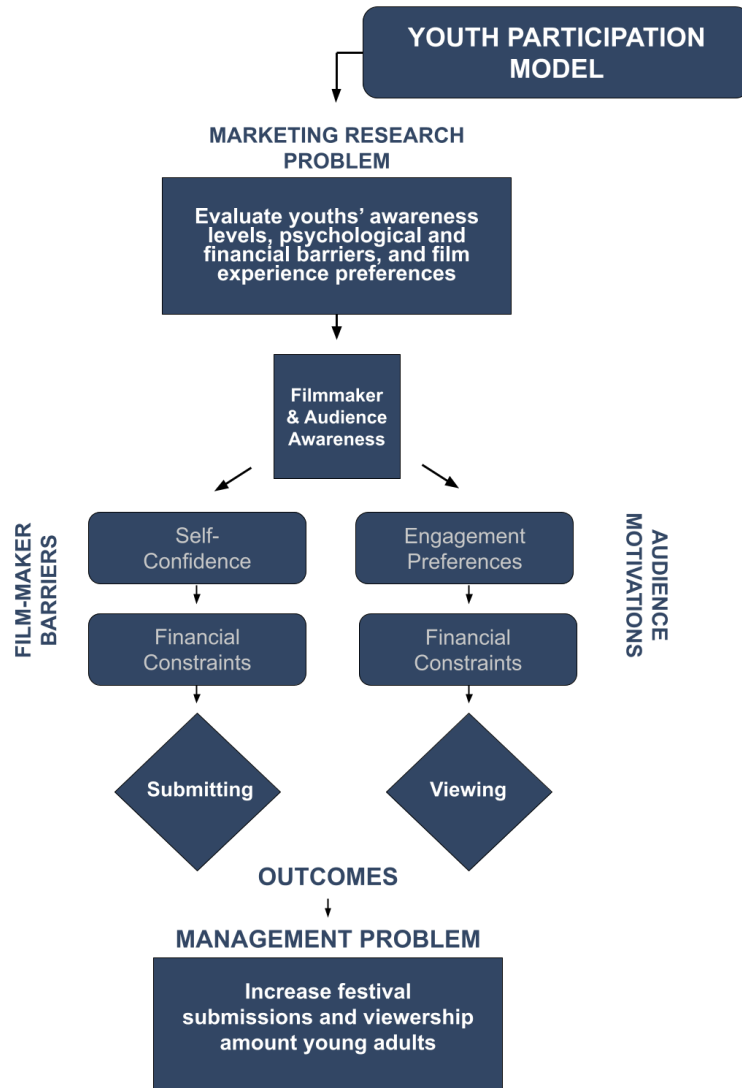
## **Analytical Framework**

### *Analytical Model*

Our marketing research problem required evaluating the target market's awareness of ESFF, barriers (psychological and financial), and film consumption preferences. This evaluation guides strategies to increase youth participation as filmmakers and audience members through submissions and viewership. Our research identifies ways to promote ESFF awareness, reduce participation barriers, and create event screenings that align with audience motivations. Ultimately, we aimed to help ESFF build stronger connections with youth audiences and creators.

The overall outcome variable examined was youth filmmakers and audience members' participation in ESFF. Engagement was measured through submission and viewership indicators, including participation rates, film submissions, event attendance, and expressed interest or satisfaction with the festival. Secondary and primary research identified barriers and motivators impacting youth participation in ESFF (outcome). The literature review highlighted low self-confidence and financial constraints as barriers for young filmmakers and that audience members show a post-pandemic preference for hybrid or virtual events.

Quantitative research utilized a pre-tested electronic survey distributed through Google Forms, email invitations, and social media platforms to reach a diverse sample of Edmonton youth interested in film. Stratified sampling ensured representation across students in film programs, members of arts organisations like Film & Video Arts Society of Alberta (FAVA), and film-related social media groups. The target sample size of 80-100 responses achieved generated 55 valid responses: 43 audience members and 12 filmmakers. Audience respondents were primarily aged 18-25, predominantly female, with low income and varying employment statuses. Filmmakers were mostly male, reporting high education levels and an even distribution of income. In conducting our research, categories of barrier, constraint, motivation, and consumption, aligned with similar key themes from our literature review (See Appendix A) and in-depth interviews with members of the target market (childhood media exposure, initially considered, proved insignificant and will not be further studied) (See Appendix B). Interviews revealed low confidence in film quality and fear of judgment as emotional barriers to submission for filmmakers, and audience members stated a preference for virtual film viewing, both during and post-pandemic. Also, both targets' associated filmmaking and film viewing expenses (e.g., equipment/production costs, submission fees, travel to events, ticket costs) were significant obstacles, emphasizing a shared tendency for limited monetary resources. Qualitative analysis demonstrated that lack of awareness and untargeted outreach discouraged engagement, a factor not covered in the literature review (See Appendix B). This added insight was crucial for determining how to boost young filmmaker and viewer engagement, as awareness is the first step toward participation. Hence, our model positions awareness as the initial stage to outcomes, before youth encounter specific barriers and motivators.



### Research Questions & Hypotheses

RQ (1) What factors contribute to ESFF's unreached audience of youth filmmakers and potential audience members' lack of company awareness?

H(1): The lack of awareness of ESFF and its events/offerings among unreached audiences is primarily due to insufficient marketing efforts, limited online visibility, and a failure to engage with diverse segments effectively.

RQ (2) What role do feelings of intimidation and fear of rejection play in youth filmmakers' decision to submit films to festivals?

H(2): Feelings of intimidation and fear of rejection act as psychological barriers that lower participation rates, discouraging youth filmmakers from submitting films to festivals.

RQ (3) How have post-pandemic shifts, such as the rise of streaming and hybrid events, affected youth audience members' expectations for live film festivals?

H(3): Post-pandemic shifts, such as the rise of streaming and hybrid events, have increased youth expectations for more flexible, accessible, and digitally integrated experiences at live film festivals, influencing their event format preferences.

RQ (4) How does financial constraint impact both filmmakers and audience members when considering participation in ESFF events?

H(4): Financial constraints negatively impact filmmaker and audience members' participation in ESFF events by limiting their ability to cover equipment and ticket costs, submission fees, and other associated costs (e.g. travel), thus reducing overall engagement.

## Research Design: Survey and Sampling Design

### *Target Population*

Our target population was youth in Edmonton interested in film, specifically students from educational institutions offering film programs, members of local arts organisations, and followers of film-related social media groups.

### *Sample Size*

Our objective for this project was to gather between 80 and 100 surveys (20–25 surveys per group member). This strategy ensured our sample size was achievable within the current semester's parameters, while preserving a size large enough to yield significant insights. By distributing data collection across multiple group members, we could efficiently reach the desired number of respondents and cover various strata of the film community. Our original sample size included 79 audience members and 13 filmmakers. Following the screening process, the final sample size was 55, with the following characteristics:

**Audience Group:** 43 respondents, predominantly aged 18-25 (36), with a mix of women (30) and men (13). Most had an undergraduate education (21), and earned less than \$20,000 (17). Employment status varied, with 16 students, 13 full-time employees, and 7 part-time workers. Most respondents rented their homes (18), and lived in Edmonton (32). The survey screened out a total of 36 invalid audience respondents, explaining why the final count for valid responses was lower than the initial sample.

**Filmmaker Group:** 12 respondents, with a distribution of ages including 18-25 (3), 34-41 (4), and 42-49 (4). The group was primarily male (9), holding undergraduate degrees (8). Their income was fairly evenly spread across income brackets, and most were employed full-time (6), and some self-employed (4). Housing status showed a balance between renters (5) and homeowners (7), and a mix of locations as respondents reported living mainly in Edmonton (6) and Calgary (4). Only 1 of the filmmakers were screened out by the survey.



Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Characteristic	Audience Group	Audience Group (%)	Filmmaker Group	Filmmaker Group (%)
<b>Sample Size</b>	43	100%	12	100%
<b>Age Group</b>	18-25 (36), 26-33 (5), 42-49 (2)	83.72%, 11.63%, 4.65%	8-25 (3), 26-33 (1), 34-41 (4), 42-49 (4)	25%, 8.33%, 33.33%, 33.33%
<b>Gender</b>	Woman (30), Man (13)	69.77%, 30.23%	Woman (2), Man (9), Prefer not to say (1)	16.67%, 75%, 8.33%
<b>Highest Level Of Education</b>	Undergraduate (21), Graduate (5), Some post-secondary (17)	48.84%, 11.63%, 39.53%	Undergraduate (8), Some post secondary (4)	66.67%, 33.33%
<b>Annual Income</b>	Less than \$20,000 (17), \$40,000-\$59,000 (7), \$60,000-\$79,000 (7), \$80,000+ (5), Prefer not to say (4)	39.53%, 16.28%, 16.28%, 11.63%, 9.30%	Less than \$20,000 (2), \$40,000-\$59,000 (4), \$60,000-\$79,000 (2), \$80,000+ (2), Prefer not to say (2)	16.67%, 33.33%, 16.67%, 16.67%, 16.67%
<b>Employment Status</b>	Full-time (13), Part-time (7), Student (16), Prefer not to say (7)	30.23%, 16.28%, 37.21%, 16.28%	Full-time (6), Self-employed (4), Part-time (1), Prefer not to say (1)	50%, 33.33%, 8.33%, 8.33%
<b>Housing Status</b>	Rent (18), Own (11), Live with parents/relative (9), Prefer not to say (5)	41.86%, 25.58%, 20.93%, 11.63%	Rent (5), Own (7)	41.67%, 58.33%
<b>Location</b>	Edmonton (32), Calgary (6), Other (5)	74.42%, 13.95%, 11.63%	Edmonton (6), Calgary (4), Other (2)	50%, 33.33%, 16.67%

### Sampling Frame

Our sampling frame consisted of structured sources aligned with our target groups, such as membership lists from regional arts organisations like FAVA, film-focused Instagram and Facebook groups, and student directories from local film studies programs. These directories and lists were vetted as trustworthy resources for locating youths participating in film-related academic or community arts activities. Using these sources, we established a thorough and representative sampling frame of Edmonton's youth film community.

### Sampling Method

We used the stratified sampling technique to draw our sample, assuring a diverse and representative sample from our target population. This approach involved dividing the target population into distinct subgroups, or strata, based on the accessible sources. For the purpose of this research, the three main strata are as follows: (10 students attending local educational institutions offering film studies programs, (2) members of film-related social media platforms,

specifically Instagram and Facebook groups, and (3) affiliates of local arts organisations like FAVA. Using stratified sampling, we could verify that each key segment was equally represented in the sample. To further ensure this representation, we chose respondents from each group at random. This choosing method not only maximized the representation of every source in our sample but also minimized bias, enhancing the reliability of our findings to produce results which accurately reflect the overall population's characteristics and opinions regarding the Edmonton Short Film Festival.

### *Survey Administration Method*

An electronic survey was ideal for ESFF to assess the opinions of its target market. We could widely distribute the survey via email and social media, increasing the likelihood of reaching diverse segments such as youth, students, and filmmakers. Respondents could participate anytime and access the survey from various devices, enhancing convenience and interaction and improving data collection diversity for the overall success of the questionnaire. Given youth's penchant for mobile device usage, the sample control of an online survey is generally high, helping to mitigate the potential of low response rates. With a high sample control, we could initiate effective and efficient survey outreach. Additionally, qualitative research showed that social media was the preferred communication method for our target demographic. Online tools, like Google Forms, offer user-friendly, cost-effective, anonymous platforms for creating, distributing, and analyzing surveys. This method also allowed participants to respond thoughtfully, fostering a sense of personal control and cooperation. Sharing the survey through email and social media allowed for easy follow-up too, as we could remind respondents through second-contact messages. Since ESFF provides intangible products and services, physical stimuli present in the survey stage was unnecessary, further supporting the selection of an online questionnaire method. The subject matter was not sensitive, so a personal survey method was not considered.

### *Survey Data Collection*

- **Online survey platform (electronic interviewing):** Used Google Forms to create and distribute two questionnaires. (See Appendix C)
- **Email invitations (electronic interviewing):** Sent the surveys to MacEwan University film students and faculty, leveraging existing academic networks, and distributed email newsletter including survey information and links to FAVA members and ESFF community network.
- **Social media distribution (mobile interviewing):** Shared the questionnaire links through social media channels (Instagram and Facebook) and local film community groups.

\*Response data was collected November, 2024 using the following methods:

### *Field Work and Data Collection*

Most data was collected through the circulation of the Google Forms survey link to individuals within our target segments. We shared the link through email and social media to reach as many individuals involved with ESFF as possible. We also worked with FAVA and MacEwan Professors, who kindly shared the survey through their network to broaden our reach.



Additionally, the survey was posted in the Edmonton Filmmakers Facebook group, which allowed us to connect with more members within the community.

While these efforts helped gather a diverse range of responses, the final sample size was smaller than expected, particularly in the filmmakers' category. We can potentially attribute the lower number of filmmakers' responses to the fact that filmmakers are generally less common than viewers within film communities, especially those filmmakers who are relatively new. These new filmmakers may also experience a lack of confidence in sharing their opinions or feel that their input might not be taken as seriously compared to more established peers in the community. This phenomena could have led to young filmmakers' reluctance to engage with the survey. Another factor for the general low response rate among both subgroups may be on account of the specific qualifications required for survey participation, which would have screened out certain participants, namely those outside the target market. While still notable, screening considerations affected the final survey numbers to a lesser degree since the team took care to send the survey to what was anticipated as relevant target respondents. Overall, this data collection approach contributed meaningful feedback from both the audience and filmmakers despite the challenges with low response rates among the filmmaker group.

#### *Questionnaire Development and Pretest*

**Development:** Our question set followed the "sandwich model," beginning with screening and warm-up questions to gauge respondent behaviour through easily answered questions, followed by main questions on attitudes, preferences, and rankings, and ending with classification for demographics. Each section was organized logically, moving from general to specific to aid respondent understanding. Questions were precoded for categorizing and theming with codes like "Advertisements," "Familiarity," "Intimidation," "Cost," and "Online."

**Pretest:** To identify and address potential issues with the questionnaire, we conducted a pre-test with 2 respondents from the target population from diverse backgrounds. Their feedback on content, wording, sequence, layout, question difficulty, and instructions guided necessary improvements for a more effective field survey. Respondents estimated that completing the original questionnaire took 8-12 minutes. Adequate pre-testing was essential to ensure high-quality data collection and minimize errors. After reviewing the comments, we revised the original questionnaire based on the suggested improvements.

**Updated Questionnaires (after pre-test):** After pre-testing, feedback from respondents was used to revise some questions. Due to the lengthy completion time, the researchers split the questionnaire into two sections: one for filmmakers and another for film festival audience members (detailed questionnaires can be seen in Appendix C).

#### *Ethics*

The data collected for this research focused on ESFF and their youth demographic was carried out in full compliance with ethical guidelines outlined by the research ethics board. All participants were informed of the purpose of the survey, which aimed to understand audience and filmmaker engagement with the festival, and were assured that their participation was entirely voluntary. Participants also had the option to withdraw from research involvement at any

time, without negative consequence. Informed consent was obtained from all participants and each participant received clear explanations on how their responses would be used, and the measures in place to protect their privacy.

Confidentiality was a top priority: we removed all personal identifiers from survey results, and participants were given unique identifiers to maintain anonymity. The research was designed to be respectful of participants. No financial incentives were offered, to ensure unbiased feedback. Data was securely stored – once the study concluded, data was disposed of to meet ethical guidelines. These protocols guided responsible research practices, safeguarding participant rights while we gathered valuable insights for ESFF.

Our research protocol was approved by the Research Ethics Board (REB) as well, in accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS-2) and MacEwan University Policy. Our research was set to expire on September 02, 2025. From that point, it could have been extended, given that we had completed the annual renewal request before the approval expired. Any proposed changes to the study would have needed to be submitted to REB for approval before implementation. As outlined in the protocol, we made certain that any information acquired through an external institution, organisation, or other group abided by their own ethics or operational requirements beyond REB review. In any case where outside organisation cooperation (including ESFF itself) was necessary, we were responsible for formally collaborating with any relevant body to seek permission to proceed with the research.

## Statistical Data Analysis and Results

### *Audience Univariate Descriptive Statistics*

Given that our target population was divided into two subgroups, audience members and filmmakers, we created two data analyses of the questionnaire results. Examining the audience group first, the following tables indicate the univariate descriptive statistics of each independent variable. We examined the variables of Awareness, Cost, Preferences (drivers), and Attendance Likelihood (outcome) to test our research questions' hypotheses based on the potential audience member responses. The variables were analyzed using N observations, the percentages of each response category, mode (the most frequently answered numeral), and average of all numerical values.

Table 2 depicts questionnaire responses regarding awareness and factors that contribute to levels of awareness (e.g. advertising and media used). Respondents were asked about general awareness, information-seeking behaviours, film festival advertisement exposure, advertising media seen, and familiarity description.

*Table 2: Audience Awareness Univariate Statistics*

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>AWARENESS</b>				
Awareness of Film Festivals				
Yes	27	63%	-	-
No	16	37%		

Methods to Receive Film Festival Information				
Social Media	32	36%	-	-
Word of Mouth	27	30%		
Traditional advertisement	16	18%		
Google Search	6	7%		
Email Newsletter	6	7%		
Film Community Websites or Forums	2	2%		
No. Advertisements Seen				
Never	13	30%	1	0.91
1-3 times	28	65%		
4-6 times	1	2%		
7+ times	1	2%		
Advertisement Media				
Social Media	29	43%	-	-
Traditional advertisement	13	19%		
Digital advertisement	10	15%		
Email newsletter	4	6%		
Google search	4	6%		
N/A (Have not seen ad.)	7	10%		
Familiarity with ESFF				
Very limited knowledge	17	40%	-	-
Aware but not actively following events	20	47%		
Follow events but have not attended	2	5%		
Participated in ESFF	4	9%		

Table 3 analyzes the financial variable as a predictor of in-person event attendance for audiences. Respondents were asked to rank their likelihood of attending based on various ticket price ranges, as well as the level of agreement with a statement regarding decreased theatre attendance due to direct and extended costs.

*Table 3: Audience Cost Univariate Statistics*

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>AUDIENCE COSTS</b>				
Ticket Price				
Free	-	-	4	4.09
\$1-\$10	-	-	4	3.88
\$10-\$15	-	-	3	3.30
\$16	-	-	3	2.51
Direct and Extended Costs of Theatres				
Decrease Attendance				
5- Strongly Agree	5	12%	4	3.33
4- Agree	17	40%		
3- Neutral	9	21%		
2- Disagree	11	26%		
1- Strongly Disagree	1	2%		

Table 4 describes responses related to audience engagement preferences, such as viewing channels, online streaming, hybrid events, etc. Most preference questions were structured as agreement-level ratings on a 5-factor Likert scale.

Table 4: Audience Preference Univariate Statistics

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>PREFERENCES</b>				
After COVID, at-home > theatre attendance				
5- Strongly Agree	9	21%	4	3.47
4- Agree	16	37%		
3- Neutral	8	19%		
2- Disagree	6	14%		
1- Strongly Disagree	4	9%		
Greater value in online streaming than attending theatre				
5- Strongly Agree	3	7%	2	2.77
4- Agree	9	21%		
3- Neutral	11	26%		
2- Disagree	15	35%		
1- Strongly Disagree	5	12%		
Flexible viewing and online sources are important aspects for audiences				
5- Strongly Agree	8	19%	4	3.77
4- Agree	22	51%		
3- Neutral	9	21%		
2- Disagree	3	7%		
1- Strongly Disagree	1	2%		
Believe that hybrid & online formats are preferred				
5- Strongly Agree	3	7%	3	3.21
4- Agree	13	30%		
3- Neutral	17	40%		
2- Disagree	10	23%		
1- Strongly Disagree	0	0%		
Rather watch films at the theatre than at home				
5- Strongly Agree	4	9%	4	3.33
4- Agree	18	42%		
3- Neutral	11	26%		
2- Disagree	8	19%		
1- Strongly Disagree	2	5%		
Most Used Viewing Channel				
Mobile Phone	15	35%	-	-
Computer	12	28%		
TV	8	19%		
Theatre	4	9%		
Tablet/iPad	4	9%		

Table 5 shows an outcome variable, attendance likelihood, for further data analysis for correlations and cross-tabulations that will be explored in the audience results.

Table 5: Audience Attendance Likelihood Univariate Statistics

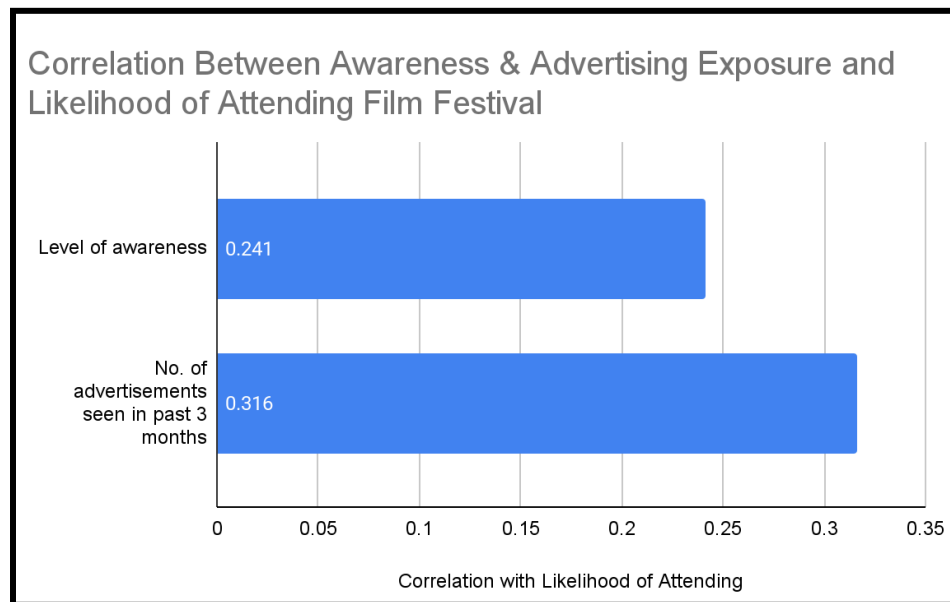
Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>ATTENDANCE LIKELIHOOD</b>				
Likelihood of Attending in Next 12 Months				
1 - Highly Unlikely	3	7%	3	3.21
2 - Unlikely	13	30%		
3 - Possible	18	42%		
4 - Likely	10	23%		
5 - Highly Likely	9	21%		

### Audience Results

For the audience responses' data analysis, RQ(2) and H(2) were ignored, as levels of intimidation related only to filmmaker submission and the hypothesis could not be tested using this subgroup. However, the following statistical results were used to fulfill the research objectives:

RQ (1) What factors contribute to ESFF's unreached audience of youth filmmakers and potential audience members' lack of company awareness?

H(1): The lack of awareness of ESFF and its events/offerings among unreached audiences is primarily due to insufficient marketing efforts.

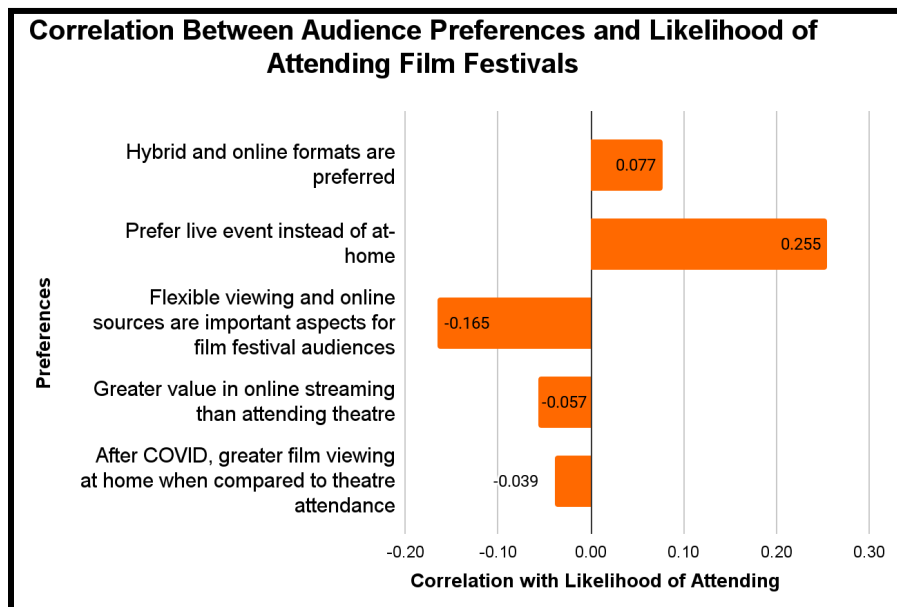


The two statistically significant variables were the level of awareness of film festivals and the number of advertisements seen for film festival participation within the last quarter. We correlated the likelihood of attending and the two variables and the results indicate that greater awareness and a greater number of advertisements seen by individuals resulted in greater audience participation, meaning that the variables were positively correlated. In addition to the correlation chart, it is important to note that in the univariate descriptive analysis, respondents'

average number of advertisements was reported as 0.91. This data strongly supports our hypothesis, signifying that low marketing efforts (advertising and community engagement) have contributed to lower awareness. These two variables resulted in low audience participation, which was the management problem being addressed.

RQ (3) How have post-pandemic shifts, such as the rise of streaming and hybrid events, affected youth audience members' expectations for live film festivals?

H(3): Post-pandemic shifts, such as the rise of streaming and hybrid events, have increased youth expectations for more flexible, accessible, and digitally integrated experiences at live film festivals, influencing their event format preferences.

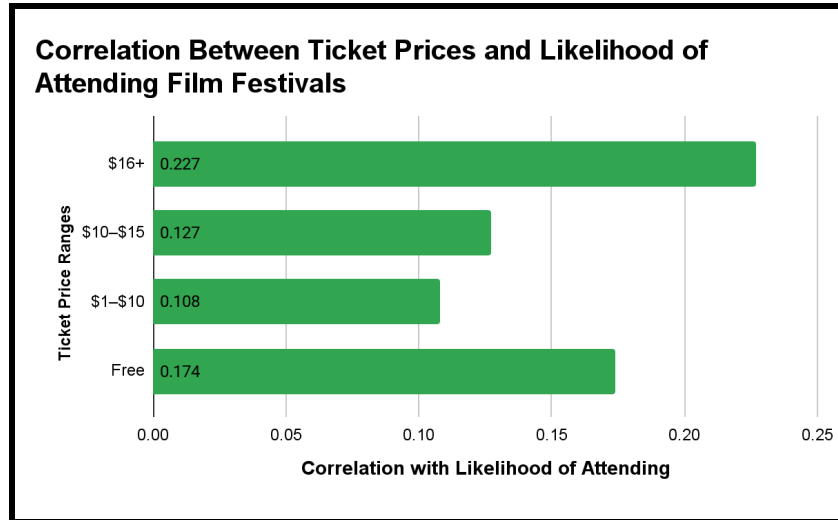


The likelihood of theatre attendance was correlated against several audience preferences, such as greater value in online streaming, post-pandemic behavioural shifts, and preferred live events. The data showed that stronger preferences for hybrid and online formats and preferences for live events positively correlated with a higher likelihood of attending. Meanwhile, strong preferences for flexible viewing and online sources, greater value in online streaming, and post-COVID shifts to greater at-home film consumption were negatively correlated with the attendance likelihood variable. The data results supported our hypothesis that post-pandemic shifts in media consumption habits and engagement preferences have shifted to increase expectations for virtual experiences that can be enjoyed from home. It should be observed though that providing more hybrid options will increase audience participation, but flexibility in viewing times and online-exclusive events will not be due to the negative correlation.

RQ (4) How does financial constraint impact audience members when considering participation in ESFF events?

H(4): Financial constraints negatively impact audience members' participation in ESFF events by limiting their ability to cover ticket costs, and other associated costs (e.g. travel), thus reducing overall engagement





After correlation analysis using ticket prices, we were surprised to find a higher positive correlation between more expensive ticket prices and a greater likelihood of attending film festivals. The second highest positive correlation value was free ticket prices, followed by prices between \$10-\$15. The data results were inconsistent with our hypothesis, meaning that higher prices related to theatre audience attendance do not reduce participation. Therefore, our hypothesis was rejected for the audience subgroup. The cross-tabulation between the level of agreement with the given statement and the likelihood of attending reveals a contradiction. Despite respondents agreeing that their attendance frequency was decreased due to costs, their likelihood of attending was highest.

#### *Filmmaker Univariate Descriptive Statistics*

Examining the filmmaker data, the following tables indicate the univariate descriptive statistics of each independent variable. We examined the variables of Awareness, Intimidation, Cost, Preferences (drivers), and Attendance Likelihood (outcome) to test our hypotheses to the research questions based on the potential audience member responses. The variables were analyzed using N observations, the percentages of each response category, mode (the most frequently answered numeral), and the average of all numerical values.

Table 6 depicts questionnaire responses to awareness and factors that contribute to levels of awareness (e.g. advertising and media used). Respondents were asked about general awareness, information-seeking behaviours, film festival advertisement exposure, advertising media seen, and familiarity description.

*Table 6: Filmmaker Awareness Univariate Statistics*

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>AWARENESS</b>				
Awareness of Film Festivals				
Yes	12	100%	-	-
No	0	0%	-	-

Methods to Receive Film Festival Information				
Social Media Posts	11	37%	-	-
Film Community Websites or Forums	8	27%		
Word of Mouth	5	17%		
Google Search	3	10%		
Traditional advertisements	2	7%		
Email newsletters	1	3%		
No. Advertisements Seen				
Never	0	0%	7	4.50
1-3 times	3	25%		
4-6 times	4	33%		
7+ times	5	42%		
Advertisement Media				
Social Media	11	44%	-	-
Traditional advertisement	1	4%		
Digital advertisement	3	12%		
Email newsletter	7	28%		
Google search	3	12%		
N/A (Have not seen ad.)	0	0%		
Familiarity with ESFF				
Very limited knowledge	1	8%	-	-
Aware but not actively following events	1	8%		
Follow events but have not attended	1	8%		
Participated in ESFF	9	75%		

Table 7 indicates the various intimidation and self-confidence barriers with an agreement level using a 5-point Likert scale. As well, the most common answer was under the mode column, followed by an average of all data results.

*Table 7: Filmmaker Intimidation Univariate Statistics*

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>INTIMIDATION</b>				
Feeling of Intimidation while submitting.				
5- Strongly Agree	3	25%	4	3.08
4- Agree	3	25%		
3- Neutral	1	8%		
2- Disagree	2	17%		
1- Strongly Disagree	3	25%		
Fear of Rejection withholds my submission				
5- Strongly Agree	0	0%	1	1.83
4- Agree	2	17%		
3- Neutral	1	8%		
2- Disagree	2	17%		
1- Strongly Disagree	7	58%		
My work is inferior compared to others				
5- Strongly Agree	0	0%	3	2.33
4- Agree	2	17%		
3- Neutral	4	33%		
2- Disagree	2	17%		
1- Strongly Disagree	4	33%		

Competing with Experienced Filmmakers				
5- Strongly Agree	0	0%	1	2.17
4- Agree	3	25%		
3- Neutral	1	8%		
2- Disagree	3	25%		
1- Strongly Disagree	5	42%		

Table 8 depicts the financial barriers experienced by filmmakers. We used agreement levels using a 5-point Likert scale, importance ratings, and a dichotomous question.

*Table 8: Filmmaker Cost Univariate Statistics*

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>FILMMAKER COSTS</b>				
Free Submission for Film Festival				
5- Strongly Agree	2	17%	2	3.00
4- Agree	2	17%		
3- Neutral	3	25%		
2- Disagree	4	33%		
1- Strongly Disagree	1	8%		
Financial help would increase my participation				
5- Strongly Agree	5	42%	5	4
4- Agree	4	33%		
3- Neutral	2	17%		
2- Disagree	0	0%		
1- Strongly Disagree	1	8%		
Rating Importance When Submitting to Film Festivals				
Monetary incentive	-	-	1	2.08
Free submissions	-	-	4	2.92
Do production costs deter creation/submission of films				
Yes	8	67%	-	-
No	4	33%	-	-

Table 9 shows filmmaker preferences using an agreement level and rating scale. When ranking the importance of various factors, flexible submission criteria were least important, while genre variety was most important. *Table 9: Filmmaker Preferences Univariate Statistics*

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>PREFERENCES</b>				
Hybrid Events & Online Streaming Preferred Over Theatre				
5- Strongly Agree	0	0%	3	2.25
4- Agree	0	0%		
3- Neutral	6	50%		
2- Disagree	3	25%		
1- Strongly Disagree	3	25%		
Rating Importance when Submitting to Film Festivals				
Flexible film submission criteria	-	-	1	1.92
Variety of genre categories	-	-	4	3.08

Table 10 shows an outcome variable, attendance likelihood, to use in further data analysis for correlations that will be explored in the filmmaker results.

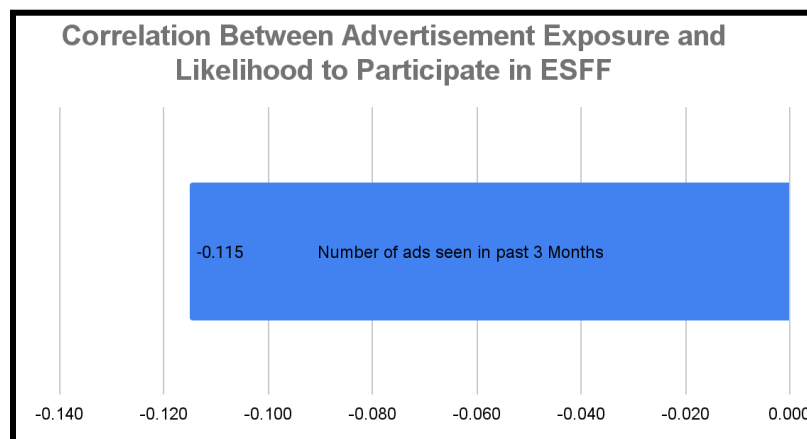
*Table 10: Filmmaker Attendance Likelihood Univariate Statistics*

Variable	N Observations	Percentage of Responses	Mode	Average
<b>ATTENDANCE LIKELIHOOD</b>				
Likelihood of Attending in Next 12 Months				
1 - Highly Unlikely	1	8%	5	4.17
2 - Unlikely	0	0%		
3 - Possible	2	17%		
4 - Likely	2	17%		
5 - Highly Likely	7	58%		

### *Filmmaker Results*

RQ (1) What factors contribute to ESFF's unreached audience of youth filmmakers and potential audience members' lack of company awareness?

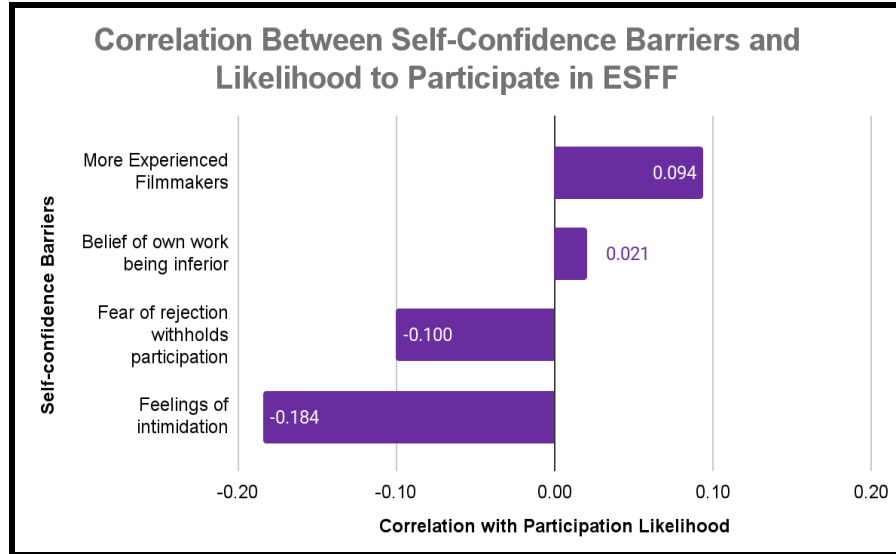
H(1): The lack of awareness of ESFF and its events/offerings among unreached audiences is primarily due to insufficient marketing efforts.



To test for awareness, we correlated the number of advertisements seen against the likelihood of participation. However, due to negative correlation, the findings did not support our H(1). Thus, despite more exposure to advertisements, the filmmakers did not experience an increased desire to participate in ESFF. It is necessary to observe that filmmakers presented a strong likelihood of participation, as the average response was 4.167 with a mode of 5. It is possible that word-of-mouth or community buzz were more important indicators of filmmaker submissions and ESFF participation.

RQ (2) What role do feelings of intimidation and fear of rejection play in youth filmmakers' decision to submit films to festivals?

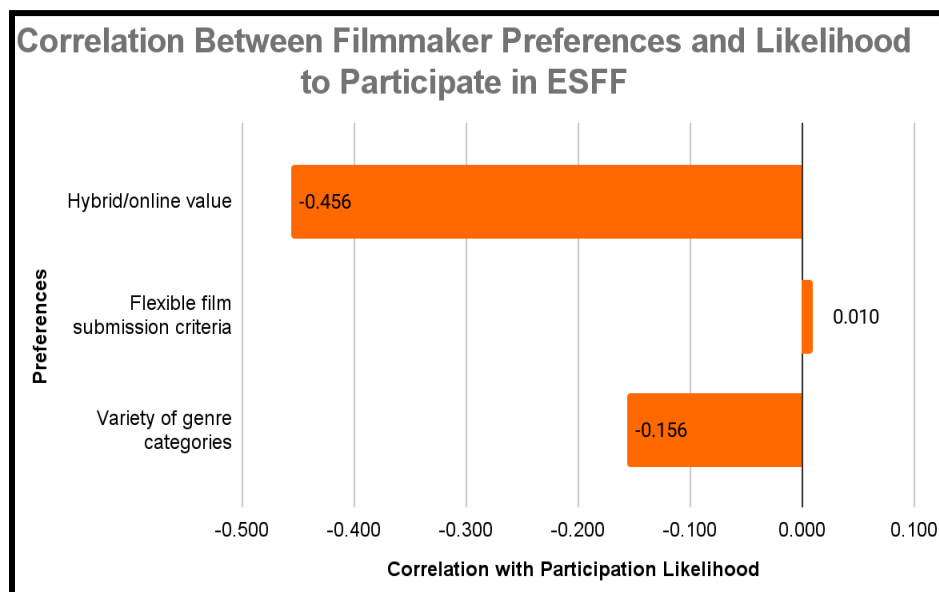
H(2): Feelings of intimidation and fear of rejection act as psychological barriers that lower participation rates, hence discouraging youth filmmakers from submitting films to festivals.



To test feelings of intimidation and low self-confidence, we asked several levels of agreement questions. The results were correlated against the likelihood of participation. Interestingly, competing against more experienced filmmakers and believing that one's own work was inferior were positively correlated, while fear of rejection and general feelings of intimidation were negatively correlated. These findings revealed that fear of rejection and feelings of intimidation corresponded with decreased participation, which supports H(2), while comparisons with others were a determining factor in an increased likelihood of film festival participation.

RQ (3) How have post-pandemic shifts, such as the rise of streaming and hybrid events, affected youth audience members' expectations for live film festivals?

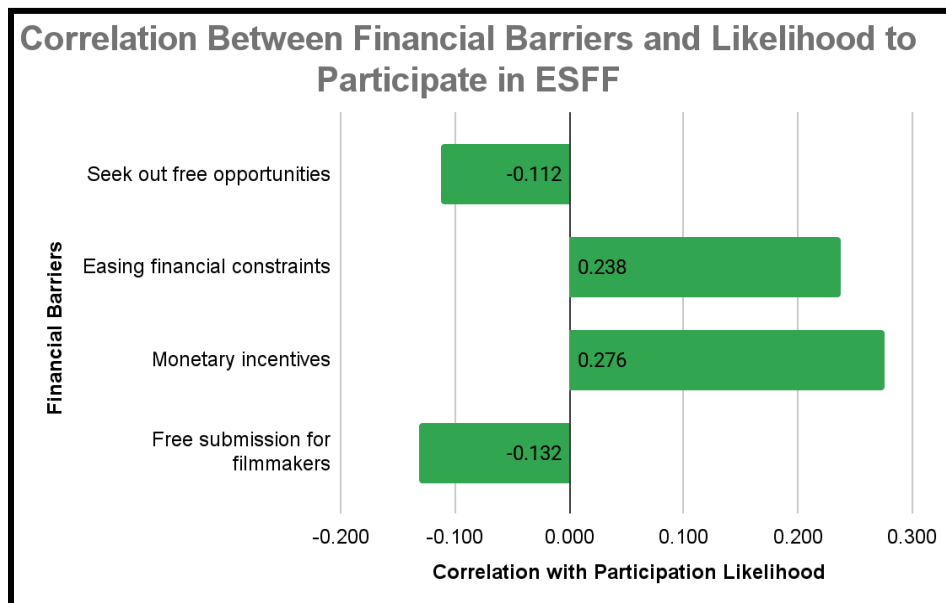
H(3): Post-pandemic shifts, such as the rise of streaming and hybrid events, have increased youth expectations for more flexible, accessible, and digitally integrated experiences at live film festivals, influencing their event format preferences.



The likelihood of filmmaker participation was correlated against several filmmaker preferences, such as greater value in hybrid/online events, flexible submission criteria, and a variety of genres. Each of these preferences, except for flexible film submission criteria, were negatively correlated with participation likelihood. This result indicated that the variety of genres and hybrid/online events did not increase participation, and so the data rejected H(3).

RQ (4) How does financial constraint impact both filmmakers and audience members when considering participation in ESFF events?

H(4): Financial constraints negatively impact filmmakers' participation in ESFF events by limiting their ability to cover equipment, submission fees, and other associated costs (e.g. travel), thus reducing overall engagement.



The data correlations against participation likelihood showed that monetary incentives and easing financial constraints positively correlated with increased participation. In other words, with greater incentives or financial assistance, filmmakers were more likely to submit their films. However, free opportunities were negatively correlated, meaning participation likelihood did not increase without submission fees. This interesting finding likely means filmmakers submitting their work appreciate monetary rewards and recognition for their contributions more than free entry.

## Recommendations

Based on the statistical results we have developed the following specific recommendations and courses of action to address each research objective.

### *Recommendation 1 - Increase Awareness Among Youth*

RQ (1) What factors contribute to ESFF's unreached audience of youth filmmakers and potential audience members' lack of company awareness?



To increase youth engagement, ESFF should leverage social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok by creating visually engaging campaigns aligned with the aesthetic and interactive preferences of younger audiences that showcase the festival's unique offerings for both filmmakers and audience members, such as filmmaker success stories, behind-the-scenes content, and film previews/viewing events. Additionally, enhancing digital visibility through paid advertising, SEO, and geotargeting will ensure ESFF appears prominently in searches related to film festivals and creative opportunities, particularly targeting the Edmonton youth demographic who are heavy online users. ESFF should engage in cross-promotions as well, by partnering with local educational institutions, arts organisations, and community hubs to co-host events and workshops, expanding its reach and increasing awareness in target demographics. As well, collaborating with local influencers in the arts and film industries can further expand reach, as authentic content from trusted sources boosts relatability and engagement, especially among filmmakers.

### *Recommendation 2 - Reducing Intimidations for Filmmakers*

RQ (2) What role do feelings of intimidation and fear of rejection play in youth filmmakers' decision to submit films to festivals?

To encourage youth participation, ESFF should further promote their mentorship programs that pair young filmmakers with seasoned professionals, offering guidance on storytelling, technical skills, and navigating the festival process to build confidence and provide constructive feedback. Hosting confidence-building workshops on scriptwriting, cinematography, and editing, alongside discussions on overcoming creative blocks, can further prepare filmmakers for submissions and foster a sense of readiness. As well, continuing to create an inclusive atmosphere that showcases diverse success stories and emphasizing support for filmmakers of all skill levels—particularly first-time participants—can inspire new entrants to submit their work. Organising interactive events, like youth-focused film screenings followed by peer discussions, will help build connections and foster a sense of community among younger submitters.

### *Recommendation 3 - Addressing Post-Pandemic Shifts*

RQ (3) How have post-pandemic shifts, such as the rise of streaming and hybrid events, affected youth audience members' expectations for live film festivals?

To enhance engagement, ESFF should expand hybrid event offerings by live-streaming key festival events and providing recorded sessions for on-demand viewing, ensuring accessibility for those unable to attend in person while broadening the festival's reach. Offering flexible viewing options through a mobile-friendly streaming platform caters to youth who consume content on smartphones, increasing participation and satisfaction. For live attendance, promoting the social aspects and benefits of in-person events, such as networking opportunities, filmmaker interactions, and the communal experience of watching films together, can emphasize the unique benefits of live attendance for both groups.

#### *Recommendation 4 - Addressing Financial Barriers*

RQ (4) How does financial constraint impact both filmmakers and audience members when considering participation in ESFF events?

ESFF should introduce tiered ticket pricing for audience members by offering discounted rates for students and early registrants while maintaining premium-priced options for exclusive experiences, increasing accessibility while sustaining revenue. Providing financial incentives, such as grants, scholarships, or fee waivers for first-time and low-income filmmakers, can ease the financial strain, with additional support secured through collaborations with local organisations. Promoting value-added features like access to workshops, networking opportunities, and complimentary screenings can further justify pricing and encourage attendance.

#### **Limitations**

The research process for developing the final report encountered several limitations that impacted the depth and generalizability of the findings. One significant challenge was the limited number of filmmaker responses, with only 12 valid submissions after screening. This small sample size constrained the research's ability to draw statistically significant insights and limited the generalizability of findings to the broader filmmaker population. Furthermore, an imbalance in representation between the audience and the filmmaker groups skewed the focus towards audience-specific insights, limiting the exploration of filmmaker challenges. Additionally, approximately 40% of the initial responses were screened out due to incomplete data or failure to meet the target demographic criteria, which, while ensuring data integrity, reduced the overall sample size and statistical power of the results. Some key variables, such as online visibility and engagement with diverse audience segments, needed to be thoroughly tested due to the limited scope of the questionnaire, restricting the depth of analysis for factors affecting awareness. Time constraints compounded these issues, limiting opportunities to gather more survey data. Methodological limitations, such as reliance on self-reported data, introduced potential biases like social desirability or non-response bias, particularly for sensitive topics like intimidation and financial challenges. Despite these challenges, the findings provide valuable insights and a strong foundation for understanding barriers and opportunities for engaging youth with the Edmonton Short Film Festival.

## References

Inside Pulse. (2024, March 6). *The Ever-Evolving Landscape of Film: A Look at the Latest Industry Statistics*. Inside Pulse.  
<https://insidepulse.com/2024/03/06/the-ever-evolving-landscape-of-film-a-look-at-the-latest-industry-statistics/>

## Appendix A: Literature Review Table

Author (Year)	Country of Study	Research Objective	Methods used and sample size	Techniques of Data Analysis	Key Variables	Main Findings/ Results
Chacon-Lopez & Maeso-Brown (2023)	Spain	Discover the role of prior participation in artistic activities in creative development, self-esteem and barriers to creativity.	Exploratory (secondary research used) and quasi-experimental, Descriptive, cross-sectional study. 574 students participated in the validation, 291 (randomly selected) in the subsequent survey.	Frequency analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, regression analysis, and ANOVA for survey data using SPSS version 25 software with alpha 0.05 assumed on all contrasts	Gender, barriers of creativity, tests of creative imagination, self-esteem, participation in artistic activities	Lower self-esteem scores correlate with more creative barriers.
Thatcher & Brown (2010)	United States of America	Examine direct and indirect roles of the communication media mix (i.e., the proportion of mediated and non-mediated communication) has on creativity	Exploratory (secondary research used) and Descriptive, initial interviews with company supervisors and personal surveys with 210 employees and supervisors, 172 valid responses	Data reduction analysis using PLS-Graph Version 3.00 (Build 1126) for survey data	Self-esteem and creativity measured through social differences, informational differences, communication media mix, team size, individual tenure, and communication frequency	Social category differences negatively affect creativity, but informational differences enhance it. The mode of communication, mediated communication especially, significantly moderates these relationships.
Hilal, Husin, & Zayed (2013)	Malaysia	Identify most significant barrier to creativity of Malaysian undergraduate students	Exploratory (secondary research used) and Descriptive Surveys with 459 respondents from several universities, 459 valid responses	One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and data display for survey data	Most critical barrier studied through types of creativity barriers respondents deal with, university, and faculty of study	Task achievement barriers are most significant barrier to students' creative abilities, Compliance needs are the second most important barrier, followed by abstract ability, environmental circumstances, self-concept, and finally, systematic analysis.

Nordin & Malik (2015)	Malaysia	Examine barriers to creativity and innovation action in a local university, as well as effects of gender, program, and hometown on innovative action.	Exploratory (secondary research used) and Descriptive surveys (cross-sectional research design) with 213 graduate students, 202 valid responses	One way ANOVA for survey data	Creative thought and innovative action measured through barriers to creative and innovative action. Barriers related to self-confidence and risk taking, barriers related to need for conformity, barriers related to use of abstract, barriers related to use of systematic analysis, barriers related to task achievement. Barriers related to physical environment, hometown, gender, program.	Moderate barriers exist related to self-confidence and risk taking, need for conformity, use of systematic analysis, use of abstract, task achievement and physical environment.
Carol Laurent Jarzyna (2021)	Global level	Examine how parasocial interaction and relationships function during the COVID-19 quarantine and how they can be used to compensate for social deficits externally imposed by quarantine conditions	Secondary research - the Mars-500 simulation and social experiments involving quarantine-like conditions	Literature Review and Synthesis, Comparative Analysis	PSI, PSRs, social isolation, and the use of digital platforms	PSI and PSR helped mitigate feelings of loneliness and fear during the quarantine. The study emphasizes the growing importance of digital media in facilitating these interactions and the role of new technologies like AR and haptic suits in enhancing parasocial experiences.

John Drury, M. Brooke Rogers, Theresa M. Marteau, Lucy Yardley, Stephen Reicher, Clifford Stott (2021).	United Kingdom	To describe and analyze critical variables that affect public behaviour about the spread of COVID-19 during the reopening of live events and large venues. Additionally, mitigation measures should be proposed to reduce transmission risks to a safe level.	Secondary research And Research on behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic.	A theoretical framework for understanding collective behaviour at live events based on behavioural science principles and empirical findings from existing literature.	Group identity, norms, proximity behaviors, and interaction tendencies at live events analyzed through secondary research	The findings highlight that risks of COVID-19 transmission at live events are amplified by close contact and collective behaviour and emphasize the importance of effective communication and creating new social norms for safer event attendance.
R. Clayton, C. Clayton, and M. Potter (2022)	United Kingdom	To investigate how British families' film and TV use changed during the COVID-19 lockdowns and beyond and how these media impacted their well-being, daily routines, and family dynamics.	Quantitative via Survey of 500 British adults and Qualitative via interviews with 60 parents	Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis	<b>Screen Time:</b> Measured by self-reported hours spent on different devices <b>Social Grade:</b> Defined using socio-economic categories to distinguish light vs. heavy users of screens. <b>Family Dynamics:</b> Assessed through qualitative responses about how media consumption affected family bonding, stress, or coping mechanisms.	Streaming services were vital for mental well-being and family bonding during lockdowns, with 51% of adults reporting increased leisure screen use post-pandemic. Shared viewing replaced cinema visits, but concerns arose about children binge-watching unsupervised.
M. Sami Okumuş (2022)	Turkey	The study aimed to explore whether the cinema industry and the movies produced lost value compared to TV series during the COVID-19 pandemic and to assess the future position of movie theatres against television and internet broadcasts	Qualitative focused on industry-wide trends	Descriptive and comparative	Analyzing data, tracking subscription rates and economic impact assessed through box office revenues and the financial performance of movie theaters during the pandemic	The COVID-19 pandemic led to a 72% drop in cinema attendance as audiences shifted to OTT platforms. Cinema revenues are unlikely to recover before 2024, with OTT platforms dominating the market and cinema engagement expected to remain low.



Kay, P., Wong, E., and Polonsky, M.J. (2009)	Australia	Study on non-attendance of cultural attractions, followed by qualitative in-depth interviews to identify commonalities or gaps in the previous research on barriers, constraints and inhibitors, as well as to propose linkages between these.	Secondary research analysis, in-depth interviews with 11 participants.	NVivo 7.0 data management and analytical tool	Researchers codified the transcribed interviews using keywords and phrases.	Interconnected barriers to visitation are identified: 1) physical access, 2) personal access, 3) cost, 4) time and timing, 5) product, 6) personal interest and peer group, 7) socialization and understanding, and 8) information.
Kattelle, A. (2000)	USA	Book examining the history of filmmaking.	Secondary research analysis.	N/A	N/A	Historical points in the film industry in the USA.
Hollinshead, A. (2011)	Scotland	Study examining film viewers in areas of deprivation about their film viewing choices and practices.	Secondary research analysis, exploratory research, semi-structured interviews with 10 participants.	Descriptive and comparative.	Interviewees' responses were examined and quoted.	Subjective information on consumption practices, costs, family, film genre, and social class influence on cinema attendance.
Tseng, A. (2022)	USA	Average cost of short film production.	Online estimates analysis from secondary data sources.	Data census from film industry	Census results were averaged.	Average cost for a live-action short film, accounting for crew, set, cast, and other production factors.

## Appendix B: Analysis of Findings From Qualitative Research

The in-depth interviews have revealed several key themes that will guide the next research stage for the Edmonton Short Film Festival (ESFF). One of the primary issues identified was the need for ESFF to improve its efforts to engage individuals who are likely to submit or attend. While some respondents were aware of ESFF, their knowledge was primarily through word of mouth or film-related programs. Instead of broadening general outreach efforts, it appears more beneficial for ESFF would be to concentrate on engaging these individuals. This focus could involve targeted outreach, stronger engagement within film-related communities, and forging deeper partnerships with educational institutions where prior awareness exists.

Another significant theme was the low confidence experienced by aspiring filmmakers. Many participants expressed concern over the quality of their work and the fear of public criticism or rejection. This emotional barrier appeared to deter amateur filmmakers from submitting their films, even if they were aware of ESFF. For some, submitting their work to a professional festival felt overwhelming. This finding highlighted the need for ESFF to create an environment that feels more supportive and accessible to young creators, which could help to overcome this fear and encourage more submissions.

Financial and resource constraints also surfaced as significant barriers for filmmakers and potential audience members. The cost of filmmaking—ranging from equipment and production to submission fees—was identified as a deterrent, particularly for students and young filmmakers who often operate on limited budgets. Additionally, some respondents mentioned the cost and time of attending live events as a challenge, especially compared to accessible or affordable streaming options. This result suggests that financial and time considerations play a significant role in limiting youth participation.

The shift in entertainment consumption due to the COVID-19 pandemic also emerged as a theme. Many respondents noted that they had become accustomed to streaming services and virtual events during the pandemic, shaping their expectations for future events. The convenience and accessibility of digital media now play an essential role in how youth prefer to engage with film festivals. This shift implies that ESFF needs to adapt to these changing patterns and explore hybrid or digital event options to attract a younger audience.

Despite these barriers, respondents expressed that recognition, networking opportunities, and career development motivate participation in film festivals. Participants viewed these events as critical for building professional networks and gaining exposure within the industry, illustrating an opportunity for ESFF to emphasize these benefits in its marketing, helping to address some of the barriers related to intimidation and cost.

## Appendix C: Final Questionnaires

### Marketing Research- Questionnaire for Filmmakers

#### Research Information and Consent Statement

- **Purpose of the Research:** The focus of the current study is to aid the Edmonton Short Film Festival (ESFF) by providing insights into barriers to film festival participation.
- **Potential Risks:** There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. A further risk that should be identified refers to inconvenience in that the time taken to complete this questionnaire.
- **Potential Benefits:** This project will provide insights on the audience and target market within the short film industry. The results of the research will provide valuable information to stakeholders interested in film creation and production. We also hope to be able to provide the results of the research to the ESFF in hopes of better preparing their services.

**After reading the above information, do you agree to participate in this questionnaire?**

- Yes
- No

**Where do you reside?**

- Edmonton
- Sherwood Park
- St. Albert
- Leduc
- Fort Saskatchewan
- Beaumont
- Spruce Grove
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you have experience in film OR are you a student/alumni of a school of Fine Arts & Communications?**

- Yes
- No

**Are you aware of film festivals in the Edmonton area?**

- Yes
- No

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#### Main Section

**What modes do you usually receive film festival information through? (Select all that apply)**

- Word of Mouth
- Social Media Posts
- Email Newsletters

- Film Community Websites or Forums
- Traditional advertisements (posters, billboards, etc.)
- Google Search
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**How would you describe the likelihood of submitting your work and participating in a film festival within the next year?**

- 1 (Highly Unlikely)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Highly Likely)

**How would you rate the following aspects in terms of importance to you when considering film festival submissions?**

Aspect	1 - Most Important	2- Important	3- Somewhat Important	4- Least Important
Free submission for filmmakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Variety of genre categories	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible film submission criteria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monetary incentives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Does the cost of film production (equipment, casting, mise-en-scene, and editing) deter you from creating and submitting films?**

- Yes
- No

**How often have you seen advertisements for film festival submissions as a filmmaker within the past 3 months?**

- Never
- 1-3 times
- 4-6 times
- 7+ times

**Where do you typically see advertisements for film festival submissions within the past 3 months? (Select all that apply)**

- Social Media
- Email newsletter
- Organic Google Search
- Sponsored Digital Advertisements

- Traditional advertisements (posters, billboards, etc.)
- N/A (I have not seen advertisements within the past 3 months)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe your agreement with the following statements as a filmmaker:**

***When participating in film festivals, I experience feelings of intimidation.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

***Easing financial constraints through grants or subsidies would increase my engagement and participation with film festivals.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***Fear of rejection withholds me from submitting my work to film festivals in the Edmonton area.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***In comparison to other filmmakers, I believe my work is inferior, and that influences my participation in film festivals negatively.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***I am scared of submitting my work to film festivals because other filmmakers are more experienced and have a higher chance of success than me.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***I believe that hybrid events and/or online streaming is preferred by film festival audiences and filmmakers.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***When submitting to film festivals, I tend to seek out free submission opportunities.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**What description below best describes your familiarity with the Edmonton Short Film Festival?**

- Very limited knowledge
- Aware of it but not actively following events
- Follow events but have not attended
- Participated in ESFF
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**In your opinion, what does ESFF need to do more often to increase their marketing outreach and awareness levels for youth filmmakers? (e.g., Instagram advertising campaign)**

- Open-ended response: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Demographic Classification Section**

*Please note that these questions are necessary for reporting statistics by groups. All responses are kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.*

**What is your age group?**

- Under 18
- 18–25
- 26–33
- 34–41
- 42–49
- 50 or older

**What is your gender?**

- Man
- Woman



- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your highest level of education completed?**

- Less than high school diploma
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Some post-secondary education, no degree
- Undergraduate Degree
- Graduate or Professional Degree

**What is your annual income?**

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000–\$39,000
- \$40,000–\$59,000
- \$60,000–\$79,000
- \$80,000+
- Prefer not to say

**What is your current employment status?**

- Student
- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Self-employed
- Unemployed

**What is your housing status?**

- Own
- Rent
- Live with parents/relative
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Marketing Research-Questionnaire for Film Audience Members**

### **Research Information and Consent Statement**

- **Purpose of the Research:** The focus of the current study is to aid the Edmonton Short Film Festival (ESFF) by providing insights into motivators to film festival participation..
- **Potential Risks:** There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. A further risk that should be identified refers to inconvenience in that the time taken to complete this questionnaire.
- **Potential Benefits:** This project will provide insights on the audience and target market within the short film industry. The results of the research will provide valuable information to stakeholders interested in film creation and production. We also hope to be able to provide the results of the research to the ESFF in hopes of better preparing their services.

**After reading the above information, do you agree to participate in this questionnaire?**

- Yes
- No

**Where do you reside?**

- Edmonton
- Sherwood Park
- St. Albert
- Leduc
- Fort Saskatchewan
- Beaumont
- Spruce Grove
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you have interest in film studies and film festivals *OR* are you a student/alumni of a school of Fine Arts & Communications?**

- Yes
- No

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### **Main Section**

**Are you aware of film festivals in the Edmonton area?**

- Yes
- No

**What modes do you usually receive film festival information through? (Select all that apply)**

- Word of Mouth
- Social Media Posts
- Email Newsletters
- Film Community Websites or Forums

- Traditional advertisements (posters, billboards, etc.)
- Google Search
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**How often have you seen advertisements for film festival viewing as an audience member within the past 3 months?**

- Never
- 1–3 times
- 4–6 times
- 7+ times

**Where do you typically see advertisements for film festival viewing events within the past 3 months? (Select all that apply)**

- Social media
- Email newsletter
- Organic Google search
- Sponsored digital advertisements
- Traditional advertisements (billboards, posters, etc.)
- N/A (I have not seen advertisements within the past 3 months)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**How would you describe the likelihood of attending a film festival as an audience member within the next year?**

- 1 (Highly Unlikely)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Highly Likely)

**How likely are you to attend a film festival based on the indicated ticket price ranges?**

Ticket Price Range	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very Likely
Free ticket price	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
\$1–\$10 ticket price range	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
\$10–\$15 ticket price range	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
\$16+ ticket price	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Describe your level of agreement with the following statements:

***The costs associated with travel, ticket sales, and extended expenses (e.g., popcorn bought at theatre) decrease the frequency I attend live events.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

***I believe that after the COVID-19 pandemic, I have started watching more at-home entertainment rather than going out to the theater.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

***I believe that there is greater value in streaming short films on a personal device rather than attending an in-person short film festival.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***I believe that flexible viewing times and accessibility to online sources are important aspects for short film festivals.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***I would prefer to watch short films at a live event, such as a film festival, instead of at home.***

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

***I believe that hybrid events and/or online streaming is preferred by film festival audiences.***

- Strongly disagree

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**When watching short films, which viewing channel do you use most often to watch them?**

- Mobile Phone
- Tablet/iPad
- Computer
- TV
- Theatre

**What description below best describes your familiarity with the Edmonton Short Film Festival?**

- Very limited knowledge
- Aware of it but not actively following events
- Follow events but have not attended
- Participated in ESFF
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**In your opinion, what does ESFF need to do more often to increase their marketing outreach and awareness levels for youth audiences? (e.g., Instagram advertising campaign)**

- Open-ended response: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Demographic Classification Section**

*Please note that these questions are necessary for reporting statistics by groups. All responses are kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.*

**What is your age group?**

- Under 18
- 18–25
- 26–33
- 34–41
- 42–49
- 50 or older

**What is your gender?**

- Man
- Woman

- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your highest level of education completed?**

- Less than high school diploma
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Some post-secondary education, no degree
- Undergraduate Degree
- Graduate or Professional Degree

**What is your annual income?**

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000–\$39,000
- \$40,000–\$59,000
- \$60,000–\$79,000
- \$80,000+
- Prefer not to say

**What is your current employment status?**

- Student
- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Self-employed
- Unemployed

**What is your housing status?**

- Own
- Rent
- Live with parents/relative
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_