SYS's Six-Figure Screenplay Contest

Dates | Prizes | Rules+Eligibility | FAQ | Judges | Estimate Budget | Enter Now!

Welcome

Welcome to SYS's Sixth Annual Six-Figure Screenplay Contest.

As the contest has matured and found some success, we're eager to continue to build on our momentum and find more homes for quality, low budget screenplays.

Many of last year's screenplays have found interest from producers and we're hoping to have some exciting announcements in the coming year as these films move into production. Click here to see last year's top screenplays.

Our inaugural contest winning screenplay, *Killer Profile*, written by Richard Pierce, was found through the contest by one of our industry judges, Ted Campbell, who took the project to MarVista Entertainment where it was purchased and shot and is currently airing worldwide. Richard and Ted were both gracious enough to come on the SYS Podcast to talk about the experience and how it all came together. Click here to listen to Richard Pierce's episode and click here to listen to Ted Campbell's episode.

We'll be continuing to accept short films this year as well. Many producers are looking for quality short film scripts, so we're excited to try and find a home for them as well.

What's this contest all about?

Do you have the next great low budget screenplay? SYS is trying to find great screenplays in any genre that could be produced for less than $1,000,000USD (one million). In other words, scripts that could be produced on six-figures or less.

Our goal with this contest is simple: find the best low budget screenplays on the planet and present them to the industry, which will hopefully lead to options, sales, and productions.

We've assembled a great group of seasoned writers, directors, and producers (see list below) to help judge the entries, as well as a great group of readers to handle the first round of reads.

How's it going to work?

Each script submitted will be read by a minimum of two professional readers in the first round. The scripts that stand out in the first round will move into the second round (roughly 20% of all screenplays entered). The second round screenplays will be vetted further with more assessments from the SYS readers. The top scripts from the second round will be selected and moved into the quarterfinals, where we will pitch those screenplays to the industry judges. Finally, after all the scripts have been graded by the judges, we will choose a winner and make the announcement.

How will scripts be graded?

Each professional reader will fill out an SYS Script Assessment form for each screenplay that they read. The SYS script assessment is a quick way for the reader to grade the screenplay. Each screenplay will be graded based on seven key criteria: Ability to be produced for less than $1M, Concept, Characters, Structure, Marketability, Tone, and Craft. For a small additional charge ($10) you can receive the two assessments from the first round readers (and possibly a 3rd assessment from a second round reader). Click here to see an example of the script assessment form that gets filled out by the readers.

Dates

- August 31st final deadline - Features: $65 | Shorts: $55
- Wednesday, October 1st - 2nd round screenplays announced
- Wednesday, October 8th - Quarter-finalist announced
- Wednesday, October 15th - Semi-finalists announced
- Wednesday, October 22nd - Winner and runner-up announced.

Prizes (Features)

For this contest shorts are screenplays that are less than 30 pages, while features are screenplays that are longer than 75 pages.

Winner:

- $1,000 cash
- 1 SYS 3-pack screenplay analysis
- Highlighted in a special newsletter that goes to hundreds of working producers
- Featured in The Budget List at the end of the year

Runner up:

- 1 SYS 3-pack screenplay analysis
- Highlighted in a special newsletter that goes to hundreds of working producers
- Featured in The Budget List at the end of the year

Semi-finalists:

- Highlighted in a special newsletter that goes to hundreds of working producers
- Featured in The Budget List at the end of the year

Quarter-finalists:

- Featured in The Budget List at the end of the year

Prizes (Shorts)

Short film scripts (less than 30 pages) will be judged using the same method and criteria as features. We're looking for low budget short scripts. Our readers will grade the scripts in the first round and then the highest rated scripts will be passed along to our industry judges in the later rounds.

Winner:

- $100 cash
- Highlighted in a special newsletter that goes to hundreds of working producers
- Featured in The Budget List at the end of the year

Runner up:

- Highlighted in a special newsletter that goes to hundreds of working producers
- Featured in The Budget List at the end of the year

Semi-finalists:

- Featured in The Budget List at the end of the year

Payment Options:

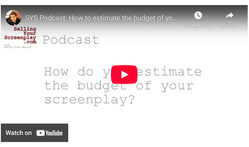
Choose

Click Here To Enter SYS's Six-Figure Screenplay Contest

*Final contest deadline ends August 31st.
**You will receive the 2 assessments from our first round readers.
Note: Upload link will be emailed to you once payment has been made.
Shorts vs Features: For this contest shorts are screenplays that are less than 30 pages, while features are screenplays that are longer than 65 pages.

How do you know if your screenplay could be produced for less than $1M?

This short video should help you estimate the budget of your film.



Watch on YouTube

Rules+Eligibility

Writer(s)

- This contest is void where prohibited.
- All writers must be at least 18 years old to be eligible.
- Writer(s) must wholly own the screenplay and intellectual property that they submit.
- Entrants may be required to submit further information to assist in verifying eligibility.
- All submissions must be made by the writer or co-writer of the screenplay being submitted.
- Submissions written by more than one person must be submitted with the consent of all other writers. And all writers should be credited on the title page.
- If a writing team's screenplay is picked as a winner, prizes will be given to the one writer who made the submission. The submitting writer is responsible for dividing or sharing the prize money with his or her writing partners.

Material

- All material must be submitted in industry standard screenplay format.
- The title page should contain the title of the screenplay and names of all writers. It's okay but not mandatory if it also contains the writer's contact information.
- All screenplays must be written in English, however anyone from anywhere may enter the contest if they meet all the other eligibility requirements.
- Only screenplays that are 120 pages or less are eligible.
- All material must be submitted electronically as a PDF.
- Substitutions of either corrected pages or new drafts of the entered material will NOT be allowed. Please proofread your material and make sure you are submitting the correct draft at the time of submission.

Submitting

- The script assessments from the two professional first round readers may be purchased for a small additional fee, but it must be purchased at the time of entry. No other feedback will be provided.
- All submissions must be received on or before the deadline dates by Midnight PST.
- The submission fee payment must be made in full at the time of submission.
- Entry fees are NOT refundable for any reason.
- Any submission may be deemed ineligible for any reason at the sole discretion of SYS.
- Quarter-Finalists may be required to sign and return within ten (10) business days of receipt a notarized Affidavit of Eligibility and a Release and Indemnification and proof of valid passport and any other documents that SYS or any other partner may require before receiving prize payment. Failure to respond to the initial notification within fifteen (15) business days will result in disqualification.
- We reserve the right to amend any part of these rules at any time. So please check back often.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Can I submit the same screenplay I submitted last year?
A: Yes. You can submit a previously submitted screenplay. However, it's NOT recommended that you do. Unless it's been substantially re-written, the chances are it won't fare any better this year than last.

Q: Can I submit my screenplay to other competitions while SYS is reviewing my screenplay?
A: Yes. You can submit your screenplay to other competitions as well as producers, agents, and managers. And you can submit your screenplay to SYS if you've entered it in other contests, too.

Q: Does it matter when my screenplay was written?
A: No. Any screenplay, no matter when it was written, is eligible.

Q: Can I submit an adaptation of a book or comic or based on some other intellectual property?
A: You can only submit screenplays if you own all the IP that goes along with it.

Q: Can I submit more than one screenplay?
A: Yes, you can submit as many screenplays as you'd like.

Q: Should I register or copyright my screenplay before entering this contest?
A: Yes. It is recommended that you register your screenplay with the WGA and/or submit it to the Library of Congress for a copyright before submitting it to us or anyone else.

Some of our distinguished judges include:

Ted Campbell Producer / Less is More Productions	David Tish Producer / Envision Media Arts, LLC	Kent Moran Producer / Wishing Well Pictures	James Engle Producer / Echo Lake Entertainment
Daniel Wilson Producer / Bartoli Film	John Cross Producer / John Cross Productions	Param Gill Producer / FlickBag	Udana Fonseka Producer / Grindout Productions
Alexander Steinhoff Producer / StoneHope Entertainment	J. Vaughn Producer / No Halo Pictures LLC	Daniel Frei Director / Producer / The Frei Group	Michael D Jones Producer / Silver Heart Productions
Oleg Lubske Producer / ScriptBridge	Jon Michael Kondrath Producer / ReKon Productions	Sean Tracey Director / Producer / Sean Tracey Associates	Bharathi Mehra Actress
Macee Binns Producer / Casting Director / Black Sheep Casting	Caryn McCann Producer	Christine A. Yohn Producer / CutieBoots Pictures	Pietro Schito Producer / WriteForAnimation.com

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You Missed

Podcast Transcripts
SYS Podcast Episode 536 - Working With Tom Cruise, Jamie Foxx on Collateral (2004) With Chuck Russell (transcript)

Podcasts
SYS Podcast Episode 536 - Working With Tom Cruise, Jamie Foxx on Collateral (2004) With Chuck Russell

Podcasts
SYS Podcast Episode 535 - The Ladybug Effect With Greg Porper

Podcast Transcripts
SYS Podcast Episode 535 - The Ladybug Effect With Greg Porper (transcript)