**NOTE ON APPROACHING**

**A POTENTIALLY DUBIOUS OR SCAM FESTIVAL**

Below is an outline for the letter. You should review each dubious festival's website and FilmFreeway site to identify your concerns. Please amend and include the issues that concern you. It is only a template to get you started.

**IMPORTANT RED FLAG WARNING SIGNS**

1 – Lack of transparency (No names for the directors – No ways of tracing the curators via Google etc. – No Jury names and information).

2 – Transparency and where the festival is run from a long list of countries may suggest a level of corruption.

3 – The website is vague and includes little more than generic photos and images, rules and no details about their venue. Check the venue to see if it exists and if the festival is booked on the dates it states.

4 – It has no physical awards and only offers downloadable PDF certificates to winners. Alternatively, it lets you BUY your award for an exorbitant price.

5 – It hosts an 'Online only/Awards event', as opposed to having a genuine event and a legitimate venue. Often, anything so-called festival with the word AWARDS in it, will be bogus.

6 – ONLINE FESTIVAL can be genuine (though few are). They should state in the 'About' the event and how they run the festival.

Does it have a Screening Area and other events within the festival?

Does it have a Meet and Greet for filmmakers?

Is it hosting any extra events like workshops or discussions?

Is there a means to hold special screenings with a Q&A from the filmmaker?

Where does it plan to source its audience?

 How do they gauge how many viewers will interact with the festival events?

**N.B. If it is only online, it is not a festival,**

**at best it is an event and at worst a scam!**

For more information go to

[**https://www.submittingtofilmfestivals.com/scam-film-festivals/**](https://www.submittingtofilmfestivals.com/scam-film-festivals/)

To: Festival Director

Festival Name

Re: Invitation to your festival or Concerns about your festival

Dear Festival Director,

Thank you for reaching out to me from Festival Name. I appreciate your interest in my work; After reviewing the information you provided in your email, I checked your website and FilmFreeway page. I have several concerns and reservations about the festival and its workings. Perhaps you can address them for me.

Firstly, I notice a lack of personal information about the festival director(s) and the jury on the festival's website. Transparency and credibility are important factors when considering participation in a film festival, and the absence of such information raises doubts about the festival's legitimacy.

Secondly, upon visiting the festival's website, I found it vague and limited in terms of its content and the details about how the running of the festival. The overall appearance of the website, along with a generic email address, gives the impression of a potential spam or scam festival. As an artist, it is critical to prioritize trustworthy platforms and events over those looking to make money out of unaware filmmakers.

Thirdly, it is always questionable when a festival offers more than 20 categories. Additionally, the only prize available to the filmmakers is selection laurels (PNG) and downloadable certificates (PDF) for the winners.

Considering these concerns, I kindly request you to provide me with more information about the festival and its organizers. It would be helpful to have details about the festival's history, past editions, notable participants or winners, and any affiliations with reputable organizations within the film industry. This information will assist me in making an informed decision regarding my potential participation.

If I do not receive a satisfactory explanation or clarification regarding these concerns, I will inform FilmFreeway about my experience and observations. They take such matters seriously, and they may consider taking appropriate action, which may include the removal of your festival from their platform.

I look forward to receiving the requested information at your earliest convenience.

Regards,

Your Name?