

Visual Voice and JAEBC Launch Strategic Partnership to Bridge Japan-Africa Entertainment Sectors

Special "Focus on Africa" Program to be featured at SSFF & ASIA 2026

TOKYO, April 28, 2026 – Visual Voice Inc. (Headquarters: Shibuya, Tokyo; CEO: Tetsuya Bessho), the operator of Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA)—one of Asia's largest Academy Awards® accredited international short film festivals—is proud to announce a strategic partnership with the Japan Africa Entertainment Business Council (JAEBC). This collaboration aims to accelerate content distribution and mutual cultural understanding between the rapidly growing African market and Japan's creative industries.

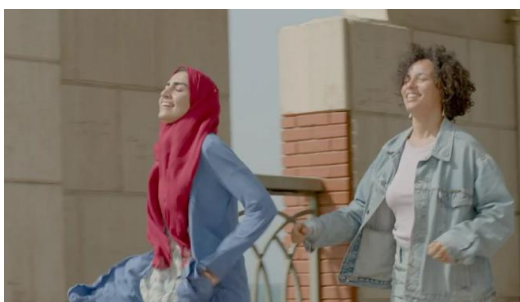
Background and Objectives.
With a population of approximately 1.4 billion and a median age of 19, Africa represents the world's youngest and most dynamic demographic. As smartphone penetration drives the growth of music, film, and animation, Africa has become a vital market for Japanese Intellectual Property (IP).

This partnership leverages SSFF & ASIA's global creative network and JAEBC's expertise to facilitate a new era of entertainment exchange.

Key Initiatives

■ "Focus on Africa" Program at SSFF & ASIA 2026:

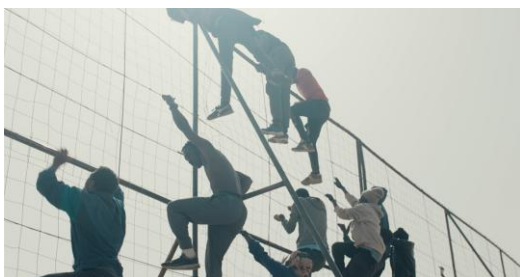
Starting May 25, the festival will showcase a special selection of short films from five countries, including Egypt, Algeria, and Senegal. Featured Work: Salt of Our Sea (Egypt/USA), a drama about self-discovery in Alexandria. Featured Work: Patience (Sabali) (Algeria), a powerful music video depicting resilience and hope. Official Website (Open 17:00 JST): https://www.shortshorts.org/2026/program/program_cat/africa



"Salt of Our Sea"

Dir : Nada Bedair / 2025 / 18:38 / USA・Egypt / Drama

On a sunlit vacation in Alexandria, Layla quietly observes her parents' crumbling marriage. Amid the tension, her bond with Nour offers a sense of freedom and intimacy missing at home, leading her to navigate the delicate line between rebellion, self-discovery, and the awakening of first love shaped by sea, salt and forbidden longing.



"Patience (Sabali) "

Dir : Valentin Guiod/ 2025 / 7:17 / Algeria/ Music Video

Patience which comes from Sabali in Arabic, tells the story of Moudou's exodus and the resilience of his migration. It follows his clandestine odyssey, his struggle for love, and above all, his patience.

■ Long-term Collaboration:

The partners are exploring the establishment of an "Africa Award" to recognize excellence in African filmmaking and the permanent inclusion of African content in future festivals. Furthermore, Visual Voice's creator platform, "LIFE LOG BOX," will support the cross-border distribution of both Japanese and African content.

Message from Tetsuya Bessho, CEO of Visual Voice Inc. and Founder of SSFF & ASIA

"African short films are absolutely 'hot' right now! Over the past few years, our festival has received a significant number of submissions from all across the continent. These works are not only incredibly colorful and of high entertainment quality, but they also vividly and powerfully convey the 'now' of Africa. Last year, we welcomed Mr. Debo Adedayo, a prominent actor and producer from Nigeria, as an official jury member, which further solidified my conviction in the immense potential of the region. Through this new partnership with JAEBC, we are committed to broadcasting these vibrant works—which showcase Africa's diverse cultures alongside its economic growth—from Japan to the rest of the world. Starting with this year's 'Focus on Africa' program, we aim to deepen our collaboration through initiatives such as the establishment of an 'Africa Award' and the exchange of talent and technology. Together, we want to draw a new future map for the creative industries and culture. We invite everyone to join us and pour your passion and support into this exciting journey!"

■ Message from Satoshi Shinada, Co-Founder and Managing Director of JAEBC

"Having first set foot in Africa in 2001 and dedicated the past 25 years to the African market, I cannot overlook this pivotal moment where an explosion in entertainment consumption is about to occur across the continent. For Japanese entertainment companies to fully capture the potential of the African market, there is an urgent need for a 'playbook'—a strategic framework to engage existing large-scale fan communities, utilize data, and build and scale distribution and sales mechanisms. In 2026, as JAEBC enters its new phase, we will establish the organizational structure, know-how, and infrastructure necessary to build actual entertainment businesses in Africa, accelerating our efforts toward full-scale monetization."



<Japan-Africa Entertainment Business Council (JAEBC) >

The Japan-Africa Entertainment Business Council (JAEBC) is a nonprofit platform dedicated to building strong, sustainable partnerships between Japan and Africa across the entertainment sector — including music, film, anime, manga, games, sports entertainment, and fashion. It was launched in 2025 to act as a strategic bridge between key industry figures and organizations on both continents at a time when Africa's creative economy is entering a new phase of global momentum.
URL : <https://www.stagebank.jp/en/jaebc-eng>



<Visual Voice Inc.>

Visual Voice Inc. operates at the core of the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), an Academy Awards® accredited and one of the largest international short film festivals in Asia, building a network that connects creators from around the world. Beyond simple video production, the company develops diversified business projects, including the planning and production of "Branded Movies" that weave corporate philosophies into narrative stories, problem-solving for local governments, and the operation of video streaming platforms. By harnessing the power of storytelling to move people's hearts, Visual Voice co-creates new viewing experiences that brighten the future of society and enterprises.
URL : <https://v-voice.jp/en/>

[Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2026 Overview]

■ Festival Period :

Monday, May 25th : Opening Ceremony
Tuesday, May 26th to Tuesday, June 9th : Screening at Tokyo
Wednesday, June 10th : Award Ceremony
※Online Venue: Monday, May 25th to Tuesday, June 30th

■ Screening Venues : MoN Takanawa: The Museum of Narratives
(Box1000, Tatami, Park Terrace)
Akasaka Intercity Conference, Euro Live,
WITH HARAJUKU HALL, LIFORK HARAJUKU

※Dates and programs vary by venue

■ Official Website:

<https://www.shortshorts.org/2026/en/index.html>

■ Ticket Sales:

[Advance Tickets]

General: 1,500 yen, University Students/ U29/ Seniors / Persons with Disabilities: 1,200 yen
Elementary School · Junior High School · High School Students: 1,000 yen
Preschool Children (under elementary school age): Free

[Same-Day Tickets]

General: 1,800yen, University Students /U29 / Seniors / Persons with Disabilities: 1,500 yen
Elementary School · Junior High School · High School Students: 1,200 yen
Preschool Children (under elementary school age): Free

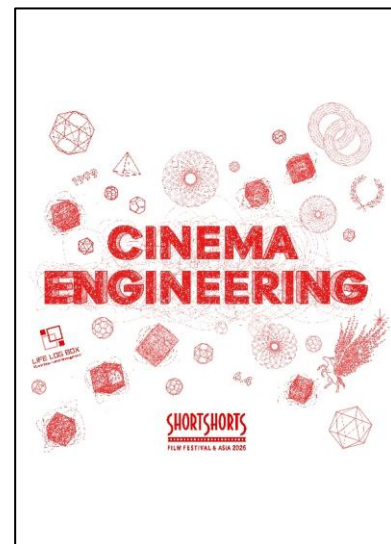
[Passports]

General: 7,000 yen, Students / Seniors / Persons with Disabilities: 5,500 yen

[Online Venue] 2,500 yen (Within Japan) / 15 USD (Outside Japan)

*passport for the Online Venue will be on sale from May 25th.

■ General Inquiry : info@shortshorts.org



[PRESS INQUIRY]

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[Stills are available here:]

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rFNG05-2fx-ILHmk0SoZUotABgDgLnH?usp=sharing>