



**CHARITABLE
CONTRIBUTIONS**

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Funds Distribution Report

Recipient Organization:

Deaf Spotlight

Mailing Address:

PO Box 20191
Seattle, WA 98102

Contact:

<https://www.deafspotlight.org>

Organization's General Goals:

Deaf Spotlight inspires and showcases deaf culture and sign languages through the arts.

Date of Award:

2025 Q4

Level:

\$500 to \$2,500

For more information, please read the attached report from Deaf Spotlight.

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Report Code: Q4 2025 14.2



FINAL REPORT

Name/Brief Description of Project: Seattle Deaf Film Festival 2026

Name of Organization: Deaf Spotlight (DS)

Dates of project:

In-person dates: April 10 – 12, 2026

Virtual dates: April 13 - 26, 2026 with Eventive as our streaming platform

Link: [SDFF 2026 - Deaf Spotlight](#)

Neighborhood of project activity: Capitol Hill, Seattle, WA & Virtual Realm

Project Contact Person: Patty Liang at director@deafspotlight.org

Total number of persons participating/attending/benefitting: 1,142

Eventive (a virtual platform to stream films): 581 viewers

In-person only: 561 attendees

Total number of artists participating:

Panelists: 5

Topics consisted of:

- Q&A with filmmaker of SIREN: The Voices of Shelley Beattie, Irene Taylor moderated by Patty Liang, Executive Director

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- Q&A Panel with 3 filmmakers (Douglas Ridloff -Director, Andrew Membrey-Writer, and Leah Egan- Director) from the “Family Ties” short film program, moderated by Andrea Passafiume, festival programmer
- Q&A with filmmaker Dickie Hearts about the evolution of his project, “Passengers” which won as a 5 minute short in Easterseals (and screened in SDFP back in 2014) and expanded to a feature pilot with hopefully more episodes in the future, moderated by Phelan Conheady

Committee

There were 9 individuals on the committee.

This was the first time that Deaf Spotlight hired an outside film festival director, MJ Kiego, to lead the SDFP committee for a year and a half. We had one programmer who was responsible for curating the content of the festival’s films and managing the screening committee. Two committee members were in charge of hospitality and for the festival’s receptions and luncheon events. One member was a dedicated marketing and communications expert that made email blasts, social media posts, and visuals for the website. The rest participated in various shapes and forms ranging from screening films, to coordinating volunteers or to managing logistics during both the in-person and virtual screening portions.

DS cannot do this festival without these invaluable committee members’ time, energy and support. They were able to troubleshoot quickly to ensure a great event given some barriers on Friday evening with the reception space due to the building manager’s error.

Summary

The Seattle Deaf Film Festival continues to champion its’ values on making the festival accessible through both in-person and virtual screenings. The festival featured 38 local and international films on, by and about the Deaf community across 9 programs. Three panels were conducted during the weekend of the in-person portion of the festival.

The in-person festival opened with a reception in Deaf Spotlight’s physical office on Friday evening. Continuing from our last festival, we hosted our filmmakers’ luncheon on Saturday, encouraging networking and opportunities for the selected films’ crew members. We collaborated with Deaf Night Out on Saturday evening at Stoup Brewing near the physical location at the Northwest Film Forum, where festival goers could mingle and meet with the broader Deaf community in Seattle. The in-person festival

ended with a fantastic closing reception with support from Panarchy, a new pizza restaurant who decided to make our organization their first catering service.

Technical Aspects

In our last iteration, we used Northwest Film Forum for both our in-person and virtual screenings, but this year NWFF could only do the in-person portion. This year we used Eventive, a large well-known online streaming platform also used by other major film festivals (such as Sundance, BlackStar, ReelAbilities, FantasticFest, etc.) on our own for the first time. We met with a representative from Eventive to go through an online workshop and learn how to create our event and administer it smoothly with several committee members. Our streaming/technical members had to download the film files onto a physical hard drive and ensure that we could upload all the required materials on Eventive a few weeks before the virtual screening occurred so that the committee could do quality checks on each program/film online.

Outcomes

As expected, DS' primary audience consisted of members of the Deaf community. Other attendees included family and friends of Deaf persons, interpreters and sign language students. Deaf Spotlight has sold tickets to adults, students, and senior citizens (the latter two groups received a ticket price discount as a public benefit). Subtitles were provided for audience members who do not know American Sign Language, as a public benefit. Panels were accompanied by ASL and Deaf interpreters.

What impact did your project achieve?

1. Provided an arts/culture opportunity
2. Expanded participation/audience for arts/culture
3. Served under-represented artists, cultural groups
4. Spotlight Deaf stories on the screen
5. Built community relations through arts/culture
6. Met a community need or goal through arts/culture
7. Achieved a milestone: 8th biennial festival

Will you repeat this event or opportunity? Explain why or why not?

Yes, DS will be continuing to provide its biennial festival both virtually and in person here in Seattle and look forward to its return in 2028. We aim to expand our offerings on

workshops and panels by conducting some of them outside of the festival dates and partnering with other Deaf film festivals and organizers.

Thank you for supporting DS's 8th biennial Seattle Deaf Film Festival. DS looks forward to more creative and equitable collaboration opportunities with funders like you. Along with other arts organizations, I join them to encourage your support for the arts and its ongoing endeavors. Thank you.

Share a story or remarks from anyone involved in your project (audience, participants, volunteers, or others).

Some comments from our survey respondents:

- I was thrilled to see that there was a documentary that focuses on Shelley 'Siren' Beattie. It was a great documentary!
- Yes, I liked most of them. They nourished my soul. I also appreciated the variety, particularly the comedy.
- Liked most of them. The shorts were best.

Video testimonials:

Alan C- Hi, I'm here at the Seattle Deaf Film Festival, and I am truly enjoying it. Surprising as well. Coming here last Friday, I assumed that it would be focused on Deaf identity, which I was already familiar with, but I was pleasantly surprised at the diversity of the films. One example was the film featuring a Deaf woman who worked out and showing the journey that took her through her story, being affected by drug use, bipolarism, and everything not going to plan. I resonated with that one, as well as the diverse film offerings that I saw. I truly felt inspired, cathartic by the films I watched over the weekend. I truly enjoyed the experience, and thank you, and hope to attend the festival again next time!

Guthrie: Wow! I haven't been to SDFF since 2018, and now I'm finally here! I'm thankful for the exploration of the Deaf identity and the journey it follows to establish that identity. Coming here and viewing the different films showing different stories that revolve around that Deaf identity, it's inspiring to see that wide range of experiences and journeys taken. My favorites of them all? "Siren"; "Between Signs & Tides"; "Loud Love"; "Glass Cage", among others. I encourage you to go and watch these films! It's empowering and now I want to go out and make films myself. Thank you Deaf Spotlight.

Aspen: Hello! I enjoyed seeing films made by young Deaf filmmakers, especially “Dinner Table Syndrome”. I looked forward to seeing that one, and I truly enjoyed watching it. My favorite part was when two people sat with each other eye to eye, with visual noise in the background to suggest missed dialogue. I related to that, having that experience myself.

