

Road to BaseCamp 2026

Ciao! If you landed on this page, chances are you're getting your application ready for the next edition of BaseCamp. And trust us, 2026 is bringing a lot of new energy.

Whether you've already been part of the project, heard about it from friends, or just discovered BaseCamp for the first time, here you'll find useful info, tips, and a few sneak peeks about what's coming next.

The first thing you'll want to know is the application timeline.

The open call will start on May 21st and stay open until June 5th at 2 PM CEST.

Why that specific time? In case you run into any issues while submitting your application, we'll be around to help until the very last minute. Still, we strongly recommend not waiting until the deadline to apply. Unforeseeable surprises can happen, and once the form goes offline at the specified time, we won't be able to accept incomplete or late applications.

Once all applications have been reviewed and the selection process is complete, results will start rolling out from June 15th onward.

Now that you've marked these dates on your calendar, let's add a bit of context.

So... what exactly is BaseCamp? BaseCamp emerged from an urgent need to forge new connections between the Locarno Film Festival and the next generation of talent. At a time when the cost of participation can outweigh enthusiasm, BaseCamp transformed a structural barrier into a space for experimentation and collaboration.

At its core, BaseCamp is an ecology of relationships. It is this that we must learn to protect, nurture and pass on.

Functioning as a temporary community and meeting ground, as well as a workspace, BaseCamp brings together 200 talented

individuals from various disciplines in Locarno every August. For 11 days every August, participants live and work together in close proximity.

By night, the BaseCamp awakens: open to everyone with free access, it hosts installations, performances, conversations, and live events that foster collective practices and exchange – plus affordable food and drinks.

BaseCamp is also about education. In 2022, the BaseCamp Academy was created: a daily program of meetings, masterclasses, conversations, and roundtables. What sets the BaseCamp Academy apart is its multidisciplinary approach. Although part of a film festival, goes beyond the boundaries of cinema as a classical art form and embraces new languages, formats, and artistic and scientific expressions, fostering constant cross-pollination between them. Over the years, several internationally renowned guests have helped make the Academy's program truly unique.

From the outset, BaseCamp was never intended to be a fixed entity; it's a living experiment, evolving each year as a creative laboratory and cultural epicentre. BaseCamp reminds us that festivals need not be passive showcases but active arenas where new ideas emerge, are tested, and take shape.

Who can apply?

Who can apply? Every year, BaseCamp brings together young people (18-35 y.o.) from different backgrounds who rarely meet. BaseCampers are not defined by a single discipline, title or fixed career path. They are individuals for whom curiosity is a working method and dialogue is a necessity. In our space, we bring together filmmakers, musicians, researchers, performers, visual artists, writers, designers and activists, as well as architects, biologists, psychiatrists, project managers, doctors, botanists and chefs. You, the reader, might also join our ecosystem. Heterogeneity is not a curatorial choice made for its own sake; it is a prerequisite for something genuinely new to emerge. Isn't diversity what enables growth in any living system? There is no single profile of a BaseCamper. But there is a recognisable quality: a refusal to be only one thing. An appetite for complexity. A sense that art, in whatever form, is a practice, and that practice, at its best, is inseparable from how one moves through the world and relates to others.

And if you're thinking, "Damn, I already turned 35!", don't panic. We're actually pretty flexible about age. Priority will go to applicants within the target age range, but if your profile is especially interesting and aligned with the project, we're always happy to make exceptions.

Who are the BaseCampers? Those who come from an established practice but feel something shifting. They already have a recognisable path, but are in a moment of transition, movement. They are looking for a context that won't simply confirm what they already know how to do.

Those who work at the edges of multiple disciplines. They don't fully recognise themselves in any single professional category. That position is their main resource, not a gap to be filled.

Those who need dialogue in order to think. Solo work is no longer enough, or never was.

They need an interlocutor, not necessarily for validation.

Those who bring an underrepresented geographic or cultural perspective. Not in the sense of a quota, but in the sense that their way of looking at cinema, at art, at community, starts from an elsewhere that changes the questions they ask.

Those who are still in the middle of something. They know exactly where they are starting from. Where they are going is not yet clear, and that is precisely why this moment matters.

Do applicants have to be artists and have a project ready to go when they arrive at BaseCamp? No, a BaseCamper does not have to be a filmmaker or an artist to attend the program and doesn't need a project ready before arriving.

What we're looking for is genuine motivation and curiosity. The purpose of the residency is to stimulate participants' artistic practice through meetings, workshops, and exploration of the Festival program.

Your stay in Locarno

Now that you've got a clearer picture of the project and who we're looking for, make sure you have everything you need to submit your application.

In the first part of the form, you'll be asked to fill in some basic contact info.

Once you've entered your name, surname, email, etc., you'll move on to the accommodation section. You will find more information on how to share your accommodation preferences in the next chapter.

Just a heads-up: in every accommodation option, rooms and facilities such as bathrooms and showers will be shared with other BaseCamp participants.

Participation & accommodations

Starting this year, there are four different options to take part in BaseCamp and the Locarno Film Festival:

Option 1: BaseCamp Accreditation – FREE

This option allows you to obtain a professional accreditation for the Locarno Film Festival, granting you free access to all screenings and official Festival events, as well as the opportunity to take part in the full BaseCamp program of masterclasses, meetings, workshops, and events. The accreditation will also allow you to travel free of charge on all public transport in the canton of Ticino.

Please note that this option does not include accommodation. If needed, participants are responsible for arranging their own housing for the duration of the Festival.

Option 2: BaseCamp Accommodation @ Scuole di Muralto – FREE

10 nights' accommodation (check-in Wednesday 5 August – check-out Saturday 15 August)

You will be able to stay at the Muralto primary school. This is not a standard hotel accommodation, but a school that, for the occasion, has been emptied of desks and chairs, with 4 to 6 military camp beds placed

in each classroom. Rooms and facilities (showers and bathrooms) are shared. Breakfast is included.

This option also includes the BaseCamp Accreditation with the same features as Option 1.

(PLACES FOR OPTION 2 ARE VERY LIMITED. IF POSSIBLE, WE RECOMMEND CHOOSING MORE THAN ONE OPTION.)

Option 3: BaseCamp Accommodation @ Ostello Montebello Bellinzona – CHF 400

10 nights' accommodation (check-in Wednesday 5 August – check-out Saturday 15 August)

You will be able to stay at the Bellinzona youth hostel with other BaseCampers in shared rooms with 4 or 6 beds.

Breakfast is included. The hostel is approximately a 40-minute ride from Locarno by public transport. All public transport is free with the Locarno Film Festival accreditation. This option also includes the BaseCamp Accreditation.

Option 4: BaseCamp Accommodation @ Ascona / Losone – CHF 550

10 nights' accommodation (check-in Wednesday 5 August – check-out Saturday 15 August)

Option 4 includes two different accommodations (Collegio Papiro in Ascona and Osteria Belvedere in Losone). Both locations offer triple rooms, breakfast included, and are about 10–15 minutes by bus from Locarno. Both accommodations share the same price and conditions, and it is not possible to share one over the other, as the BaseCamp organisation will determine the allocation and room assignment.

This option also includes the BaseCamp Accreditation.

Helpful tip: the more flexible you are about accommodation, the higher your chances of being selected!

If you're open to more than one option, we encourage you to rank as many as feel right for you: every additional preference gives us more opportunity to find you a spot.

What's needed to apply?

Important: in the form, you can rank your choices from most preferred to least preferred. However, if an option isn't right for you, it shouldn't be included in the ranking at all. This means we trust you to choose options that truly fit your situation: the more thoughtfully everyone selects, the better we can ensure that BaseCamp remains accessible and fair for all participants.

At this stage, we'd like to get to know you a bit better. We'll ask you to upload a few attachments and tell us a little about yourself.

CV: Your CV should be a short document that gives us an overview of your personal background, education, and professional experience. There's no need to go into too much detail; one page with the essential information is often more than enough.

In many cases, your CV can reinforce the positive impression your cover letter or portfolio creates. It also helps us ensure a good level of diversity in the selection process, so make sure to highlight the experiences that make you unique.

Cover letter : The letters that stay with us begin somewhere real. A specific moment, a specific place, something happening in the work right now that has not yet found its form. Not a summary of what you have done, but a sense of where you are and why this particular context, at this particular time, feels necessary.

Tell us what is actually going on. What are you in the middle of? What brought you to this application at this moment in your life, not just your career. The circumstance matters: being between two projects, arriving from a different discipline, working in a place that leaves little room for experimentation, or carrying a question that your usual practice cannot answer alone.

The most compelling letters we receive are written from a specific position in time. Not

from the height of an achievement, but from somewhere more immediate and alive. They tend to say: this is where I am, this is what I need, this is why now.

How long should a cover letter be? We don't have a maximum character limit, but as with your CV, length isn't what matters most. One or two pages are usually more than enough to help us understand who you are and what you want to share.

Portfolio: We ask for work samples not to evaluate a finished achievement, but to understand how you think and what you are drawn to. What counts as a portfolio varies depending on your practice. A filmmaker will share something different from a researcher, a musician from a visual artist.

What matters is a sense of where your work comes from and where it seems to want to go. Work in progress is welcome. A body of work that is still finding its shape tells us something that a finished, polished portfolio sometimes cannot. If your practice is hard to document, tell us why.

Other questions: At the end of the form, you'll find a few optional questions. Some of them might feel a bit unusual. These questions relate to the theme of this edition and will help us understand whether your profile aligns with the program we're planning.

FAQ

Your application should now be ready to submit. If you've had any questions in the meantime, we'll try to answer some of them here.

What dates should I mark in my calendar?

- **Mai 21st, 2026** Open Call
- **June 5th, 2026**, at 2:00 PM open call closes (No late submissions can be accepted)
- From **June 15th, 2026**, onward: selection process communication. Keep in mind that you may not hear back exactly on June 15th; decisions will be communicated in the weeks that follow.
- **August 5th, 2026**, check-in until 8 PM
- **August 15th, 2026**, check-out at 11 AM

What costs should I expect if I participate in BaseCamp?

- If you choose **Option 1 (accreditation only)**, participation is free; however, you will need to arrange and pay for your own accommodation.
- **Option 2** includes **free accommodation**, offering a more basic shared setup for the duration of the programme.
- **Options 3 and 4** include accommodation at CHF 400 and CHF 550, respectively. Breakfast is included in all accommodation options, along with a few shared meals, but we recommend budgeting at least CHF 30 per day for additional food expenses. None of the options covers travel to and from Locarno; it is at your own expense.

Are there scholarships available to cover the accommodation fee? Unfortunately, we do not currently offer scholarships or financial support. Making BaseCamp as accessible as possible is something we care deeply about, and we continue to work in that direction.

If selected, what can I expect at the Festival and at BaseCamp? *"The programme! The curation! The soft hand lending us the threads to weave together! With the radio, library, stage, bar, tent and the middle tree that has witnessed so much all in one place, few venues can claim to have a beating heart*

as much as the Basecamp Pop Up. And it was sexy, too! (in the sense that you never knew what would happen, but chance always found a way to surprise you)."

Giulia Rumasuglia, Switzerland, Basecamper & Theatre Director

Is it mandatory to attend BaseCamp for the full duration of the Festival?

Yes, full attendance is required. The BaseCamp programme is designed around the ten days of the Festival, and it is important that all participants are present for the entire duration. If I attend fewer days, can I pay less? We understand that unexpected situations can arise, but we are unable to offer reduced fees or refunds in the unlikely event of an early departure.

How does transport work? Your BaseCamp accreditation includes free travel on all public transport in the canton of Ticino for the entire duration of the Festival.

For everyone choosing accommodation option 3 (Montebello Hostel in Bellinzona), public transport will be available until late at night, with the last train departing at 3 AM. This means you won't miss a single event during the Festival!

Travel to and from Locarno is not included.

For those travelling to the Festival by plane, we recommend flying into Milan Malpensa Airport (MPX). Connections between the airport and Locarno will be free of charge.

How are rooms assigned? The BaseCamp organisation assigns rooms. It is not possible to choose your roommates.

I am an artist/performer – if selected, am

I expected to contribute to the artistic programme?

Not necessarily. We do not expect participants to produce or contribute any artistic work, unless otherwise agreed with the organisation during the selection process. If, during the selection process, we come across something in your portfolio that feels particularly relevant for this edition, we'll reach out to you directly.