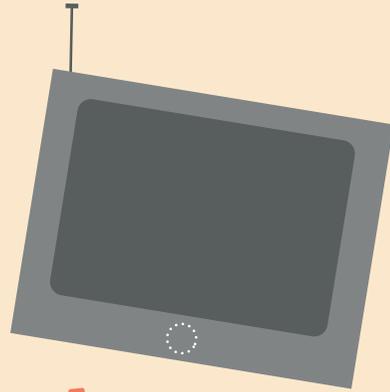


The CINEMA FOR ALL guide to online film clubs



1. Setting up your online film club

Start by having a discussion with your team to decide on the logistics:

- **How often will you screen?**

You could stick to your regular screening times, or perhaps you want to watch films together more often while we are all spending more time at home.

- **What streaming platform will you use?**

Maybe you could gather feedback from your audience or do a poll to see what people would prefer; Netflix, NowTV Movies, Amazon Prime, MUBI, Vimeo (great for sourcing short films) etc. If you are using a paid platform, stick to the same one throughout to make it more accessible.

- **How will you connect and interact with your team/ audience?**

We all know that one of the most special things about community cinema is getting together with and chatting to your community. This can be difficult to do remotely, but it's a good idea to set up a Facebook page, WhatsApp group, forum or Twitter hashtag so that people can easily interact with each other. For your members not on the internet, why not set up some post-film phonecalls between audience members to discuss their thoughts (and just have a general chat!) This can also really help with tackling loneliness during this isolating time. You could even try out group Skype or FaceTime calls for post-film discussions.

As a way to continue to enjoy great film and interact with your community cinema team and audiences during these difficult times, Cinema For All has put together some tips and advice for setting up your own online film club!

This is a great opportunity to experiment with your film choices, try out new forms of communication with your audience, and deepen the connection to your community.

2. Choosing your films

Once you have organised how your online film club will work, it's time for the fun bit - choosing your films! For probably the first time as a community cinema, you are not restricted by licences or cost - so now is the time to take risks, screen something you wouldn't usually screen, or even something completely new to your team! You never know, something might be so well received that you can add similar films into your upcoming programme.

How to decide:

- **Social media poll**

Decide on a few films (or genres) as a team and leave the decision up to your audience! This is a really nice way to give your audience some ownership and make the process more interactive.

- **Take it in turns to select a film**

Assign each person in your team a night to screen their favourite film. This could be a fun way to experience a range of film tastes and, if you want to make it a bit more competitive, ask the audience to score the films and create an online leaderboard!

- **Look at films lists for inspiration**

There are hundreds of great film lists out there - online film publications, IMDb and Letterboxd are a good place to start. You can also get in touch with the Cinema For All team or listen to the podcast for ideas - we love recommending and chatting about films.

- **Screen that Netflix film you could never get the licence for**

Now is the time that you can finally experience films like Roma with your audience!

Check out Tara Judah's, Watershed and 20th Century Flicks, list of 'Films in the time of Coronavirus': www.tarajudah.com/2020/03/18/films-in-the-time-of-coronavirus/

3. Publicising your screenings

Now that you have decided on your film, it's time to let your audience know about it. Remember that you can do as much or little as you like; keep it casual or advertise widely as you would with your regular screenings. The nice thing about doing this online is that you can bring in new audiences from far and wide, not just locals, so encourage anyone to join in! It's a great opportunity to raise your profile as a community cinema.

However, it's important to remember to:

- **Be recognisable to your existing audience**

Remember to include your logo and regular branding in your online publicity.

- **Include all of the key information**

What film it is, when everyone will be screening it, how you will discuss, what platform you will be using. It's a good idea to offer guidance to audience members who may need some support downloading the platform, or create a simple guide that people can download.

- **Spread the word far and wide**

Share information across multiple platforms - social media, email to members, cross-promotion with other local organisations, phonecalls. It's a good idea to also @ film organisations and people related to the film to help spread the word.

- **Be creative**

Share interactive content, images, trailers, articles and reviews to engage and excite your audience. You could even create digital posters and flyers!



Don't forget that Cinema For All is always here for any further guidance and support you may need: become a member, sign up to our newsletter or support us to do more with a donation. www.cinemaforall.org.uk

4. Running your screenings

Here are some ideas of how you can make your online screening fun and exciting:

- **Countdown to the film screening**

Why not do a countdown to your screening on the day to get your audience excited? You could encourage them to get comfortable, make a cup of tea, open their popcorn, share photos of themselves ready to watch the film in their homes.

- **Let people know how you plan discuss the film**

Perhaps you could organise a 15 minute tea break, where audiences can also go online to chat about their thoughts so far? Will you be hosting an online post-film discussion on Twitter? Maybe you and your team could record an intro and post it online before the film starts - giving some information about the films and letting people know how it will work (remember, no spoilers!)

- **Include instructions on how to stream the film for audiences who may not be experienced with streaming platforms**

- **Create a hashtag so that people can tune in and join the conversation**

E.g. #SheffieldOnlineFilmClub

This will be especially useful for people outside of your membership/ core audience, who may want to get involved but not have other ways to get in touch with you.

- **Ask for feedback**

Once your first online film screening has taken place, ask for feedback from your audience on how they found it, and any suggestions on how to improve the experience.

Remember, the first one will be a trial and this is only temporary! There is no pressure for everything to run smoothly straight away. Chat to your audience and figure out what will work best together.

For more specific advice contact the Cinema For All team on: info@cinemaforall.org.uk



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