REC

MG

Mirjan Gjergjevica
Mirjan Films · Corfu, Greece

FREE GUIDE · PDF

Documentary Planning Workbook

Plan your documentary before the first call: story, audience, format, archive, budget and rights.

For: Museums, foundations, municipalities, communities, companies and families planning a documentary.

mirjangjergjevica.com

This workbook collects the questions I ask at the start of every documentary. You do not need every answer. Fill in what you can, with the people who know the story, and leave the rest blank: the gaps are useful too.

The last page is a one-page brief. Send it to me, or take it to any filmmaker you are talking to.

#01 The story

What is the story, in one or two sentences?

Why does it need to be told now?

Whose voices should we hear?

#02 Who needs to see it

- [ ] Visitors to an exhibition
- [ ] A community
- [ ] A festival audience
- [ ] Other:
- [ ] Students
- [ ] Customers or partners
- [ ] Television viewers

#03 Where it will be shown

- [ ] A screen in a museum or an exhibition
- [ ] A website
- [ ] Television
- [ ] Other:
- [ ] A cinema or a public screening
- [ ] Social media
- [ ] Festivals

#04 Format

Tick the one closest to what you have in mind.

- ☐ **Portrait, 3 to 5 minutes**
  One person, one place or one company. Works online and on a screen in an exhibition.
- ☐ **Short documentary, 10 to 20 minutes**
  Room for a few voices and some archive. Good for events, museums and festivals.
- ☐ **Feature documentary, 45 minutes and up**
  For festivals, broadcast and screenings. The Jews of Corfu runs 49 minutes.
- ☐ **Not sure yet**
  That is fine: the first conversation is for exactly this.

#05 What already exists

Photographs, letters, old footage and, above all, people who remember. List what you know of.

What or who	Where it is, how to reach them	Notes

#06 Dates

Is there a fixed date: an anniversary, an opening, a festival deadline?

> How long it takes depends on the length and on the research. The Jews of Corfu, an independent feature documentary, took seventeen months, from the first interview in August 2020 to the finished film in January 2022. A short portrait takes far less. If there is a fixed date, the schedule is built backwards from it.

#07 What drives the budget

Each line adds time or cost. Tick what applies to your film and add a note.

- [ ] Shoot days and locations: each day on location adds crew, equipment and travel
- [ ] Interviews: how many people, and where they live
- [ ] Research: some stories need weeks of research before the camera comes out
- [ ] Archive: photographs and footage may need an agreement with the people or archives that hold them
- [ ] Music: an original score, or licensed tracks
- [ ] Versions: subtitles and other languages, a short cut for social media, festival or broadcast deliverables

#08 Your budget range

- [ ] Under €3,000
- [ ] €3,000 – €10,000
- [ ] €10,000 – €25,000
- [ ] €25,000+
- [ ] Not sure yet

#09 Rights to settle early

Agree on rights at the start, and put them in writing.

- [ ] Who owns the finished film?
- [ ] Where can it be shown, and for how long?
- [ ] Archive material: who holds it, and on what terms can it be used?
- [ ] Music: original, or licensed tracks with their own terms?

#10 How the work runs

1. **Conversation**
   A short call about what you need, who it is for and where it will live.
2. **Treatment**
   A written and visual treatment with the approach, references, schedule and quote.
3. **Production**
   Pre-production, interviews and the shoot.
4. **Post-production**
   Edit, colour, sound and every version you need.

#11 Your one-page brief

Copy your answers here, then send this page as a photo or a scan, or type it into the contact form.

ORGANISATION

NAME AND EMAIL

THE STORY, IN TWO SENTENCES

WHO IT IS FOR, AND WHERE IT WILL BE SHOWN

FORMAT

FIXED DATE, IF ANY

BUDGET RANGE

WHAT ALREADY EXISTS

Send it to mirjangjergjevica.com/contact/

MIRJAN FILMS · CORFU, GREECE

Have a story in mind?

Send the brief, or just a few lines about the story, the audience and the date. Before any work starts, you get a written treatment with the approach, the schedule and the cost.

Start a conversation →

Mirjan Gjergjevica is a film director based in Corfu, Greece, and the founder of Mirjan Films. The Jews of Corfu (2022), directed, shot and edited by Mirjan, was selected for the 24th Thessaloniki Documentary Festival and the 19th San Francisco Greek Film Festival.

mirjangjergjevica.com/work/
More free guides:
mirjangjergjevica.com/guides/

Made in Corfu by Mirjan Gjergjevica · © 2026