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The Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) is holding a national scriptwriting competition for 2010. Deadline for submission of entries is on or before May 20. Winners will be announced on June 12, Independence Day.

“We’re holding the historical scriptwriting contest to promote and support the development and growth of the Philippine film industry as a medium with which to uplift aesthetic, cultural and social values for a better understanding and appreciation of the Filipino identity,” said FDCP chairman Rolando Atienza. He added the FDCP is championing this endeavor for Filipinos to “share our history through scripts that may be produced into films as well.”

Atienza said the binding theme of the contest is historical non-fiction where contestants will embrace orthodox and unorthodox approaches in narrating our history. “The stories should be unique, not common, not popularly known,” Atienza pointed out.

The FDCP notes that the year 2011 will be an important date in hallmarking important historical events. National hero Jose Rizal will mark his 150th birth anniversary in 2011. If it is not mute and academic for some, the Philippines will also mark in 2011 its 65 years of independence from America. 2011 will come a-burning, too, as the country celebrates the 25th anniversary of the People Power Revolution.

“The subject matters can delve on the unsung heroes of the Philippines or about the little known events that took place in the history of the country,” said Christine Dayrit, Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB) chairman and project leader of the historical scriptwriting contest. The

CEB is under the aegis of the FDCP.

“If the participants choose to depict the lives of known heroes like Rizal and Bonifacio, they must present something new about those heroes that have not yet been discussed in the textbooks,” Atienza said.

The historical scriptwriting contest, Dayrit said, is open to Filipino and of-Filipino descent writers, historians, film enthusiasts, overseas Filipino workers and Filipino expats. Contestants can be based in the Philippines or abroad.

A panel of distinguished judges will declare three winners. The first prize winner will receive P350,000; the second prize winner, P250,000; and the third prize winner, P150,000.

The applicant should submit only one (1) entry reproduced into seven (7) copies, each copy to be accompanied by a synopsis. The name of the writer and title of the script must be typed out on a separate information sheet. No identifying marks of the writer should appear on the pages of the script. The screenplay must be written in Filipino, English or in any local Filipino dialect. Script written in a local dialect should have a Tagalog or English translation. Also, if the script is written in Filipino or English but carries in part dialogues in a local dialect, the vernacular should also have a translation.

“Again, the rule of thumb is simple — there should be historical accuracy,” Atienza emphasized.

For more information and contest mechanics please call FDCP: Cely Tomas at 634-6984 or Abi Portillo at 638-2739, or log on to www.filmdevcouncilph.org.