

Ghostbusters: Afterlife

Ghostbusters: Afterlife^[a] is a 2021 American supernatural comedy film directed by Jason Reitman from a screenplay he co-wrote with Gil Kenan. It is the direct sequel to *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *Ghostbusters II* (1989), the third mainline installment and the fourth film overall in the *Ghostbusters* franchise. The film stars Carrie Coon, Finn Wolfhard, Mckenna Grace, and Paul Rudd, alongside Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Ernie Hudson, Annie Potts, and Sigourney Weaver reprising their characters from the earlier films. Set 32 years after the events of *Ghostbusters II*, it follows a single mother and her children who move to an Oklahoma farm they inherited from her estranged father Egon Spengler, a member of the original Ghostbusters.

A third *Ghostbusters* film was in development since the release of *Ghostbusters II*, but production stalled because Murray refused to return to the series. After Harold Ramis died on February 24, 2014, Sony Pictures produced a female-driven reboot that was released in 2016. In January 2019, it was announced that Jason Reitman would direct a sequel to the original films, with the new cast being announced by July, while the original cast signed on two months later. Principal photography took place from July to October of the same year. Rob Simonsen, a frequent collaborator of Jason, was hired to compose the film's score. This was the final film to be produced by and involve the franchise's co-creator and Jason's father Ivan Reitman before his death in February 2022.

Ghostbusters: Afterlife was screened unannounced during CinemaCon in Las Vegas on August 23, 2021, and was released in the United States on November 19, by Sony Pictures Releasing under its Columbia Pictures label, after being delayed four times from an original July 2020 date due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The film received mixed reviews from critics, with praise for the cast's performances, Reitman's direction, nostalgic tone, and its respectful tribute to Ramis, with criticism mostly being directed towards its screenplay and

Ghostbusters: Afterlife



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Jason Reitman
Written by	Gil Kenan Jason Reitman
Based on	<i>Ghostbusters</i> by Dan Aykroyd Harold Ramis
Produced by	Ivan Reitman
Starring	Carrie Coon Finn Wolfhard Mckenna Grace Paul Rudd
Cinematography	Eric Steelberg
Edited by	Dana E. Glauberman Nathan Orloff
Music by	Rob Simonsen
Production companies	Columbia Pictures Bron Creative

fan service. It grossed \$204 million worldwide against a production budget of \$75 million. A sequel titled *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* was released on March 22, 2024.

Plot

In Summerville, Oklahoma, Egon Spengler captures an entity in occultist Ivo Shandor's mine outside the town and lures another to his farm. He activates an elaborate setup on his property, but the power fails. Egon manages to conceal the ghost trap in his home before being attacked by the creature and suffering a fatal heart attack, dying shortly after.

Egon's estranged, financially struggling daughter Callie inherits the farm and moves there with her children, Trevor and Phoebe, after being evicted from their Chicago apartment. Trevor becomes infatuated with carhop Lucky Domingo, and the scientifically minded Phoebe enrolls in a summer science class taught by seismologist Gary Grooberson, whom Callie later dates.

Phoebe discovers the farmhouse is haunted, and the poltergeist residing in it leads her to the ghost trap, which she shows to Gary and her new friend, "Podcast". Gary, a fan of the Ghostbusters, helps her learn more about them and her grandfather. He, Phoebe, and Podcast tamper with the trap, releasing Vinz Clortho, one of Gozer the Gozerian's Sentinels, which escapes to the mine. The farm ghost leads Phoebe to Egon's underground laboratory and, after revealing himself as her grandfather, guides her in restoring the Ghostbusters' equipment.

While testing the proton pack with Podcast, Phoebe finds a ghost they call "Muncher" that haunts Shandor's foundry and flees to the town. Having repaired the Ghostbusters' Cadillac Ecto-1's engine (with Egon's help), Trevor uses the car to chase Muncher with the pair; they capture it, but are arrested for the damage incurred, and their equipment is seized.

Using the Ghostbusters' telephone number that she had written down, Phoebe contacts Ray Stantz for help and informs him of Egon's death. In turn, Ray tells her what became of the Ghostbusters after they defeated Vigo the Carpathian:^[b] After the Ghostbusters had disbanded, Egon took off with their equipment and moved to Summerville to pursue an unspecified threat. Shortly after, Gary is attacked and possessed by Vinz after returning the children home following a date with Callie. Egon's ghost leads Callie to a wall of detailed notes and pictures he kept of his daughter's life, showing he cared about her more than she thought, just before she too is possessed, by Zuul.

Phoebe, Podcast, Lucky, and Trevor find a Gozerian temple within the mine. Exploring further, they discover Shandor is alive in his casket, and automated proton cannons, installed by Egon, hinder Gozer's attempts to cross over. Zuul and Vinz destroy Egon's equipment, allowing Gozer to escape. Shandor awakens and pledges his fealty to Gozer, but instead he is killed by Gozer.

The children discover Egon's setup is an array of ghost traps buried around the dirt field, and with supernatural chaos distracting the town, recover the seized ghostbusting equipment and head to the mine in Ecto-1. Phoebe distracts Gozer so Podcast can re-capture Zuul, freeing Callie and weakening Gozer's

	<u>Ghost Corps</u>
Distributed by	<u>Sony Pictures</u> <u>Releasing</u>
Release dates	August 23, 2021 (CinemaCon) November 19, 2021 (United States)
Running time	124 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$75 million ^[2]
Box office	\$204.3 million ^{[3][4]}

physical form. They lure Gozer and Vinz to the trap field, but it malfunctions and Gozer frees Zuul, who possesses Lucky and fully restores Gozer's power.

Ray and the other surviving original Ghostbusters, Peter Venkman and Winston Zeddemore, arrive to help, and Gozer, after having already killed Egon, seeks to complete her revenge against the quartet for vanquishing her.^[c] Supported by Egon's now manifested ghost, Phoebe battles Gozer with her grandfather's proton pack. The Ghostbusters help Phoebe restrain Gozer by crossing their proton streams while Trevor uses his to charge the traps' power source, allowing Callie to activate the ghost traps and capture the deity and its minions. Lucky and Gary are freed from their possessions, and Egon reconciles with his family and friends before passing on to the afterlife.

Later, the original Ghostbusters return to New York City, and Peter is revealed to be married to Dana Barrett and live in Cortland. Winston, having become a wealthy entrepreneur and family man since leaving the Ghostbusters, returns the fully restored Ecto-1 to the Ghostbusters' firehouse. In the basement, a light on the ecto-containment unit is flashing red.

Cast

The new film's cast was announced by July 2019, with the cast of the original film signing on two months later:

- Carrie Coon^[5] as Callie Spengler^{[6][7][8]}
- Finn Wolfhard^[5] as Trevor Spengler^{[6][7][8]}
- Mckenna Grace^[9] as Phoebe Spengler^{[6][7][8]}
- Bokeem Woodbine as Sherman Domingo, the sheriff of Summerville^[8]
- Paul Rudd^[10] as Gary Grooberson^{[6][8]}
- Logan Kim as Podcast^[8]
- Celeste O'Connor as Lucky Domingo,^[8] a friend of Trevor's and Sheriff Domingo's daughter
- Bill Murray as Peter Venkman^{[6][11]}
- Dan Aykroyd as Raymond "Ray" Stantz^[12]
- Ernie Hudson as Winston Zeddemore^{[8][12]}
- Annie Potts as Janine Melnitz^{[8][13]}
- Sigourney Weaver as Dana Barrett^[14]

The film's cast also includes Marlon Kazadi as Thickneck;^[8] Sydney Mae Diaz as Swayze; and Aykroyd's youngest daughter Stella as Deputy Medjuck, a nod to Joe Medjuck, who was an associate producer on Ghostbusters



Top: Left to right: Carrie Coon (2013), Finn Wolfhard (2017)
Bottom: Mckenna Grace (2017) Paul Rudd (2018)

(1984), an executive producer on the subsequent movies, and a co-founder of production company Ghost Corps. Harold Ramis posthumously appears as Egon Spengler in archival clips and photographs taken from *Ghostbusters* (1984).^[15] Bob Gunton (credited as "The Ghost Farmer") and Ivan Reitman also portray living and ghostly versions of Egon, respectively, using prosthetics and digital makeup.^{[16][17][18]} J. K. Simmons plays Ivo Shandor, the leader of a Gozer-worshipping cult responsible for the Sumerian god Gozer's arrival in *Ghostbusters*. Simmons took the role as a token of friendship with the Reitmans, with whom he frequently collaborates in films like Jason's 2007 film *Juno* and the 2017 film *Father Figures*, co-produced by Ivan. Olivia Wilde,^[16] who portrayed Mesopotamian deity Inanna in Ramis's final film *Year One*, physically portrays Gozer, Shohreh Aghdashloo provides Gozer's voice, and Emma Portner plays Gozer's CGI spirit form, previously portrayed by Slavitz Jovan and Paddi Edwards in voice in *Ghostbusters* (1984). Josh Gad was one of many actors who contributed to the voice of Muncher, a metal-eating miner ghost conjured after a *séance* went wrong at Summerville Foundry in the 1940s.^{[19][18]} Ira Heiden (a friend of Jason Reitman's), Sarah Natochenny, and Shelby Young voiced the Mini-Pufts, tiny versions and replicated forms of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man, but were not credited for their performances.^{[20][21]}

Production

Development as *Ghostbusters III*

In the early 1990s, following the release of *Ghostbusters II*, Dan Aykroyd wrote a script for a third film tentatively titled *Ghostbusters III: Hellbent*.^[22] In the script, the Ghostbusters are transported to a parallel-universe version of Manhattan called Manhellton, where the people and places are "hellish" versions of Earth, and the characters meet and confront the Devil.^{[23][24]} At the time, Aykroyd stated that Columbia Pictures was interested, though the principal actors, especially Bill Murray, were not. The Hellbent script's main characters are a new, younger group of Ghostbusters; Ray, Egon, and Winston struggle to keep the business going after Peter's relationship with Dana becomes serious.^[24] Elements of this story were used in *Ghostbusters: The Video Game* (2009), which Aykroyd considered to be "essentially the third movie".^[25] At various stages of its development, Chris Farley, Chris Rock, and Ben Stiller were reported as potential stars of a new *Ghostbusters* film.^[26]

By 2004, Columbia had begun pursuing a sequel but Murray, who disliked sequels, was uninterested in the project.^[27] The following year, Harold Ramis confirmed plans to introduce Stiller into the principal cast.^{[23][28]} By 2009, the project had failed to progress,^[22] but by January 2010, Ivan Reitman, director of the first two *Ghostbusters* films, confirmed he would direct a third one.^{[29][30]} Also in March, Murray discussed development of the film and his mixed feelings about reprising his role.^{[31][32]} A release was scheduled for Christmas 2012.^[33] That October, Aykroyd commented on the screenplay written by Gene Stupnitsky and Lee Eisenberg, stating that he was particularly impressed with the writing of Murray's character and the implementation of the new team with the original while he and Ramis worked on a second draft of the script.^[34]

By August 2011, Aykroyd stated that filming was scheduled to begin later that year with a story focused on passing the Ghostbusters mantle to the younger actors.^{[35][36]} When Murray decided against reprising his role, Aykroyd said another actor might replace him.^[37] Aykroyd also said he wanted retired actor Rick Moranis to return as Louis Tully.^[38] By February 2012, the film was placed on hold as the production team re-evaluated the project. Without Murray, the studio searched for replacement actors and considered

including his character as a CGI-rendered ghost.^[39] In June, Murray again acknowledged all involved were attempting to develop the third film before dropping out of the film the following month.^{[40][41][42]} In July, Aykroyd confirmed the film was back in development with a script re-write from Etan Cohen.^[43] Aykroyd said of the script: "It's got to be perfect. That's the whole thing. There's no point in doing it unless it's perfect. So that's what we're up to now."^[43] By September, Reitman announced the developments of a remake.^[44] In May 2013, Aykroyd discussed plot points including real experiments being done by college students at Columbia University as a source of inspiration. The plot would revolve around research being done by the university, which would bring about threats from other dimensions. A new team of Ghostbusters would form to save Earth's plane of existence from supernatural threats.^[45] The script reportedly included Murray's character with hopes Murray would decide to join the production.^[46]

Following the death of Harold Ramis on February 24, 2014,^[47] Sony/Columbia stated that Ramis would appear in a cameo in the film. The film was delayed again to rework the script.^[48] By March 2015, Reitman was no longer attached to direct the third film, but would remain as producer, with plans to begin principal photography by early 2015.^[49] Weaver wanted her character's son to feature as a member of the team, and Reitman said he had already been included in the script.^[50]

Development as *Ghostbusters: Afterlife*

A new film connected to the original two films was revealed in January 2019. Ivan Reitman's son Jason was confirmed to direct from a script he co-wrote with Gil Kenan while Ivan would serve as a producer.^[51] The film would feature teenagers—two males and two females—as the new recruits for the *Ghostbusters* team.^[52]

Jason Reitman said the film ignores the events of 2016's *Ghostbusters* reboot, which was directed by Paul Feig.^[53] Reitman said he did not mean to snub the 2016 film and that he had "nothing but admiration" for Feig. Feig said Reitman had been a supporter of his film and that he "can't wait to see his take on the *Ghostbusters* universe".^[54] Reitman later said the idea of a teenage girl wanting to be a Ghostbuster had come to him, and with a positive reaction from Feig's film, proved the idea that anyone could be a Ghostbuster would work. Reitman also said the *Ghostbusters* franchise could readily expand on this idea with all types of people becoming Ghostbusters, personally thanking Feig for making this possible.^[55] Reitman considered, unlike the three prior *Ghostbusters* films—all of which involve people going into the ghostbusting business—he wanted to make this film about family first. With Kenan, Reitman created a script based around the Spengler family and the reason they are so disconnected.^[56] According to Dan Aykroyd: "Jason Reitman wrote a beautiful, heartfelt script that takes the real DNA from the first two movies and transfers that directly to the third, the next generation. It hands the legacy off to a new generation of stars, and players, and actors, and characters."^[57] Murray, who was also confirmed to be reprising Peter Venkman, was positive about the script.^[58] Ramis's daughter Violet (whom Reitman befriended during the filming of the first film), gave her blessing after reading an early version of the screenplay, saying that the story "captures the spirit of what the old movies are". She occasionally visited the sets, and was (at the insistence of Reitman and propmaster Guillaume DeLouche) photographed wearing her late father's proton pack prop from the first film while prop makers from The Hand Prop Room in Los Angeles were building lighter replicas of it for Mckenna Grace to wear.^[18]

With a script centered around family, Reitman felt it was appropriate to change the backdrop from New York City to the American West to give the film a new identity and a different color palette. The script was structured to slowly reveal the connection to the Egon Spengler character, which would bring in elements of

earlier *Ghostbusters* films. For example, the film sees Aykroyd's character returned to running Ray's Occult Books, as seen in *Ghostbusters II*, but only the events of the original film are directly referenced.^{[56][59]}

Casting

The castings of Mckenna Grace as the young female protagonist, Finn Wolfhard as her brother, and Carrie Coon as their single mother were revealed in March 2019.^{[5][9]} Reitman described Grace as an avid fan of the series and a perfect fit for his concept of a teenage-female Ghostbuster.^[55] Wolfhard, who had dressed as a Ghostbuster during the second season of *Stranger Things*, was unsure he would get the role, saying that "Jason Reitman is probably not even going to look at my tape" because of that.^[60] Paul Rudd was cast in the film in June, later confirming his role of Mr. Grooberson, the children's new teacher who knows of the Ghostbusters' legacy.^{[10][61][6]} Rudd himself had worked with Harold Ramis in an uncredited role for his final film *Year One*.

Newcomers Celeste O'Connor and Logan Kim were cast in July.^[62] Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Ernie Hudson, Sigourney Weaver, and Annie Potts were confirmed to be reprising their roles from the first two *Ghostbusters* films.^{[63][12][57][58]} Rick Moranis, who also appeared in the first two *Ghostbusters* films, did not return to reprise his role in the film.^[64]

Design

Reitman shot on location and relied on practical effects as much as possible to maintain stylistic continuity with the original films. The Spengler farmhouse was a practical set built on a ridge that recalled the *Psycho* house. An old barn was relocated and reconstructed piece-by-piece on location for the unveiling of Ecto-1. Two Ectomobiles were used during filming. While the vehicles were vintage 1959 Cadillac Miller-Meteor Sentinels, modern performance engines and suspension upgrades were required to complete the stunt sequences which were filmed on real city streets.^[65]

Creature effects

Reitman and the production crew reviewed the designs of the original film's ghosts and other supernatural creatures for use in *Afterlife*, observing the designs looked different from each other and were distinct.^[56] The creature known as "Muncher", co-created by creature designer Brynn Metheney, is similar to Slimer; Reitman explained: "Something happened to Slimer over the years that people started thinking of him as the dalmatian of the firehouse. The original Slimer was an angry dude and very scary and we wanted to get back to that",^[56] and Metheney wanted to make Muncher whom "the audience can latch on to" easily, giving him a universal appeal of him being "funny and cool and cute and weird in every way" like Slimer yet completely new and different from his green predecessor. Though the film did not reveal Muncher's origin, Metheney's character personality reveals that the ghost in life was a miner "conjured into existence by a séance gone wrong in the 1940s" at Summerville Foundry's supervisor's office and he has haunted the plant ever since then, "after terrorizing the group that contacted him". Her most ambitious design was the Mini-Pufts; she wanted to give them a realistic look on scale and texture of authentic marshmallows than the colossal Stay Puft Marshmallow Man, even bought packages of them to make tiny marshmallow men for visual references and inspirations. For the scenes of Summerville Crossrip, Metheney created the "flaming phantasms" that chase a firetruck and pedestrians outside the Spinners Roller Hop and included the animated series *The Real Ghostbusters'* popular three-eye ghost Bug-Eye in homage to the show. Other apparition concepts that did not make the final cut include a rancher ghost, Louise the crossing guard ghost

of Summerville Middle School, possessed balloons and sandwiches, and more miner ghosts (Dynamite, Pick Axe, Lunchbox, Coats, and Shovel) after Muncher. Creature effects designer Arjen Tuiten, who is a fan of the first film's special effects artist Steve Johnson, personally created the "Old Miner Ghost" in resemblance to his idol's "Zombie Taxi Ghost" without Metheney's involvement.^[18]

Egon's Aztec Death Whistle was designed by Landon Lott under Jason Reitman's instruction,^[18] and despite the claim in the film that whistles like it are "designed to ward off evil spirits", their actual purpose remains unclear.^[66]

Ramis's likeness was recreated with digital makeup created by Pier Lefebvre and his team at Moving Picture Company (MPC) Film in Los Angeles, scanned from his appearance in the original films to create his digital double with alterations on it based on number of photographs and footage of him being aged taken prior to his death.^{[16][18]} Bob Gunton and Ivan Reitman (his right hand holding Mckenna Grace's to steady the barrel of a proton pack's neutrona wand) physically performed the role. Special effects technicians and puppeteers, including Ronald Binion (suit puppeteer for Slimer in the 2016 *Ghostbusters* film), portrayed Egon's poltergeist by puppeteering objects and lights in his house and storm-cellar laboratory.^[18]

Filming

Under the working title "Rust City", principal photography began on July 12, 2019, in and around Calgary, Alberta, and lasted until October. Location filming occurred in surrounding communities such as Crossfield, Beiseker,^[67] Drumheller and Fort Macleod (Muncher chase scene) during July and August.^[68] Other locations around Alberta were also used.^{[68][69][70]} Filming was wrapped after sixty-eight days on October 18.^[71]

Music

The score for *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* was composed by Rob Simonsen and conducted by William Ross and Anthony Parnter. Simonsen studied Elmer Bernstein's score for the first *Ghostbusters* film and recruited Bernstein's son Peter, who guided the orchestration of Simonsen's score and the use of material from *Ghostbusters* (1984), as a score consultant. Simonsen used the ondes martenot throughout the score, which was played by Cynthia Millar, who played the same instrument on Bernstein's 1984 *Ghostbusters* score. The soundtrack was released on Compact Disc on November 19, 2021.

The songs "Ghostbusters", which was performed by Ray Parker Jr., and "Haunted House", which was written and performed by Mckenna Grace are heard during the film's end credits.^[72] The songs "The Clapping Song" by Shirley Ellis, "Baby It's You" by The Shirelles, "Can You Get to That" by Funkadelic, "Boredom" by Buzzcocks,^[73] "All Your Love (I Miss Loving)" by Otis Rush, "Muddy Water" by The Delmore Brothers, "Wait a Minute Girl" by The Newday, "Foolish Try" by Kelly's Lot, and "On the Road Again" by Willie Nelson are used in the film.

Release

Theatrical

Ghostbusters: Afterlife was scheduled to be released in the United States on July 10, 2020, by Sony Pictures Releasing^[74] but its release was postponed to March 5, 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.^[75] Sony pushed the film to June 11, 2021,^[76] then later shifted the release to November 11, 2021.^{[77][78]} The film's release was again postponed to November 19.^[79] The film was dedicated to Ramis and executive producer Tom Pollock (who died shortly before its completion),^[18] and the former is commemorated before its closing credits.

The film was given a surprise screening on August 23 during the 2021 CinemaCon event in Las Vegas;^[80] and another for fans at the 2021 New York Comic Con.^[81]

Marketing

In August 2019, toy manufacturer and multimedia company Hasbro obtained the master toy license for the *Ghostbusters* franchise, with the new products (including action figures and role-play items) originally scheduled to be released in stores in April 2020.^[82] Because of the pandemic delays to the film's release date, the introduction of *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* toys to market was also delayed. Target received exclusive versions of some toys ahead of the projected June 2021 release date, but further rollouts were held back when the studio announced an additional delay until November.^[83] A new line of Hasbro action figures based on the film was unveiled on the same day the second trailer debuted. It included several characters and costumes that had not been seen in any promotional material for the film before.^{[84][85]} In November, Zaxby's promoted the film with a commercial featuring *Ghostbusters: Afterlife's* Mini-Pufts.^[86]

Home media

Following the film's theatrical screenings, it was released digitally on January 4, 2022, and on DVD, Blu-ray, and Ultra HD Blu-ray on February 1 in North America.^{[87][88][89]}

After its digital release on PVID services, the film acquired the top position on iTunes and Vudu, while being placed second on Google Play. Overall, it spent four weeks at the top position on iTunes and Vudu, while spending five weeks at the top rank on Google Play.^{[90][91][92]} The film debuted at the second position on Redbox's digital chart.^{[93][94]} It was the top-selling digital title on "Redbox On Demand" for four consecutive weeks.^[95]

After debuting on disc, it acquired the top position on the "NPD VideoScan First Alert" chart which tracks combined DVD and Blu-ray sales.^[96] It sold 285,642 units overall for \$5.3 million.^[3] It maintained its position in the overall sales for the following week, while being displaced from the top position in the Blu-ray sales by *Encanto*.^{[97][98]} It was also the most-rented film from Redbox kiosks for three consecutive weeks.^[99] ^[95] The film was the highest-selling title for the month of February according to the "NPD VideoScan First Alert" chart.^[100]

In April 2021, Sony signed a deal with Disney giving them access to their legacy content, including past *Ghostbusters* films, including *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* to stream on Disney+ and Hulu and appear on Disney's linear television networks. Disney's access to Sony's titles would come following their availability on Netflix.^[101]

Reception

Box office

Ghostbusters: Afterlife grossed \$129.4 million in the United States and Canada, and \$75 million in other territories, grossing \$204.3 million worldwide.^{[4][3]} Scott Mendelson of *Forbes* described the film's theatrical run as "relatively successful" and said it was "made cheaply enough to be a hit".^[102]

In the United States and Canada, *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* was released alongside *King Richard*,^[2] and earned \$16.6 million on its first day—including \$4.5 million from Thursday night previews, \$1 million more than the 2016 film. The film debuted to revenues of \$44 million, topping the box office.^[103] It made \$5.3 million on *Thanksgiving* and \$24.2 million in its second weekend, finishing second behind newcomer *Encanto*.^{[104][105]}

In its third weekend, the film earned \$10.35 million and exceeded \$100 million in the U.S. and Canada.^{[106][107]} In its fourth weekend, the film dropped to third place at the box office and earned \$7.1 million.^{[108][109]} It made \$3.4 million in its fifth weekend, placing fourth,^[110] and \$1.2 million in its sixth, finishing eleventh.^[111] The film returned to the box-office top ten in its seventh weekend, earning \$1.5 million and finishing seventh.^[112] In its eighth weekend, the film made \$1.1 million and finished eighth.^[113] The film returned to the box office top ten in its eleventh weekend, earning \$776,451 and finishing eighth.^[114]

Paul Dergarabedian of *Comscore* said *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* opened to a "really solid number" that showed the "brand is really powerful even some 37 years after the original became a cultural phenomenon". The *Associated Press* noted the "crucial difference" between this film and the 2016 reboot is that *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* "cost about half as much to make".^[115] *Variety* described the film's opening weekend box office as "stronger-than-expected" and "an important victory for the studio after it failed in 2016 to revive the decades-old series".^[116]

Critical response

On the review aggregator website *Rotten Tomatoes*, 63% of 306 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6.2/10. The site's critical consensus reads, "*Ghostbusters: Afterlife* crosses the streams between franchise revival and exercise in nostalgia – and this time around, the bustin' mostly feels good."^[117] *Metacritic*, which uses a *weighted average*, assigned the film a score of 45 out of 100 based on 47 critics, indicating "mixed or average reviews".^[118] Audiences polled by *CinemaScore* gave the film an average grade of "A−" on an A+ to F scale, while those at *PostTrak* gave it an 82% positive score, and 69% said they would definitely recommend it.^[103]

Sheri Linden of *The Hollywood Reporter* described the film's cast as "engaging" and "[having] the comic beats down", and added that "they also play more fully fleshed people than the first film offered, reflecting the director's interest in character-driven stories". She also noted some similarities between the film and

Stranger Things, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.^[119] Olly Richards of *Empire* gave the film a score of four out of five, describing it as "thoroughly lovely" and saying it "firmly establishes its own new generation" while being "full of love for the originals".^[120] Peter Debruge of *Variety* described the film as an "unnecessary but enjoyable movie", and added: "The good news for *Ghostbusters* fans is that *Afterlife* does nothing to tarnish what has come before".^[121]

William Bibbiani of *TheWrap* commented that *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* will probably satisfy fans of *Ghostbusters* (1984)—particularly those who like finding Easter eggs—but might disappoint viewers who want it to offer something different; but these could still enjoy the film's "slick and straightforward, formulaic craftsmanship".^[122] Scott Mendelson of *Forbes* gave the film a score of 6 out of 10, describing it as a "charming and witty kid-centric coming-of-age fantasy", but criticized its reliance on "pandering" nostalgic fanservice.^[123] Kyle Smith of *National Review* described the film as "a winsome, endearing summer movie for November, a cunningly engineered generational bridge".^[124] *The Guardian* critic Charles Bramescio gave it one out of five, finding it lacks the humor of *Ghostbusters* (1984) and instead

resembles an "Amblin knockoff" that is similar to the television series *Stranger Things*. Bramensco concluded it is "a nostalgia object, drained of personality and fitted into a dully palatable mold, custom-made for a fandom that worships everything and respects nothing".^[125]

Accolades

Award	Date of Ceremony	Category	Recipients	Result	Ref.
<u>Alliance of Women Film Journalists</u>	January 2022	Sequel or Remake That Shouldn't Have Been Made	<i>Ghostbusters: Afterlife</i>	Nominated	^[126]
<u>Art Directors Guild Awards</u>	March 5, 2022	Excellence in Production Design for a Fantasy Film	<u>François Audouy</u>	Nominated	^[127]
<u>British Academy Film Awards</u>	March 13, 2022	Best Special Visual Effects	Aharon Bourland, Sheena Duggal, Pier Lefebvre and Alessandro Ongaro	Nominated	^[128]
<u>International Film Music Critics Association Awards</u>	February 17, 2022	<u>Best Original Score for a Fantasy, Science Fiction or Horror Film</u>	<u>Rob Simonsen</u>	Nominated	^[129]
<u>Las Vegas Film Critics Society Awards</u>	December 13, 2021	Best Visual Effects	<i>Ghostbusters: Afterlife</i>	Nominated	^[130]
	December 13, 2021	Youth in Film - Female	<u>Mckenna Grace</u>	Nominated	^[131]
<u>Critics' Choice Super Awards</u>	March 17, 2022	Best Actress in a Science Fiction or Fantasy Movie		Nominated	^[132]
<u>Music City Film Critics Association Awards</u>	January 25, 2022	Best Young Actress		Nominated	^[133]
<u>San Diego Film Critics Society Awards</u>	January 10, 2022	Best Youth Performance		Runner-up	^[134]
<u>Sunset Circle Awards</u>	December 2, 2021	Best Family Film	<i>Ghostbusters: Afterlife</i>	Nominated	^[135]
<u>Saturn Awards</u>	October 25, 2022	<u>Best Performance by a Younger Actor</u>	<u>Finn Wolfhard</u>	Won	^[136]
		<u>Best Fantasy Film</u>	<i>Ghostbusters: Afterlife</i>	Nominated	
		<u>Best Supporting Actress in a Film</u>	<u>Carrie Coon</u>	Nominated	
		<u>Best Film Special / Visual Effects</u>	Sheena Duggal and Alessandro Ongaro	Nominated	

Future

Sequel

Aykroyd has expressed interest in having the surviving cast of the original *Ghostbusters* team reprise their roles in up to three sequels.^[137] On the possibility of sequels, David A. Gross of *Franchise Entertainment Research* said the box-office results were "excellent" and would "encourage Sony to forge ahead with new installments".^[116] In April 2022, a sequel was confirmed to be in early development^{[138][139]} and it would return to New York City as with prior installments. Mckenna Grace reprises her role,^[140] as well as Logan Kim, Celeste O'Connor, Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Ernie Hudson, and Annie Potts.^[141] The film was released on March 22, 2024.^[142]

In December, Gil Kenan took over as director from Reitman, who still remains as a writer and producer. Paul Rudd, Finn Wolfhard, and Carrie Coon were also confirmed to return alongside Grace. On March 20, 2023, a photo of Reitman and Kenan was posted to the Ghostbusters Facebook page showing them on the set of the new movie, with the working title *Firehouse*.^[143]

Upcoming animated film

A separate animated film from Sony Pictures Animation was also announced to be in development, to be directed by Chris Prynoski and Jennifer Kluska, and written by Brenda Hsueh.^[144]

Notes

- a. Titled onscreen during the main-on-end titles as ***Ghostbusters***.
- b. As depicted in *Ghostbusters II* (1989)
- c. As depicted in *Ghostbusters* (1984)

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External links

- [Official website](https://www.ghostbusters.com/) (<https://www.ghostbusters.com/>)
 - *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4513678/>) at [IMDb](#)
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