



Reel Stories Institute 2026

Ages 18–24

July 6–10, 2026

This summer, we're excited to welcome a new cohort of emerging filmmakers to Reel Stories Institute: a five-day creative intensive designed for young women, girls, and gender-expansive filmmakers who want dedicated time to create, experiment, build community, and deepen their craft.

Institute is a space for filmmakers who are actively making work - or hoping to make more of it. Whether you're developing a short film, building your portfolio, exploring a new creative direction, or simply looking for a community of peers who care deeply about storytelling, Institute is designed to support that process.

Over the course of the week, participants will gather alongside a cohort of fellow filmmakers to share ideas, receive feedback, develop works-in-progress, and learn from working professionals across the film and media industries. The program balances creative exploration with practical conversations about careers, artistic practice, collaboration, and what it means to sustain a life in the arts.

During Institute, participants will meet on-site at a studio in Oakland and spend the week immersed in creative work. Together, we'll workshop projects, engage in peer critique, hear from guest artists, explore pathways into the industry, and carve out meaningful time to focus on our own filmmaking.

One of the most valuable parts of Reel Stories Institute is the community itself. The week brings together filmmakers from different backgrounds, experiences, and creative disciplines, creating space for collaboration, conversation, and the kind of connections that often continue long after the program ends.

At its core, Reel Stories Institute is about making room for your creative voice. It's a chance to step away from the day-to-day, spend time with other filmmakers who are asking similar questions, and invest in your own work within a supportive, curious, and artist-centered community.



Program Details

Dates: July 6–10, 2026

Eligibility: Young women, girls, and gender-expansive filmmakers ages 18–24. No polished portfolio or finished project is required. Curiosity, creative interest, and a desire to engage with the work of others are more important than any particular level of experience.

Location: Oakland, CA

Questions? Reach out anytime at reelstories@bavc.org, we'd love to connect.