



THE 2026 GUERILLA FILMMAKING CHALLENGE: NEW YEAR EDITION CRITERIA, RULES, AND REGULATIONS

Attention Utah-based Filmmakers!

The 2026 New Year Edition of the Guerilla Filmmaking Challenge is here! You have just over a month to create a 5-minute short film using any available resources. Then, experience the thrill of seeing your work on the big screen in front of a packed audience!

For first-time participants, don't be intimidated. This challenge is both a creative process and a learning experience. Experienced filmmakers, push yourselves to explore new techniques. If you need assistance, join [FMASU's Filmmaking Connection on Facebook](#), which can be a great resource for finding collaborators, including performers, editors, composers, and writers.

All completed Guerilla shorts will be showcased at The Electric Theater on Saturday, March 14th, at 6 PM (Doors open at 5:30 PM) during the 2026 New Year Edition of the Guerilla Shorts Showcase Event.

AI Use Policy

Quite obviously, AI is a big topic of conversation these days, and from our perspective, it's contrary to what FMASU stands for. We recognize that AI can be a powerful tool and can be used in many different facets of the storytelling process, but for the sake of this challenge (and the future of filmmaking in general), we don't want to see it on the screen. This is to say that if our team can see imagery/footage that's blatantly AI generated in your project (performance, scenes, imagery, script, edits, etc.), it can result in the disqualification of your film. This is something our Jury will be looking at during the judging process as well. We're not looking to police your creativity in any way. Again, we're just looking to preserve the purity of the filmmaking process. AI as a tool can be beneficial, but as of late, it is too often used as the foundation for the creative process rather than a tool, and that's where it becomes an issue. Yes, technology is becoming so advanced from day to day that it's possible for audiences to be fooled, but please be mindful of why you're taking part in this process in the first place. In the end, this is a passion plea to you, the storyteller, to create from your imagination. Don't rely on another source to create it for you.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

You are not officially registered for the challenge until you've paid the \$50 submission fee (Or, \$45 if you sign up early).

- **Registration opens:** Friday, January 30th at 7 PM (MST)
- **Early Bird Discount:** Register within the first 72 hours to receive:
 - **\$5 off the fee**
 - **An extra minute** added to your short film's runtime
- **Registration link:** [CLICK HERE](#) (available at launch)
- **Submission fees are non-refundable**, as they fund Guerilla prize packs and event production.
- Once you've paid, you will receive an email with specific challenge criteria, including a category and dialogue options.

KEY DATES & REQUIREMENTS

- **Submission Deadline:** Monday, March 2nd at 11:59 PM (MST)
- **Film Length:** Maximum 5 minutes (Early bird registrants get 6 minutes)
- **Category Selection:** 10 categories available, first come, first served (a very limited number of signups per category provided on the designated [Google Sheet](#))
- **Dialogue Selection:** Filmmakers must include a required line of dialogue from the provided list (the list of lines will also be provided on the designated [Google Sheet](#))
- **Screening Event:** All completed films will screen at the **Guerilla Shorts Showcase on March 14th at 6 PM.**
- **Prizes:** Cash Prizes, Physical Awards, and more for best films. Jury will judge films based on provided criteria. Audience choice award will be chosen by a way of votes from attendees on event night

RULES & SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

(Please note a change in how you submit your projects)

1. **Submission Process:** You will submit your completed film and a High-res image from the film by uploading them to the following Google Form ([CLICK HERE](#)) by the deadline.
2. **Format:** Films must be submitted (at least) in **1080P or 2k (No 4K) in MP4 or .MOV**
3. **File Size:** Maximum **8 GB**
4. **Content Restrictions:**
 - No strong language, no nudity, and no sexual content
 - PG-13 level violence only
 - If unsure about content, err on the side of caution, or reach out to organizers
5. **Licensed Music & Footage:** If using copyrighted material, clearance is required for festival eligibility. FMASU is **not responsible** for unauthorized content.
6. **Premiere Requirement:** Films **cannot be posted online or submitted to festivals** before the **March 14th showcase** to maintain a premiere environment.
7. **Guerilla Logo:** Must be included in end credits ([DOWNLOAD HERE](#)).
8. **Ownership:** Filmmakers retain ownership but grant FMASU permission to archive films on the [Guerilla YouTube Channel](#) (films can be unlisted upon request for festival runs).

BENEFITS & PRIZES

- **Cash prizes** awarded to the strongest films
- **1st Place Winner** earns an Official Selection slot at the upcoming **2026 Desertscape International Film Festival**
- Each Guerilla submission includes:
 - **One complimentary ticket** to the March 14th Showcase
 - **A Desertscape Film Lover's Screening Pass**, granting access to all Desertscape screenings and Industry Panels (Valued at \$99)

TICKETING INFORMATION

- **Showcase Event Tickets:**
 - \$10 for adults
 - \$5 for children (11 & under)
 - \$25 group pass (up to 5 people)
- **Tickets will go on sale soon**—check **FMASU.com** for updates.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- **Category & Dialogue Selection:**
 - Categories are **limited to 3 slots each**, so don't wait. Register quickly!
 - Once selected, categories **cannot be changed (unless given authorization by Guerilla Challenge programmers)**
 - If your desired category or line of dialogue is taken, you must select another
- **Disqualification:** Films **must adhere to all rules** to remain eligible for prizes and public display.
- **By registering, you agree to all challenge rules and guidelines.**
- **For questions, contact:** info@fmasu.com and be sure to join the [**FMASU Filmmaking Connection Facebook page**](#).

HAPPY FILMMAKING!

We can't wait to see what you create! See you at the **2026 Guerilla Shorts Showcase on March 14th!**

