

ARTISTIC POLICY

California American Indian & Indigenous Film Festival (CAIFF) considers film, video, and digital media works made by American Indian and Indigenous media artists (directors, producers, actors, screenwriters). In programming work for the Festival, CAIFF strives to represent a diversity of ideas, themes and genres in its programming, seeking representations of subjects that would not necessarily be made available through the mainstream forms of media. The Festival prioritizes works that balance unique and new perspectives expressed within the content of the work, cultural and social relevance, a creative approach to form characterized by innovative expression, distinctive style, personal vision, as well as the practice of crossing aesthetic borders in terms of genre, medium and emerging content platforms.

CAIFF supports the diverse artistic visions and perspectives of Indigenous artists working in the media arts; thus, works selected for programming do not need to have overt Indigenous content or themes. As identified in our mission statement, CAIFF is committed to **showcasing** American Indian and Indigenous made content while facilitating spirited discussions within a respectful international and historical context; **educating** both native and non-native communities about the lived realities, both past and present, of Indigenous peoples; **entertaining** native and mainstream audiences through an engaging forum and major cultural event; and **cultivating** young native artists and filmmakers from our communities, preparing the next generation of media makers by encouraging youth to choose filmmaking as a career path.

Selection criteria for the California's American Indian & Indigenous Film Festival is based on:

- Artistic Excellence;
- Innovation in representations, content, aesthetic form and genre;
- Relevance of the work to the American Indian and Indigenous community and to general audiences as a whole;
- Relevance of the piece in terms of form and content, with consideration to emerging themes and issues that present themselves during the programming process, which create an artistic framework for the overall program;
- A key member of the creative team (director, writer, actor, producer) must self-identify as American Indian or Indigenous. Joint creative positions (co-director, writer, producer) are also considered with detailed submission requirements for creative role and decision-making involvement. Executive Producers with creative and practical involvement (ie. not advisory) are also considered.

A note from the Programming Team:

We, the Programming Team, comprised of a group of peers and Festival employees, appreciates the dedication of all the artists who feel that their work compliments the artistic mandate, policy and vision of CAIFF in the presentation their work. The programming process at CAIFF is an involved and challenging one, and we wish to share with submitting artists that many factors are considered when selecting works. Decisions are made by consensus, with considerable thought and discussion during programming

deliberations. If a film is not programmed, it is not a comment on individual achievements, nor does it reflect the artistic value of the work. Outside of our eligibility terms, artistic and programming policies, the programming process also includes considerations such as available programming slots, scheduling, thematic arcs, and representing the diversity of artistic and cultural perspectives from American Indian and Indigenous nations around the world.

We receive hundreds of submissions and the process of accepting and declining works is a necessary, but emotional, experience for everyone involved. As artists, we understand how difficult it can be to receive such news. We appreciate feedback on our processes, and in return are pleased to suggest [alternative exhibition strategies](#) for your work beyond the official program. We hope to continue to receive your works and look forward to meeting you at the Festival.