



OFFICIAL RULES AND GUIDELINES

ReelRoad48 “Official Time Period” starts Friday, July 10, 2026 at 6:00p.m. and ends on Sunday, July 12, 2026 at 6:00p.m.

Prior to the “Official Time Period,” teams may organize cast and crew, secure equipment, and scout/secure locations.

During the “Official Time Period,” teams may write, rehearse, costume and set design, film, edit, and design sound.

KICKOFF EVENT

At least one representative from your team must be present at the official kickoff on Friday, July 10, 2026, at 5:30p.m. at the Red Rooster Coffee House, 218 S Main Street, Aberdeen, SD, 57401. It is recommended you arrive about 30 minutes prior so we can get your team checked in.

Upon check-in, each team will receive a sealed envelope. Enclosed are the control elements (required prop, character, and line of dialogue), and **TWO RANDOMLY SELECTED GENRES**. Each team is required to **PICK ONE GENRE OR COMBINE THE TWO**. You **DO NOT** have to disclose what genre you choose until Saturday, February 15, at 9:00a.m. Failure to disclose the genre before this time could result in disqualification from awards.

During the kickoff party, the host will announce the control elements that are required to be in your film. If your film doesn’t include all three elements, it will be disqualified for awards.

Elements used in any end credit sequence does NOT COUNT.

PROP: The required prop is a physical object that **MUST** appear in your film. It’s strongly encouraged your prop is also involved in your film more than just being a background prop.

LINE OF DIALOGUE: The line of dialogue must be spoken, sung, or written verbatim. If it’s said in a language other than English, it should be subtitled. The line can be split between more than one actor, as long as no filler words are added, and the words in the line are in the correct order.

REQUIRED CHARACTER: The required character **MUST** be present in the film, but they don’t have to be your lead character. The character’s name does not have to be spoken – but the audience should be able to infer who they are. The profession/characteristics listed and the name of the character must belong to the same person performing the role.



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PARTICIPATION

“I don’t live in Aberdeen! Can I still register a team?” **YES!** Filmmakers from all over the Midwest are invited to compete in ReelRoad48. You can either stay the weekend in Aberdeen to create a film, or you can make one in your hometown and submit it to us. There are a few important things to note:

- If you are unable to show up in-person to the Kick-Off event, please inform us immediately. We will reach out to you Friday evening with your required elements and genre options.
- Either you or a representative of your team **MUST BE PRESENT** to check in at submission window on Sunday. For out-of-town teams, we will be implementing online submissions to try and ease this process but you should also have a physical copy of your film for safety.
- We understand that despite best efforts, you still may be unable to attend the screening. If you find yourself unable to attend the Sunday screening but still can submit a film, we will screen it, but it will be ineligible for adjudicated awards. (Your film will still be eligible for people’s choice awards.)

SUBMISSION AND TECH REQUIREMENTS

For the film to be shown, all required paperwork must be completed by the “Check-In” window, which is 5-5:30p.m. on Sunday, February 16. The following is your required paperwork:

- ☐ Participation Agreement
- ☐ Talent Releases – everyone recognizable on screen must sign a release.
- ☐ Location Releases for any location not in public. Privately-owned businesses, residences, federal land, state parks and tribal land REQUIRE releases.

The completed film must be a minimum of 4 minutes or a maximum of 8 minutes. **ALL** opening slates, closing credits, and any after-credit sequences must be included in the total time. The sequence of required elements must be as follows:

EIGHT SECONDS of the opening slate. The opening slate must include: film title, team name, “July 12, 2026” for the date, the city your team is from, and your team’s genre. After the opening slate is –



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THREE SECONDS of black. Then your film begins. When your film ends, credits must be no longer than 50 seconds. After your credits and any optional after-credit sequence(s) should be –

FIVE SECONDS of the closing slate. The closing slate can be found to download [here](#).

When submitting, please let us know if your film contains any mature themes or language. The premiere event is open for all ages, but we will inform the audience of any possible film that has these themes. Nudity, pornography, simulated mass shootings, hate speech and hate symbols **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. YOU WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.**

You may use any video camera or audio equipment. (good audio will make your film seem more pro than good video.) Stock footage may not take up more than 25% of the total viewing screen at any time. Animation and special effects created during the “Official Time Period” are permitted.

Music recorded before the “Official Time Period” is permitted, but you must have proper permissions to use it and/or be royalty-free. Credits and attribution is **REQUIRED**.

If you wish to make a movie poster, the size can be 8 ½ by 11 inches or 12 by 18 inches. It is recommended you frame them.

The use of generative AI in any capacity before or during the “Official Time Period” is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED**. This includes but isn’t limited to: writing, imagery, music or video.

TECH REQUIREMENTS

During the “Check-In” window on Sunday, March 1, at least one member of your team must stay to conduct a sound check. Films must be submitted on a USB flash or hard drive. (Online submissions permitted for out-of-town teams.) We recommend you bring two copies of your film on separate drives if possible. If your film cannot be viewed, you may be disqualified.

For best results, use the following specs for rendering your film:

- 1920 x 1080 resolution with a 16:9 aspect ratio
- Audio stereo only. We cannot support surround sound. (5.1 or 7.1)
- H.264 encoding with a maximum bit rate of 15 MB/s



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OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS

Please send any photos of your team or behind-the-scenes photos to johngazzete@gmail.com. They will be posted on SchwabGazette Industries' social media and website. Participation in this is not required.

Additionally, once you upload your film online, please email us a link so we can create a playlist of all the film submissions for 2026.

After the competition, **YOU** own the rights to your film. You are free to edit, screen at your discretion or submit it to film festivals or art exhibitions (Highly encouraged!). Our only requirement is you keep the end slate in your film.

ReelRoad48 organizers reserve the right to add or amend these rules at any time prior to the "Official Time Period."

HAVE FUN!! Participating in art should be rewarding and challenging. We want you to be successful with your film, so please check out our site schwabgazette.com/rr48-howitworks for some resources on independent filmmaking! If you have any questions about the rules, please contact John Schwab at johngazzete@gmail.com. They will provide their phone number at Kickoff, too.