



Presented by One Institute  
Open Call for Proposals 2025

Application Deadline: 11:59 PM PST on Friday, March 28.  
All applications must be submitted via our online [Jotform application](#).

*Late or incomplete applications will not be reviewed.*

Please direct application inquiries to [circa@oneinstitute.org](mailto:circa@oneinstitute.org).

#### ABOUT CIRCA

Returning for a third year, Circa: Queer Histories Festival is the first and only LGBTQ+ histories festival in the United States. Hosted by One Institute, the oldest active queer organization in the country, Circa will take place during LGBTQ+ History Month, October 2025. The month-long programming series showcases the trailblazing histories and vibrant cultural contributions of LGBTQ+ communities through the lens of present-day challenges and triumphs. Spanning the arts, humanities, politics, and culture, Circa features queer and trans thinkers and doers leading the movement for LGBTQ+ liberation. Circa also provides opportunities for cultural practitioners to present new works and works-in-progress, and for audiences to gather, learn, and celebrate.

#### WHAT'S NEW IN 2025?

One Institute curates Circa Festival programs prioritizing quality, inclusion, and alignment with our mission.

- In 2025, roughly 30 in-person programs will be accepted through the open call for proposals process.
- Additional programs may be proposed via Zoom from anywhere in the world, including outside Los Angeles. We are dedicated to expanding our reach to increase accessibility for those who are not able to safely host queer programs in person. See more under "Virtual Program Guidelines" below.
- One Institute can accommodate up to two mounted exhibitions at the One Gallery during Circa. Program proposals for exhibitions accepted into the 2025 festival may need to secure their own exhibition space.

#### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Program proposals must address queer and trans historical events and individuals. We also welcome proposals that creatively and expansively approach queer history. If the proposed

program centers contemporary topics, the programmer must include in their presentation the subject's ties to LGBTQ+ history. In other words, we all stand on the shoulders of our ancestors. Who and what led us to where we are today?

Programs may be subject to being compiled into group events such as short films, readings, and performances. Applicants can indicate on their application if they would like to be considered for a short film festival, which we conducted during Circa 2024.

### *What we mean by Queer Histories Programming*

One Institute invites queer, trans, and allied community members, artists, activists, scholars, youth, educators, cultural institutions, and community organizations to submit innovative, thought-provoking program proposals. We welcome proposals from across the arts, cultural, and humanities disciplines in the form of: performances, screenings, readings, speaking engagements, workshops, and exhibitions. We are currently prioritizing in-person programs from Los Angeles-based programmers but will also accept virtual programs accessible to broader audiences. Please note we cannot accommodate travel support for out of state folks.

### *Circa 2025 Theme: RECLAIMING FREEDOM*

In 2025 we invite proposals that consider the theme of RECLAIMING FREEDOM in our histories and today. Are we free even when discrimination, surveillance, and inequality persist? How have we insisted on the fight towards liberation despite threats to our rights? With the Trump administration's relentless attacks on queer and trans communities, immigrants, HIV/AIDS funding, LGBTQ+ inclusion in public schools, women's reproductive rights, and more, the notion of reclaiming our freedom even when we are not completely free is relevant and urgent. As James Baldwin said in *Nobody Knows My Name*, "*Freedom is not something that anybody can be given; freedom is something people take and people are as free as they want to be.*"

## CIRCA PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. By submitting your proposal, you or your organization agree to take part in the Circa Festival, and to produce and host a program during LGBTQ+ History Month, October 2025, in person in Los Angeles County or virtually from anywhere in the world.
2. Proposals from individual artists may be for new works or works-in-progress. Previously presented work may also be considered if there is demonstrated relevance.
3. Programs are self-funded by the individual, group, or organization that submits the proposal. Program support for eligible applicants is described below.
4. All accepted programs will receive robust print and online marketing and publicity support, including inclusion in the Circa festival calendar, microsite, and social media marketing campaign. Limited IG posts are made weekly, and all programmers should supplement marketing efforts with their own outreach to their audiences.
5. A limited number of program venue spaces will be made available at low to no cost to accepted proposals at one of our Circa program hubs including One Gallery in West Hollywood and the Los Angeles LGBT Center in Hollywood. These venues offer space and limited audio/visual equipment. There may be a cost to the programmer for tech heavy programs, or programs that require rehearsals.

- o Indicate on application if you would like to be considered for free to low cost venue space.
  - o The usage of the One Gallery is free to use for all programmers.
  - o The usage fees of the LA LGBT Center Spaces (Davidson-Valentini and Renberg Theatres) range from \$113-\$226 based on the venue desired. These costs may be offset if you receive a stipend and/or via revenue share dependent on ticket sales.
6. If your program proposal is for a mounted exhibition, we can only accommodate two exhibitions at the One Gallery. Any other exhibitions will need to find their own venue and be responsible for rental fees, curation and installation.
  7. Late or incomplete program proposals, or those that do not fit Circa's guidelines or thematic considerations, may be rejected.
  8. Please limit your application to one program idea per proposal. One program per applicant will be considered if the applicant chooses to submit multiple proposals.

### VIRTUAL PROGRAMS GUIDELINES

- One Institute welcomes virtual programs based anywhere in the world following the same guidelines as in person programs. Please note, stipends are more limited for virtual programs.
  - o We are especially dedicated to accessibility for programmers in states, countries, regions, etc. where in person queer programming is not possible.
- All virtual programs are able to utilize our Zoom Pro account, with a webinar feature that can host up to 500 attendees.
- Virtual programs should account for Pacific Standard Time.
- Virtual programs taking place on venues such as Meta Platforms, Twitch, Youtube, Gathertown, University Domains, etc. are responsible for coordinating the technical logistics of those platforms.

### ELIGIBILITY FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

One Institute recognizes the time and effort that goes into producing high-quality programming for our communities. We offer additional programming support to participating individuals and organizations, according to these eligibility guidelines:

- A limited number of stipends are reserved for small and emerging nonprofits and individuals who may be asked to demonstrate need. Most stipends range from \$150-\$500. Stipends are not guaranteed.
- Applicants are eligible for free to low-cost program venue spaces on a case-by-case basis, depending on availability.
- Accepted programs are eligible for a percentage of revenue from ticket sales.
- All applicants are eligible for print and digital marketing and publicity support.

### HOW WE SCORE CIRCA PROGRAM PROPOSALS

The curatorial and educational choices made by One Institute are guided by our commitment to excellence, social equity and justice. We engage with the complexity of LGBTQ+ history and representation through highlighting the intersectional narratives of Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC), women, gender- nonconforming and

transgender people, people of various abilities and disabilities, youth, and elders across all socio-economic classes. We highly value programs that are based in community, and we accept programs on a wide spectrum of interest, relevance, and scope.

To evaluate proposals, the Circa Steering Committee will score applications through the following categories:

- **Program Design**  
Circa seeks original proposals with a strong and clear vision tied to LGBTQ+ history. Committee members will assess program quality, originality, clarity of execution, demonstrated social relevance to the LGBTQ+ community, connection to the festival theme, and alignment with One Institute's mission. Please be clear in describing what your audience will experience from the beginning to the end of your program.
- **Intended Audience & Equity**  
Circa believes in the importance of inclusive and engaging programming. Committee members will assess each program's ability to reach underserved and marginalized audiences, as well as marketability and aptitude for serving as a high-profile event, and accuracy of audience size communicated in the application. *We recognize not every program will attract similar audiences, but submissions should communicate its potential for significant reach.*
- **Experience & Expertise**  
Circa takes place in Los Angeles, home to a diverse range of talent who execute programming experiences with varying levels of available resources. Committee members will assess applicants' history of programming as well as their experience with production and event logistics.
- **Access and Accessibility**  
Circa is working to ensure programs are accessible and responsive to the needs of our audiences. Committee members will assess whether programs address accessibility needs in a thoughtful and consistent manner.

## **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

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Please submit your program proposal via our online [Jotform application](#) by 11:59 PM PST on Friday, March 28th. Applicants will be notified on a rolling basis via email starting May 9th.

Prospective applicants may register for one of two virtual Applicant Information Sessions, held on Thursday, March 6, 2025, and Thursday, March 20, 2025 from 5-6 pm. Register below using the links in the Key Dates section.

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

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*\*Asterisks denote required fields. All applications must be submitted via our online [Jotform application](#). It is strongly recommended that you draft your answers to the following questions in a separate document and enter into the Jotform for submission when complete.*

- Individual or Organization Name\*
- Primary Contact Information (Name, pronouns, email, phone required)\* *Primary contact must remain consistent throughout the application process and festival, unless revised with One Institute's Public Programs Manager.*
- Additional contacts (up to 3)
- Are you based in Los Angeles? (Yes or No)\*
  - If No, where do you currently reside? *Note: Although LA-based programmers will be prioritized, we welcome applicants from outside Los Angeles to submit a Circa proposal.*
- Organization Mission/Description (if applicable; up to 250 words)
- Program/Project Title\*
- Program/Project Description (up to 500 words)\* *Clearly describe your program including what your intended audience will experience from beginning to end. See [event](#) and [exhibition](#) descriptions from Circa 2024 for examples.*
- How does your proposed program relate to this year's theme, *RECLAIMING FREEDOM* (up to 250 words)\*
- Program Type (performances, screenings, readings, speaking engagements, workshops, exhibitions)\*
  - Please note that information required will vary based on program type. For example, film screenings should include runtimes.
- List of Program Participant(s) with brief bios\* *Note: One Institute understands your program participants may not yet be final. Please indicate if each participant is proposed or committed.*
- Work Samples (optional): Upload a PDF with links to artist portfolio, website, program images, video, audio, etc.
- Proposed Date(s) (must be in October 2025), if you have one. Your proposed date is not guaranteed. *Please note, if you would like to be considered for free to low cost venue space, we will discuss available dates at the time proposals are notified.*
- Expected attendance\*
- Please describe your outreach plan to market your program if it is accepted (up to 250 words)\*
- Would you like to be considered for a free to low cost venue space in one of our programming hubs? (Yes, No)\*
  - If No, and if you already have a proposed venue, what is the venue?
  - If No, how will you address accessibility needs at this venue?
- Would you like to be considered for a stipend of up to \$500? (Yes, No)
  - If Yes, please provide an itemized program budget (Template included in form). *Please note that stipend funds are not released until after your Circa program is complete.*

## 2025 CIRCA: QUEER HISTORIES FESTIVAL KEY DATES

- Thurs, Feb 20: Circa Call for Proposals open to public
- March 6, 2025 & March 20, 2025 from 5-6pm PT: Circa proposal information sessions via Zoom
  - [Register for Session #1](#) on Thursday, March 6, 2025
  - [Register for Session #2](#) on Thursday, March 20, 2025

- Fri, March 28: Proposals due by midnight, Pacific Standard Time
- Fri, May 9: Program and stipend notifications begin
- Fri, May 23: Accepted Circa programs must confirm their participation on or before this date.
- June TBD: Programmer information session via Zoom
- Fri, July 11: Preliminary program information due
  - Program title, participants, program image, venue, date, time
- Fri, July 25: Final program information due
  - Includes final participants and bios, program title, description, venue, date, time
  - Image assets: Headshots, logos, final program image, etc due for Circa microsite
- Tues, Sept 9: Circa microsite launches with full Festival lineup and ticket reservations
- Circa: Queer Histories Festival launch weekend: SAVE THE DATE!
  - Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup>: Circa featured exhibition and opening @ LA LGBT Center's Lily Tomlin/Jane Wagner Cultural Arts Center in Hollywood
- October 1-31: Circa Queer Histories Festival throughout LA County and virtual