

FACILITATION GUIDELINES



Filmmakers use immersive storytelling to produce intense thoughts and emotions in the viewer. Journeys in Film uses this powerful medium as a springboard for meaningful dialogue around humanity's most pressing issues. In this guide, you will find suggestions for leading productive conversations that broaden perspectives, encourage empathy, and build new paradigms for education.

- When watching a film or having a powerful discussion, normalize taking breaks and exercising bodily autonomy. Acknowledge that conversations around complex topics can be vulnerable, complicated, and challenging.
Encourage members to voice and do what is right for them without needing to explain or apologize.
- People do their best when they know what to expect.
Start and end your meetings on time.
- **Share or co-create your intentions for the meeting.**
- **Create your space.** If possible, share snacks or find other ways to create an inviting, comfortable atmosphere.
- **Create a trustworthy space.** Maintain confidentiality and only speak to your own experience.
- **Minimize distractions** while you are together. Silence cell phones and devices so you can give your full attention to the conversation.
- **Practice whole-body listening.** Listen to words, tone, body language, and the feeling in the atmosphere.
- **Acknowledge voices that may be absent.** Is there a lived experience that isn't represented in your group? Who are the bridge people who might be able to connect you with other people in your community who might bring new perspectives to the table?
- **Adopt an attitude of positive intent.** If someone says something that bothers you, assume positive intent and ask for more information.
- Ignite your curiosity around other people's views and opinions. **Listen to understand, not to respond.** You don't need to agree with others in your group or make it known that you are "right" to have a worthwhile conversation.
- **Words matter.** Be open to learning and practicing new ways to communicate with others.
- **Be clear, direct, and kind** in your communication. Nobody benefits when you bottle your opinions.
- Everyone has blindspots and biases; **cultivate a space of grace** as you enter into new territory together.
- If a conversation gets heated, practice acknowledging the tension and pausing as a group. **Take a collective breath together** before diving back in or take a longer break to reset.
- Privilege your relationships with others over the content or agenda of the meeting. **Show each other kindness.**
- **Create a closing ritual** that celebrates the time you've spent together and either gives closure or gives members something to think about before your next meeting.