

## ABOUT BFI DISTRIBUTION AND EXHIBITION SUPPORT

The BFI recognises that film is among the most powerful media we have to enrich lives and to expand our understanding of the world. It's also the most socially inclusive art form with the average British person watching over 80 films per year on big and small screens. Audiences want and expect to find choice across a variety of platforms, from the collective experience of the big screen to television and mobile devices. This presents both opportunities and challenges for those in the business of making, distributing and screening films of every kind.

The BFI aims to ensure that there is a full spectrum of choice across platforms, from blockbusters to the latest independent breakout movie or the revival of a classic. We want to encourage people to build a lifelong relationship with film and enable film culture to be enjoyed by everyone in the UK. The distribution and exhibition initiatives outlined below present interlinked strategies to achieve these aims, seeking to ensure audiences can find a greater choice of film in the cinema, in their local community, at festivals, at home or on the move.

### Distribution Fund

Distribution of British and International independent films in the UK remains a predominantly high risk activity. High advertising costs, rigid windows, a diminishing DVD market and an inflexible Virtual Print Fee mechanism all combine to curtail the potential of release programmes. The BFI Distribution Fund supports new ideas that embrace digital opportunities alongside ambitious release plans to give audiences greater access to a wider range of British and international independent films.

### Film Audience Network

The Film Audience Network (FAN) is a major initiative developed by the BFI to grow regional audiences for British and international independent film.

The Network is made up of nine Film Hubs which cover the whole of the UK. The organisations that lead each Hub receive funding from the BFI to deliver extensive

programming, audience development activity and sector training in their region. The Hubs work together to share initiatives and further their aims through collaboration.

### Programming Development Fund

The Programming Development Fund is designed to help film programmers and exhibitors put together film seasons and events. It aims to make a significant impact on audience choice and admissions by supporting adventurous programming decisions, working in tandem with the BFI Film Audience Network and complementing the BFI Distribution Fund. It focuses on initiatives that demonstrate scale and innovation.

### Film Festival Fund

Film Festivals offer enhanced opportunities for audiences to engage with a wide diversity of British and international stories, celebrating and reflecting the rich diversity of life in the UK and beyond. The Film Festivals Fund aims to support a broad range of audience-facing festival activity in the UK, from community provision to sustaining the ambition and reach of festivals that are of UK-wide or international significance.

Each year the Fund supports a portfolio of film festivals across the UK in order to deliver a vibrant and diverse range of independent British and high quality international film, showcase a complementary range of genre specialisms and reach diverse audiences.

### BFI Neighbourhood Cinema

There are many people in the UK who can't regularly go to the cinema. This may be due to social or economic circumstances, or simply because their nearest cinema is too far away. BFI Neighbourhood Cinema brings new film experiences to communities across the UK, no matter where they are. It helps community venues to offer quality local cinema experiences, showing a wide variety of films while charging affordable ticket prices and overcoming the dual challenges of

presentation quality and supply of content. BFI Neighbourhood Cinema has two categories of support:

- **Equipment Fund:** Non-cash awards of equipment to existing community cinemas to improve the quality of their film presentation;
- **Touring Fund:** Awards to touring cinemas to create new venues and increase the percentage of British and international independent film screened in community cinemas.

### Film Export Funding

Support for the export of UK film helps to ensure that audiences around the world enjoy a variety of British film culture and is a critical part of the financing landscape for UK film. Part of the BFI's international strategy, this fund is a springboard for British film exports, designed to help films make sales abroad when they're selected for major international festivals. It can assist sales agents with a film's publicity and marketing, as well as with the technical and logistical costs of appearing at a high-profile festival.

### Joint Venture Scheme

This scheme is designed to encourage UK distributors and producers to form strategic partnerships from the initial stages of financing a film. We are piloting joint ventures to encourage UK producers and UK distributors to align their interests more closely. We will consider projects from those making and distributing low-budget and commercially challenging works, as well as those working on higher-profile films that carry some commercial risks.

### Digital and cross-media projects

This initiative provides development support and distribution funding for digital and cross-media projects produced tangentially to the film, which aim to increase the scope for audience engagement with the film. Awards might include funding for the production of concepts, such as a series of characters that might be exploited in an animated feature, in a game environment and / or for the promotion of the film.