

BFI NET.WORK BOOSTS SUPPORT FOR TALENT DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE UK

- **BFI pledges over £3m per year to develop new UK filmmakers through the BFI NET.WORK**
- **BFI works with partners Creative England, Creative Scotland, Film Agency for Wales and Northern Ireland Screen to roll out the NET.WORK across the UK**
- **BFI will work with Film London, Aardman and 104 films to offer schemes aimed at animators, Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and disabled filmmakers**
- **Pioneering new digital platform to offer new UK filmmakers peer-to-peer support and direct access to industry and talent development executives**

Bristol - Friday 20 September 2013: With British films riding high internationally, the UK's filmmakers of the future get a boost today following the launch of the first phase of the BFI NET.WORK at the Encounters Short Film and Animation Festival in Bristol. The NET.WORK is a key initiative to support promising writers, directors and producers from the nations and regions of the UK and is central to the BFI's strategy, detailed in its *Film Forever* five year plan, to discover and support the next generation of UK filmmaking talent, no matter where they live.

With an annual budget of over £3m, an increase of £1.5m on funds previously available, the NET.WORK sees the BFI work with national partners Creative England, Creative Scotland, Film Agency for Wales and Northern Ireland Screen to establish a joined-up network of experienced development teams across the UK. These organisations, with additional support and financial backing from the BFI Film Fund, will work to discover and develop the UK's most distinctive filmmaking voices, enabling them to realise their potential and ultimately prepare them for their first feature film.

The BFI is continuing to develop the NET.WORK and will roll out further NET.WORK partnerships and programmes in the coming months. In acknowledgement of the large and diverse talent pool in London, the BFI will work with Film London to deliver two shorts schemes in the capital, one producing up to 18 films at a lower budget level and one at a higher budget level for emerging Black and Asian Minority Ethnic filmmakers which will produce up to five films per year. In support of animators, the BFI will work with multi award-winning and internationally acclaimed animation studio, Aardman to deliver a specialised animation development programme. The BFI will also work with 104 Films to offer training and development programmes for disabled filmmakers across the UK.

Ben Roberts, Director of the BFI Film Fund comments: ““Many of us noted the sheer range and quality of UK films coming out of Toronto this year - and that there was no 'house style'. Our hope with the NET.WORK is that this family of organisations will pull together to unearth our standout filmmakers and help to develop them as distinctive, singular voices. This new approach dedicates more time, energy and resources to our next generation of feature filmmakers, and the NET.WORK itself will continue to grow as we announce more partnerships in the coming months, this is just the start.”

A full summary of phase one NET.WORK partners and opportunities can be found here: www.bfi.org.uk/network

The BFI NET.WORK will nurture writers, directors and producers who have yet to have a feature film produced and/or released, through a hands-on, holistic approach that is tailored to the needs of the filmmaker and aims to equip them with the skills, experience and support required to ready them to make their first professional feature film. This work will include developing and funding short films at various degrees of filmmaker experience and budget; commissioning and funding feature film pilots; developing and funding new writing; and further bespoke support that is appropriate to the needs of the individual. The NET.WORK partners will host regular screenings, readings, masterclasses and other talent development-focused events across the country.

The NET.WORK brings together experts across the UK to offer talent development opportunities in a more joined up way than ever before. This new approach will culminate in a joint event from all NET.WORK partners, which will take place once a year. The

NET.WORKER will be an annual event that brings together NET.WORK filmmakers from every part of the UK to share work, experience and information and help forge potential partnerships and collaboration.

Underpinning and complementing the NET.WORK will be a dedicated online discovery space which will allow new writers and filmmakers to upload samples of their work (such as shorts and screenwriting), interact with the BFI Film Fund, and NET.WORK partners, and find out about funding opportunities. The ambitious new site, which is set to launch in 2014, will help filmmakers showcase their work to a range of key film industry professionals, including agents, talent executives and others, and will provide a unique and innovative 'postcode-free' route to securing development support and funding.

The BFI NET.WORK in England

Creative England has partnered the BFI to establish two out-of-London Talent Centres in Brighton and Sheffield. Each centre is led by a dedicated, connected and highly experienced senior talent development executive. In Brighton, the centre is led by former Passion Pictures' Head of Development for Animation Celine Haddad, and in Sheffield is led by former BBC Writers' Room Development Producer, Paul Ashton.

Celine will work with Development Executive, Peter Parker and Paul will work with Development Executive, Jessica Loveland, to actively seek new writers, directors and artists with filmmaking potential, and provide mentoring, funding and short film programmes for both new and emerging talent. The talent centres will manage all emerging talent from across England including filmmakers from London, and will also run short films schemes aimed at new filmmakers from outside the capital. Film London will complement this with two specific shorts schemes for London-based filmmakers, which will be run in conjunction with the NET.WORK. The BFI is working in close partnership with Creative England's Head of Film, Chris Moll and the talent centre teams in Brighton and Sheffield, with BFI Film Fund executives consulting on NET.WORK funding decisions.

Filmmakers based in London can apply to Film London's shorts scheme, 'London Calling', which will produce up to 18 short films. In acknowledgment of the large and diverse talent pool in London, the BFI is working with Film London to offer a shorts scheme called

'London Calling Plus' specifically targeting Black and Asian Minority Ethnic film-makers and offering up to five higher budget shorts for Emerging talent.

Additionally the BFI is developing targeted programmes with Aardman to benefit new and emerging animators, and with 104 Films to benefit disabled filmmakers. Details of these partnerships and the opportunities available through them will be announced soon.

The BFI NET.WORK in Northern Ireland

Alongside its own funding for short film and script development, and production funding for feature film pilots, Northern Ireland Screen has developed a new initiative to be offered through the BFI.NETWORK called *Breaking In*.

Breaking In will introduce and showcase emerging Northern Ireland-based writers, directors and producers to London-based producers and talent agents through a series of performed readings and networking activities. The aim is to encourage London-based producers, production companies, film financiers and agents to actively engage with Northern Ireland talent, as well as to increase the talent's ability to deliver projects suited to the marketplace.

The BFI NET.WORK in Scotland

Creative Scotland will offer a broad range of opportunities through the NET.WORK, with new initiatives to be managed by an external organisation. Scotland is currently undergoing a film policy review at national level and until this is complete and the NET.WORK in Scotland becomes operational at the beginning of 2014, the BFI Film Fund will continue to provide direct support for new and emerging Scottish filmmakers.

The BFI NET.WORK in Wales

Film Agency for Wales will complement its own development and production activity with a broad range of support for new and emerging writers, directors and producers through the NET.WORK. Through the NET.WORK Film Agency for Wales will offer tailored talent and project specific mentoring, specialist talent labs, talent showcases, script readings, and networking, and will for the first time offer a short film scheme for new Welsh talent. The agency will employ a dedicated executive to work across all its NET.WORK projects.

For the full range of training, development and production opportunities offered by each partner organisation outside of the NET.WORK, please see their individual websites.

– Ends –

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NOTES TO EDITORS

BFI Film Fund

With £26m to invest in 2013, the BFI Film Fund is the UK's largest public investor in film - supporting first-class film-making through development and production, to distribution and international sales.

Recent and upcoming films backed by the BFI Film Fund include Yann Demange's **71**, Declan Lowney's **Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa**, Amma Asante's **Belle**, Duane Hopkins' **Bypass**, John Michael McDonagh's **Calvary**, Daniel Wolfe's **Catch Me Daddy**, James Griffiths' **Cuban Fury**, Joanna Hogg's **Exhibition**, Richard Ayoade's **The Double**, Peter Strickland's **The Duke Of Burgundy**, Lenny Abrahamson's **Frank**, Destiny Ekaragha's **Gone Too Far**, Kevin Macdonald's **How I Live Now**, Beeban Kidron's **INREALIFE**, Ralph Fiennes' **The Invisible Woman**, Ruairi Robinson's **The Last Days On Mars**, Roger Michell's **Le Week-End**, Jon Wright's **Our Robot Overlords**, Stephen Frears' **Philomena**, Lone Scherfig's **Posh**, Matthew Warchus' **Pride**, Dexter Fletcher's **Sunshine on Leith**, Jonathan Glazer's **Under the Skin**, Morgan Matthews' **X Plus Y**.

BFI

The BFI is the lead organisation for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for
- today and future generations

- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Greg Dyke.

www.bfi.org.uk