

£1M NATIONAL LOTTERY FUNDING A YEAR FOR UK DOCUMENTARIES BFI NAMES DOC SOCIETY AS NEW DOCUMENTARY FUND DELIVERY PARTNER

- **Funding will back progressive and creative filmmaking across the whole of the UK**
- **Doc Society will collaborate with BFI NETWORK to offer dedicated non-fiction talent development**

LONDON – Monday 11 December 2017: Doc Society – formerly BRITDOC – has been announced as the delivery partner for the BFI Documentary Fund. Fulfilling a commitment outlined in **BFI2022**, the BFI’s five year strategy, the Fund will offer support to documentary filmmakers from across the whole of the UK, including dedicated support for new and emerging filmmakers as part of BFI NETWORK. Awarded up to £1m of **National Lottery** funding a year until March 2022, Doc Society will open the fund and support programme in **early 2018**.

Through an open application process, Doc Society demonstrated a compelling and energising vision for UK documentary film. Doc Society was selected for its inspiring proposals to support creativity and craft excellence, as well as its spirit of enterprise, its extensive international network and a track record of helping to develop globally recognised documentaries. Awarding National Lottery funding, Doc Society will have a strong focus on deepening regional and national opportunities to enable talent UK-wide to tell transformational stories that maximise the potential of the genre. It will also employ a creative approach to reaching audiences, reflecting the rapidly evolving distribution space.

Sandra Whipham, Director, Doc Society, says: “We are thrilled with this partnership with the BFI and the opportunity it gives us to enable brilliant British documentary films to shine on an international stage. What excites us most is that it will also give us the means to spot, develop and nurture new British documentary talent in a strategic and meaningful way.”

Ben Roberts, Director of the BFI Film Fund, says: “Documentaries have always been a deeply integral aspect of our work, and we believe that partnering with Doc Society is an opportunity to advance UK documentary film and filmmakers. Doc Society have a zeal for the form which is energising, they have shown a clear ability to unlock alternative financing sources, as well as impressive national and international reach. We are also thrilled to be able to deliver more structured opportunities for new and emerging documentary talent through Doc Society working closely with BFI NETWORK.”

Over the past 12 years Doc Society has supported over 270 feature documentary films with production or outreach grants and have executive or co-produced films including *CITIZENFOUR*, *Whose Streets*, *Virunga*, *Notes on Blindness*, *The Possibilities Are Endless*, *Ping Pong*, *All These*



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Sleepless Nights, Afghan Star, Hell and Back Again, Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer, Who Is Dayani Cristal? The End of the Line, Hooligan Sparrow, Chosen, Chasing Coral, Dirty Wars, Dragonslayer, Give Up Tomorrow, Here's Johnny, The War Show, One Mile Away, No Fire Zone, Steal This Film, Swandown, The Look of Silence, The Opposition and our first award-winner *We Are Together*.

The BFI Film Fund slate includes a number of critically acclaimed and internationally successful documentaries including James Spinney and Peter Middleton's ***Notes on Blindness***, Lucy Cohen's BFI London Film Festival award-winner ***Kingdom of Us***, Louise Osmond's ***Dark Horse*** and Sophie Fiennes' ***Grace Jones: Bloodlight and Bami***, as well as anticipated titles such as Tim Travers Hawkins' upcoming ***XY Chelsea***. The BFI Documentary Fund partnership with Doc Society promises to build on that success by providing dedicated and experienced support to discover, develop and finance interesting new documentaries.

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About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body 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
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK - 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 Josh Berger CBE.

About Doc Society



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Doc Society is a not-for-profit organisation that funds and enables independent documentary films. Founded in 2005 (and previously known as BRITDOC) by four women, today we are a team of 24 with offices in London and New York and independent media partners on every continent.

We have been funded since 2011 by the Bertha Foundation, with whom we develop and run many projects including the first documentary journalism fund. The Ford Foundation are currently our biggest overall supporter, as part of their Build programme. We were originally supported at launch by Channel 4 TV but our broadcast partner is now the BBC with whom we are co-funding a number of films a year and exploring new audience engagement ideas. We are also lucky enough to work with a myriad of brilliant national and international partners and funders who make our work and the work of our filmmakers possible. They include Creative Europe, Fritt Ord, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Foundation for Democracy & Media, Threshold Foundation, The Perspective Fund and Wyncote Foundation amongst others. The BFI is our latest partner and the most exciting one possible to begin 2018.

Who works at Doc Society? Many many brilliant people do, or have worked behind our doors. Thanks and kudo to all of them for building this organisation to the place it is today. Our directors are: Maxyne Franklin, Beadie Finzi, Jess Search, Sandra Whipham and Oliver Rivers. Our whole brilliant team and exceptional board members in the UK and US can be found at www.docsocociety.org

What else do we do? As well as funding films, we always have a number of ambitious projects on the go. The most important ones to mention here are:

Doc Academy – a schools audience development programme run on an online platform delivering curated film clips and specially written lesson plans that help meet UK governmental education targets on literacy, citizenship education, personal and social education for children and young people aged 11–19. Now being used in a quarter of the UK's secondary schools, we are expanding the programme in 2018. Piloting in schools in the US with our US partner Blueshift Education, and in Kenya with our Nairobi based partner Docubox in collaboration with the British Council.

docacademy.org

The Good Pitch – brings together documentary filmmakers with foundations, NGOs, campaigners, philanthropists, policymakers, brands and media around leading social and environmental issues - to forge coalitions and campaigns that are good for all these partners, good for the films and good for society. In its 10th year, Good Pitch is now a global programme that has raised over £25 million for films and their impact campaigns. Events have taken place in India, Taiwan, Argentina, Australia, Indonesia as well as multiple US cities, Oslo, Copenhagen, Stockholm and London. We have just launched Good Pitch Local, a smaller touring event that is working regionally in the US.

goodpitch.org

Impact Field Guide – we train individuals wishing to work as impact producers, creating change through film, through short professional training courses and convenings of the community. We recently gathered 100 delegates from 22 countries to our Global Impact Producers Assembly at IDFA in Amsterdam. We also publish an online reference resource that is a practical 'how to' guide to the field called the Impact Field Guide which is available in English and Spanish and shortly in Arabic & Portuguese. It has 36,000 users worldwide.

impactguide.org

Safe and Secure – we are working with a wide group of independent documentary funders to bring in a new approach to assessing and managing the physical, digital and legal risks that film teams and film subjects take. We have designed a new Safe and Secure Protocol - to help teams flag areas of concern early and a Safe and Secure Handbook to offer guidance based on expert advice and filmmaker experience.

safeandsecure.film

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