

BEN ROBERTS APPOINTED CHIEF EXECUTIVE, BFI

17 December, 2019, 11:00: BFI Chair Josh Berger is delighted to announce the appointment of Ben Roberts as Chief Executive of the BFI, the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. The appointment was made by Josh on behalf of the BFI's Board of Governors after an extensive recruitment process.

As CEO, Ben will be responsible for the BFI's future strategic and cultural direction and provide leadership for the UK's screen industries. With seismic transformations happening across the broader screen industries and emerging media, Ben will lead a new direction for the BFI across these sectors, whilst continuing to champion film culture, heritage, education, skills, independent film and filmmakers and support the future success of the wider industry. Ben will forge and maintain cultural and industry relations nationally and internationally, and will work with Government to ensure that the screen sectors remain firmly on the agenda and recognised as one of the fastest growing industries in the UK.

Ben will lead the BFI's next five year strategic plan (2022- 2027) and build on the BFI's relationships with the wider screen industries, promoting diversity and inclusion across the organisation, broadening the BFI's audience and relationships with talent, and developing the BFI's financial sustainability, brand and commercial strength. Ben starts his role in mid-February 2020.

Since joining the BFI as Director of the BFI Film Fund in 2012, then promoted to Deputy CEO in October 2018, Ben has been one of the key architects in launching the BFI Diversity Standards, devised a new template for inclusive training with Lucasfilm and Disney for the BFI Film Academy, and has been instrumental in setting inclusion targets across all BFI National Lottery funding. Under his stewardship, the BFI NETWORK has become a prolific and highly successful year-round, UK-wide talent development programme. He has reinvigorated the BFI's Production, Development and Audience Funds to be the home of the most vibrant and distinctive UK talent, and developed the BFI Film Audience Network as a thriving community of promoters and exhibitors. In the last year Ben also launched the new Government backed £57m Young Audiences Content Fund aimed at delivering new original UK television content for young audiences.

BFI Chair Josh Berger said *"I'm absolutely thrilled to appoint Ben Roberts, on behalf of the BFI Board, as the BFI's new Chief Executive. Ben is a rare talent, with broad experience and understanding of the complexities of our screen industries; from the cultural landscape and developing new voices to growing UK independent film; from the challenges facing the UK film industry to what drives the UK's success as a global destination for filmmakers. Ben is a passionate advocate for inclusion and has already done much to steer our industry towards better representation and accessibility. Going forward, the BFI has an important role in shaping the exciting cultural and commercial opportunities presented by the broader screen industries and Ben is the person to lead this.*

I want to thank Amanda Nevill for her brilliant 17 years transforming the BFI into the great organisation it has become and I'm delighted to find someone who can build on Amanda's incredible legacy and take us to even greater heights in the future."

Culture Secretary Nicky Morgan said: *"Ben Roberts will do an incredible job as the BFI's new Chief Executive, building on the fantastic achievements of Amanda Nevill, and will continue to take the organisation from strength to strength. I look forward to working with him to ensure the ongoing success of the British film industry, with a renewed focus on skills, diversity and inclusion."*

Ben Roberts, Chief Executive, BFI said *"I'm eternally grateful to Amanda for bringing me into the BFI, and to Josh and the board for supporting my vision for its future. Film is egalitarian, and I want everyone to see the BFI as their home, to see themselves in our programmes, and feel welcome in our industry. We need all the diversity of voice, thought and talent to maximise the potential of the UK's growing screen industries. My 22 year old self used the BFI library to help me find my first job in film, and so my 44 year old self is immensely proud to lead our brilliant teams through this next chapter."*

Ben Roberts, Biography

Ben Roberts joined the BFI in 2012 as Director of the BFI Film Fund, then promoted to Deputy CEO in October 2018, responsible for overseeing the BFI's Lottery investments in film development, production and distribution, along with the BFI's international activities. He has 20 years' experience in the film industry, across international sales, studio acquisitions, UK distribution and film finance, gained during his time as CEO of Protagonist Pictures, and before that at Universal Pictures and independent UK distributor Metrodome. Ben is on the Board of Trustees of The Terrence Higgins Trust. His first job in film was as an usher at Showcase Cinemas in Coventry.

Ends.

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About the BFI

The BFI is the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of world cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally



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Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter. The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.