



**PRESS
RELEASE**

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 14:30 (LONDON) 24 MARCH 2020

**THE BFI AND THE FILM AND TV CHARITY SET UP
NEW COVID-19 FILM AND TV EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND
WITH £1M DONATION FROM NETFLIX**

London, 24 March 2020, 2.30pm

The BFI and The Film and TV Charity have partnered to create a new industry-backed **Covid-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund** to help support the creative community, which like many industries, has been devastated by the pandemic.

Established with a £1m donation from Netflix, the new **Covid-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund** will be administered by The Film and TV Charity with support from the BFI. It will provide emergency short-term relief to the many thousands of active workers and freelancers who have been directly affected by the closure of productions across the UK.

Alex Pumfrey, CEO of The Film and TV Charity, said: *“The film and TV industry is now facing a huge threat. Many freelancers have seen their livelihoods disappear overnight. We’re entering a period of unprecedented isolation and worry for a workforce that we know from our research already suffers from poor mental health.*

“Which is why I’m incredibly pleased that Netflix and the BFI are working with us to kick-start this new Covid-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund to support workers across the UK’s film and TV industry.”

Ben Roberts, BFI Chief Executive, said: *“Freelance professionals are the backbone of our film and television industries, and we hope that everyone will work together to support those who have been hardest hit at this extraordinary time of need. Netflix’s early commitment to this fund is hugely welcomed and we are asking other commercial industry partners to contribute, if they are able, and play their part in helping those most in need get through this crisis.”*

Anne Mensah, Vice President, Original Series at Netflix, said: *“We’re proud to be working with the BFI and The Film and TV Charity to support the hardest hit workers in TV and film production. UK crews - from electricians to carpenters, hair and makeup artists to drivers – have always been vital to Netflix’s success and now we want to help those freelancers who most need support in these unprecedented times.”*

The Film and TV Charity has supported people working behind the scenes in the film and TV industry for almost 100 years. Founded in the early days of cinema in 1924 with the generosity of entrepreneurs who understood the value of a well-supported workforce in an industry driven by people, the charity has huge experience in distributing hardship funds to those in need.

The Film and TV Charity is currently working on the precise eligibility criteria and level of individual funding but the fund will be open to those working in production, distribution and exhibition. To be the first to

hear when the fund launches, applicants should register for the charity's mailing lists at <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/keep-in-touch/>

Those in immediate and urgent need should apply for support via The Film and TV Charity's existing hardship fund, offering grants of up to £500 to provide stop-gap support. This hardship fund will sit alongside the new Film and TV Covid-19 Emergency Relief Fund. Details on eligibility and how to apply can be found at: <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/coronavirus-financial-advice/>

The Film and TV Charity and BFI also recognise the significant mental health pressures arising as a result of Covid-19 and, in line with the charity's existing Whole Picture Programme for better mental health, are developing new advice specifically tailored for our industry on how to stay mentally well at home and creating a new supportive community forum for freelancers. The Film and TV Charity already provides 24/7 mental health support to the industry, including counselling and legal advice, via the Film and TV Support Line on 0800 054 00 00.

The BFI is leading an industry wide Screen Sector Task Force that is looking at the wide-ranging impacts of Covid-19 on the whole industry and its workforce, as well as working closely with Government to ensure that all of the ramifications and impacts are considered. The BFI has up-to-date industry advice for freelancers and other areas of the sector at <https://www.bfi.org.uk/supporting-uk-film/covid-19-answering-questions-screen-sectors#freelancers>.

Netflix's donation is part of a broader announcement last week to set up a \$100m fund for creatives whose jobs have been affected by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Most of the funds will go towards support for the hardest hit workers on Netflix's own productions around the world and is in addition to the two weeks' pay they already committed to the crew and cast on productions that have been suspended. Netflix's donation to the **Covid-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund** and to other organisations around the world is to provide emergency relief to out-of-work crew and cast across the broader film and television industry in the countries where Netflix has a large production base.

ENDS

Press contacts

Judy Wells, Director Press and PR, BFI

judy.wells@bfi.org.uk / +44 207 957 8919 / 07984 180 501

Aimee McAvoy, Communications Manager, The Film and TV Charity

aimee.mcavoy@filmtvcharity.org.uk / 020 7437 6567

Notes to Editors

About The Film and TV Charity

The Film and TV Charity works behind the scenes of the film, television and cinema industry in the UK. From research to writing, through casting and production, to editing, sales, distribution and exhibition, the organisation supports the lives of everyone involved.

In February 2020 the charity released the results of ground-breaking research into the mental health and wellbeing of people working in the UK's film and TV industry, which found that 9 in 10 workers have experienced a mental health problem. The charity is convening the Film and TV Taskforce on Mental Health to co-fund and co-create an urgent 2-year action plan, the Whole Picture Programme, as part of a 10+ year evidence-based plan.

The charity's free, confidential, independent Film and TV Support Line provides 24/7 support for everyone working in the industry on issues such as debt, depression and harassment. People can access the service via phone 0800 054 00 00, online chat at www.filmtvcharity.org.uk or by emailing support@filmtvcharity.org.uk

The Film and TV Charity was founded as the Cinematograph Trade Benevolent Fund in 1924 and later became The Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund. Alex Pumfrey was appointed CEO in October 2017 and the organisation embarked on a bold new mission to extend its reach and impact as The Film and TV Charity. HM Queen Elizabeth II has been Patron of the charity since 1952. Registered charity no. 1099660

About the 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
- 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.