

## **BFI EXPANDS SUPPORT FOR UK PRODUCERS WITH RELAUNCHED VISION AWARDS AND NEW BFI NETWORK TRAINING PROGRAMME**

- **BFI Vision Awards to invest up to £2.5 million of National Lottery funding to UK-based producers and producer teams over next two years**
- **Awards refocused for talent who have produced at least one feature and working across a range of platforms**
- **New BFI NETWORK INSIGHT professional development programme for next generation of producers on the cusp of making their first feature**
  - **Deadline for both programmes: 6 January 2020**
  - **[www.bfi.org.uk/visionawards](http://www.bfi.org.uk/visionawards)**

**UNDER EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.00am, Thursday 7 November 2019:** The BFI announces expanded support for new and emerging producers across the UK, to provide talent with the skills and stability to develop a dynamic slate of projects. **BFI Vision Awards** are relaunched, with up to **£2.5million National Lottery** funding over two years to support up to **20** UK-based producers who have made between one and three feature films. In tandem, **BFI NETWORK INSIGHT** is a new professional development programme for up to **12** new and emerging producers who are yet to make their first feature.

**Ben Roberts, BFI's Deputy Chief Executive**, said: "We are incredibly proud of the many successes of previous Vision Awards producers and the contribution they are making to a more diverse film culture. We've consulted widely on where the greatest value of the Vision Awards lies, and we are now launching two distinct, but complimentary programmes to support producers early in their careers. This means training and knowledge to build business skills, alongside the funding to help build their slates of brilliant UK filmmaking talent and projects across a variety of platforms"

The two programmes aim to help producers build strong and viable UK film businesses, and address identified gaps in provision following a review of support for independent producers in the UK.

The fourth edition of the BFI Vision Awards sees a maximum of **£50,000** per year available for successful applicants. The eligibility criteria has been adjusted to support producers who have produced at least one feature but no more than three, and welcomes applicants from television and emerging media backgrounds who have comparable credits. Building on this experience, Awardees will be able to capitalise on the funding to grow a slate of projects and broaden the range of their relationships to effectively move projects into production.

**BFI NETWORK INSIGHT** is seeking talent who have a strong track record of short form work, and aims to equip talented new producers with the confidence and ability to realise their creative and business ambitions. The practical, nine month programme will provide successful applicants with in-depth knowledge of navigating the life-cycle of a project from the pivotal position of the producer.

The comprehensive programme is driven by the needs of entry level producers, but also insights from the marketplace. Modules include project development and IP, managing creative relationships, business planning and sustainability, business affairs, packaging and financing, co-production, marketing and distribution, and culminates in a trip to Berlin's European Film Market in February 2021.

The Co-Production module and the EFM activity are supported by BFI's International Fund, as part of commitments outlined in BFI2022, to support UK film businesses pursue creative and commercial opportunities with the international industry with a focus on co-production. This year's Vision Awardees will benefit from key elements of the INSIGHT programme, including both international focused modules.

Materials developed for the programme include a course pack, which will also be available online. This will provide free professional training resources for anyone seeking guidance and advice on becoming a successful producer.

Both programmes are seeking applicants from across the whole of the UK, with a view to backing a cohort of producers who are truly representative of the population, and awards seek to meet the BFI Inclusion Targets. As with all applications to the BFI Film Fund, for applicants who need assistance with completing the form due to access requirements, support for costs is available, see full details: [bfi.org.uk/accesssupport](https://bfi.org.uk/accesssupport).

The BFI's first Vision Awards in 2008 supported 15 companies looking to scale up their business and establish their international reputation through making critically acclaimed and commercially successful films. With its Vision Awards for 2013-2015, the BFI widened the field by supporting 19 companies, including 12 emerging companies. The 2016-2018 Awards backed 22 production companies focusing on emerging producers, to support for their development activity and enable them to expand their relationships and the work they develop.

ENDS

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**About the BFI**

The BFI invests over £50 million of National Lottery funding a year into developing and supporting filmmakers with diverse, bold and distinctive films, that have a cultural relevance or progressive ideas, and which reflect people from different backgrounds, as well as a range of activities to increase the opportunities for audiences to enjoy them.

Upcoming titles include Ken Loach's *Sorry We Missed You* and Jessica Hausner's *Little Joe* which both premiered in Competition at the Cannes Film Festival, where the latter was awarded the Best Actress prize for Emily Beecham; Tribeca Film Festival Best Documentary Feature *Scheme Birds* from directors Ellen Fiske and Ellinor Hallin; and *Saint Maud*, the debut feature from Rose Glass, and *Rocks* from award-winning director Sarah Gavron and producer Faye Ward, which both premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Recent titles include Oscar and BAFTA-nominated *Cold War* which brought Pawel Pawlikowski the Best Director award at last year's Cannes; Joanna Hogg's *The Souvenir*, winner of the World Dramatic Competition at the Sundance Film Festival; *Dirty God* from Berlin Film Festival FIPRESCI Prize winner Sacha Polak; Claire Denis' English language debut *High Life* and Locarno Film Festival Special Jury Prize and BIFA Best Debut Director award-winner *Ray & Liz* by filmmaker Richard Billingham.

Currently in prep, production or post are *Chasing Chaplin* from three-time BAFTA nominees Peter Middleton and James Spinney; Philippa Lowthorpe's *Misbehaviour* starring Keira Knightley, Gugu Mbatha Raw and Jessie Buckley; *Ammonite*, directed by Francis Lee starring Saoirse Ronan and Kate Winslet; Jessica Swale's *Summerland* starring Gemma Arterton and Gugu Mbatha-Raw; and *Herself* directed by Phyllida Lloyd and starring Clare Dunne.

Made possible through National Lottery funding, **BFI NETWORK** exists to discover and support talented writers, directors and producers at the start of their careers. We collaborate with film organisations and leading cultural venues across the UK to provide funding for short films, support for the development of first features, as well as a range of professional and creative development programmes.

Find out more and watch supported work: [www.bfinetwork.org.uk](http://www.bfinetwork.org.uk) @bfinetwork

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 investing National Lottery money into development, production, distribution, sales, export, film heritage and education
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

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