

BFI UNLOCKS UK FILM HERITAGE WITH MAJOR FILM DIGITISATION FUND

On September 8th 2014 applications will open for the BFI's Unlocking Film Heritage Digitisation Fund. Holders of important British film and television items will be able to apply for funding for digitisation (only films and television titles originated on film are eligible). £5 million is available over a three year period through an award of National Lottery funding to the BFI to fund the digitisation of 10,000 titles.

We'll bring back films to the big and small screen, often not available or seen since first made.

The BFI's Unlocking Film Heritage was established in 2013 and has already seen colleague archives and key specialist collections across the country undertaking new programmes of work and digitisation, revolutionising the technical range of our abilities, establishing new digital and cataloguing standards and much more.

Heather Stewart, Creative Director, BFI and executive in charge of the UFH project said,

"The UFH project is an astonishing opportunity to make some of the unseen and unheralded glories of British cinema available to the widest possible range of audiences. We are working with rights holders and partners to bring these films into the 21st century and stimulate a renewal of interest in our shared history as captured on film."

The BFI's Unlocking Film Heritage project is designed to change the face of film archiving and the public's engagement with it across Britain, helping to create new audiences for a broader range of films across all platforms.

The work will be divided into separate strands: 5,000 from the BFI National Archive and 5,000 from the significant public collections and rights holders' collections in the UK.

The goal of the programme is to ensure that the people of the UK, filmmakers, educationalists, researchers and other users can access and enjoy the full range of their rich screen heritage, regardless of where they live or where that heritage is held.

In turn, this will ensure that the UK's screen heritage is safeguarded for future generations and is widely available for learning and enjoyment.

One of the key aims of the project is to make as much film as possible accessible via the BFI's VoD platform, BFI Player and through a wide range of educational resources.

The priority for this phase of the project is to find films which meet criteria of public and cultural value, which have a strong audience appeal and make a contribution to a series of curatorial themes: in particular films which can be used to explore Britain on Film, or feature key anniversaries, seasonal and regional festivals, customs and events. Britain on Film is one of the key parts of the project and will include films which have strong sense of place, revealing the fascinating wealth of British landscapes and architecture, in both rural and urban settings. Diversity in subject matter and material which will appeal to diverse audiences are key priorities.

To ensure value for money in digitisation and consistency of technical standards a ground-breaking network of partnerships with commercial providers has been set up.

Another major benefit of the project is the establishment of a National Catalogue of British Film, with every film listed being given a unique entry in the Entertainment Identifier Registry using a new international standard for film cataloguing.

The full guidelines for applicants are published on the BFI website at:

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/supporting-uk-film/funding-organisations/unlocking-film-heritage-digitisation-fund>

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

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

