

UK-WIDE COLLABORATION INCREASES OPPORTUNITIES FOR FILM AUDIENCES AND FILMMAKERS

- **National Lottery funding to expand the role of the UK-wide BFI Film Audience Network**
- **Brand new roles to find and support filmmakers with new regionally based talent executives**
- **Devolving decision-making responsibility for funding locally**

Thursday 25 January 2018: As set out in **BFI2022**, the **BFI** is launching key developments to build on the success of the **BFI Film Audience Network (FAN)** across the UK. A unique collaboration made up of eight Hubs managed by leading film organisations and venues strategically placed around the country, FAN has been the backbone of the BFI's strategy to ensure the greatest choice of film is available for everyone.

In a new move, National Lottery funding will see six **BFI NETWORK talent executives** appointed in the English Hubs to give greater support to new talent where they live. This recognises the strength of the Hubs as spaces for filmmakers and audiences to meet and reflects the BFI NETWORK offer which already exists in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The ambition is to ensure all aspiring talent across the UK can access support, as well as benefit from signposting to the full scope of funding and training opportunities available to develop careers across the screen industries.

Over **£4million of National Lottery funding** per year until 2022 will enable BFI FAN to continue its broad range of activity to encourage greater engagement with independent and British film across the UK. With increased decision-making responsibility, Hubs will now invest in local film festivals as well as back innovative audience development activity, enabling them to meet the specific needs of their local exhibitors and audiences. Hubs will deliver greater choice and access to a diversity of content to audiences everywhere, with a focus on reaching 16-30 year olds.

Restructuring the boundaries of FAN's English Hubs, coupled with the completion of an open application process, sees changes to some of the organisations heading-up the Hubs:

- **Film Hub Midlands** will be led by **Broadway Media Centre** in Nottingham working in partnership with the Birmingham-based **Flatpack**
- **Film Hub North** will be led collectively by **Showroom Workstation**, Sheffield, **HOME**, Manchester and **Tyneside Cinema**, Newcastle
- **Film Hub South East** will be led by the **Independent Cinema Office** in collaboration with **Saffron Screen** in Saffron Walden and **The Depot** in Lewes
- **Film Hub South West** will be led by **Watershed** in Bristol
- **Film Hub Scotland** will be led by **Glasgow Film Theatre**
- **Film Hub Northern Ireland** will be led by **Queen's University Belfast**
- **Film Hub Wales** will be led by **Chapter** in Cardiff
- **Film Hub London** will be led by **Film London**

Changes to FAN's geography in England see the Hubs now aligned with Arts Council England's boundaries, creating improved potential for cultural partnerships and collaborations. FAN is made up of over 1,500 partners, and a greater focus on local and national collaboration will see them working more closely with organisations such as Into Film and its UK-wide 10,000+ film clubs in schools, the BFI Audience Fund, and the BFI Film Academy, with the collective aim of bringing together existing regional and local expertise, to engage and involve more people from every background, regardless of where they live.

Margot James, Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries, said: "It is fantastic that BFI's Film Audience Network is expanding. A boost in its National Lottery funding will mean it can build on its success and bring diverse, independent British films to even more communities across the UK and inspire the country's next generation of filmmakers."

Ben Roberts, Director of the BFI Film Fund, said: "Central to BFI2022 is the cultivation of a richer diversity of those who are watching and making films in the UK. In BFI FAN we have a thriving network of audiences, curators and filmmakers, reaching across the whole of the UK and through all types of cultural spaces – from multiplexes through to film clubs – so by embedding a mission to develop film talent within it, we can offer an inspiring and inclusive environment where creativity can thrive. Thanks to all our partners who have worked tirelessly with us to build BFI FAN over the past five years, and welcome to our new partners; we are excited by the opportunity to connect more people across the UK with the infinite joy of film."

Delphine Lievens, Theatrical Sales Executive, Altitude Film Distribution said: "The BFI Film Audience Network has become an essential partner for us on our releases over the last year across a number of titles and most noticeably on our release of *Daphne*. The FAN team and Film Hubs across the UK have provided vital insights, support and unbridled enthusiasm to the projects we have worked together on. They have not only maximised press and marketing opportunities in key areas outside of London that otherwise may not have been covered but most importantly drawn in new audiences to cinemas across the UK."

Holli Keeble, Chief Executive of Tyneside Cinema, said: "We are delighted to be part of the new collective leading Film Hub North alongside our partners in Manchester and Sheffield, developing audiences for independent film in a range of settings across our wider region. Tyneside Cinema is an important hub and resource for the region's creative industries with a commitment to talent development. We know that by delivering a programme of rich and diverse content and fostering a spirit of openness in our approach, we attract local filmmaking talent, and we look forward to capitalising on that and proactively connecting with all those in our region with a passion for film. By locating the new talent executives in venues like ours, there is a huge opportunity to develop a network of spaces where creativity can truly flourish."

Jaki McDougall, Chief Executive of Glasgow Film, said: "Building on the success of the last five years, we believe the BFI Film Audience Network represents a huge opportunity for audiences and the exhibition industry in Scotland. As a UK and Scottish endeavour, FAN has supported real progress in this sector – long term funding is enabling investment in growing new audiences for film to ensure everyone in Scotland is encouraged and has access to non-mainstream film. I look

forward to working with our many local, regional and national partners to make sure FAN has a real and long lasting impact on the population's relationship with film."

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the BFI Film Audience Network

Established in 2012 to build wider and more diverse UK cinema audiences for British and international film, FAN achieved over **1,600,000¹** audience admissions from 2013-17, **40%²** of which were new audiences.

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.

¹ BFI Film Audience Network Final Evaluation, October 2017, by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre

² BFI Film Audience Network Final Evaluation, October 2017, by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre