



Future audiences

Great filmmaking for audiences everywhere

Great filmmaking can change lives. Through stories from now, and from other times and other cultures, we learn to think differently and understand each other better. Great filmmaking is about revealing things we don't yet know, seeing the world in new ways, enriching our lives and making a vital contribution to our wellbeing.

People in the UK love film and television. We want people to embrace and value the rich and diverse range of great filmmaking that the BFI stands for. Our aim is that by 2022, industry, policy-makers, and the public alike will understand and champion the cultural value of film, and will be mobilised to advocate for that value in the UK.

We believe that everyone, everywhere in the UK, should have the opportunity to enjoy and learn from the richest and most diverse range of great British and international filmmaking, past, present and

future. This is central to our goal of encouraging ambition in filmmakers, and curiosity and hunger in audiences. In the next five years we will have a specific focus on increasing opportunities for those aged 16-30 to engage with great filmmaking, so that they can learn and grow from those experiences, whether as audiences or as aspiring filmmakers themselves.

Feature films are made for the big screen, and ensuring they can be seen as intended – as a shared experience – is core to our vision. But we intend 'film' to signify excellence and innovation in all kinds of moving image making, regardless of production process, recording medium, or distribution channel. Groundbreaking works which challenge assumptions, which experiment with subject matter, narrative, or style, have always been a part of the BFI offer. In the next five years we are set to embrace new and emerging forms of the moving image within our programming and conservation plans.

Only a small handful of countries worldwide are able to offer the breadth and depth of cultural programming that the BFI and our partners present to audiences. However, the UK lacks a national and international centre for film which could celebrate and give a voice to this extraordinary art form. Our aspiration is to address this during the lifetime of the strategy with plans to be unveiled next year for a new home for the BFI.

We have three objectives to deliver great filmmaking to audiences across the UK:

1. TO OFFER A RICH CULTURAL PROGRAMME

The BFI leads the way in discovering the riches of world cinema and of the significant and pivotal British stories past and present. We will create new materials for some of the greatest films from the history of cinema, films which would otherwise no longer be available to today's audiences. We will curate programmes from our own rich film and television heritage to draw in new audiences in the UK and beyond. We will tell new stories of how the arts of film, television and the moving image have developed worldwide. And we will offer an unmatched diversity of public programme.

What will we do?

In the next period, our priorities are:

British Stories

- We will work with rights holders and significant archival collections to create unprecedented public access to our television heritage, one of the richest collections in British culture
- In a period of potential upheaval in what it means to be British, we will explore Britishness, in particular focusing on Black British and Asian British filmmakers and audiences
- We will celebrate British directors and other creative talents, finding new stories to tell and new ways of examining their work – for example developing programmes from immigrant filmmakers who made Britain their home, from Korda to Kubrick
- We will mark the 50th anniversary of the legalisation of homosexuality in the UK, not only with our annual BFI Flare festival but with the digitisation and launch

on BFI Player of a major new collection of LGBT filmmaking made in the UK

- We will continue our year-round programming devoted to women and film – now developing out from women directors to look at a range of creative roles and representation on screen
- The riches of British animation will be an ongoing focus in our programme – we will make available a comprehensive history of British animation featuring 275 films from the 19th century to the present day

World cinema

- We will deliver a rich and thought-provoking programme of contemporary and historical world cinema, with a major retrospective celebrating the centenary of Ingmar Bergman, and an immediate focus on Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Claude Chabrol. In 2017 we have a major focus on India, with not only a year-long programme in the UK but complementary programmes in India

Blockbusters

- Building on the success of our UK-wide partnership programmes – such as our Gothic, Sci-Fi, Love and Black Star blockbusters – we plan to sustain and develop further this widely popular annual programming showpiece with a range of projects which we believe will engage new UK-wide and especially 16-30 audiences

Wider moving image

- We will build on our Digital Futures and LFF Connects programmes, connecting audiences with new kinds of moving image experimentation, and hosting a conversation about new ways of thinking and talking about what is 'film'
- We will collect new kinds of moving image works to develop the collections of the BFI National Archive

Skills and knowledge

- We will build on the BFI's internationally recognised expertise in preservation and documentation, developing an 'Archive Futures' programme to share expertise and skills with international colleagues

- We aim to develop a more diverse curatorial, editorial and programming workforce in the BFI, which reflects the UK population

- We also aim to develop an appropriately skilled workforce, able to curate across a wider cultural terrain

Research and data

- We will further build our research and evidence base to strengthen the case for the value of film

2. To engage young audiences across the uk and keep them for life

Never before has film had such breadth and range, and never before have there been so many ways to watch it. As the landscape for film, television and the moving image evolves and expands, the BFI will work with partners to ensure that all audiences have the opportunity to enjoy a diverse range of culturally rich material, both in venues and on demand.

However, our audience development strategy will have a distinctive and unifying focus that all our partners, stakeholders and the public can understand, support and help us deliver: a focus on 16-30 year olds.

This group holds the key to the future of film culture, as well as to the continued economic growth of the screen industries. As screens proliferate and moving image becomes the predominant way that young people interact with the world and each other, there is a clear need to encourage cultural curiosity and risk-taking among this group.

Audiences at this age are making an increasing number of independent choices and building the tastes that will inform their behaviour for the rest of their lives. It's crucial that we reach out to them on their terms and where they gather, and offer an opportunity for them to see themselves, their heritage and their future. This focus reaches right across into our strategy for education, skills and filmmaking, acknowledging that much of this audience group watches films in commercial cinemas and online.

We also take this opportunity to refocus our audience-facing investments to maximise the impact that they make at a national and regional level. We will ensure that a diversity of film culture is readily available to audiences across the UK, both in venues

and on demand.

What will we do?

- We will develop a simpler, more accessible and responsive Audience Fund, able to support distributors, exhibitors, festivals, national and touring programmes, multi-year projects and strategic partners. The fund will take a more flexible approach to help build audiences for commercially risky projects regardless of the partner and the platform, with a particular focus on strategies to develop the 16-30 year-old audience

- We will pass more responsibility to a more strategic Film Audience Network – encompassing eight Film Hubs in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, South West England, South East England, Greater London, a unified Film Hub North and a newly created Film Hub Midlands. The Film Hubs will each carry a strategic lead role and have direct responsibility for more of our Lottery funds to support local distribution strategies, festivals, education activity and key programmes

- We will lead an audience engagement and data-gathering initiative, in particular to create an understanding of the 16-30 year-old audience's tastes and viewing habits across commercial, independent and supported cinemas and online platforms, including BFI Player, which can be used for targeted campaigns to encourage this group to explore a wider and more diverse range of film

- We will make significantly more of our cultural programme central to the BFI Player + service, specifically recognising the growing importance of subscription VOD among the 16-30 year-old audience

3. To ensure that everyone, everywhere in the uk will be able to enjoy more of the uk's moving image heritage

There have been over 20 million views of newly available archive material through our Britain on Film programme since it launched, through BFI Player and on social networks. The BFI National Archive is the only national archive with a complete, searchable online database. Anything not immediately and freely available can be made available if paid for on demand. We have eight mediathèques situated in public venues around the UK where hours of archival material can be enjoyed for free. We are also one

of the busiest archives in the world with over 60 per cent of our overall cultural programme drawn from our collections. Nevertheless, there is still a perception that it is difficult to access the collections.

As well as increasing the amount of material available across the UK, we also aim to engage audiences more effectively by explaining the skills and expertise behind the story of film archiving and preservation, and how to access the UK's collections.

Our work on understanding the data behind British filmmaking – the UK Filmography – will become an essential research and evidence tool on every feature film made in the UK. When linked to data from television and other creative industry sources it will give a longitudinal picture which can inform public policy and funding and create a foundation for understanding diversity both on screen and behind the camera.

What are our priorities and what will we do?

- We will develop and lead a focused effort with our partners to digitise the most at-risk video collections, most of which are television heritage. This will ensure that up to 100,000 of our unique British television programmes – including major one-off dramas and documentaries, children's television and the birth of breakfast television – currently held on obsolete video formats and in danger of being lost in the next five to six years, will be safeguarded for future generations to enjoy. The digitisation should eventually release costly storage space to allow resources to be reinvested in public activities

- We will work with key partners and with Government to explore extended collective licensing to facilitate this mass digitisation, and we will increase UK-wide access to the national collections by building on the BFI Player digital infrastructure, developing a 'walled garden' and other copyright solutions to reach people in educational institutions and public libraries across the UK

- We will renew the BFI Collecting Policy to include the broadest range of significant moving image works, also undertaking an options study on statutory deposit and present recommendations to Government

- We will explore with other collections and rights holders ways to reduce costs and opportunities for commercial partnerships to generate more income

- We will enrich the data in the newly created UK Filmography, by 2022 creating a detailed picture of gender and ethnic diversity behind and in front of the camera in key roles within British film. Making available this fully searchable data we believe will be of inestimable use to researchers, policy-makers and funders, providing a benchmark from which to track change

- We will lead on the development of solutions for the long-term sustainability of significant regional archive collections in the UK

- In the next five years we will make film prints and DCPs for at least 100 of the great classics of British and international cinema, bringing the films to cinema audiences on big screens in exactly the way the filmmakers intended. Without this initiative, the master materials we hold safely in sub-zero storage will never be seen as intended

- The BFI holds one of the richest collections in the world of film- and television-related materials. Most of these are paper collections, which cannot be easily accessed. Some of the materials are too fragile to be moved at all. We will digitise and make available collections of the posters, designs, press books, annotated scripts and other materials that form a key part of the nation's heritage

