

#BFI Diversity

THE QUALITY OF DIFFERENCE: BFI CELEBRATES DIVERSITY

£1M FUND OPENS, NEW DIVERSITY STANDARDS FOR DISTRIBUTION AND AUDIENCE FUNDS

- *BFI opens £1m Diversity Fund to support individuals and organisations*
- *BFI's ground-breaking Three Ticks becomes BFI Diversity Standards, now extended to all projects in receipt of BFI Lottery funding*
- *BFI Diversity Standards being adopted by BFI funded partners, including BFI Film Audience Network, Creative Skillset, Creative England, Creative Scotland, Ffilm Cymru Wales, Film London, Into Film, Northern Ireland Screen*

London – Thursday 15 October, 2015: At an event today, hosted by Culture Minister, Ed Vaizey as part of the BFI London Film Festival, the opportunities presented by increasing the diversity of the UK film industry were explored by a host of industry leaders.

Announced today are details of the £1m BFI Diversity Fund and the introduction of BFI Diversity Standards across all Film Fund Lottery funding schemes including film development, production, distribution and audience development. The BFI Diversity Standards have been enthusiastically welcomed by BFI funded partners who will be adopting them over the next 12 months. Underpinning the BFI Diversity Standards is a new BFI definition of diversity, applicable across all BFI Lottery funded projects: **to recognise and acknowledge the quality and value of difference.**

Culture Minister, Ed Vaizey said: "We need to make sure that our fantastic film industry reflects the wonderfully diverse nature of UK society today. The BFI is a tremendous champion of diversity, and this new fund will be instrumental in helping the industry as a whole continue to build on all that has been achieved so far."

BFI CEO, Amanda Nevill comments: "Art itself is borne of diversity, of celebrating the different. As our most accessible and powerful art form, film must reflect the society in which it is made and tell stories that speak to the many different people who exist within that society. That isn't an optional extra or a nice to have – it's a moral and social imperative and, by ensuring audiences are served with films they want to see, it also makes good business sense."

Director of BFI Film Fund, Ben Roberts comments: "It's been an instructive but overall a very positive year since we introduced the guidelines for production. It's given us an opportunity to tighten them up in some places, and the confidence to introduce them to a wider constituency. What's been great is the broad response to diversity as an opportunity, not a challenge, and that will be the key to success."

Camille Gatin, producer of BFI-backed feature film *She Who Brings Gifts*, comments: "Our creative decisions at every stage were purely based on what was best for the film, and we were incredibly lucky to have carte blanche when it came to casting our lead - she had to be 10 years old and very, very talented, and that was it. We are very proud that we have managed to apply this principle throughout the film: from the story, to the cast, to the crew. The BFI's support was invaluable, and I thank them for believing in this project and supporting our creative vision from the very beginning."

Andy Paterson, producer and representative of UK producers' association, Pact comments: "Pact has supported the BFI's initiatives from the beginning and welcomes today's announcements. As producers we are determined to deliver on diversity and we call on decision makers at every level – public funders, distributors and exhibitors – to accept that real change means having the courage to back new voices with new

stories to tell. We look forward to working with the BFI and the industry to generate a diverse pool of talent on both sides of the camera.”

The BFI’s £1m BFI Diversity Fund opens on **2nd November 2015**. The fund is to help inspire and provoke positive changes across UK film by providing opportunities for individuals working across the industry to benefit from professional development to help support their careers, and supporting companies and organisations to show leadership in diversity and the many opportunities that it holds for UK filmmakers, audiences and industry.

The BFI Diversity Fund complements the BFI’s work to bring diverse new talent into the film industry. The BFI Film Academy, supported by the Department for Education and the National Lottery, helps around 1,000 young people per year and is working successfully to bring through a diverse range of talented 16-19 year olds from across the UK, of the 47 BFI Film Academy network courses, 40 are outside London. In the UK-wide courses, 27% of the participants were from BAME communities, 11% were in receipt of free school meals and 6% worked with a disability. In specialist BFI Film Academy residential courses, 28% of participants were from BAME communities and for the craft skills course at the National Film and Television School (NFTS) it was 24%.

The BFI is also enhancing and extending its ground-breaking Three Ticks initiative from today, which are now known as the **BFI Diversity Standards**.

The BFI introduced Three Ticks, backed by UK producers’ association Pact, as a 12 month pilot in September 2014. So far, 15 productions have received support from the BFI since Three Ticks was launched, including Gurinder Chadha’s ***Viceroy’s House***, Andrea Arnold’s ***American Honey***, Peter Middleton and James Spinney’s ***Notes on Blindness***, Amma Asante’s ***A United Kingdom***, Michael Lennox’s ***A Patch of Fog***, Andrew Steggall’s ***Departure***, Ben Wheatley’s ***Free Fire***, and Colm McCarthy’s ***She Who Brings Gifts*** (the full list can be found in Notes to Editors).

Developed by the BFI and designed to address diversity in relation to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and socio-economic status, Three Ticks encourages diverse representation across the workforces and in the portrayal of under-represented stories and groups on screen in BFI Film Fund supported productions.

Since commencing her role in June 2015, BFI Diversity Manager, Deborah Williams, has undertaken an audit of the Three Ticks pilot. Informed by this work, the guidelines have been further developed to include a new category for BFI Audience funds (including the Distribution Fund, Programme Development Fund and Festival Fund), and to ensure the guidelines engage with and challenge the industry in a constructive manner, to make a strong and long-lasting impact to diversifying the UK film industry in the round.

All projects supported with Lottery funding through the BFI Film Fund will now be subject to the BFI Diversity Standards, as will those supported through BFI funded partners (including BFI Film Audience Network, Creative England, Creative Scotland, Ffilm Cymru Wales, Film London, Into Film, and Northern Ireland Screen) who will be adopting the standards over the next 12 months.

Today's announcements were made as part of **BFI's Diversity Discussion** at Picturehouse Central which took place as part of the BFI London Film Festival's Industry Programme.

The BFI Film Fund is the largest public film fund in the UK, investing over £30m into film development, production, international sales, distribution and exhibition.

The BFI Diversity Standards require applicants to the BFI Film Fund to demonstrate how their project will succeed in tackling underrepresentation across four areas of their project, with at least one tick needed in a minimum of two areas:

A - On Screen Representation, Themes & Narratives

This section considers the representation and recognition of specific groups on screen.

For example, is the project telling us something we do not already know? Is it a new voice? OR a familiar story told from a different POV?

B - Creative Practitioners & Artistic Leadership

Is the artistic leadership of one of the identified diverse groups likely to have a positive outcome on the project?

Does the project have the potential to open doors which have historically been closed?

C - Industry Access & Opportunities

The BFI will consider what the value is of the work experience and development opportunities offered.

Does the project present an opportunity to work collaboratively with other elements of the industry?

Are there wider and deeper career development opportunities to be offered?

D - Opportunities for Audience Development

This will be a required category for festivals, distribution funds and other funded audience activities, and offers an additional category for feature film projects which have distributors attached.

Considerations will include the nature of the programme or film, the audience it is aimed at and the intended long-term impact.

BFI Diversity Manager, Deborah Williams will help support funded projects and provide guidance for the wider industry in complying with the Standards.

Feature film projects will continue to be independently assessed against BFI Diversity Standards by the BFI's Certification Unit, which also administers the cultural test for film, games, high end television and animation projects. With a minimum of two ticks required, film projects receiving three ticks will carry the new BFI SCREEN DIVERSITY mark of good practice.

Find out more about the BFI Diversity Standards and download the full guidelines here:

www.bfi.org.uk/diversity

– Ends –

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The 15 BFI-backed productions which have been backed by the BFI since the Three Ticks initiative was introduced in September 2014 are:

A Patch of Fog

Director: Michael Lennox

City of Tiny Lights

Director: Pete Travis

Departure

Director: Andrew Steggall

Early Man United

Director: Nick Park

War on Everyone

Director: John Michael McDonagh

A United Kingdom

Director: Amma Asante

American Honey

Director: Andrea Arnold

Free Fire

Director: Ben Wheatley

Ethel & Ernest

Director: Roger Mainwood

She Who Brings Gifts

Director: Colm McCarthy

Production company: Lupus Films

I Daniel Blake

Director: Ken Loach

Swallows & Amazons

Director: Philippa Lowthorpe

Mindhorn

Director: Sean Foley

Viceroy's House

Director: Gurinder Chadha

Notes on Blindness

Directors: Peter Middleton, James Spinney

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 now 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 Greg Dyke.