

## **BFI LAUNCHES REVAMPED £4M DISTRIBUTION FUND**

- **New-look fund will increase audience choice across the UK by supporting distributors to release independent and specialised films**
- **Four distinct strands will back a diverse range of release strategies, bringing quality films to cinemas and additional platforms**
- **Substantial awards offered through 'Big Audience' strand now targeted at British independent films with wide audience appeal**

**London, Monday 21 January 2013:** The BFI today launches its new-look Distribution Fund to boost audience choice and enrich film culture UK wide. With a budget of £4m per year the BFI Distribution Fund, a remodelled version of the former P&A Fund, will support the distribution of high quality British independent and specialised films, helping them to find new audiences right across the UK, particularly outside London.

By encouraging distributors to harness digital technologies and explore new and innovative ways to bring films to audiences both in cinemas and across additional platforms, the Distribution Fund will also support the UK industry to incubate fresh ideas and practices and help foster new models for growth in the rapidly evolving film distribution landscape.

The launch of the Distribution Fund marks another step in the roll out of *Film Forever*, the BFI's five year plan to support the UK's film industry. The Fund will help to increase the size, diversity and geographical spread of audiences viewing specialised and British independent film, and is key to the BFI's strategic priority of expanding education and learning opportunities and boosting audience choice across the UK.

**Ben Roberts, Director of the BFI Film Fund, comments:** "Distribution of independent and specialised films in the UK still carries a high degree of financial risk which can make ambitious release programmes challenging, especially for independent distributors. By

sharing some of that risk and encouraging distributors to be bold and creative in their approach, the BFI Distribution Fund will be key to helping us increase choice and bring great films to audiences across the UK.”

The £4m Distribution Fund is now comprised of four strands specifically designed to address different types of films, release strategies and the associated challenges and opportunities in the marketplace:

### **BIG AUDIENCE**

The Big Audience strand will provide significant awards of around £250-300k, helping to take high quality independent British films with commercial appeal and strong marketable elements to a wide UK audience. Distributors will contribute at least 50% of the total P&A (prints and advertising) costs and the BFI’s funding will significantly enhance the scale and scope of the distribution strategy, ensuring the film is released on at least 100 screens and seen by cinema audiences across the nations and regions of the UK.

### **BREAKOUT**

Breakout awards will increase audience reach for exemplary independent UK and specialised films. With funding awards of around £100-£150k, Breakout awards will ensure critically acclaimed films with audience appeal and strong marketable elements can be seen on more screens, particularly outside London, helping to bring the best in UK and world cinema to new audiences across the UK.

### **NEW MODELS**

The New Models strand will encourage and support new thinking in distribution and marketing through experimental and ambitious releases that explore new opportunities outside traditional theatrical and marketing routes. The BFI’s funding will support the distribution of high quality new British and specialised films as part of a multiplatform release and/or using original marketing strategies and creative audience-building opportunities offered through cross-media activity. The BFI aims to compile data and findings from releases supported through the New Models strand, to help the UK industry overcome challenges and exploit opportunities for growth in an ever-changing marketplace.

## **SLEEPERS**

This brand new approach will provide flexible, agile and responsive support for in-release films that have achieved exceptional weekend box office results and taken the market by surprise. The BFI will monitor and assess opening weekend performance and identify and invite distributors to apply for 'fast-track' awards of around £20-40k, where the funding can make a real impact in helping such films capitalise on their unexpectedly strong performance and reach the widest possible audience, particularly at a regional level. As an entirely new approach, the BFI is initially launching the Sleepers strand as a pilot.

Applications for the BFI Distribution Fund are now open to companies with experience of film distribution in the UK. Guidelines and application forms are available from the BFI website: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/film-industry/lottery-funding-distribution/distribution-fund>

– Ends –

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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

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.

