

**BFI NET.WORK LAUNCHES NEW FREE DIGITAL PLATFORM
WHERE ASPIRING UK FILMMAKERS
CAN SHOWCASE SHORT FILMS AND WRITING
TO TALENT DEVELOPMENT TEAMS**

www.network.bfi.org.uk

- **BFI NET.WORK launches free digital platform for new British writers and shorts filmmakers to showcase their work to talent development executives**
- **Filmmakers supported by BFI NET.WORK partners are developing new films across the UK and winning film awards at international film festivals**

EDINBURGH – Friday 19 June 2015. **BFI NET.WORK**, the UK-wide partnership of film funding organisations which helps to discover and develop new writers, directors and producers, has launched a new and digital platform where new writers and directors from anywhere in the UK can search for funding opportunities and introduce their work to NET.WORK partners and the wider industry.

Developing new talent is the lifeblood of the industry and introducing talented up and coming filmmakers, no matter where they live, to industry professionals who can help take their filmmaking to the next stage, is crucial for building a vibrant and successful film culture and industry.

Alongside funding opportunities, events and industry news, the BFI NET.WORK platform offers aspiring emerging filmmakers a unique opportunity to gain exposure for their short film or script by sharing samples of their work directly in the **POSTROOM**, a space where NET.WORK and industry executives will actively seek out the most exciting and creative new film talent.

Lizzie Francke, Senior Production Executive for the BFI and a long-term supporter of new filmmakers says, “Everyone working in talent development recognises that filmmaking

talent is everywhere in the UK but opportunity often isn't - one of the biggest challenges for those of us working in talent development is how we can cast our nets as wide as possible in order to find, develop and support the next generation of filmmakers. On the flip side, whilst getting a first film or short film made is a phenomenal achievement for filmmakers, being able to present it to funders and other industry professionals is a whole new challenge. The BFI NET.WORK is where filmmakers can share their work to the industry and get direct access to industry and talent development executives."

Matimba Kabalika, BFI NET.WORK Talent Co-ordinator & Content Editor adds, "The beauty of the BFI NET.WORK initiative for filmmakers is the combination of direct and specific support from the experienced development teams in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and having an online space where undiscovered talent has a real chance to shine through. In addition to showing their films, they can also access information about funding sources and other forms of support such as workshops which will aid them as they hone their skills, creativity and knowledge."

With an annual budget of £3 million of Lottery funding, the BFI NET.WORK sees the BFI work with national partners Creative England, Ffilm Cymru Wales, Film London, Northern Ireland Screen, Scottish Film Talent Network in a joined-up network of experienced development teams supporting **New and Emerging Talent** – the NET in NET.WORK, with additional support from Creative Skillset, which supports skills and training across film and the creative industries.

Early examples of filmmakers being supported through the BFI NET.WORK partnership include:

- Rungano Nyoni from Wales whose short film *Listen* which she co-directed, won the Best Short Narrative Prize at the Tribeca Film Festival and was nominated for a European Film Award. Nyoni is currently writing her debut feature, *I Am Not A Witch* and her new short film *Concrete Jungle* was one of the nine projects recently selected for BFI NET.WORK Wales' short film scheme Beacons.
- Rachel Tunnard and Lucy Campbell whose short *Pig Child*, supported through the NET.WORK with Creative England's iShorts programme screens at this year's Edinburgh International Film Festival. Tunnard's first short funded, *Emotional Fusebox*, was selected for last year's BFI London Film Festival and won a BIFA nomination. Creative England is now supporting Tunnard with her first feature *How To Live Yours*.
- Aleem Khan, who won the best UK short prize at the Iris Festival for his first short, *Diana*, and a BAFTA nomination this year for *Three Brothers* produced through

Film London's shorts fund London Calling Plus, is now working on his first feature *After Love*.

- Michael Lennox from Northern Ireland whose short *Boogaloo and Graham* which he directed, won the Best British Short Film at BAFTA and was nominated for Best Live Action Short Film at the Academy Awards. Michael is currently in post-production on his debut feature, *A Patch of Fog*.
- Six filmmaker teams are starting production on their short films through the Scottish Film Talent Network.

The BFI NET.WORK development teams take a hands-on approach tailored to the needs of each filmmaker in order to equip them with the skills, experience and support required as they prepare to make their first professional feature film. This approach includes developing and funding short films at various degrees of filmmaker experience and budget; commissioning and funding feature film pilots; developing and funding new writing; and further bespoke support geared to the needs of the individual. The NET.WORK partners host regular screenings, readings, masterclasses and other talent development-focused events across the UK.

The BFI NET.WORK is also hosting annual NETWORKER events – this year being held during Edinburgh - to bring together filmmakers from every part of the UK to share work, experience and information and help forge potential partnerships and collaboration.

For the full range of training, development and production opportunities offered by each partner organisation outside of the NET.WORK, please see their individual websites.

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Notes to Editors

The BFI

With over £30 million of Lottery funding to invest each year, the BFI is the UK's largest public investor in film, and the BFI Film Fund supports first-class British filmmaking from

talent and project development, through production, to audience development across exhibition, distribution and international sales.

Films supported by the BFI Film Fund which have recently screened at international film festivals include Sean McAllister's ***A Syrian Love Story***, which this month won the Grand Jury prize at Sheffield Doc/Fest; Yorgos Lanthimos' ***The Lobster*** which premiered In Competition at Cannes in May; Andrew Haigh's ***45 Years*** which premiered in competition at Berlin Film Festival in February where it won two Silver Bear awards; and John Maclean's ***Slow West***, John Crowley's ***Brooklyn***, Louise Osmond's ***Dark Horse*** and Jerry Rothwell's ***How to Change the World*** which all premiered at Sundance in January.

Highly anticipated films backed by the BFI include Sarah Gavron's ***Suffragette***, recently announced as the opening night film for this year's BFI London Film Festival and featuring a stellar cast including Carey Mulligan, Helena Bonham Carter and Meryl Streep; Ben Wheatley's ***High Rise***; Terence Davies' ***Sunset Song***; John Michael McDonagh's ***War On Everyone***; Andrea Arnold's ***American Honey***; Colm McCarthy's ***She Who Brings Gifts***; and Pete Travis' ***City of Tiny Lights***.

The BFI is the lead organisation 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 Greg Dyke.



The BFI NET.WORK in England

Creative England has partnered the BFI to establish two out-of-London Talent Centres in Brighton and Sheffield. Each centre is led by a dedicated, connected and highly experienced senior talent development executive.

The talent centres manage all emerging talent from across England including filmmakers from London, and also runs short films schemes aimed at new filmmakers from outside the capital. Film London complements this with two specific shorts schemes for London-based filmmakers, run in conjunction with the NET.WORK. The BFI is working in close partnership with Creative England and the talent centre teams in Brighton and Sheffield, with BFI Film Fund executives consulting on NET.WORK funding decisions.

The BFI NET.WORK in London

Filmmakers based in London can apply to Film London's 'London Calling' and 'London Calling Plus' training through production schemes. London Calling offers up to 15 teams training and £4,000 in production funding, while London Calling Plus forms part of Film London's work to champion underrepresented voices, targeting emerging black, Asian and minority ethnic filmmaking talent, offering five teams up to £15,000 in production funding. Both schemes will be open for applications in autumn 2015.

The BFI NET.WORK in Northern Ireland

Alongside its own funding for short film and script development, and production funding for feature film pilots, Northern Ireland Screen developed a new initiative offered through the BFI.NETWORK called *London Reading*.

London Reading will introduce and showcase emerging Northern Ireland-based writers, directors and producers to London-based producers and talent agents through a series of performed readings and networking activities. The aim is to encourage London-based producers, production companies, film financiers and agents to actively engage with Northern Ireland talent, as well as to increase the talent's ability to deliver projects suited to the marketplace.

The BFI NET.WORK in Scotland

Creative Scotland offers a broad range of opportunities through the NET.WORK, with new initiatives managed by the Scottish Film Talent Network, a consortium comprising the Centre for the Moving Image (CMI), DigiCult and Hopscotch Films. The SFTN represents Scotland in the UK-wide BFI NET.WORK initiative as it connects the UK's film talent development agencies. www.scottishfilmtalent.com and follow us at [@SFTNetwork](https://twitter.com/SFTNetwork)

The BFI NET.WORK in Wales

Ffilm Cymru Wales will complement its own development and production activity with a broad range of support for new and emerging writers, directors and producers through the NET.WORK. Through the NET.WORK Film Agency for Wales will offer tailored talent and project specific mentoring, specialist talent labs, talent showcases, script readings, and networking, and will for the first time offer a short film scheme for new Welsh

talent. The agency will employ a dedicated executive to work across all its NET.WORK projects.