

BFI UNLOCKS UK FILM HERITAGE WITH MAJOR FILM DIGITISATION FUND

London: 16 June 2015 – Applications are now open for the BFI’s **Unlocking Film Heritage Digitisation Fund**. Holders of important British film and television items can apply for funding to digitise original film materials (only films and television titles originated on film are eligible). This is the third round of funding made available from a £5 million, three year National Lottery fund aimed at digitising 10,000 titles. At this stage £1.5 million is available, with the maximum grant per application set at £100,000. The deadline for submission is 5pm, 21 August 2015.

This ambitious project will bring back films to big and small screens, which have often not available or seen since they were first made, and forms a key part of the BFI’s strategic plan to unlock film heritage for everyone in the UK to enjoy.

The BFI’s Unlocking Film Heritage project was established in 2013 and has already seen colleague archives and key specialist collections across the country undertaking new programmes of work and digitisation, revolutionising the technical range of our abilities, establishing new digital and cataloguing standards and much more.

Heather Stewart, Creative Director, BFI said: *“The UFH project is an astonishing opportunity to make some of the unseen and unheralded glories of British cinema available to the widest possible range of audiences. We are working with rights holders and partners to bring these films into the 21st century and stimulate a renewal of interest in our shared history as captured on film.”*

The BFI’s Unlocking Film Heritage project is designed to change the face of film archiving and the public’s engagement with it across Britain, helping to create new audiences for a broader range of films across all platforms.

The work has been divided into separate strands: 5,000 from the BFI National Archive and 5,000 from the significant public collections and rights holders’ collections in the UK.

The goal of the programme is to ensure that the people of the UK, filmmakers, educationalists, researchers and other users can access and enjoy the full range of their rich screen heritage, regardless of where they live or where that heritage is held.

In turn, this will ensure that the UK's screen heritage is safeguarded for future generations and is widely available for learning and enjoyment.

One of the main aims of the project is to make as much film as possible accessible to the widest number of people possible via the BFI's VoD platform, BFI Player and through a range of educational resources.

The priority for the project is to find films which meet criteria of public and cultural value, which have a strong audience appeal and make a contribution to a series of curatorial themes: in particular films which can be used to explore Britain on Film, or feature significant anniversaries, seasonal and regional festivals, customs and events. Britain on Film is one of the largest parts of the project and will include films which have strong sense of place, revealing the fascinating wealth of British landscapes and architecture, in both rural and urban settings. Diversity in subject matter and material which will appeal to diverse audiences are key priorities.

To ensure value for money in digitisation and consistency of technical standards a ground- breaking network of partnerships with commercial providers has been set up.

Another major benefit of the project is the establishment of a National Catalogue of British Film, with every film listed being given a unique entry in the Entertainment Identifier Registry using a new international standard for film cataloguing.

The full guidelines for applicants are published on the BFI website at: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/supporting-uk-film/funding-organisations/unlocking-film-heritage-digitisation-fund>

Press contacts:

Brian Robinson, Communications Manager, Archive & Heritage, BFI
Tel: 020 7957 8940 / Brian.robinson@bfi.org.uk

Judy Wells, Head of Press, BFI,
Tel: 020 7957 8919 / judy.wells@bfi.org.uk

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

