

BFI LAUNCHES INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY TO BOOST UK FILM

- **BFI pledges £1.5m Lottery funding for International Strategy, to help drive UK economic growth and enhance the global reputation of UK film**
- **BFI to pilot marketing and promotional support for US releases of selected UK films in 2014**
- **Priority territories for export, co-production and cultural exchange identified as China, Brazil and the US**
- **BFI increases funding to support inward investment, film export and co-production**
- **BFI's unique role as cultural and industrial leader ensures UK cultural agenda fully integrated into strategy, building UK audiences for the best of world cinema at home and working with partners to build audiences for UK films around the world**

London, Tuesday 15 October 2013: The BFI today launched an ambitious international strategy to help UK film achieve maximum economic growth and cultural reach in the global marketplace by 2017 – a key aim of the BFI's five year plan, *Film Forever*. The strategy document, titled *The Wide Angle: The BFI's International Strategy* was unveiled to an audience of film professionals this afternoon as part of the BFI London Film Festival's Industry Programme. It is available to download here: www.bfi.org.uk/international

BFI Head of International, Isabel Davis, has spearheaded the strategy, consulting widely with government and partners from across the UK. Through consultation, the key areas of international engagement that best support the UK film economy have been identified as: audiovisual policy, co-production, cultural exchange, export, inward investment and skills.

BFI Head of International, Isabel Davis, said: “Film is a truly global business, and UK film is riding high on the world stage following a hugely successful outing for British films and filmmakers in the autumn festivals and with the UK’s world-class crews, talent, facilities, studios and infrastructure, coupled with our attractive film tax relief, continuing to entice film production from around the world. The aim of this strategy is to capitalise on that success and stimulate growth in the years ahead. Partnership is at the heart of this strategy, and we look forward to working in close collaboration with our partners in government and industry to maximise the economic growth and cultural reach of UK film.”

In addition to exporting UK culture and creativity around the world, a globally successful British film industry brings substantial benefit to the UK economy, with UK production volume worth on average over £1bn a year and exports of UK film worth £1.7bn per year – an increase of 121% since 1995. The core aim of the BFI’s International Strategy, complementing the BFI’s five year plan *Film Forever*, is to grow this economic and cultural success.

The strategy is underpinned by research undertaken by Olsberg SPI on behalf of the BFI, with China, Brazil and the US identified as priority territories by the strategy due to clear evidence that they offer the greatest opportunities for growth, and for public intervention through the BFI and its partners to help unlock opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration. The BFI is working closely with government and partners to maximise opportunities available to UK film through engagement with these territories.

The BFI has dedicated £1.5m of Lottery funding per year to make effective interventions, and is working closely with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), the GREAT Campaign, the British Council and public and private partners from across the UK to maximise the support available for UK film.

What the BFI is doing:

- **Export:** The BFI International Strategy is committed to growing the value of UK Film exports year on year. The budget of the BFI Film Export Fund, which helps spotlight UK films at key international markets, has been increased to £275k per year. In 2014 the BFI will pilot a scheme to provide P&A (prints and advertising)

support for the US releases of selected UK films. This support will help sales companies make UK films even more attractive at key international markets and ensure UK films are able to achieve better audience reach in the US. Additionally, the BFI is committed to ensuring strong UK presence at key international festivals and markets (Berlin, FILMART Hong Kong, Cannes, Toronto) through the international umbrella brand, We Are UK Film, and to improving the availability of data and analysis of international sales by territory.

- **Inward investment:** The BFI funds - and works in partnership with - the British Film Commission, and film agencies across the UK, to deliver economic growth through inward investment. The BFI International Fund has committed £200k per annum (subject to approval) to support the BFC to attract film inward investment from the US. This is in addition to c£400k Grant-in-Aid (GIA) funding from the BFI.
- **Co-production:** An effective co-production landscape enhances opportunities for growth, opening up streams of international finance, removing trade barriers, and increasing audiences. The BFI Film Fund has committed up to £1m per annum for minority co-productions, giving UK producers and talent enhanced opportunities to collaborate with world-leading filmmakers. The BFI is connecting UK producers to international counterparts to explore international co-production opportunities, with delegations and individual bursaries to priority territories – the most recent example being a delegation to Brazil for the Rio Film Festival, supporting UK industry to connect with Brazilian counterparts in preparation for the ratification of the UK-Brazil co-production treaty. The BFI is also continuing to review UK membership of Eurimages, and the impact of the UK Film Tax Relief on co-production.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Film has a powerful ability to open windows of understanding on other cultures, open hearts and minds, and thus effect change. Building UK audiences for international cinema is a core BFI objective, as is increasing the knowledge and understanding of British film, history and culture through the BFI's successful international touring programmes, which play each year in 200 venues around the world with invaluable support from the British Council. A recent example is the global success of the BFI's restorations of Alfred Hitchcock's nine

silent films, with major presentations across the world including at Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival, San Francisco Silent Film Festival and at the Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF). By working closely with partners and increasing the resource available for this activity, the International Strategy will help maximise the cultural, creative and diplomatic impact of the BFI's cultural programme, in turn helping to build collaborative relationships with partners around the world.

- **Audiovisual policy:** The international political and regulatory environment has a huge impact on the conditions for success and growth in film. The BFI has a lead role in shaping policy and advocacy on such issues as: IP protection, State Aid, international free trade agreements, co-production agreements, sustainability and access to finance. Through the International Strategy the BFI will continue to lead on these issues through effective engagement with partner agencies and government departments, both in the UK and internationally.
- **Skills and talent:** The BFI is working in partnership with Creative Skillset and partner agencies to identify and develop the best of UK's film talent and skills base, ensuring the UK is fully equipped to compete, innovate and lead in a global environment.

– Ends –

NOTES TO EDITORS

The BFI is grateful for the support and input of all members of the International Strategy group, whose contribution was so important in developing the strategy:

Department for Culture, Media and Sport; UK Trade & Investment, British Council, British Film Commission, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Film Export UK, GREAT, Number 10, Creative Skillset, BAFTA, BBC Worldwide, Creative England, Creative Scotland, Northern Ireland Screen, Screen Agency for Wales, Film London, Directors UK, PACT, Production Guild, UK Screen, Cinema Exhibitors Association.

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BFI

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
- 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.

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