



Media Release

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## **Inclusive Cinema tasks cinemas to take anti-racist action with launch of new guide**

The BFI Film Audience Network's [Inclusive Cinema](#) has launched a practical guide for improving the cinema experiences of ethnically diverse audiences, and staff, which challenges institutions to make good on their Black Lives Matter and anti-racism statements from 2020.

Inclusive Cinema is a UK-wide project funded by the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) through the National Lottery to support exhibitors in welcoming everyone to participate in cinema, by countering cultural, systemic or physical barriers. The new guide '[Dismantling Structural Inequality in Your Cinema](#)' was commissioned from artist and freelancer Sadia Pineda Hameed and focuses on the cinema experiences of ethnically diverse people, with reference to intersections including gender, sexuality, disability, income and class.

From immediately actionable tools, to encouraging inner, reflective and dialogue-based work towards undoing systemic injustice, the guide is intended to create lasting change for future generations, and sustain organisations in a meaningful way, cited by its writer as *"the last toolkit that cinemas should need"* when it comes to making their spaces truly inclusive of and led-by ethnically diverse people.

**Speaking at film exhibition conference, This Way Up, in December 2020, Sadia Pineda Hameed, author of the guide said:**

*"This toolkit wants to help you within your cinema or organisation to dismantle historic, powerful and violent structures; it's not about reforming a single workplace but actually creating a more sustainable sector. It's about decolonisation not diversification. The toolkit does not prioritise visible diversity and inclusion, but prioritises making sure exclusion can't exist in your space ... Share it with your funder and ask your funder to hold you accountable to it, and vice versa."*

The toolkit examines the role of cinemas in the context of systemic injustice and focuses on preventing harm towards people of colour as audience members, staff and creators who exhibit their films, and arrives in tandem with Dogwoof's latest release, charting Martin Luther King Jr.'s mistreatment by the FBI, MLK/FBI, available in virtual cinemas and on demand, from 15 January.

As audiences connect the dots between the seeds to Black Power rising from the '50s and '60s, to Black Lives Matter in 2020, the vital reminder is that institutional and structural racism are still

endemic issues within our society and culture, requiring multiple strategies and committed action.

**Toki Allison, BFI Film Audience Network Access Officer, who oversees the Inclusive Cinema project, explains:**

*“Many cinemas have made statements recognising that structural change is essential after the resurgence of Black Lives Matter bringing racism forcibly into the public consciousness in 2020. This toolkit provides short and long-term actions for organisations to take, to show their true commitment to not only making statements, but taking anti-racist action to create an equitable space for Black, Asian, and ethnically diverse talent, curators, staff and audiences. It’s a comprehensive and inarguably uncompromising document, but it will only be effective if organisations take it, absorb it, recognise the deep work that needs to be done, and get on and do it. I’m looking forward to seeing real change happen, including true accountability from white-led organisations who give up their power and make way for ethnically diverse leaders, makers and curators to share stories in their own ways.”*

**Rico Johnson-Sinclair, director and founder of CineQ, and festival manager at SHOUT Festival, was consulted in the creation of the toolkit, and said:**

*“There’s been a bit of work in the film industry generally over the last couple of years. And whilst this work is formative, it’s still optional and very base level. While the industry is debating whether or not to even implement systems of equality within their organisations, people of colour from all perspectives are put on the backburner time and time again, in lieu of something, anything else, that seems to take priority due to its rise in the public sphere. As this happens, whole generations of black and brown storytellers, creatives and hard-working film-lovers are cast aside to protect a casually and subversively racist status quo. This toolkit not only helps organisations to acknowledge systemic racism happening in their backyards (within a film industry that was built during a time where the only representation we had was given to us by white people), it also shows us a path to valuable self-learning; to implement change across the team to ensure that as the conversation changes and evolves amongst marginalised people (which it will inevitably do), organisations are able to keep up. Instead of performative, this toolkit champions the formative and sustainable.”*

**Alex Misick, programme coordinator at The Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow, who have begun the work to structural change in their venue, said:**

*“I like how the guide doesn’t pull any punches, and is quite explicit about the politics that underpin so much of what hopefully, should be a historic approach. One of Sadia’s key points is that this isn’t just a strategy to be implemented from the top-down of an organisation. These are conversations that need to happen between staff, not necessarily led by senior management, and to be implemented at an individual level... Instead of following capitalist logic of doing more, this is a moment to take a step back, and to recognise there’s a rupture in consensus and let’s not go back to normal.”*

You can find the toolkit in the how-to guides section of the Inclusive Cinema website [here](#) and/or download it [here](#).

You can find virtual screenings and on demand links to watch MLK/FBI [here](#).

## **Ends**

For images, please copy and paste the following link into your browser:

<http://bit.ly/2LSejs0>

For more information, please contact:

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### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **About Inclusive Cinema**

Inclusive Cinema is the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN)'s UK-wide project to support exhibitors in welcoming everyone to participate in cinema, by countering cultural, systemic or physical barriers.

Led by Film Hub Wales on behalf of BFI FAN, the project champions the network's aims to bring British, international and independent film to audiences. With a focus on young audiences (16-30) and a skilled, confident, exhibition sector, access is at the heart of FAN's strategy. In partnership with our creative network of exhibitors, we celebrate meaningful representations of diversity behind the camera, on screen and in our audiences, working towards the BFI Diversity Standards.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#)

#### **About Dogwoof Distribution**

Founded in 2003 by Andy Whittaker, Dogwoof is a London-based, documentary film company integrating production, sales, and UK theatrical distribution. Dogwoof has so far released 26 Oscar®-nominated documentaries, with four wins and an additional three BAFTA winners; notable titles include Oscar®-winning and BAFTA-winning *Free Solo*, Oscar®-nominated *RBG*, BAFTA-winning *The Act of Killing* and *Blackfish*.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#)

#### **About Film Hub Wales**

Film Hub Wales aims to bring more films, to more people, in more places around Wales. Part of the BFI Film Audience Network and supported by National Lottery funding, FHW regularly develops inventive ways for people in Wales to go to the cinema with its independent member venues.

Film Hub Wales (FHW) is one of eight UK wide 'hubs' part of the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) and supported with National Lottery funding, with Chapter appointed as the Film Hub Lead Organisation (FHLO) in Wales. We aim to develop the exhibition sector through dedicated research, training and audience development project support. Since Film Hub Wales set up in 2013, we've supported over 225 exciting cinema projects, reaching over 465,000 audience members.

They also lead on the UK inclusive cinema strategy on behalf of BFI FAN.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

### **About the BFI Film Audience Network**

Supported by National Lottery funding, the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN), is central to the BFI's aim to ensure the greatest choice of film is available for everyone. Established in 2012 to build wider and more diverse UK cinema audiences for British and international film, FAN is a unique, UK-wide collaboration made up of eight Hubs managed by leading film organisations and venues strategically placed around the country. FAN also supports talent development with BFI NETWORK Talent Executives in each of the English Hubs, with a mission to discover and support talented writers, directors and producers at the start of their careers.

BFI FAN Film Hubs are:

- Film Hub Midlands is led by Broadway, Nottingham working in partnership with the Birmingham-based Flatpack
- Film Hub North is led collectively by Showroom Workstation, Sheffield and HOME Manchester
- Film Hub South East is led by the Independent Cinema Office
- Film Hub South West is led by Watershed in Bristol
- Film Hub Scotland is led by Glasgow Film Theatre
- Film Hub Northern Ireland is led by Queen's University Belfast
- Film Hub Wales is led by Chapter in Cardiff
- Film Hub London is led by Film London

[Website](#)

### **About the BFI**

The BFI is the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of world cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online,
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world,
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers,
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

[Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)

### **About the National Lottery**

Thanks to National Lottery players, up to £600 million of funding has been made available to support communities across the UK during the Coronavirus crisis.

The National Lottery is playing a critical role in supporting people, projects and communities during these challenging times.

By playing The National Lottery, you are making an amazing contribution to the nationwide-response to combating the impact of COVID-19 on local communities across the UK.

[Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)

### **About Chapter**

Chapter is one of Europe's largest and most dynamic arts centres with cinemas, theatres, exhibition spaces, studios, a café, award-winning bars, over 60 cultural workspaces and more. Chapter has an international reputation for excellence, innovation and collaboration. It offers an ever-changing programme of the best performance, films and exhibitions from Wales and from around the world.

[Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)