

Executive summary

“QUICK THINKING,
COMFORTABLE
ON THE BALL,
VISION AND
AWARENESS,
MAGNIFICENT!”

Bend It like Beckham
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This publication tells the story of the UK Film Council’s first six years of operation and lays out our proposed priorities and plans for the period 2007–2010.

Looking forward to the next three years, we have a challenging agenda which reflects the growing importance of film and moving image both in the global economy and in the shaping of our cultural values and our lives in Britain.

In the following pages we set out what we believe should be our future priorities in both policy and funding terms. Many of our priorities are as important today as they were five years ago and we are not suggesting a total overhaul of current policies. We can see that radical change is on the horizon, but the timing is not yet right to make a significant shift in public spending on film. The key is to ensure that there are flexible funding and policy priorities in place which can *adapt* and *evolve* to meet the needs of the industry as it changes.

In order to ensure our policies can be adapted to the digital age, we are watching closely the ways in which on demand digital technology can be used to enhance access to UK independent and specialised films, on home platforms via TV sets, and on mobile platforms. Our conclusions will inform our development of new initiatives in this sphere.

Resources are of course limited and this publication seeks to start the difficult but necessary task of selecting which policies should be prioritised.

With a review of Government spending due for completion in 2007 and the promise of significant reductions in the level of Lottery revenues as a result of the demands of the 2012 Olympics, we know that there may be tough choices and challenges ahead. But we remain positive and we are seeking to develop closer working relationships with other public sector agencies and Lottery distributors to join forces to deliver common agendas.

Recognising the financial uncertainty the UK Film Council faces but also our ambitions about what can be achieved, the following three tables set out:

- Our policy priorities (new policy priorities are in blue type);
- Our core funding priorities (those we are confident we can afford to finance between 2007 and 2010); and
- Potential funding priorities (that we can deliver on if extra funding is secured).

The purpose of this publication is to consult and test out our ideas with you. In section seven, you will find a questionnaire asking for your views and comments on what we have done and what we propose to do. We hope that you will take the time to consider our proposals and give us your feedback. The deadline for responses is Monday 5 February 2007.

Following the consultation, we will consider all the responses we received and we will publish our final policy and funding priorities for 2007–2010 in spring 2007.

Our aims

Developing a competitive film industry, built on creativity and skills

Stimulating greater choice for audiences

Encouraging participation and opportunities for learning

Promoting the UK in the wider world

Policy priorities at a glance

Fiscal measures

- To work with the UK Government and the EU to ensure effective long-term fiscal measures are in place to support UK film.
- To work with public and private sector partners to develop a corporate finance initiative to provide UK film companies with better access to corporate and institutional finance.
- To create the conditions for a sustainable business sector for film production.

International

- To work with the UK Government to modernise the UK's film co-production agreements and to assist the UK industry to benefit fully from these agreements.
- To help maximise inward investment through film production.
- To work with the UK Government and the EU to contribute to the development of a strong European audiovisual policy which benefits the UK.

- To create opportunities for UK film by building and strengthening European and US relationships.

Anti-piracy

- To help combat copyright theft and infringement and to assist industry in responding to changing market realities and consumer appetites.
- To explore with the industry a time limited voluntary levy to support anti-piracy activities to reduce the damage piracy is inflicting on UK film.

Digital technology

- To harness new technologies to the benefit of British and specialised film and encourage viable new business models for financing and distributing British films.

- To ensure that on demand film services are harnessed to the benefit of audience for British and specialised films.

National and regional film centres

- To assist the creation of a BFI National Film Centre, which draws on digital technology to create the world's best centre of excellence for learning and research, and which houses a strengthened London Film Festival.
- To help develop and enhance key regional film centres as cultural and creative hubs.

Broadcasters

- To work with broadcasters and other platform operators to improve public access to British and specialised films.
- To secure an improved commitment for British and specialised films from the UK public service broadcaster Channel 4.

Education and literacy

- To ensure media literacy is a key component in the Government's agenda for life-long learning.
- To put in place a UK-wide film and moving image education strategy to foster and increase understanding and appreciation of film.

Research and statistics

- To gather and publish statistics and market intelligence and to carry out and to disseminate research.

Diversity and inclusion

- To help achieve a more diverse and inclusive workforce and film culture.

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Core funding priorities

Film Skills Fund

- To ensure a strong, consistent supply of skilled and talented professionals in line with market demand.

Development Fund

- To broaden the quality, range and ambition of projects and talent being developed.

Premiere Fund

- To assist the production of feature films that can attract audiences the world over.

New Cinema Fund

- To support creativity, innovation, new talent and 'cutting-edge' filmmaking.

Distribution and exhibition

- To support the distribution, promotion and marketing of specialised film in the analogue and digital environments, thereby helping to ensure UK audiences have access to film in all its variety.

International Festival Sales Support Scheme

- To improve the promotion of UK films at selected international festivals.

British Film Institute

- To champion moving image culture, education and cinema heritage in all its richness and diversity, across the UK, for the benefit of as wide an audience as possible and to deepen and encourage public debate about film.

Nations

- To co-ordinate film policy, strategy and delivery UK-wide with the National Screen Agencies.

Regional Investment Fund for England

- To co-ordinate regional film policy, strategy and delivery across England with and through the Regional Screen Agencies and the private sector.

First Light

- To offer children and young people more opportunities to participate and learn about filmmaking.

Publications Fund

- To support discussion, information and debate about film culture.

Sponsorship

- To help promote targeted showcase film events which benefit the UK industry and/or the British public.

Digital Film Clubs for Schools

- To create a National Schools Film Club network that offers films to schools across the UK and maximises opportunities for the enjoyment and understanding of those films by young people.

Media Literacy Challenge Fund

- To provide partnership funding for projects aiming to enhance levels of media literacy and film education in the UK.

Screenwriting skills

- To initiate a new programme which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and skills between writers working in film, theatre and television.

Learning from US and European practitioners

- To create mentoring programmes and other networking initiatives which enable UK practitioners to learn from their counterparts in the US and in Europe.

Digital Screen expansion

- To help ensure that universities and other educational organisations and venues have access to digital equipment in order to ensure that they can improve their level of access to film.

An enhanced Prints and Advertising Fund

- To continue to grow the public appetite for specialised film with increased investment in prints and advertising and new support focused specifically on 'on demand film' film distribution and marketing.

Small Cinema Capital Fund

- To provide support for the modernisation and refurbishment of cinemas so that they can better serve the local communities in which they operate.

Cinema Access and Inclusion Fund

- To increase opportunities for audiences with sensory impairments to get the most out of the cinema-going experience through the wider use of soft-subtitling and audio-described film prints.

UK-wide film festivals strategy

- To work with partners to better support nationally significant film festivals in the UK.
- To help develop one or more world class international film festivals based in the UK.

UK-wide film archives investment

- To help make national and regional moving image archives accessible to all citizens, maximising the public value of the archives and implementing a joined-up plan for storage, preservation and access.

2012 Olympic Film Fund

- To fund a film programme that promotes citizenship, internationalism, diversity and inclusion as part of the cultural programme of the 2012 Olympics.

UK Co-production Fund

- To support European co-productions which aim to deliver cultural value to audiences but which will not be financed solely by the market.

'Experimental' Production Fund

- To provide a space for singular and experimental directorial and artistic talent which operates outside the commercial parameters of the British film industry.

Market testing for British films

- To help ensure that a higher proportion of British films reach their target audience.

Sales agent support

- To bolster exports of UK film around the world through new support measures to sustain and build the UK film sales sector.

Inward investment

- To increase resources in order to better attract large budget portable film productions in the face of increased competition from other territories as a consequence of globalisation.

Completing the Screen Academy map

- To create two more Skillset Screen Academies to complete the existing network, one to act as a centre of excellence for digital technologies.