

THE AMERICAN BLACK FILM FESTIVAL AND LAUGH OUT LOUD NETWORK ANNOUNCE FILMMAKER FELLOWSHIP

ENTRIES NOW OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS; THREE FINALISTS TO RECEIVE BUDGET TO PRODUCE FILM THAT WILL PREMIERE AT ABFF 2018

LAUGH OUT LOUD CONTINUES MISSION TO RECOGNIZE AND CHAMPION DIVERSE COMEDIC CONTENT

LOS ANGELES (February 28, 2018) – Today, the American Black Film Festival (ABFF) and Laugh Out Loud, the comedy brand and multi-platform network created by Kevin Hart and global content leader Lionsgate (NYSE: LGF.A, LGF.B), announced a new partnership for a filmmaker fellowship showcasing exciting new comedic creative voices. The ABFF and Laugh Out Loud will take submissions for comedic narrative film ideas and scripts that are 5-10 minutes in length and feature diverse casts or have a broad appeal to multicultural audiences, with the top three films to receive a production budget and premiere slot at ABFF.

The “ABFF and Laugh Out Loud Filmmaker Fellowship” begins accepting submissions on March 1, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. PST, ending on March 15, 2018 at 11:59 p.m. PST. ABFF has a rich history of unique programs designed to identify and showcase talent, including directors, writers and other content creators.

"We're excited about this fellowship program and partnership with Kevin Hart and Lionsgate's Laugh Out Loud network. We believe that it will unveil some really talented new writer/directors with authentic and keen comedic sensibility," stated Jeff Friday, ABFF Ventures CEO.

"We're thrilled to partner with ABFF in an official capacity," said Jeff Clanagan, President of Laugh Out Loud. "With their legacy of supporting talent in front of and behind the camera and our mission to make big bets on undiscovered comedic voices, the filmmaker fellowship will continue those initiatives to give a platform to the next generation of diverse, comedic stories."

After submissions close, a panel will select 20 semi-finalists based on a variety of criteria including creativity, comedic integrity, narrative ability, directing, budget restraints, and target demographic. Judges will then narrow down the list to 10 finalists who will be invited to pitch their submissions to a jury consisting of ABFF and Laugh Out Loud representatives. Ultimately, the judges will select three potential winners who will receive an opportunity to have their project produced by Laugh Out Loud, using a fund of up to \$20,000 for each filmmaker, and will then premiere their film at the 22nd annual American Black Film Festival in Miami on June 13-17.

Only the first 200 submissions received within the entry period will be accepted to the competition. For complete submission details and to review all eligibility requirements for the ABFF and Laugh Out Loud Filmmaker Fellowship go to:

<http://abffventures.com/filmmakerfellowship/>

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About Laugh Out Loud:

Laugh Out Loud is a comedy brand and multi-platform network founded by the world's top comedian Kevin Hart, in partnership with Lionsgate. Through his streaming video service Hart delivers his vision for the future of comedy: social, mobile, multicultural and seriously funny. From stand-up legends to globally-recognized digital influencers, Hart and LOL curate comedy's boldest voices to produce original scripted and unscripted series, stand-up specials, live broadcasts and special events. Hart brings the groundbreaking social-first strategy that earned him 100 million+ followers to Laugh Out Loud, with one core mission: keep the world laughing. Dope Comedy. Delivered Daily. Always On. Always Loud. *Directly from Kevin Hart and his hand-picked crew of comedic rockstars.* For more, visit LaughOutLoud.com.

About ABFF:

The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) is an annual event dedicated to showcasing quality film and television content by and about people of African descent. The festival is committed to the belief that Black artists and content creators deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts. ABFF founder Jeff Friday conceived the festival in 1997 as a vehicle to promote diversity in the motion picture industry, and strengthen the Black filmmaking community through resource sharing, education, artistic collaboration and career development. For more than two decades, the ABFF has been the standard-bearer of excellence in independent Black cinema, having premiered the works and supported the careers of many of today's most successful artists, including Ryan Coogler (*Black Panther*), Anthony Anderson (*Black-ish*), Will Packer (*Girls Trip*), Issa Rae (*Insecure*), Omari Hardwick (*Power*) and Raoul Peck (*I Am Not Your Negro*). Today, it is the preeminent pipeline for Black talent, in front of and behind the camera, significantly expanding the range of talent in the entertainment industry at large. The ABFF is a property of ABFF Ventures LLC, a multifaceted entertainment company specializing in the production of live events, television and digital content, targeted to upscale African American audiences. The company is a joint venture between Film Life Inc. and Black Enterprise, two prominent media and event companies, each with legacies of showcasing the best of African American culture and achievement.

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