

Press release: immediate

## UK FILM COUNCIL APPOINTS HEAD OF NEW FILM FUND

**LONDON** – 10 February 2010: The UK Film Council has today appointed **Tanya Seghatchian** Head of its new Film Fund.

The new role will see Seghatchian heading up a single, unified film fund, which will work with emerging voices and world-class talent across film development and production.

Announcing Seghatchian's appointment, **Tim Bevan** CBE, Chairman of the UK Film Council said: "Tanya shone through in what was an incredibly strong line-up of candidates. She will be responsible for establishing the brand new £15m Film Fund with creative excellence at its heart. At a time of real turbulence for independent filmmakers, I am confident that Tanya's experience and passion will ensure that they have a supportive, energetic and understanding champion.

"This was an extremely competitive process, which in itself is a reflection of the vast wealth and array of talent currently at work in Britain's film industry. Tanya is hugely respected across the film sector and has a fantastic track-record with creative talent, supporting filmmakers at all stages of their career and developing exciting film projects, ranging from *Harry Potter* and *My Summer of Love* to the UK Film Council-backed *In the Loop* and *Fish Tank*."

**Tanya Seghatchian**, who will report directly to John Woodward, Chief Executive of the UK Film Council, commented: "It is a huge privilege to have been

asked to take on this new role. Our filmmakers are currently amongst the very best in the world, but the challenging financial climate and the speed of technological change mean that now more than ever they need a supportive and reliable home which invests in creative excellence and encourages boldness.

“I’m really looking forward to working closely with the film industry to establish an accessible and ambitious new fund which will protect investment in British talent and champion the importance of a dynamic film culture.”

The UK Film Council is currently consulting on the exact activities of the Film Fund and has received widespread support from across the film sector for its proposals, especially its commitment to protect investment in new British filmmaking. The proposal is for the Film Fund to have a minimum of £15m a year, topped-up further with recoupment from successful film investments, to support feature and short films and to create a new space for experimental filmmaking. It is proposed that the fund will give production companies a share of the UK Film Council’s recoupment from all feature film investments and, as part of the UK Film Council’s commitment to promoting regional talent and economies, that it will have a 25% target for non-London originated films.

Tanya Seghatchian has been Head of the UK Film Council’s Development Fund since 2007. Under Seghatchian’s leadership, the Development Fund has supported new writers and directors, established filmmakers and production companies which have produced films including:

- *Bright Star* – BAFTA and Oscar nominated (Costume Design);
- *Fish Tank* – Cannes Jury prize winner, BAFTA nominated (Outstanding British Film), Evening Standard Best British Film 2009, BIFA Best Director and Most Promising Newcomer;
- *In the Loop* – BAFTA nominated (Outstanding British Film; Adapted Screenplay) and Oscar nominated (Adapted Screenplay);
- *Nowhere Boy* – BAFTA nominated (Outstanding British Film; Outstanding Debut; Supporting Actress, Anne Marie-Duff; Supporting Actress, Kristen Scott-Thomas);
- *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll* – BAFTA nominated (Leading Actor, Andy Serkis).

Before joining the UK Film Council, Seghatchian worked with producer David Heyman, JK Rowling and screenwriter Steve Kloves to develop the *Harry Potter* books into the biggest film franchise in history. She independently produced Pawel Pawlikowski's *My Summer of Love*, which won both the Michael Powell Award for Best British Film at the Edinburgh International Film Festival and the Alexander Korda BAFTA for Outstanding British Film of the Year.

The final make-up of the Film Fund, including the appointment of three Senior Executives, will be announced shortly.

For more information, please contact:

Oliver Rawlins, Head of Communications

T: 020 7861 7505

M: 07855 326 362

E: [oliver.rawlins@ukfilmcouncil.org.uk](mailto:oliver.rawlins@ukfilmcouncil.org.uk)

Oliver Foster, Head of Press and Public Affairs

T: 020 7861 7508

M: 07920 560509

E: [oliver.foster@ukfilmcouncil.org.uk](mailto:oliver.foster@ukfilmcouncil.org.uk)

#### **UK FILM COUNCIL ([www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk](http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk))**

- The UK Film Council is the Government-backed lead agency for film in the UK, supporting the UK film industry, celebrating UK film culture and nurturing UK film talent at home and abroad.
- Since its creation in 2000 the UK Film Council has backed more than 900 films, shorts and features, which have won over 300 awards and entertained more than 200 million people around the world. The UK Film Council generates £5 for every £1 of Lottery money it invests.
- Its support develops new filmmakers, funds exciting new British films and gets a wider choice of films to audiences throughout the UK. It also invests in training British talent, promoting Britain as an international filmmaking location and raising the profile of British films abroad. In addition, it funds the British Film Institute.
- Films backed by the UK Film Council include *Bend it like Beckham*, *Bright Star*, *The Constant Gardener*, *Fish Tank*, *Gosford Park*, *Happy-Go-Lucky*, *In the Loop*, *The Last King of Scotland*, *Man on Wire*, *Nowhere Boy*, *Red Road*, *St Trinian's*, *This is England*, *Touching the Void*, *Vera Drake* and *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*.
- Current UK Film Council funding initiatives include:
  - the world's first Digital Screen Network, which has invested in 240 digital screens in cinemas across the country, increasing film choice, bringing the 3D experience to a wider audience, and ensuring the UK has more digital screens than any other European country;
  - over 200 film societies and independent regional film venues;
  - UK film festivals, including the Edinburgh International Film Festival, the BFI London Film Festival and the Sheffield International Documentary Film Festival;
  - working with Skillset, the UK skills and training industry body for the creative industries, to enable almost 7000 people to further their filmmaking careers;
  - giving over 20,000 young people the opportunity to get involved in filmmaking through First Light Movies and Mediabox;
  - sponsoring the pilot and now the current rollout of FILMCLUB to thousands of schools, introducing new generations of children to the best of British and international cinema.