



PRESS RELEASE

**FOR THE FUTURE OF CINEMA IN PUGLIA**

**EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES TO SUPPORT COMPANIES AND WORKERS IN THE AUDIOVISUAL SECTOR  
THE APULIA FILM COMMISSION'S STRATEGY.**

**THE NEW APULIA FILM FUND, APULIA SHORT & DIGITAL FUND, THE NEW SOCIAL FILM FUND, ENHANCEMENT OF THE APULIA DEVELOPMENT FILM FUND, A NEW ROLE FOR APULIA FILM COMMISSION.**

Many and various are the actions jointly taken by the **Regione Puglia** and **Apulia Film Commission** to support the film and audiovisual sector, following the containment emergency measures due to Covid-19. Structured around three axes, the strategy comprises **aid for companies, support to authors and audience-focused initiatives**. To this extent, **new important measures in relation to film financing and development** have been recently approved.

In regard to aid for companies, **the Regional Council of the Regione Puglia** has recently allocated **a budget of 5 million euros** for the new **Apulia Film Fund**, addressed at productions willing to come to Puglia, as soon as shooting activities will be allowed again. **Apulia Film Commission has recently been designated as Intermediate Body**, in order to effectively handle all Fund-related activities.

In regard to supporting the development of new projects through the **Apulia Development Film Fund**, 15 projects have passed the first stage of the application process and will now be further evaluated. Given the challenges faced by the industry in this particularly difficult moment, the **Board of Directors of Apulia Film Commission** has increased the financial budget of the Fund for the first session, **thus granting funding support to all projects which result eligible from the application process**. **Applications will open again** for the second session from the **15<sup>th</sup> of April 2020 until 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020**.

Authors are further supported through the **Social Film Fund**, developed with the **Fondazione Con il Sud**, whose first edition gave surprising results. In agreement with the Regione Puglia, the project has been refinanced and **a new edition** will be launched soon. Since social exclusion and precariousness are increasingly topical issues, the **third sector** faces a growing responsibility today. To this extent, the Fund's goal is to foster the collaboration between authors, productions and non-profit organizations, in order to envisage new ideas and provide innovative instruments of support.

As part of the support to companies, Apulia Film Commission, in agreement with the Regione Puglia, has developed a new fund to support innovative players dealing with digital formats, including gaming and animation. The **Apulia Shorts&Digital Fund** aims to attract ideas and proposals focusing on new formats and exploring trends of digital consumption and fruition.

Last but not least, Apulia Film Commission has planned several **activities** for the near future, **aimed at the general public**. Numerous digital and open source activities are being implemented, together with the more classic broadcasting of products made in Puglia on several platforms, including both national and regional TV broadcasters and the **Youtube** channel of **Fondazione**. The **online dissemination** of original AFC products (audiovisual productions, masterclasses and more) through a specifically created platform, will see the involvement of **local film exhibitors**, today in great need of reconnecting with their audiences. In addition, **arthouse initiatives and curated selections of films** will be organized and streamed online. Finally, in collaboration with the many local companies and professionals working in the digital sector, AFC is developing a **Digital Cluster**, with the aim of supporting the local **network of innovation-lead companies** operating in such fields as animation, gaming, cross-media and post-production content. Based in the Apulia Film House, whose inauguration has been postponed due to the current COVID-19 emergency, the network will soon be operational.

Moreover, to facilitate a quick recovery for the audiovisual industry in Puglia, Apulia Film Commission, together with the Regione Puglia, is committing to a series of feasibility and sustainability studies, currently entrusted to the regional agency **ASSET**, to create innovative **infrastructures** such as studios, water tanks and hubs (e.g. new Cineports). To this extent, AFC aims at setting up new production areas and structures, according to the renovated safety standards the industry will inevitably adapt to, in the post-emergency phase.

More broadly, further measures have been designed to support workers of the audiovisual chain. **To support freelancers and intermittent professionals** of audiovisual sectors, the Regione Puglia has created a platform, SYNTHESIS, through which, those which are eligible for unemployment benefit (Cassa Integrazione in Deroga), will be able to submit their applications. These benefits add to the 600 euro bonus provided by **Inps** as according to the article 38 of the D.L.18/2020. In addition, in support of local movie professionals affected by the current situation, **Netflix** and the network of the **Italian Film Commission**, to which AFC belong, have just launched a new Film and TV fund. With a budget of **1 million euros** (generously offered by Netflix), the Fund targets specific categories (e.g. electricians, sound engineers, editors and make-up artists, and so forth).

With prayer of diffusion

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