

## THE RED SEA FUND UNLOCKS THE SECOND CYCLE OF FUNDING SUPPORT FOR UNTOLD STORIES AT THE DEVELOPMENT STAGE

*Call for exceptional storytelling that require critical development funding*

*Saudi, Arab and African filmmakers can apply for funding support from 6<sup>th</sup> April - 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2022*

**Jeddah, Saudi Arabia – 28 March 2022:** The Red Sea Film Foundation has today confirmed the second cycle of the Red Sea Fund dedicated to the development stage will open for submissions for features, documentary, and animation projects on 6th April and close on the 20th April 2022.

The second cycle of the fund enables filmmakers from Saudi Arabia, the wider Arab region, and Africa secure access to crucial funding at the early stages of crafting an idea, exploring unique stories and script development.

The recently improved year-round fund comprising of four cycles was adapted to handle the increasing number of submissions and will empower uprising filmmakers the support they need to create and evolve production-ready screenplays to bring them one step closer to bringing their stories to the screen.

The Red Sea Fund encourages bold and original ideas that embrace a rich and diverse range of subjects that inform, educate and entertain global audiences.

As the film industry in Saudi Arabia continues to thrive, the Red Sea Fund has proven to be a crucial vehicle to ensure filmmakers are in a position to make a vital contribution to champion the cultural value of storytelling in the Kingdom and thus creating a window for audiences to access authentic, untold narratives from the past, present and future. To encourage Saudi filmmakers who have taken part in previous funding cycles, they are eligible to submit their short films for further funding consideration.

Last year, out of the 97 awarded projects, 37 films were from development stage which further underlines the importance of this stage of the filmmaking process.

14 Red Sea Funded films from Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Qatar, Iraq, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco were presented to packed-out film screenings at the Red Sea International Festival in December. With a number of the films finding their way onto the international festival circuit this further indicates that the Red Sea Fund is an important force behind extraordinary features, documentaries, and animations coming out of Saudi, the Arab region, and Africa.

Mohammed Al-Turki, Red Sea IFF's Chairman of the committee said: "The development stage of the Red Sea Fund cycle is crucial for filmmakers with strong and exceptional stories to tell. Global streamers and studios are ramping up the volume of local content available on their platforms, the surge of Arab and

African films continue to increase at international Film Festivals and there is investment from international and regional production companies to shoot in the region. This is an exciting time for filmmakers; however, we are fully aware of how challenging the process can be and we look forward to supporting a new diverse slate of projects, broaden recognition for filmmakers and support their journey from script to screen through the Red Sea Fund.”

For more information on how to apply for funding:

<https://redseafilmfest.com/>

For further press information:

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### **About the Red Sea International Film Festival:**

The second edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival will bring the best in Arab and World Cinema to Jeddah, nestled on the eastern shore of the Red Sea.

The Festival will showcase a compelling slate of new and diverse films, alongside a retrospective programme celebrating the masters of cinema as well as introducing audiences to exciting new voices from the region and beyond. The Festival will provide a platform for Arab filmmakers and industry professionals from around the world to connect, host feature and short film competitions, and present a series of events, masterclasses, and workshops to support emerging talent.

Running alongside the Festival is the Red Sea Souk, the Festival's industry market, designed for global exchange and partnerships between the international and Saudi film industries. The four-day market will offer a packed programme of curated events to foster co-production, international distribution, and new business opportunities. The Souk offers unbeatable access to the new vibrant Saudi scene, as well as the best of the Arab market through pitching sessions, one-on-one meetings, screenings, industry talks, and networking events.

### **About Majid Al Futtaim**

Founded in 1992, Majid Al Futtaim is the leading shopping mall, communities, retail and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

A remarkable business success story, Majid Al Futtaim started from one man's vision to transform the face of shopping, entertainment and leisure to 'create great moments for everyone, every day'. It has since grown into one of the United Arab Emirates' most respected and successful businesses spanning 17 international markets, employing more than 43,000 people, and obtaining the highest credit rating (BBB) among privately-held corporates in the region.

Majid Al Futtaim owns and operates 29 shopping malls, 13 hotels and four mixed-use communities, with further developments underway in the region. The shopping malls portfolio includes Mall of the Emirates, Mall of Egypt, Mall of Oman, City Centre malls, My City Centre neighbourhood centres, and five community malls which are in joint venture with the Government of Sharjah. The Company is the exclusive franchisee for Carrefour in over 30 markets across the Middle East, Africa and Asia, operating a portfolio of more than 375 outlets including City+, the region's first checkout-free store, and an online store.

Majid Al Futtain operates more than 600 VOX Cinemas screens as well as a portfolio of world-class leisure and entertainment experiences across the region including Ski Dubai, Ski Egypt, Dreamscape, Magic Planet, Little Explorers and iFLY Dubai. The Company is parent to a Fashion, Home and Specialty retail business representing international brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Hollister, AllSaints, lululemon athletica, Crate & Barrel, Maisons du Monde, LEGO and THAT, a Majid Al Futtain fashion concept store and app. In addition, Majid Al Futtain operates Enova, a facility and energy management company, through a joint venture operation with Veolia, a global leader in optimised environment resource management.

[www.majidalfuttain.com](http://www.majidalfuttain.com)

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