

Documentary competition offers a foot in the door to new film-makers

Scottish Documentary Institute opens a call on the theme of SHIFT to all Scottish-based film-makers. *Bridging the Gap* (BTG) is one of the leading documentary new talent initiatives for cinema in the UK, consistently picking up awards, BAFTAs, special mentions and festival screenings in over 40 countries worldwide. Now in its 8th year, it offers a creative training programme alongside production.

This year, five short documentaries with a budget of up to £16,000 each – £8,000 cash and £8,000 in kind, will be commissioned at an industry pitching session in December.

Professor Noe Mendelle, director of the Scottish Documentary Institute is delighted to be supporting Scottish film-making talent in this way: -*“Our films are picked up by many festivals worldwide every year, providing a genuine launch pad for film-makers’ careers. With this year’s theme SHIFT we want to reflect on the changing world around us and hope to receive a wide range of personal ideas from Scottish-based film-makers engaging a diverse audience.”*

The scheme aims to bridge the gap between training/graduation and a first professional commission, and all those film-makers who have not made documentaries for the big screen.

Lesley Finlay, Development Officer of *Creative Scotland*, a longstanding partner of the initiative since its inception said:-*“We are delighted to continue to support Bridging the Gap as part of our year-long Docscene programme with the Scottish Documentary Institute. BTG is a world leader in discovering and developing the best new Scottish documentary talent.”*

While 12 directors will be selected and put through a training process, the initiative will also present a series of public documentary master classes in Edinburgh, highlights of which will be available online for the benefit of the wider filmmaking community.

[Edinburgh College of Art](#) is very proud of the continued success of this initiative and the high quality of work in the past, as Assistant Principal Ian Pirie enthuses: -*“Bridging the Gap has been widely recognised by broadcasters, industry bodies, film festival directors and award juries providing a world class production and training. It is once again clear that Edinburgh College of Art, part of the Edinburgh Skillset Screen and Media Academy in our partnership with Edinburgh Napier University, is a unique high quality provider of screen production education.”*

As well as generous in kind support from Edinburgh College of Art, home of the [Scottish Documentary Institute](#), *Bridging the Gap* has again attracted investments from Creative Scotland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (via Screen Hi). Amanda Millen, Development Producer for Highlands and Islands Enterprise, is delighted to be providing support: -*“Our partnership with Bridging the Gap gives talent from the Highlands and Islands the opportunity not only to work with the professional broadcast industry, it also provides the platform for our unique voice that is too little heard. We are delighted to be working with the Scottish Documentary Institute on this and many more projects in the months and years to come.”*

The commissioned film-makers will receive further hands-on training right the way through to post-production. The films are geared for distribution in cinemas and festivals.