

Press Release

## Abu Dhabi Film Festival Opens Submissions for Second Session of SANAD Grants

- *SANAD Supports Arab Film-makers for Fifth Consecutive Year*
- *Projects Receive up to US\$20,000 for Development and up to US\$60,000 for Post-production*

**Abu Dhabi-UAE: June 3, 2014** – SANAD, the Abu Dhabi Film Festival's (ADFF) development and post-production fund, has called for entries for the second session of grants from across the Arab World. Submissions will be accepted until July 15, 2014 and successful grantees will be informed at the end of August ahead of the Abu Dhabi Film Festival in October 2014.

ADFF, powered by twofour54, the commercial arm of Media Zone Authority – Abu Dhabi, offers Arab filmmakers with projects up to US\$20,000 for development and up to US\$60,000 for post-production. To date, the initiative has funded more than 100 projects as part of its mission to drive the development of a filmmaking hub in the UAE and wider Arab region. In the first session of 2014, approximately 75 percent of all the submissions came from film-makers making their first or second feature length projects.

Ali Al Jabri, Director of ADFF, said: "SANAD seeks out bold and remarkable works from both new and established filmmakers either in the development or post-production stage. With intercultural dialogue, creativity and relationship building at its core, SANAD serves as a vehicle for identifying and supporting worthwhile projects while connecting filmmakers to potential partners, funding opportunities and audiences.

"Our aim is to spotlight innovative film projects and provide year-round support for new and established filmmakers whose films are essential to the continuing growth and fascinating trends in Arab Cinema. We also seek to fuel ingenuity and facilitate Arab filmmakers across the region to create a meaningful body of work that ensures greater Arab representation in contemporary world cinema.

"To achieve this objective, we supplement twofour54's work in developing a major media hub in Abu Dhabi and the UAE. SANAD funded films regularly feature at leading film festivals across the world such as Berlin, Cannes, Toronto and Venice which is a testament to our continuing commitment towards supporting high calibre projects by Arab filmmakers."

SANAD earlier announced the recipients of its first session of development and post-production grants. Beneficiaries for post-production include 'Cat' directed by Ibrahim El Batout, 'The Valley' directed by Ghassan Salhab, 'The Wanted 18' directed by Amer Shomali and Paul Cowan, 'Um Ghayeb' directed by Nadine Salib and 'Pirates of Salé' directed by Merieme Addou and Rosa Rogers.

Development Grants in 2014 feature first or second time filmmakers such as Rami Kodeih for the narrative project 'Sons of Sunday' from Lebanon, Mohamed Ben Attia for the narrative project 'Hedi' from Tunisia, Ahmed Amer for the narrative project 'Kiss Me Not from Egypt,' Sameh Zoabi for the narrative project 'Catch the Moon' from Palestine and Alia Yunis for the documentary project 'The Golden Harvest' from Palestine.

This year's development grants demonstrate ADFF's continued support for established filmmakers for their new projects such as Hiner Saleem for the narrative project 'Money Babe' from Iraq and Daoud Aoulad-Siyad for the documentary project 'The Bird of the Mountains' from Morocco.

SANAD grants may be awarded to producers and directors who are citizens of one of the following Arab countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Projects must be associated with a company producing in at least one of the listed countries.

Projects can be submitted for the second session via the ADFF website: [www.adff.ae/sanadfund](http://www.adff.ae/sanadfund).

For questions regarding entries email [sanad@adff.ae](mailto:sanad@adff.ae).

This year's Abu Dhabi Film Festival is the 8th edition and takes place from October 23 to November 1.

**-ENDS-**

**For further information, please contact:**

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**About The Abu Dhabi Film Festival**

The Abu Dhabi Film Festival (ADFF), powered by twofour54, is presented each October to help create a vibrant film culture throughout the region. With a focus on Arab cinema and the wealth of emerging and established film talent from around the world, ADFF has become one of the most anticipated cultural events in Abu Dhabi, helping to enhance the emirate as a hub of creativity.

Abu Dhabi Film Festival is committed to curating exceptional programs and engaging and educating

the local community with their own and other cultures through the art of cinema. The films of Arab film directors are presented in competition with those of the most respected film-makers from all over the world.

#### **About twofour54**

twofour54, the commercial arm of the Media Zone Authority-Abu Dhabi, is one of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region's leading media and entertainment hubs. As part of its mission, twofour54 is driving the development of the creative industries in the region, supporting talent and content development initiatives, creativity and young entrepreneurs.

Its initiatives are contributing to the growth and diversity of the Abu Dhabi economy and its campus is home to over 260 local, regional and international companies, including Ubisoft, Cartoon Network, Sky News Arabia, CNN, BBC, Flash Entertainment, Sport 360, Reed Exhibitions, Charisma, Tahadi and Jawaker.

twofour54 provides a range of services including: training across all media sectors; business development and funding support to UAE nationals and other Arabs with great ideas; a creativity lab that allows members to get involved in creative projects; and it facilitates world-class content through its production and post-production facilities. These services are supported by tawasol, facilitating easy business set-up and providing ongoing support services.

twofour54 powers the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and Abu Dhabi Media Summit each year to drive the development of a vibrant film and entertainment industry.