



## Greenhouse Program for Jewish and Arab Women Filmmakers

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the beginning of 2014 the NFCT decided to replicate the hugely successful *Greenhouse* model within Israel through an innovative new program targeting Jewish and Arab women documentary filmmakers. At a time when intolerance and discrimination are unfortunately on the rise, we recognized an urgent need to foster mutual understanding and build bridges between the Jewish and Arab communities. We have chosen to focus on women filmmakers because women in Israel still face significant social and economic barriers to becoming successful documentary film directors and producers, especially women from vulnerable and marginalized groups.

The program brings together 12 talented female filmmakers from diverse religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and supports them in the development of compelling documentaries that amplify women's voices about important contemporary and social issues. The one-year program includes three 5-day residential workshops spanning a period of eight months.

The participating Jewish and Arab filmmakers are enriched by the cross-cultural dialogue, cooperation and community-building fostered through the program, which profoundly influences their work. Each of the participants receives individual and continuing support from one of three dedicated mentors who are themselves leading figures in the field of documentary filmmaking in Israel. The workshops enable the filmmakers to deepen their understanding and respect for each other and build bridges among women filmmakers committed to peace and social change.

The first round of the program ended in early 2015 and the second round was launched in February 2015 with a new call for proposals. The workshops will start in the summer of 2015.

The program is supported by the Dobkin Family Foundation, USA, Mifal Hapayis (Israel's Lottery) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Germany.



## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Established in 1993, the New Fund for Cinema and Television (NFCT) is an Israeli non-profit organization. For the past eight years, the NFCT has overseen ***The Greenhouse Development Program for Documentary Filmmakers from the Middle East and North Africa***, which seeks to nurture a diverse community of young documentary filmmakers from all over the region, committed to dialogue and reconciliation and possessing the necessary skills to create high-impact films that advance a more just, democratic and peaceful region. Since its inception, Greenhouse has trained more than 130 filmmakers from the region and to date 24 powerful documentaries have been completed.

In 2014 we made the strategic decision to replicate the hugely successful Greenhouse model within Israel through an **innovative new program targeting Jewish and Arab women documentary filmmakers**. At a time when Israeli society is increasingly fragmented, and intolerance and discrimination are unfortunately on the rise, there is an urgent need to foster mutual understanding and build bridges between the Jewish and Arab communities. We have chosen to focus on women filmmakers because women in Israel still face significant social and economic barriers to becoming successful documentary film directors and producers, especially women from vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Documentary films have the power not only to illuminate injustices, but also to mobilize efforts to bring about meaningful change. Additionally, the documentary medium enables audiences to see the human face of others and to become immersed in their stories, perspectives and realities. If the documentary field in Israel is strengthened, then over time this will help advance **a culture of peace** as more people change their negative attitudes about other ethnic, political or religious groups.

## OBJECTIVES

Each year, our ***Greenhouse Program for Jewish and Arab Women Filmmakers will bring together 12-16 talented female filmmakers from diverse religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds***, and support them in the development of compelling documentaries that amplify women's voices about their own communities and realities, while documenting important contemporary and social issues. The participating Jewish and Arab filmmakers will be enriched by the **cross-cultural dialogue, cooperation and community-building** fostered through the program, which will profoundly influence their work. Through the powerful medium of film, *The Greenhouse Program for Jewish and Arab Women Filmmakers* aims to achieve three main objectives:

- Supporting emerging and talented women filmmakers from diverse religions, ethnicities, and cultures as they develop powerful documentary films.
- Fostering cross-cultural dialogue and community-building among women filmmakers committed to peace and social change.

- Promoting the values of mutual understanding and respect, equality and peace through the development of outstanding films made by women filmmakers that illuminate pressing issues affecting our society and provide diverse women’s perspectives.

## **PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

This is a **one-year program**. The first cycle was launched in March 2014, with 12 filmmakers and projects selected. The projects are in a broad array of subjects, such as: a feminist look at the Sephardic social justice protest movement; women's struggle against violence; the effects of capitalism on one of the poorest neighborhoods in Israel; a unique look at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem from the point of view of the women's prayer section; a look at teenagers who post instructional and personal videos on their YouTube channels; and more.

- The filmmakers participate in three 5-day residential workshops spanning a period of eight months.
- The workshops and their curricula have been adapted from the successful Greenhouse model, which includes master classes on storytelling from industry professionals, scriptwriting, and pitching films to prospective financiers.
- Each of the participants receives individual and continuing support from one of three Jewish and Arab dedicated mentors, who are themselves leading figures in the field of documentary filmmaking in Israel.
- After the third and final workshop, the filmmakers present their projects in a **pitching forum** in front of potential investors, Israeli commissioning editors, producers, as well as civil society representatives. Our pitching forum guests provide the filmmakers with expert feedback on their projects and valuable connections within the documentary film industry.
- At the end of the cycle, the filmmakers apply with their projects to local TV channels and to the NFCT, under the guidance of the program's team, in order to raise the necessary funds to produce their films.

By the time the filmmakers graduate from the program, they will have honed their skills, prepared high-quality production files, and developed their capacity to act as effective filmmakers and agents of change within their respective communities.

Deeply committed to the successful completion and distribution of our participants’ films, we accompany the filmmakers far beyond the life span of the program. We continue to provide creative, technical, and moral support to our filmmakers through every stage of their projects.

***The Greenhouse Program for Jewish and Arab Women Filmmakers* strives to build a nurturing, cross-cultural community of women filmmakers dedicated to using film as a tool to create a more just, pluralistic and peaceful society.**