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NATIONAL BLACK PROGRAMMING CONSORTIUM LAUNCHES INCUBATOR FOR SERIAL CONTENT FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION

Producers to vie for grants of between \$50,000 and \$150,000 for their series pilots

NEW YORK (October 1, 2014)—“National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC), a nonprofit based in Harlem that has been presenting stories about the Black experience on the public airwaves since 1979, is launching NBPC 360, a new funding initiative designed to identify innovative storytellers and to generate quality serial, digital and multiplatform content for public media outlets, including the Web. Producers will compete for development funds of between \$50,000 and \$150,000 and the chance to work with veteran producers to develop their series pilots. The program launches on Wednesday, October 1.

NBPC was founded on the mission to bring visionary stories about the rich global Black experience to public television. NBPC has supplied public media with hundreds of hours of quality programming from diverse producers—content that challenges, provokes, educates and entertains. It has since gone on to establish itself as an trailblazer in the digital space, providing training, mentorship, funding and distribution for new digital, multiplatform work. NBPC 360 is the next phase in its storytelling mission; the incubator will help launch nonfiction serial projects for broadcast and Web, fiction projects for the Web, as well as interactive or “transmedia” projects.

“As the public media landscape is evolving, so is NBPC. NBPC 360 signals a shift in our focus from funding ‘one-off’ independent documentaries to creating a complete infrastructure and production model that helps outstanding producers of color create the type of serial programming that will be the wave of the future,” said NBPC Interim Executive Director Leslie Fields-Cruz.

To kick off the program, NBPC will present a series of professional development webinars and informational workshops at film festivals, hackathons, public television stations, public media conferences and nonprofit media organizations in key markets. Beginning October 1, interested producers may apply for the program at www.blackpublicmedia.org. Up to 10 projects will be selected through an open call for the NBPC 360 inaugural class.

Those chosen projects will enter the incubator phase, a residency that consists of a boot camp and six weeks of intense, hands-on training and preparation for the pitch and pilot phases of the program. The producers of each project will be assigned a mentor to fine-tune their project concept as they work to develop a full proposal and sample reel to pitch to public media and industry professionals.

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The 10 teams will present their project to a high-profile panel of production companies, station representatives interested in hosting a project and a live audience brought together by NBPC during a pitch session at a national film festival. Teams will be evaluated on their market/audience research, technical and artistic merits, relevance, team capacity and suitability to the broadcast venue. Three winners will be selected, and each winning team will be awarded between \$50,000 and \$150,000 to cover production costs for its pilot.

The three winning teams—with help from an assigned executive producer and/or a producing station—will produce its pilot over the next four to six months. The teams will outline the remaining episodes, production plan, market research and budget that support a primetime broadcast slot or web series. The three producing teams, together with NBPC, will then pursue broadcast and distribution opportunities for the programs.

To continue to nurture the next generation of content producers, NBPC will help facilitate meetings with distributors, funders and other interested producing outlets for producers of the seven projects that do not move on to the pilot stage. The meetings will be aimed at providing further development and funding of these additional projects.

For more information on NBPC or NBPC 360, visit www.blackpublicmedia.org or follow the organization on Twitter (@BLKPublicMedia).

ABOUT NBPC:

The National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC) is committed to enriching our democracy by educating, enlightening, empowering and engaging the American public. We support diverse voices by developing, producing and distributing innovative media about the Black experience and by investing in visionary content makers. NBPC provides quality content for public media outlets, including, among others, PBS and PBS.org and BlackPublicMedia.org, as well as other platforms, while training and mentoring the next generation of Black filmmakers. Founded in 1979, NBPC produces the *AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange* documentary series and manages NBPC 360, a funding and training initiative designed to accelerate the production of important Black serial and interactive content.

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