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'PITCH BLACK' SPOTLIGHTS QUALITY BLACK CONTENT

**National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC) pipelines Black stories,
presents second annual pitching session**

**Seven producing teams to compete before public media, television executives and funders
for up to \$150,000 in development funds for their series**

NEW YORK (October 14, 2016)—The second annual [National Black Programming Consortium \(NBPC\)](#) Pitch Black Forum will be held on Thursday, October 20. The live, interactive pitching session, a spirited battle of content creators participating in the Harlem-based media arts organization's national 360 Incubator and Fund, will be held at the Jerome L. Greene Performance Space in Manhattan. Seven teams will compete before a high-profile panel of public media and industry executives, and an audience of distribution and production companies, potential funders and more. The prize: development funds of between \$50,000 and \$150,000 to produce their pilots of broadcast and web series as well as innovative transmedia projects.

"Our first Pitch Black Forum resulted in four outstanding projects getting funded. One of them was recently picked up for distribution and all of them are moving forward," said NBPC Executive Director Leslie Fields-Cruz. "Those are the kind of results we envisioned for this initiative and we are looking forward to seeing what the new crop of 360 producers have in store for us this year."

The recent #OscarsSoWhite campaign has put the lack of diversity in Hollywood front and center. NBPC, the nation's only nonprofit dedicated solely to media content about the Black experience, has been working behind the scenes to pipeline broadcast nonfiction series, web fiction and nonfiction series and transmedia projects. The nonprofit launched the 360 Incubator in 2014 to help bring needed stories to the fore. Projects from the inaugural year have begun to come to market. One, "My Africa Is" by Nosarieme Garrick and Hassatou Diallo, broadcast its pilot's premiere earlier this year as part of NBPC's "AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange" public television series; another, "POPS" by Garland McLaurin, will premiere its first season on ITVS's digital channel and PBS.org in 2017; "Pixie Dust" by Damon Colquhoun and "Street Cred" by Sultan Sharrief are in development.

"We are excited by the range of social issue web and broadcast stories we are incubating this year—from mass incarceration to exploring the digital versus the real self of youth on social media to diving into culinary culture and food history in southeastern North Carolina," said NBPC Director of Programs and Acquisitions Kay Shaw. "The inaugural class of 360 producers set a high bar for this year's class of producers and we are confident they will match it in every way."

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Last year's Pitch Black drew the top names in public television, including CPB, PBS, WORLD Channel, ITVS, POV and WNET, as well as executives from HBO, A&E, Fox, BET, Tribeca All Access and Third World Newsreel.

Pitch Black includes a digital pitch session from 9:30 to 11:40 a.m. and broadcast pitching session from 1:30 to 4 p.m. The Jerome L. Greene Space is located at 44 Charlton Street, New York, NY 10013. Industry executives can sign up to attend at <http://bit.ly/2deUp3D>.

Panelists include Pamela A. Aguilar, PBS director of programming, Eric Johnson, executive producer at Trailblazer Studios, and Jason Mark Samuels, New York University associate professor of journalism and senior consultant for BET (broadcast panel); and Deniese Davis, COO of Color Creative TV, Dennis Dortch, CEO/founder of Black & Sexy TV, and Eric Freeland, PBS Digital senior director of digital programming (web/interactive panel).

Winners will be announced at a reception at 6 p.m. on Friday, October 21 at WNET Tisch Studios at Lincoln Center, 66th and Broadway.

Those competing on October 20 have been engaged in NBPC's six-week boot camp and incubator. They include:

"Saltbox," a broadcast series by Shirlette Ammons

A hybrid cooking/reality series following former "Iron Chef" contestant Ricky Moore, who moves his wife and two kids from the big city of Washington, D.C., back to his home state of North Carolina to turn the gems of his rural raising into an urban culinary enterprise in Durham.

"Invisible Universe," a broadcast series by M. Asli Dukan

A three-part documentary series following a time-traveling archivist navigating the history of speculative fiction (including fantasy, horror and science fiction), literature and cinema. In addition to exposing the racist representations of Black people in this traditionally white space, the show reveals a canon of work by Black creators who have been consciously creating their own universe.

"Selfies from the Hill," a broadcast series by Gregory Scott Williams, Jr.

Intimate, intertwined portraits of three teenagers from Pittsburgh's Hill District, once home to the city's Black middle class. After years of blight, the area is now facing gentrification. Using social media content, participatory footage and interviews, the series explores the difference between our digital and physical selves and examines the barriers of race, class and criminality in one of America's most livable cities.

"So Young, So Pretty, So White," a broadcast series by Chanelle Aponte Pearson and Christiana Mbakwe

Weaving the lives of several compelling men and women from across the globe, "So Young, So Pretty, So White" is a window into the often-secret world of skin bleaching, unmasking what drives people to lighten their skin. The series delves into the lives of those who adhere to the practice—the lure of lighter skin and the challenges to sustain it transcend national borders—and exposes multinational corporations who exploit regional discrimination against people with darker skin tones.

"Beyond the Book," a transmedia project by Dominique Taylor and Stephanie Fields

"Beyond the Book" blends entertainment and education for adults to continue a love for reading beyond our formative years. This imaginative, intellectual series encourages mature audiences to share the gift of reading with each other.

“The wHOLE,” a fiction web series by Ramon Hamilton and Glenn Martin

If mass incarceration is the New Jim Crow, then solitary confinement is the whipping post, and “The wHOLE” lays it all bare. The series offers audiences access to a rarely seen world through engaging characters and enticing drama that draws directly from real experiences—the cast and crew have spent a combined seven years in solitary confinement. “The wHOLE” opens the door to the prison within the prison.

“Urban Food Chain,” a nonfiction web series by Tiffany Judkins and Artemis Fannin

The series spotlights people seeking inventive solutions to food challenges to empower health, social enterprise and community. Hungry for change, those featured challenge the status quo. Rewriting the rules and igniting a revolution, these renegades offer up insight, recipes and innovations that inspire. “Urban Food Chain” is a gritty combination of compelling storytelling, provocative cinematography and emotive original music, with host stic.man of Dead Prez setting up each show’s theme.

NBPC 360 partners include the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the NEA, WNET (lead partner), ITVS, KQED, Writers Guild of America East, Producers Guild of America/Diversity Committee, Made in American NYC, Silicon Harlem, Third World Newsreel and the International House.

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. The nonprofit supports 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 the 360 Incubator and Fund, a funding and training initiative designed to accelerate the production of important Black serial and interactive content.

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