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BLACK PUBLIC MEDIA ANNOUNCES FELLOWSHIP DEADLINE EXTENSION

2020 MIT OpenDocLab and BPMplus Fellowship is accepting submissions from Black creatives with projects in new and emerging media through Sunday

NEW YORK (August 20, 2020) — Black Public Media (BPM), the Harlem-based nonprofit media organization dedicated to creating and producing media content about the Black experience, has announced a deadline extension for the 2020 MIT OpenDocLab and BPMplus Fellowship. Applications for the fellowship will now be accepted until 11 p.m. ET on Sunday. A collaboration between BPM, the MIT Open Documentary Lab (ODL), and MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST), the 2020 MIT OpenDocLab and BPMplus Fellowship is a new endeavor designed to support Black creatives working in emerging media such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality and other tech by helping one Black storyteller expand their emerging tech storytelling skills by developing an original nonfiction idea, researching the idea, or making significant strides in an existing nonfiction production.

The Fellowship is virtual and will be held over the course of one semester, from September 8, 2020, through January 29, 2021. The recipient will be provided with a \$7,500 grant. All submissions for the Fellowship should be from a Black filmmaker, artist, journalist, or creative technologist whose work uses AI, AR, virtual reality, mocap, 3D or similar emerging technology. Projects using “old tech” including projections, multichannel video, console video games, VFX and more in new or inventive ways will also be considered for the Fellowship. Applicants in the United States and abroad are welcome to apply.

“Many Black filmmakers and creative technologists don’t have the financial flexibility to apply for fellowships and residencies because of unintentional biases in the design of such programs,” said BPM’s Director of Emerging Media Lisa Osborne, who created the BPMplus initiative. BPMplus includes tech mixers, tech classes, pop-up theaters, and more in an effort to eliminate barriers for Black creatives to participate in the extended reality (XR) industry.

“Sarah Wolozin, who is the director of MIT Open Documentary Lab, and I took great care to make sure that this fellowship could work for a mid-career, Black creative professional, someone who is a documentary editor, a DP, or a coder by trade, for example, but also an adjunct professor by necessity,” Osborne continued.

Seeking to attract applications from a wide range of Black tech creatives, the selection process for the Fellowship aims to place an emphasis on the quality of the submitted project idea along with the applicant’s existing storytelling skills and passion for emerging tech. This is in contrast to many other tech fellowships and labs, which often rely heavily on applicants’ pedigree and awards within academia and the film and tech industries.

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Over the course of the semester, the Fellow will join OpenDocLab's interdisciplinary, international, and collaborative program and engage in a rich exchange with other Fellows, faculty, researchers, and students. Both ODL and the larger Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) community are teeming with emerging-tech practitioners, researchers, and thinkers.

There is no application fee. For full information on application requirements, full details on the Fellowship or to submit an application, please visit <https://submissions.blackpublicmedia.org/submit/10204c84-6446-4bc5-8daf-7081ac101f71/2020-mit-opensdoclab-bpmplus-fellowship>.

For more on the BPMplus initiative, visit www.blackpublicmedia.org/bpmplus and follow #bpmplus on social media. Black Public Media is @blackpublicmedia on Instagram and Facebook and @BLKPublicMedia on Twitter.

ABOUT BLACK PUBLIC MEDIA:

Black Public Media (BPM), formerly 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. BPM 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, BPM produces the *AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange* documentary series and manages the 360 Incubator + Fund, a funding and training initiative designed to accelerate the production of important Black serial and interactive content.

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Media contact:

Alimah Boyd
Cheryl Duncan & Company Inc.
alimah@cherylduncanpr.com