

**NINE HOT DOCS-BLUE ICE GROUP DOCUMENTARY FUND RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED  
\$125,000 IN GRANTS AWARDED TO TOP AFRICAN DOC PROJECTS**

Toronto, February 7, 2018 – Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and Blue Ice Group are pleased to announce that nine African film projects have been chosen to receive a total of \$125,000 CAD in development and production grants from the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Documentary Fund in its seventh round of disbursements. Selected from 73 submissions from 25 different African countries, five projects will receive development grants, three will receive completion grants, and one will receive a production grant.

“We are extremely pleased to support a range of new talent from Africa this year, whose powerful stories reflect their own unique perspective,” said Hot Docs’ acting director of industry programs, Ryan Harrington. “This year’s selection encompassed great diversity with the types of forms, subject, and style represented, and Hot Docs is very happy to award these wonderfully talented filmmakers with this funding support.”

Five of the grant recipients will also receive support to attend Hot Docs 2018, where they will take part in a creative filmmakers’ lab, attend Hot Docs screenings, conference sessions, the Hot Docs Forum and various networking events, and participate in a year-round peer-to-peer mentorship program. They will also receive support to attend and participate in the Durban International Film Festival and Durban Film Market.

The \$2.35-million Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Documentary Fund was created in 2011 to help enable more African documentary filmmakers to tell their own stories, and contribute to the African documentary community’s next generation. To date, the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Documentary Fund has awarded grants to 53 projects from 19 countries, as well as travel, accommodation and accreditation support to attend the Hot Docs Festival and Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Filmmakers Lab, and the Durban International Film Festival and Durban FilmMart.

Applications for the next round of disbursements will open in June 2018 and close in August 2018. For further information on the application process, eligibility requirements and deadlines, please visit [www.hotdocs.ca/funds/productionfunds](http://www.hotdocs.ca/funds/productionfunds).

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Documentary Fund Development Grants:

**BETTER SUNDAYS**

Director: Lydia Matata  
Producer: Achiro Patricia Oluoch  
Production Company: The Film and Laundry Company  
Country: Kenya

Robert, a Ugandan who does not believe in God, tries to transform his impoverished community through science-based learning while dealing with the stigma and discrimination that comes with being a non-believer in a religious community.

**THE GOOD BLACK**

Director: Milisuthando Bongela  
Producer: Batana Vundla, Marion Isaacs  
Production Company: Zalilizwe Picture Projects; Cool Take Pictures  
Country: South Africa

Milisuthando, a 32-year-old black South African explores the question, "What happened to racism after apartheid?", capturing the new intimacies that were shared between Black and white kids in the 1990s, and how those intimacies have affected the legacy of Apartheid.

**HOW TO STEAL A COUNTRY**

Director: Mark Kaplan, Rehad Desai  
Producer: Zivia Desai Keiper, Rehad Desai  
Production Company: Uhuru Productions Pty Ltd, SPV Curveball Productions Pty Ltd  
Country: South Africa

The biggest story in post-apartheid South Africa lays bare the political and social skeletons that now haunt the prospects of Mandela's African National Congress winning the 2019 election.

**MY FRIEND GADHGAHI**

Director: Rafik Omrani  
Producer: Rafik Omrani  
Production Company: Majez Production  
Country: Tunisia

The most infamous terrorist in Tunisia from 2013-14, Kamel Gadhgadhi, happened to be a close friend of director Rafik Omrani in college. With this film, Omrani reflects on terrorism, and how his old friend who used to be an "ordinary person" turned towards terrorism.

**SEARCHING FOR KIKHIA**

Director: Jihan Kikhia  
Producer: Jihan Kikhia  
Production Company: Desert Power LLC  
Country: Libya

A daughter explores her father's disappearance, a former Libyan Foreign Minister and peaceful opposition leader to Qaddafi, and pieces together her Syrian-American mother's 19-year perilous journey through a political labyrinth to find him.

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Documentary Fund Production Grants:

**Title Withheld**

Director: Adeyemi Michael  
Producer: Adeyemi Michael  
Production Company: Withheld  
Country: Withheld

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Completion Fund Grants:

**I AM A SCRIPT GIRL**

Director: Mina Nabil  
Producer: Mina Nabil, Mark Lotfy  
Production Company: Fig Leaf Studios  
Country: Egypt

In a male-dominated industry, she was the ultimate career woman. *I Am a Script Girl* is a close-up and personal examination of the life, challenges and career of the unstoppable Sylvette Baudrot. Today she's an 89-year-old lady still full of spunk, who worked for 69 years in the film industry.

**THE LETTER**

Director: Maia von Lekow, Christopher King  
Producer: Maia von Lekow, Christopher King  
Production Company: Circle and Square Productions  
Country: Kenya

Kaladze's city life is interrupted when he hears rumors from home that his grandmother is a witch. Across the entire coast of Kenya, a frenzied mixture of consumerism and Christianity has created a violent chasm between elders and youth. When Kaladze returns to his village to investigate, he discovers a dangerous family dispute that must be resolved before it's too late.

**SOFTIE**

Director: Samwel Soko Osebe  
Producer: Samwel Soko Osebe, Toni Kamau  
Production Company: Lightbox  
Country: Kenya

As Kenya's most notorious activist enters mainstream politics to challenge political injustice, he faces questions of the cost of his sacrifices, past and present, from his family and himself.

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Hot Docs ([www.hotdocs.ca](http://www.hotdocs.ca)), North America's largest documentary festival, conference and market, will present its 25<sup>th</sup> annual edition from April 26-May 6, 2018. An outstanding selection of over 200 documentaries from Canada and around the world will be presented to Toronto audiences and international delegates. Hot Docs will also mount a full roster of conference sessions and market events and services for documentary practitioners, including the renowned Hot Docs Forum, Hot Docs Deal Maker and the Doc Shop. Hot Docs owns the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, a century-old landmark located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood.

Hot Docs is proud to include Scotiabank as its Presenting Platinum Partner, Bell Media, CBC Docs, Rogers Group of Funds and Samsung as its Presenting Partners, and Telefilm Canada and the Government of Ontario as its Major Supporters.



**PRESS RELEASE**

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Hot Docs is a charitable, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the art of documentary and supporting opportunities for independent filmmakers.

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