



FLEX FUND 2017 GRANTEES ANNOUNCED

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Skoll Foundation, Ford Foundation I Just Films and BRITDOC are delighted to announce the 2017 recipients of the Flex Fund. Launched in 2016, the Flex Fund has been created to support the most innovative and creative projects emerging from partnerships between moving image storytellers and social entrepreneurs.

Flex Fund grants are available to joint Skoll Foundation and Ford Foundation grantees, all of whom are ground-breaking global leaders in social entrepreneurship working on a spectrum of crucial areas - from sustainability to anti-corruption to African land rights and beyond. This funding will enable teams to go further, deepen impact and/or explore bold new ideas in a nimble and bespoke way.

The 2017 Flex Fund grantees:

***Crisis Action's** impact strategy will aim to ensure that Aleppo's fate is not repeated across Syria. It will do this by using the Sundance award-winning documentary film, *The Last Men In Aleppo*, to build US support for newly-proposed no-fighting zones where civilians can escape attacks, as well as educating hundreds of newly-elected MPs across Europe about Aleppo and the power they have to prevent it from happening again.*

***Healthcare Without Harm** are deploying a short animation that will inspire doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals worldwide to recognize their moral mandate to respond to climate change, a medical emergency. Using film, the aim is to weave together a comprehensive storytelling strategy that will increase our ability to inspire action toward reversing the climate crisis.*

***Health Leads** are launching a 20 min. documentary made by filmmaker Nicole Newnham and a dynamic US-based outreach campaign later this year. The organisation envisions a healthcare system that addresses all patients' basic resource needs as a standard of quality care and empowers medical practitioners to screen for unmet needs—like housing, employment, and food—and connect patients to community resources (regranted from 2016).*

KickStart International, a non-profit social enterprise lifting farmers in Africa out of poverty, worked with producer, Ofir Kedar, and director, Topaz Adizes, to create: *A Seed of Maize*. Shot in Zambia, the documentary film explores poverty, health, and girls' education—against the backdrop of tradition, community, and family. KickStart will leverage it to promote small-scale irrigation through a forum targeting Kenya-based policy makers and other NGOs.

Search For Common Ground will work with Redbird Productions to improve attitudes toward women's empowerment in Moroccan communities through screenings and dialogues around the documentary *Casablanca Calling*. The film follows a new generation of women working as *Morchidat*, official Muslim leaders who are empowering women in their communities by supporting them in pursuing their education, managing family relationships, and ultimately pursuing peaceful social change within an Islamic framework.

Witness' Mobil-Eyes Us uses live-streamed video storytelling plus task-routing technology to connect the right "distant witnesses" - people who care about the struggles of communities facing rights violations but may not be physically present - to meaningful experience and action. Initially, the project will focus on telling (and changing) stories from Brazil's urban favelas, where solidarity and pressure can make all the difference.

This new cohort of grantees will join Forest Trends and Imazon in a programme of ongoing support from BRITDOC and its network of expertise.

Says Sandy Herz, Director of Global Partnerships, Skoll Foundation "We are thrilled that this exciting range of social entrepreneurs have the opportunity to go deeper and create more impact as a result of a Flex Fund grant and BRITDOC's ongoing support. Storytelling can be such a potent catalyst to impact when harnessed strategically. We can't wait to see the results!"

Says Cara Mertes, Director, Just Films "Just Films and Ford Foundation are delighted to be supporting through the Flex Fund for a second time. Just Films exists to support projects that inspire imaginations, disrupt stereotypes, and help transform the conditions that perpetuate injustice and inequality - and all of these Flex funded projects do just that through a potent blend of social entrepreneurship, storytelling and strategic impact."

Notes:

The Just Films initiative supports the Flex Fund, as part of Ford's Creativity and Free Expression area.

BRITDOC is a non-profit founded in 2005 committed to enabling great documentary films and connecting them to audiences globally. Based in London and New York, it works with partners and filmmakers all over the world. <https://britdoc.org/>

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