

Black Public Media Selects Fellows For Its Third 360 Incubator +



Black Public Media has 10 teams for its 360 Incubator + program designed to recognize and develop excellent Black content. The third round is the largest-ever class and eight web and broadcast teams are competing for up to \$150,000 in funding to help produce the pilots or funding reels for their projects. For the first time there are two virtual reality teams in the program reflecting Black Public Media's new creed to introduce Black filmmakers and creatives to the storytelling potential of virtual reality and other emerging technologies.

Black Public Media is the only national non-profit dedicated exclusively to funding and advancing media content about the Black experience.

The 10 winning teams completed a bootcamp in Hudson Valley, New York earlier this month and they are currently attending intensive Incubator Workshops in New York City. The workshop topics include grant-writing, budgeting, reel-creating, licenses, community engagement, distribution and virtual reality.

The workshops will complete on January 25th and the producers will return to their home bases to work on their sample reels, proposals and pitches under the guidance of their mentors in preparation for BPM's pitchBLACK competition in New York City. Incubator mentors include Kimson Albert, Joe Brewster, Rachel Falcon, Sonia Gonzalez-Martinez, Sabrina Schmidt Gordon, Chris Hastings, Byron Hurt, Michael Premo,

Yoruba Richen and Michelle Stephenson.

On April 11th the pitchBLACK forum will present the Fellows in front of a diverse audience of industry leaders, funders and distributors. The Fellows will battle to be one of three projects to be awarded a licensing agreement ranging from \$50,000 to \$150,000. The two virtual reality teams to win funding for community engagement campaigns for their films. Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on Friday, April 12.

The seven projects chosen by a panel of industry experts include:

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The 3,000 Project, a broadcast program by Keith McQuirter and LaNora Williams-Clark

In Wisconsin, one of the most incarcerated states in the nation, are 3,000 imprisoned men and women trapped in the judicial system between two changing parole laws, tripling their prison sentences. The changes create an inferno of activism and debate from the high offices of state government to the streets of Milwaukee, as the state grapples with solutions to curb its alarming rates of mass incarceration.

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Changing State, a broadcast program by Leola Calzolari-Stewart and Kiley Kraskouskas

At the height of the Cold War and civil rights movement, the first African-American ambassadors walked a tightrope: promoting the democratic promise of America abroad while living as second-class citizens at home.

The Chicago Franchise, a broadcast series by Randall Dottin

After the city of Chicago tore down its high-rise public

housing towers in 2011, the murder rate continued to climb. This was no accident.Â *The Chicago Franchise*Â explores the complicated relationship between gun violence, poverty and residential segregation.

Commuted, a broadcast program by Nailah Jefferson

*Commuted*Â tells the story of Danielle Metzâ€”a 50-year-old African-American woman whose triple life sentence (in New Orleansâ€™Â biggest RICO drug case of the earlyÂ â€™90s) was commuted by President Obama in August 2016. Now back home in New Orleans after 23 years behind bars, Metz is trying to find her footing in the free world and reconcile her present with her past regrets.

A Good Man, a web short by Michael Fequiere

This film documents Michaelâ€™s search for the elusive father he never knew and his process of coming to terms with the truth of his origins. This quest ultimately has Michael interviewing his immediate family including his mother, who sacrificed everything so her children could have a future. This family portrait shows that even in a fatherless household, there can be strong family ties that support the younger generation.

Greenwood Avenue, a virtual reality project by Ayana Baraka

*Greenwood Avenue*Â is a groundbreaking, emotional exploration into the lives of African-Americans living in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1921, during the era of Black Wall Street, the second rise of the KKK, and the Tulsa Race Riots of 1921, as told through the eyes of an elderly, black protagonist named Agnes Bess.

Heroes of Color, a web series by David Heredia

*Heroes of Color*Â celebrates the courage, perseverance and intellect of lesser-known people of color. The diverse group of heroes in the series includes black, Native American,

Latino and Asian people. The objective of the series is to create a more inclusive curriculum in school grades Kâ€“12 and inspire pride in the nationâ€™s youth.

Listen to My Heartbeat,Â a broadcast program by Nyjia July

Washington, D.C., is the political epicenter, but residents beyond Capitol Hill have long battled for a voice. As the city gentrifies, black residents are pushed out, along with their voice: Go-Go Music. Much like the black residents, Go-Go has been evicted.Â *Listen to My Heartbeat*Â examines the gentrification of Washington, D.C., through the lens of the cityâ€™s folkloric music. The film examines a changing city, the people displaced and the future of the music that gave them a voice.

A Love Supreme: Black, Queer and Christian in the South, a broadcast program by Katina Parker

*A Love Supreme: Black, Queer and Christian in The South*Â is a long-overdue heart-to-heart between black LGBTQ people, their families and the black church. The film follows eight families struggling to reconcile the religious bigotry they learned from the pulpit with the immense love they have for their lesbian, gay, bi, queer and trans loved ones.Â *A Love Supreme*Â will be accompanied by an impact campaign that networks resources, trainings and retreats for welcoming black churches.

POV, a virtual reality project by Alton Glass and Donovan DeBoer

The year is 2025. In response to rising levels of police brutality and mass incarceration, the federal government tests the worldâ€™s first Drone Law Enforcement Program in Los Angeles. Armed with artificial intelligence and artillery, one police drone stalks the lead character, accessing his GPS locations and social media profiles.Â *POV*Â explores how the combination of AI, big data and algorithms can be deadly.

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