

## 9<sup>th</sup> Ajyal Film Festival to inspire cinema enthusiasts with hybrid edition from November 7-19, 2021

- *Film submissions for the festival presented by the Doha Film Institute will open from 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021*
- *Adapted festival edition features programme of online and in-person activities, taking active responsibility for the physical health and safety of all participants*

**Doha, Qatar; April 6, 2021:** After the resounding success of the Ajyal Film Festival's hybrid edition last year, the ninth edition of the annual event by the Doha Film Institute (DFI) will be held from November 7 to 19, 2021. Continuing to follow safety protocols, the festival will once again be held in hybrid format, with a selection of in-person events and online activations.

One of the region's most anticipated film festivals celebrating creative interaction and promoting cultural understanding through cinema, Ajyal Film Festival 2021 will return to showcase compelling films from across the world. DFI's annual signature event is an immersive celebration of community and the permeating power of film for audiences across generations, with a unique focus on young talent development through its internationally acclaimed youth jury programme for ages 8 to 25.

Announcing the festival dates for this year, Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "The ninth edition of the festival reinforces its founding philosophy: to celebrate the finest of cinema from around the world while nurturing the appreciation and engagement of youth in creative and critical thinking. Ajyal continued to set a new standard in promoting cinema, despite the challenges following the pandemic, and we will build on our positive momentum by delivering a community-oriented festival that will inspire all.

"Ajyal's focus on nurturing young talent and cinematic voices from around the world fuels our belief that in these unprecedented times, the impact of film and art moves beyond boundaries and limitations, and its innate power to connect and inspire is now more important than ever. Taking into consideration that travel restrictions are still in place in many countries, we will continue to maximise the reach of the hybrid model and ensure that all safety protocols are met."

Ajyal Film Festival 2021 will have several exciting features that will be announced in due course. Submissions of feature length and short films for the festival will be open from April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, that will screen films from across the globe including DFI supported films in addition to the acclaimed 'Made in Qatar' programme of films by Qatari and Qatar-based filmmakers.

The ever-popular Ajyal Creativity Hub will delight families with a multisensory extravaganza that combines film, art and music. Geekdom, Qatar's largest and one-of-a-kind pop culture event; Ajyal Talks, gathering leaders from film, art, television, and technology for inspiring and insightful discussions; and Ajyal Tunes, celebrating the country's musical talents through a mix of online initiatives and in-person concerts. Guests can also look forward to the Ajyal Exhibition series that present works of art by emerging and accomplished local artists.

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An invaluable exchange of culture and learning through film, Ajyal's move into the virtual sphere last year inspired an even greater number of participants to benefit from this one-of-a-kind cultural initiative. The eighth edition of the festival in 2020 screened 80 films from 46 countries in an innovative mix of virtual and in-person film screenings, interactive discussions, and DFI's first-ever drive-in cinema in Lusail as part of a programme of unique experiences for all ages.

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### **About Doha Film Institute**

Doha Film Institute is an independent, not-for-profit cultural organisation. It supports the growth of the local film community through cultivating film appreciation, enhancing industry knowledge and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. The Institute's platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films; skills-sharing and mentorship programmes; film screenings; the Ajyal Film Festival; and Qumra. With culture, community, learning and entertainment at its foundation, the Institute is committed to supporting Qatar's 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge-based economy.

### **About Ajyal Film Festival**

Ajyal Film Festival is an annual celebration of film designed to nurture young minds and support the development of mindful global citizens and thoughtful future leaders. 'Ajyal', Arabic for 'generations', builds on the Institute's history of community-based programming, and brings people of all ages together through screenings and events that inspire creative interaction and stimulate cinematic dialogue. Through its' jury programme, youth between the ages of 8 and 25 are given an opportunity to watch, analyse and discuss global cinema and culture, developing self-confidence, independent critical thinking skills, self-expression, and an appreciation of cinema, while making new friends and discovering global cultures.

### **Doha Film Institute:**

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