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The Pan African Film Festival and The Africa Narrative at USC launch Short Film Competition aimed at African filmmakers on YouTube

Los Angeles, CA —The Pan African Film Festival (PAFF), in partnership with YouTube and The Africa Narrative at USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, today announced the opening of submissions for a first-ever YouTube category at the 28th annual Pan African Film Film Festival, scheduled for February 13-23 2020 in Los Angeles.

The theme for the competition is "2020 Vision," reflecting the global need to see African characters and situations with clarity and insight. The YouTube category is for story-driven videos of any format, style, and genre of less than 30 minutes in length and filmed on the African continent.

"PAFF has been a pioneer in supporting cinematic storytelling from Africa and the African diaspora for a global audience," says Ayuko Babu, Executive Director and a Founder of PAFF. "This new category for competition recognizes the power of digital distribution and the growth of YouTube as a part of the African and global entertainment industry."

The Africa Narrative is a project of the Norman Lear Center at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Its inaugural research project, "Africa in the Media" measured U.S. media depictions of the continent and revealed that mentions and portrayals of Africa or Africans on popular television shows or in the news are often negative and stereotyped. "Changing the narrative is at the heart of our mission," says Michelle van Gilder, founder of The Africa Narrative. "This competition gives filmmakers on the continent the opportunity to reach global and local audiences with stories that counteract damaging stereotypes."

"YouTube's mission is to give everyone a voice and show them the world. We hope this will showcase the next wave of film talent in Sub Saharan Africa, one of our fastest growing markets," says Dayo Olopade, who leads content partnerships in Africa for YouTube.

Competition Criteria
PAFF and The Africa Narrative invite content creators who self-identify as African and reside and work on the African continent to submit a story-driven video of any format, style and genre of less than 30 minutes in length. All submissions must be uploaded to the iamAFRICA submissions portal at www.PAFF.org/iamAFRICA Submissions that are not in English and do not contain English subtitles cannot be considered. There is no submission fee. Detailed guidelines and FAQs for submission can be found at PAFF.org. The deadline for submissions is October 31, 2019.

Prizes
Semifinalists will be announced in December 2019 and featured on the PAFF YouTube channel. Winners will be announced in January 2020. A special Audience Award will also be given to the YouTube category submission that receives the most unique votes from viewers online. Three prize winners will be named by a special jury, which includes actress and director Stephanie Linus, film executive Funa Maduka, veteran producer Themba Sibeko, Emmy-nominated screenwriter and actress Stacy Osei-Kuffour and breakout YouTube creators and

producers Dormtainment. The chosen winners may be eligible to travel to YouTube Space Los Angeles, where their work will screen at the 28th Pan African Film Festival in February.

The Pan African Film Festival, now in its 28th year, has cemented its role as a hub for breakthrough and award-winning Black films and filmmakers from around the world. PAFF is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to the cinematic promotion and cultural exploration of g peoples of African descent. It is PAFF's goal to present and showcase the broad spectrum of Black creative works, particularly those that reinforce positive images and help destroy negative stereotypes. We believe film and art can lead to better understanding and foster communication between peoples of diverse cultures, races, and lifestyles, while at the same time serve as a vehicle to initiate dialogue on the important issues of our times. www.paff.org

About The Africa Narrative
The Africa Narrative is a global initiative to engage the world in new stories of contemporary Africa. Based at the Norman Lear Center at the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the initiative seeks to broaden awareness and engagement with the continent through innovative research, outcomes driven forums, and media and entertainment centered collaborations with partners from around the world. www.theafricanarrative.org

About YouTube
Launched in May 2005, YouTube is the world's most popular online video community allowing billions of people to discover, watch and share video. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small. YouTube is a Google company. www.youtube.com

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28TH ANNUAL PAN AFRICAN FILM + ARTS FESTIVAL 2020 VISION

THE AFRICA NARRATIVE
a project of the University of Southern California's Norman Lear Center

YouTube