EMBARGOED UNTIL ANNOUNCED AT THE CEREMONY ON SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2016

JOHN BOYEGA WINS THE EE RISING STAR AWARD AT THE EE BRITISH ACADEMY FILM AWARDS IN 2016

- **The *Star Wars* actor tops the public vote**
- **The EE Rising Star Award is the only one at the EE British Academy Film Awards to be voted for by the public**
- **The other 2016 nominees were: Taron Egerton, Brie Larson, Dakota Johnson and Bel Powley**
- **Last year's EE Rising Star Award winner, Jack O'Connell presented this year's award**
- **Previous winners include Will Poulter, Tom Hardy, Kristen Stewart, Noel Clarke, Eva Green and James McAvoy**

London, Sunday 14 February 2016: EE is proud to announce **John Boyega** as the winner of the EE Rising Star Award in 2016.

The EE Rising Star Award is the only publicly-voted award presented at the EE British Academy Film Awards, and a hotly contested accolade for up and coming acting talent. Boyega was one of five international actors nominated for their exceptional talent and recognised as a true star in the making. The other nominees were: Taron Egerton, Brie Larson, Dakota Johnson and Bel Powley.

JOHN BOYEGA was cast as the lead role in *Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force Awakens,* which premiered at the end of last year. Boyega had his screen debut in the critically acclaimed BBC series, *Becoming Human,* where he starred as Danny Curtis the school bully in four episodes. His first foray into feature films was playing the lead in cult sci-fi film*, Attack the Block*, which opened SXSW in 2011, collecting a plethora of international awards. From there he went on to star as the lead in HBO drama, *Da Brick,* directed by Spike Lee, he was the lead in BBC film, *My Murder*, and filmed a feature length drama, *The Whale* alongside Martin Sheen. More recently John has starred in feature film, *Half of a Yellow Sun* alongside Chiwetel Ejiofor and several episodes of the hit TV series, *24: Live Another Day*. In 2014, he was the lead in Sundance Award Winning feature film, *Imperial Dreams* and provided the voice for Major Lazer's animated TV series.

Last year's winner, Jack O'Connell returned to the Royal Opera House stage to present this year's EE Rising Star Award.

Spencer McHugh, Director of Brand at EE, said: “All of the 2016 EE Rising Star nominees have shown exceptional talent – starring in some of the biggest films of the last year. Any one of them is deserving of the title but the public have spoken, and we are very pleased for John. His star has truly risen.”

The EE Rising Star Award was created in honour of Mary Selway, the highly respected BAFTA-winning casting director whose career spanned three decades and over ninety films before she died in 2004. She worked with notable directors such as Steven Spielberg, Roman Polanski, Clint Eastwood and Ridley Scott, contributing to the creation of some of the silver screen's most memorable characters.

The jury who selected the five nominees from the hundreds suggested by BAFTA members included actress Olivia Colman, TV personality Jonathan Ross and a host of leading industry experts including producer and jury chair, Marc Samuelson; film critic James King; *Philomena* producer, Gabrielle Tana; *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Testament of Youth* casting director, Lucy Bevan**;** director of *Harry Potter* and *Four Weddings and a Funeral,* Mike Newell, and renowned casting director for *Star Wars Episode VII, The King’s Speech* and *The Imitation Game*, Nina Gold, alongside a group of esteemed film and arts journalists.

The EE Rising Star was voted for by the British public via the EE website. For more information on the EE Rising Star Award please visit: www.ee.co.uk/bafta

The official ceremony hashtag is #EEBAFTAs

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About EE

EE is the largest and most advanced digital communications company in Britain, delivering mobile and fixed communications services to consumers, businesses, government and the wholesale market. EE has approximately 14,000 employees and 553 retail stores, and serves more than 31 million customers across its mobile, fixed and wholesale businesses.

EE runs the UK's biggest and fastest mobile network, pioneering the UK's first superfast 4G mobile service in October 2012 and is the first European operator to surpass the 10million 4G customer landmark. EE's 4G coverage today reaches more than 92% of the UK population, with unique double speed 4G reaching 75%. EE’s 2G coverage reaches 99% of the population while 3G reaches 98%. EE's superfast fibre broadband service covers around 80% of the UK population, and ADSL broadband service covers 98.7% of the population.

In the last few years, EE has received extensive independent recognition, including being ranked the UK's best overall network by RootMetrics®; Best Network at the 2014 and 2015 Mobile News Awards; Best Network for Business and Best Consumer Network at the 2014 & 2015 Mobile Industry Awards; Best Network at the 2014 & 2015 Mobile Choice Consumer Awards, and Best Network at the What Mobile Awards 2014; Fastest Network at the 2014 uSwitch Mobile Awards; Best Mobile Network at the 2014 Recombu Awards, and Winners of Best Connected Gadget at the Mobile Choice Consumer Awards 2015.

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About BAFTA

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts is an independent charity that supports, develops and promotes the art forms of the moving image by identifying and rewarding excellence, inspiring practitioners and benefiting the public. In addition to its Awards ceremonies, BAFTA has a year-round programme of learning events and initiatives – featuring workshops, masterclasses, scholarships, lectures and mentoring schemes – in the UK, USA and Asia; it offers unique access to the world's most inspiring talent and connects with a global audience of all ages and backgrounds. BAFTA relies on income from membership subscriptions, individual donations, trusts, foundations and corporate partnerships to support its ongoing outreach work. To access the best creative minds in film, television and games production, visit **www.bafta.org/guru.** For more, visit **www.bafta.org**