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## **Sundance Institute Announces Major New Initiatives for Films on Climate Change and the Environment**

**Supported by Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Kendeda Fund,  
Discovery Channel, Code Blue Foundation and Joy Family Foundation**

***Catching the Sun* is First Project to Receive Support from Robert Rauschenberg Foundation;  
Documentary Premieres Tomorrow on Netflix for Earth Day**

**Los Angeles, CA** — Sundance Institute announced today a new initiative for films and emerging media projects exploring stories related to the urgent need for action with regard to the environment, conservation and climate change. Building on more than three decades of the Institute's championing of independent stories focused on the environment, these grants to support new projects are led by founding support from the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation and include additional support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Kendeda Fund, Discovery Channel, Code Blue Foundation and the Joy Family Foundation.

**Robert Redford**, President & Founder of Sundance Institute, said, "We want this financial and creative support to stimulate the next wave of independent film and visual storytelling that inspires action on one of the most urgent issues of our time: the long-term, sustainable health of our planet."

The Institute's new program with the Rauschenberg Foundation will identify and support the creation of four projects that tackle the subject of climate change and inspire action. As part of this joint initiative, filmmakers and climate change experts will gather together for a Climate Change Lab in 2017 at renowned American artist Robert Rauschenberg's estate and studio in Captiva Island, Florida. The documentary *Catching the Sun* from director Shalini Kantayya is the first project supported by this initiative. Premiering tomorrow (April 22) on Netflix, *Catching the Sun* tells the stories of an unlikely ensemble of workers and entrepreneurs in the U.S. and China to explore the global race to lead the clean energy future. The Institute and the Rauschenberg Foundation are supporting the film's public education campaign, which seeks to engage and empower local communities across the country with the tools to access and advocate for energy efficiency.

This collaboration between the Institute and the Rauschenberg Foundation brings together two organizations with deep connections to the environment. Environmental documentaries and New Frontier works previously supported by the Institute include *An Inconvenient Truth*, *The Cove*, *Gasland*, *Chasing Ice*, *Racing Extinction*, and *Collisions*. The Rauschenberg Foundation's investment remains true to founder Robert Rauschenberg's devotion to the issues important to him, including the environment. Through grants, scholarship, exhibitions, and an artist residency program, the Foundation furthers Rauschenberg's belief that art can change the world.



**Christy MacLear**, CEO of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, said, "The Rauschenberg Foundation is invested in climate change as one of the most critical topics of our time. Our legacy is built upon the adage that art can cross cultural boundaries and bring clarity around issues, so looking at film as an artistic medium to build that momentum around this issue was a natural fit."

Additional initiatives announced today include a new collaboration with the Kendeda Fund, which will provide grants and year-round creative support to films about the environment. Also, established this year, the Sundance Institute | Discovery Impact Fellowship is given to a filmmaker whose work reflects the fragile and changing nature of our planet in the service of protecting it; The first recipient is Jeff Orlowski (*Chasing Ice*). A collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation will support projects about climate change and urban resilience, among other related topics. The Institute's program with the Code Blue Foundation and the Joy Family Foundation targets the environment and Marine Conservation.

Grantees for these activities will be selected from submissions to the Institute's Documentary, Feature Film, and New Frontier programs. For more information or to submit, visit [sundance.org](https://www.sundance.org).

### **Sundance Institute**

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Sin Nombre*, *The Invisible War*, *The Square*, *Dirty Wars*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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