



Flemish Screenwriters Guild - Activities Report 2016 – 2017

1) General info

The Flemish Screenwriters Guild ('Vlaamse Scenaristengilde vzw') was founded in 2003. We have 190 paying members, roughly 90% of all Flemish speaking professional fiction screenwriters in Belgium.

Members with a track record in screenwriting pay € 125/year, Junior members pay € 60/year.

Our board of directors (16 persons) meets once a month. The board consists of voluntary professional screenwriters with different backgrounds in film and/or TV. Since 2013 this board is supported by a part-time staff-member responsible for daily management and representation, and who is the central contact of our Guild.

We have representatives to maintain a friendly dialogue with different organizations including 2 Collecting Societies (SABAM and DeAuteurs/SACD), the Flemish Film Fund, the coordinating Flemish Authors Society, our Belgian Film Festivals (Ghent, Brussels, Ostend, the Short Film Festival in Leuven), politicians, educational partners and of course the F.S.E.

We are very active in the field of author rights. It is in our own interest to keep a good relationship with all of the Collecting Societies.

We have an active members policy, and members can contact us directly for advice. Besides several interesting advantages and reductions, our members receive invitations for public events we organize on a regular basis. We invite international guest speakers and organize Master Classes in cooperation with the Flemish Film Fund. Our Writers Guild also organizes public interviews with screenwriters of new Flemish feature films or television series. We always podcast these interviews and put them on our website.

Every year we present a Best Flemish Screenplay Award for film and since last year for television as well, voted for by our members. We also cooperate with the Dutch Screenwriters Guild to organize a yearly award for Dutch speaking screenwriters, called the Visser-Neerlandia award. Our aim is to cooperate with our Dutch and Walloon colleagues in order to exchange experiences, to extend the network for our members, and to create new opportunities.

Our website www.scenaristengilde.be is kept up to date on a regular basis and we regularly distribute a newsletter to our members and to an ever growing database of industry professionals.



2) Some highlights of 2016-2017

The past year has again been very productive for the Flemish Screenwriters Guild. We were able to continue and further expand the positive trends recorded over the past years. An extensive list of activities and involvement in political debates and collective meetings with producers, directors and actors further increased our influence and presence in the industry. We welcomed a lot of young talent both in terms of the board of directors as our membership and noted an increase in diversity.

Members: support & information

Besides supporting screenwriters in Flanders, one of the main aims of the Screenwriters Guild is to inform our members. We are currently developing an extensive **'starter pack'** that bundles information about various business aspects and useful agencies, creative tips and even more useful information to help starting screenwriters get started. In addition, we of course continue to work towards respecting the rights of the screenwriter. We aim to create a framework within which screenwriters and producers can negotiate in a correct, respectful and professional manner about the conditions for their cooperation. Good cooperation starts with a good contract and within this context we are currently working on a **solid option-contract** and an **ethical code against sexual harassment**.

Over the years we have published a large amount of articles and information on our website, shared screenplays of Flemish movies and sent out many newsletters. At this very moment we are working on a **new website, and an update of our "knowledge centre"** which is part of our website. In parallel we are working on a communication strategy which will even improve our external communication. Besides our own activities, we often communicate workshops, masterclasses and other interesting events with our members and newsletter readers as well, often offering reductions for our members.

Events

We are pleased to see an increasing interest from our members (and non-members) in our activities. Classics such as the 'Round Table' around showrunners and headwriters remain a hit. Formulas that have proven their usefulness, such as the Speeddate between young screenwriters / makers and producers at the IKL in Leuven, were extended to other domains. For example, a Speeddate between screenwriters and producers of TV series was organized at the Film Festival of Ostend. We also crossed the linguistic border with a well-attended Serial Day at the Film Fest Gent, where the similarities and differences between the making of series in Flanders and Wallonia were highlighted.



Over the past years the Flemish Screenwriters Guild has developed good contacts with the major Film Festivals in Flanders. Our annual cooperation with the festivals of Ghent, Ostend and Leuven continues. This year we decided to expand our festival activities and started a collaboration with Anima and Docville to **organize events about animation and documentary** respectively. We also worked together for the first time with the theater festival 'Theater aan Zee' (TAZ) for their Film Days.

Organization Chart

In the past year the Flemish Screenwriters Guild continued with the renewed organizational structure that was set up in 2015. The goal was a better distribution of the growing workload and a greater involvement of the whole board of directors. Within our board we have some managers responsible for communications, political and juridical deliberation, organization of events, projects, and content. Within these fields of activities several project groups work on parallel cases and projects. The director and the staff-member take care of the coordination of the board members' activities and project groups. We are convinced that, provided a permanent evaluation and evolution of this internal structure, the foundations are laid for the proper functioning of the Flemish Screenwriters Guild for the following years.