



A report for the FSE General Assembly March 2009

There are three main issues the Netwerk Scenarioschrijvers (382 members) would like to mention.

1. negotiations with public sector broadcasters.

In October 2008 the Dutch Public Sector Broadcaster (NPO) has made a rapport stating that since they have a legal task to broadcast and that they invest a lot in the realisation of new productions, it would be just they will not be hindered in performing their task. Therefore the NPO proposes the full delegation of copyrights for contracts closed with screenplaywriters (among others). In answer to this rapport, we are preparing, with our collective society (Lira), an efficient alternative which gives the public broadcasting freedom to perform their task. Also, we are convinced that nowadays there are so many mediaplatforms (internet, downloads on demand, mobile telephones etc.) that it simply gets too complex for an individual scenarist to control if being paid for each broadcasting.

We work on a collective contract between Lira and the NPO based on lumpsum agreements. Lira will have mandate to contract the copyrights of writers (members of Lira) to (re)broadcast and multiply on all platforms. Besides this collective lumpsummodel for copyrights, the Netwerk Scenarioschrijvers has made a new concept of a framework agreement for screenplay writers with the NPO. The first one expired in 2006. This framework contract focusses on the agreements on the script (how many versions, payment-agreements etc) and the non-audiovisual rights. In the month of May the negotiations will start on these two concept-agreements. This collective agreement we apply for can also be copied by directors and actors. We have their full support in the political lobby that we'll start after the first meeting with the NPO. If needed we would like to ask our colleague-members of the FSE to support us in this lobby.

2. new schemes for screenplay development

After more than a year of intense lobbying by the Netwerk Scenarioschrijvers, the Dutch Foundation of Film has agreed to allocate grants in 2009 to stimulate talented screenwriters.

Young screenwriters can get a grant for scriptcoaching during the whole process of scriptwriting. The producer has to apply. The grant is extra and will not be subtract from the writersfee.

The other scheme allows experienced talented screenwriters to apply directly for development funding without being connected to a producer. This provides that a screenwriter can work in peace on a special project which needs an extra investment, such as experimenting with an other way of storytelling or a new process of screenplay development. The maximum grant for a project is 20.000 euros. Yearly the Dutch Foundation of films holds for this scheme a budget of 100.000 euros. The aim is to stimulate high-quality, non-traditional scripts.

These schemes mentioned above function beside the existing film funding for Dutch film screenplays. Initially funding for a script is 30 000 euros; the producer is to add another 10%. More is given if the script is produced. The total a writer can get for a film script is between 100 000-120 000 euros.

3. lustrum

Last but not least, in 2009 the Network Scenarioschrijvers is celebrating its 15 anniversary. During the year there are special debates, filmscreening, a scenaristball and lots of other activities.

Anne Zeegers
Amsterdam