

Report from Norway to the General Assembly of the FSE 2011

Writers' Guild of Norway was founded in 1938, and is an independent writers' organization whose purpose is to protect the artistic and financial interests of writers for film, television, radio and theatre. Out frame agreements with the producers are to be found also in English versions on our web site www.dramatiker.no. These are similar to the other Nordic countries, and more can be read at our common web-site www.nordicwritersguild.com

To be eligible for membership, an author must have written and had staged a public performance of at least one full-length or several shorter original works of drama for the theatre, film, television or radio. To qualify for membership, the performance must be professional and the work must be of professional quality. The applicant must have written the work in the Norwegian or Sami language him- or herself.

For the time being, the Guild currently organizes 292 writers, and 38 candidate members, who is anyone who has completed publicly approved higher education as a playwright or screenwriter. There is a steady rise in the number of members.

The organization is funded as a part of the collective remuneration writers receive from public libraries. (In this respect, we are in fact a collecting society.)

Membership fee is around € 100.

Some important issues:

Digital script directory

We have established a digital script directory, including scripts for theater, film, radio and television. In this, the writers themselves publish what they want to be included. The directory will be available though subscription of registered and (low-) paying users, especially different producers and probably also education institutions in all levels. The directory is now in the process when the writers are uploading their scripts and will be officially launched when the amount of scripts is has reached a sufficient level during this year.

Cooperation with the film directors

Our guild has developed a cooperation with Directors Guild of Norway towards Norwegian Film Institute for facilitating measurements for strengthen projects initiated by writer and director. Further we cooperate in establish meeting places for directors and script writers for developing projects further without producers.



Revision of the Norwegian copyright law

The Norwegian copyright law will be revised in at least two steps, the first step, scheduled this spring, will deal with piracy and probable legal actions. The next step, scheduled at probably in 2012 at the earliest, will be a lingual revision and restructure of the law text.

Commercial breaks and product placements

In the summer 2010, the regulations for commercial breaks for Norwegian broadcasters were changed and harmonized European rules. This means more and longer commercial breaks, also in films and TV drama. In November, it was proposed, that product placement should be allowed in among other, films, TV series, sport programs and entertainment programs. Programs for children and the public broadcaster NRK were exempted. This proposal will be decided upon during 2011.

The structure of public funding results in more production

New rules of public funding of feature films opens for extra funding when films reaches a certain level of box office sales. This has in the short term resulted in an increase in new film projects. This give also the side effect that more risk-taking in the projects are moved from producers and the public to film makers as directors and script writers in accepting to invest their fees as loans into the projects.
