

## Land report Sweden

The Writers Guild of Sweden (the Guild) is an association organizing dramatists, scriptwriters and translators in the fields of film, stage, television and radio. The Guild also organizes digital platforms including computer games.

The Guild organizes a high rate of the active scriptwriters in Sweden. As of October 2018, we have a total of 712 members. Through the statutes of the Guild we have been given the the mandate to negotiate and monitor social and economic rights of our members. The Guild works actively in politics related to culture, art and copyright. All in order to strengthen the position of our members. The Guild has frame agreements for television, stage performance, radio and amateur theater. The Guild also offers its' members an extensive legal service including tax advising. Through our services we are constantly updated on the current conditions for our members in regard of taxes and social security.

The Guild is a member of Copyswede which is an organization who works on behalf of creators of culture. Copyswede is for instance assigned to manage rights collectively regarding cable- and retransmission rights.

## Current activity

### 1. TV, radio and Public service

A new agreement has been negotiated between the Guild and Swedish Television (SVT). The new agreement is mainly a prolonged version of the previous one with some mayor changes.

#### Initial licensing period

The initial licensing period has changed from 30 days to 6 months. In remuneration for the prolonged first licensing period the scriptwriter receives an increased licensing fee. The licensing fee used to be 8% of the script fee but is now 9%.

#### Serial reduction

The producer gets a price reduction when ordering three scripts or more exceeding a total of 90 minutes. This has led to lower scriptwriter fees in productions with more than one scriptwriter. With the new agreement every scriptwriter is guaranteed to be fully remunerated for one full script regardless of how many scriptwriters and episodes that are involved in the production.

#### Editorial work

The updated agreement has been given a section stating that writers are entitled to remuneration for editorial work. Editorial work includes work in writers' room, work as a head writer and other work related to scriptwriting which interferes with the actual scriptwriting. The remuneration for editorial work shall be negotiated separately from the script agreement.

### Alternative routine for commissioning a work

The parties of the agreement have negotiated an alternative routine for commissioning scripts. The new routine provides SVT with an increased flexibility with in choosing a scriptwriter in the development of TV-series. The new routine is applicable on TV-series consisting of at least 6 episodes.

The new routine has been a much-discussed issue as it gives rise to a conflict of interest between scriptwriters and SVT. Scriptwriters have an interest in not being exchanged in script development and SVT needs to accommodate the demands from the producers wishes to choose scriptwriters. With new routine SVT has the opportunity in individual cases to negotiate the exchangeability of a scriptwriter.

### Sveries Radio (Swedish Radio)

The Guild made a new agreement with Swedish Radio (SR). The new agreement is an editorial update of the previous agreement with a more contemporary language. A material novelty with the new agreement is the increased opportunities for SR to choose means to publicize commissioned material. When commissioning new radio plays SR acquires the right to air the play 5 times regardless of means of communication.

### The future of public service

Through inquiries made in 2017 it has been suggested that the Swedish radio license fee will be transformed into a tax fee. This suggestion is supported by a majority of the political parties in the Swedish parliament. An inquiry about the future of Public Service in Sweden has been proposed for public consultation. The inquiry suggests, among other topics, that the mission of Public Service should continue to be extensive with the possibility to operate online.

It is currently being debated whether or not the guaranteed existence of independent Public Service should be regulated in the Swedish constitution.

## 2. Me too/equality

The Guild has started the process of clarifications in our frame agreements that the commissioner of a work bears the responsibilities to prevent members of the Guild from harassments in their professional role as scriptwriters. An extensive survey has been handed out to members of the Guild with questions relating to the main issues associated to the me-too debate. Conclusions from the survey are yet to follow.

## 3. Online platforms

### Streaming and VOD

The Guild sees an increase in contracts regarding platforms for online streaming and VOD services. These rather new means pf public communication requires new approaches to secure the rights of script writers. The Guild carefully follows the progress of this growing industry.