

POLISH FILMMAKERS ASSOCIATION

SCREENWRITERS CIRCLE

Activity Report Summary 2019

Years 2018/2019 made a difficult time for the Polish screenwriters community. We had to cope with a number of issues affecting our profession created by the government's attempts to change the regulations governing the system of public support for film industry, particularly in the areas of financing of the project development and film production. This system, established in 2005 and working well until recently, based on the principles of self - funding (the money were coming from the levy of 1,5 percent of profit made by the commercial enterprises dealing in audiovisual field and not from the state budget) and self-governing (the funds were allocated for particular projects by bodies of professional experts and not by officials of any sort). The government's aim to gain more control over the film industry was reflected by the selection of experts resulting in practically removing representatives of screenwriting community from decision - making bodies even these dealing with matters concerning screenwriting profession (funding of development, individual grants for writers etc.) It was taking lots of time and effort to come to at least partial resolution of the issue.

Another field of controversy was constituted by the matter of the grants for screenwriters. In the framework of the abovementioned system the individual writers, working on spec, could apply for grants enabling them to work on their scripts until first draft and only then look for the potential producer. The new regulations practically abolish these grants and direct development funds to the producers only which obviously leaves many writers, particularly young and without established connections within industry, with no support for their creative efforts. This issue is not yet fully resolved and consumes a lot of our time in order to maintain the grants in the 2020 regulations.

We have paid lots of attention to the matter of presence and visibility of screenwriters at various industry events like conferences and particularly film festivals. These efforts are

aimed at making both the authorities and public realize the role of writer in the creation of audiovisual works which is so often neglected.

We took part in heated discussion on the future of CMOs in Poland (affecting in big part also the very existence of the Filmmakers Association) caused by rather specific way of implementation of the EU Copyright Directive by the Polish authorities in effect establishing its control over these organizations.

In addition we were performing our regular activities of helping our members in need with legal advice and material assistance.