

Report from the Writers Guild of Sweden

1. The agreement with the Film and TV-producers Association

The Writers Guild of Sweden (WGOS) has entered into negotiations with the Film- and TV-producers association. The negotiations have resulted in two working groups being formed.

One group consists of members of the board of the WGOS who work as screenwriters and producers representing the Film- and TV- producers association. The group aims to identify the most common issues leading to conflicts between producer and screenwriter. To this date issues discussed have included right to edit, right to replace/exchange screenwriter and credit.

The other group consists of the lawyers representing the Film- and TV- producers association and the legal advisor and managing director from the WGOS. The group focuses on the assignment of rights with emphasis on streaming platforms.

2. Theater

WGOS has prolonged the agreement with the Swedish Performing Arts Association (SPAA) through the year of 2020. The prolongation gives a 2% increase on the screenwriter fees covered by the agreement.

3. Swedish Radio

WGOS sees a declining level of commissioned radio drama. When Swedish Radio (SR) commissions new material it mainly asks for radio series typically written by popular and famous crime authors rather than screenwriters. This development has led to a decreased level of commissions of radio drama for members of the WGOS. The WGOS maintains a position where it demands diversity in radio drama.

4. E-book and audiobook

A large number of members have been offered to write dramatized texts for streaming platforms offering e-books and audiobooks. The agreements of these commissions have not been satisfactory as they generate low fees and unbeneficial royalty provisions. WGOS are in communication with the biggest platform for e-books and audiobooks and we hope to reach an agreement with them within the near future.

5. Survey

Through an analysis company the WGOS has issued a survey which was filled out by 42% of the members. Through the survey the WGOS has been able to see patterns of income level and different kinds of work assignments for the members.

6. The agency conflicts

The WGOS follows with interest the ongoing conflict in the USA between the Writers Guild of America and some of the biggest agencies in Hollywood. The conflict arose when screenwriters were made aware that they had been subject to packaging deals where agents had enriched themselves at the expense of their clients by offering packages of services to producers including the services of screenwriters and directors at unbeneficial terms.

7. Equal film politics

The Swedish Film Institute has launched a new project to achieve more equality in film politics. Women are underrepresented as screenwriters for high budget feature films. To resolve this problem the Swedish Film institute will finance the research work and development of ideas for a selected group of female screenwriters for potential films. The initiative was presented at the film festival in Cannes this spring and will have a duration of 18 months.