

Country report from Writers Guild of Norway FSE Annual meeting 2021

The pandemic and its consequences have naturally affected the association's work in the past year. Lobbying has been intensified and collaboration with other artists - and industry organizations has been close.

Digital membership meetings have led to more people from around the country participating than usual.

The board and the administration have had a very active period and we have had committees that have worked on changing the scholarship schemes, the association's new website, and a new strategy.

We have strengthened our legal and hired a second lawyer, Kaja von Hedenberg.

Contracts

NRK (Public Broadcaster)

We have negotiated a new agreement template for radio drama. The agreement is similar to the one we have for TV drama and the purchase of rights, which is time and place independent, is paid with NOK. 900 / minute. In addition, fees are paid for work. The size of this is not regulated in the agreement template.

Producers' association Virke, tv-drama

We have negotiated with the producers' association about a TV drama agreement over several years without reaching an agreement. The disagreements concern the scope of rights transfers and payment for this. Negotiations are expected to continue throughout the autumn, and we are optimisticly hoping for a result before the end of the year.

Compensation scheme for playwrights and screenwriters

The Dramatists' Association received NOK 8.5 million to a compensation scheme for losses due to corona cancellations. We are currently processing just over 50 applications received, several of which apply to several pieces. Applicants must



document the number of performances/Screenings that have actually been planned. The number of seats in the hall, ticket price, royalty rate and advance must also be documented. If all this is in place, you can get up to 70% of the loss compensated.

In reviewing the applications, we have uncovered a frightening attitude, especially towards the playwrights. Very few receive minimum fees and no one has been compensated for any loss from the theaters, not even from the theaters that have received large sums in extra grants from municipalities and the state.

Norwegian Film Institute (NFI)

NFI's new director has initiated major changes at the institute. One of them is to close down the department for script development. We have protested in all channels on this and believe it is not a professional considered change, but a budget decision, which in turn is a consequence of the Conservative government's 6-year-long «Debureaucratisation and efficiency reform».

The two script consultants were let go, and the money and responsibility for script development has been transferred to the Feature Film Consultants. Of course, we do not know what the consequences will be in the long run, but in the first two rounds of awards, there has been a major emphasis on writer-directors who have received grants.

Great expectations to the new government in Norway

There have been elections in Norway this autumn, and we have a new government after 8 years with the conservative party in power.

Anette Trettebergstuen from The Labour party has taken over the Ministry of Culture, and have promised a massive raise in culture funding in all sectors. Her focus is on the creators and artists, and she has announced an "Artist's economy reform". We have no doubt, she intends to deliver on this, as the artist organisations where the first she invited in for meetings in her first week in position. She intends to look in on everything from fair contracts (after all she's from the the labor party:) to legislation and social security rights for self-employed and freelancers.

Trettebergstuen has also announced implementation of the AMT directive in close collaboration with the industry. In order to get as much influence on this process and others to come as possible, we have organized a new network, consisting the organisations representing the writers, directors, film workers, producers, distributors and cinemas. We have already had meetings with the Minister of Culture and relevant members of the parliament on the matter.

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