



FEDERATION OF
SCREENWRITERS
IN EUROPE

CREDIT PROVISIONS FOR WRITING AUDIOVISUAL SERIES

FSE RECOMMENDATIONS
on screenwriters credits :

Created by

Lead Writer or Head Writer

Written by



CREDIT PROVISIONS FOR WRITING AUDIOVISUAL SERIES

In the last decade the volume of audiovisual series being produced in Europe has quadrupled. The writing process for series is markedly different from other forms of writing for the screen and, in consequence, some variations in the credits accorded to writers has developed.

This document lays out the writing credits which the Federation of Screenwriters in Europe believes should apply to TV series.

It should be emphasised that these guidelines relate only to writing and that credits for the work in production, increasingly done by persons who are also writers, are not addressed here.

Three writing credits are considered :

“Created by”, “Lead Writer or Head Writer” and “Written by”.

CREATED BY

1. The **Created by** credit is a writing credit. It is accorded only to writers who create a series by writing the essential initial documents which define the series.
2. By series we mean a number of episodes of a TV or streaming show conceived together as a season and any subsequent seasons.
3. Acknowledging that this varies to some degree, the initial documents written to define a series will contain at least the following elements :
 - a. A summary containing a logline, a description of the premise of the series, a synopsis summarising the major themes, characters, and plot points; basic information about the main characters; and the themes, settings, and so on.

These elements are often contained within a **Pitch document**.

- b. A document which includes an outline of the first season (at least), establishes the tone and dramatic arc, including detailed descriptions of the characters and their arcs.

It summarises the main themes; gives detailed information about the main characters, the setting and so on. It will provide a summary of the full season as well as summaries of each episode describing the plot and character story arcs.

Key information about budget, location, special effects and so on may be covered.

These elements are often contained in a **Bible** for the series (though in some countries many of these elements might be addressed in the Pitch document).

- c. A complete first draft **Pilot script**, usually the prototype episode for the first season of the series.

The writer or writers of these essential initial documents (or whichever documents perform the same task in individual member states, and regardless of the names given to these documents) receives the **Created by** credit.

- 4. Where more than one writer is responsible for the writing of the documents the **Created by** credit can be shared (e.g. "created by writer A and writer B") but each must have written a substantive portion of the initial documents.
- 5. An exceptional situation arises where one writer provides the basic premise of the show and is then commissioned to write either all episodes or the substantive majority of the episodes and does not as a consequence write the usual initial documents or not in the same detail, then, provided the writer has written the majority of the episodes, the writer is accorded the **Created by** credit.
- 6. Where a series is based on underlying rights – a novel, short story, etc – the writer who writes the initial documents is still accorded the **Created by** credit but in the form substantially like "created by X, based on the Novel by Y"
- 7. Notes, ideas and input during script development of the series are part of normal directorial and production work, and do not justify a writing credit.

LEAD WRITER OR HEAD WRITER

1. The **Lead Writer or Head Writer** credit is a writing credit which is accorded to the writer who oversees the writing of all episodes of the series based on the documents delivered by the writer/s accorded the **Created by** credit.
2. The writer accorded the **Created by** credit is often the **Lead Writer or Head Writer**, as least for the first season, but should be accorded a separate **Lead Writer or Head Writer** credit in addition to the **Created by** credit.
3. The **Lead Writer or Head Writer** will usually appoint the members of the writing team, and decides, in consultation with the members of the writing team, who writes each episode.
4. The **Lead Writer or Head Writer** runs the Writers Room, leads and supervises the writing of at least one season of the series, and has overall creative responsibility for the scripts for each of the season's episodes.

WRITTEN BY

1. The **Written by** credit is accorded to the writer who wrote each episode, based on the work carried out in the writers' room and in keeping with the structure agreed with the **Lead Writer or Head Writer**.
2. Where a writer has a **Created by** credit and/or a **Lead Writer or Head Writer** credit and also writes episodes they are also entitled to the **Written by** credit on each episode they wrote.
3. Only writers in the Writers Team should receive writing credits but every writer in the room (if a writers' room exists) should receive a credit. In the event that a writer would not receive any of the credits described here but has nonetheless contributed writing to the room, an additional credit may be given but only as decided by the writers in the room, led by the **Lead Writer or Head Writer**, and in line with credit guidelines which may be issued by a national guild.

FSE MEMBERS

The Federation of Screenwriters in Europe is a network of national and regional associations, guilds and unions of writers for the screen in Europe, created in June 2001. It comprises 32 screenwriters' organisations from 26 European countries and represents 10,000 professional screenwriters in Europe.

Austria

Drehbuchverband Austria

Belgium

Scenaristengilde (SG)

Belgium

Association des scénaristes de l'audiovisuel (ASA)

Bulgaria

Bulgarian Association of the Film, Theater and Radio Scriptwriters (BAFTRS)

Croatia

Croatian Screenwriters and Playwrights Guild (SPID)

Denmark

Danske Dramatikere
Danish Writers Guild

Estonia

Estonian Screenwriters' Guild (ESG)

Finland

Writers Guild of Finland (SUNKLO)

France

La Guilde Française des Scénaristes - The French Screenwriters Guild (La Guilde)

Germany

Deutsche Drehbuchverband (DDV)

Greece

Scriptwriters' Guild of Greece (ESE)

Iceland

Icelandic Dramatists' Union (FLH:)

Ireland

Writers Guild of Ireland (WGI)

Italy

Writers Guild Italia (WGI)

Latvia

Screenwriters Guild of Latvia (SGL)

Luxembourg

Luxembourgish Association of Filmmakers and Scriptwriters (LARS)

Netherlands

Network Scenarioschrijvers
Dutch Screenwriters Guild (NS)

Norway

Dramatikerforbundet
Writers' Guild of Norway

Poland

Screenwriters Circle of Polish Filmmakers Association (SFP)

Poland

Polish Screenwriters' Guild

Portugal

Associação Portuguesa de Argumentistas e Dramaturgos (APAD)

Slovakia

ASSA

Slovenia

DSR Scenaristi (DSR)

Spain

Writers Guild of Spain (ALMA)

Spain

Forum of Audiovisual Screenwriters Associations (FAGA)
GAC (Guionistes Associats de Catalunya)
EDAV (Escriptors Valencians de l'Audiovisual)
AGAG (Asociación Sindical Gallega de Guionistas)
EHGEP (Euskal Herriko Gidoigileen Elkarte Profesionala)
PREMISA
CINA (Cineastas de Andalucía)

Sweden

Dramatikerförbundet
Writers Guild of Sweden (DF)

Switzerland

Scenario / Swiss Filmmakers Association (ARF/FDS)

Ukraine

Guild of Screenwriters of Ukraine

United Kingdom

Writers' Guild of Great Britain (WGGB)