

The European Screenwriters Manifesto

Stories are at the heart of humanity and are the repository of our diverse cultural heritage. They are told, retold and reinterpreted for new times by storytellers. Screenwriters are the storytellers of our time.

European writing talent should be trusted, encouraged and supported. The European film industries need to find ways to attract and keep its screenwriters in the cinema and in their craft.

We assert that:

1. The screenwriter is an author of the film, a primary creator of the audiovisual work.
2. The indiscriminate use of the possessory credit is unacceptable.
3. The moral rights of the screenwriter, especially the right to maintain the integrity of a work and to protect it from any distortion or misuse should be inalienable and should be fully honored in practice.
4. The screenwriter should receive fair payment for every form of exploitation of his work.
5. As author, the screenwriter should be entitled to an involvement in the production process as well as in the promotion of the film and to be compensated for such work. As author, he should be named in any publication accordingly, including festival catalogs, TV listing magazines and reviews.

We call on:

6. National governments and funding agencies to support screenwriters by focusing more energy and resources, whether in form of subsidy, tax breaks or investment schemes, on the development stage of film and television production and by funding writers directly.
7. Scholars and film critics to acknowledge the role of screenwriters, and universities, academies and training programs to educate the next generations in accordance to the collaborative art of the medium and with respect toward the art and craft of screenwriting.
8. Festivals, film museums and other institutions to name the screenwriters in their programs and plan and screen film tributes to screenwriters just as they do to directors, actors and countries.
9. National and European law should acknowledge that the writer is an author of the film.
10. National and European law should ensure that screenwriters can organize, negotiate and contract collectively, in order to encourage and maintain the distinct cultural identities of each country and to seek means to facilitate the free movement of writers in and between all nations.

We will:

- Distribute this manifesto to industry members and the press in our respective countries.
- Campaign for the implementation of the agenda defined by this manifesto.
- Seek the transition into national and European law of the legal changes demanded by this manifesto.

Signed: The President and the Board of the FSE, representing 21 guilds and 9,000 screenwriters all over Europe

Christina Kallas (President)

Sveinbjörn Baldvinsson (Vice President)

David Kavanagh

Willemieck Seligmann

The Participants of the Thessaloniki Conference on European Screenwriting 2006

Screenwriters around Europe

Friends and Supporters