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Agreed Shared Principles Underpinning Local Negotiations with Global Streamers

The International Affiliation of Writers Guilds (IAWG) was established in 1986 to address the globalization of the entertainment industry and improve the working conditions of professional film and television writers worldwide through collective action, mutual support, and common representation internationally. Its 14 member guilds from Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Israel, Korea, New Zealand, South Africa, Spain, and the United States of America work on behalf of 60,000 writers in the areas of collective bargaining, standard contracts, credit disputes, government lobbying, and the promotion of the essential role of the writer as first creator in the filmmaking process.

The Federation of Screenwriters in Europe (FSE) is a European network of national and regional associations, guilds and unions of writers working mainly for film, television and new media in Europe. It was created in June 2001 by several writers' guilds to respond to growing globalisation of the audio-visual industry, rapid development of the digital market and an increasing volume of European Union legislation. In 2022, FSE comprises 27 screenwriters' organisations from 22 European countries, representing a total of 8,000 professional screenwriters in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and The United Kingdom.

Together, we represent approximately 67,000 working professional screenwriters around the globe who are the creators of the stories that attract hundreds of millions of viewers to the new global streaming companies. We will protect our members' interests in the contractual relationships with these streaming companies ensuring that they are fairly treated and properly remunerated for their work.

Following discussions at World Conferences of Screenwriters and at the General Assemblies of both of our organisations, we have agreed to a set of basic principles which will inform our campaigns to protect our members' interests in their contractual relationships with global streaming companies.

These four principles are:

- Solidarity,
- Transparency,
- Sharing in the economic life of what we create and
- Collective Bargaining.

Solidarity: Global response to global companies

Companies with integrated global production and distribution structures require a co-ordinated global response from screenwriter guilds and unions whose members provide similar or identical services their contractual relationships with them.

To ensure this global response, IAWG and FSE and their members will coordinate their relevant activities, work to adopt and protect international norms for writer credits, and exchange information about their campaigns and negotiations on a regular and organised basis. Where possible, they will involve other writers guilds not currently engaged with IAWG or FSE, subject to their agreeing to this set of basic principles.

Transparency

The members of IAWG and FSE insist that information on the audience and associated financial performance of the works they have created is information which they are entitled to know. Whether arrived at by collective bargaining backed by industrial action and/or by legislative means, the members of FSE and IAWG will ensure that they and their members are adequately and effectively informed about the audiences generated by their work and the associated financial performance.

Proportionate remuneration

The audience support, and consequent financial performance, of a work are in large part the result of the quality of the story and its telling, which originates with the writers. Accordingly, writers are entitled to a proportionate share of the financial performance of their work, however that may be derived. This principle applies regardless of the legislative or industrial basis of the contractual relationship. Acknowledging that there are substantive differences in compensation processes in different countries, nonetheless proportionate remuneration should be broadly comparable across the globe.

Collective bargaining

It is the conviction of the IAWG and FSE that the principles described here can most effectively be established through Collective Bargaining facilitated by whatever legislative and/or industrial processes are necessary to defend the rights and remuneration of our members.