

Europe, 5th February 2010

Dear Colleague,

Eight years ago, a gathering of international storytellers took place in France. During this meeting, the idea was born to form a European wide network for storytelling. Additional meetings took place thereafter, one in Germany, others more informally during international festivals at various places.

Then, in 2008, the idea began to manifest itself when around 60 storytellers from 20 different countries met in Oslo and agreed to continue the work under the name of *FEST: Federation for European Storytelling*. After an inspirational and encouraging 2.5 days, spirits were high and delegates from Switzerland agreed to take the "FEST-torch" to Lausanne for a gathering in 2009.

In Lausanne, as in Oslo, there was time for discussions, exchange and networking. In addition, the participants voted on a first draft of a memorandum for FEST to give the federation a mutually agreed frame work. Based on the memorandum, which will be re-considered after the first year, a Steering group consisting of 5 participants was voted to take FEST further and to organize the gathering of 2010.

And here we are, the Steering Group 2009/10, with our first Newsletter. Here you will find information on

- **THE FEST10 CONFERENCE**
(location, cost, application form, criteria for participation etc)
- **MEMBERSHIP**
(application form, criteria for membership, implications)
- **A VISION FOR FEST**
(Why should we have it? What can it be in the future?)
- Website, previous conferences and FEST 2011.

FEST10 CONFERENCE

As voted upon by the FEST09 participants, this year's gathering will take place in England.

When

Wednesday 11th, registration from 14:00, opening at 15:00
to
Friday 13th August, ending around 17:30

Where

The conference will take place at:

The University of Reading,
Whiteknights
READING
Berkshire
RG6 6AH
United Kingdom

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/about/find/about-findindex.aspx>

Programme

The programme will consist of

- Discussion and exchange through interest groups
- Presentation of projects ("Diversity in Storytelling")
- Guest speakers
- Structural development of FEST (Council meeting)
- Time for networking

A detailed programme of FEST will follow as some aspects depend on the actual participants.

Cost

PARTICIPATION FEE: £120 per person

This covers the rental of meeting space / necessary equipment and meals from Wednesday evening to Friday lunch inclusive.

ACCOMODATION:

Accommodation will be in single rooms at the University of Reading (there are no double rooms available.)

You can choose between:

- Standard £34 per night
- Ensuite £52 per night

Financial hardship

In case of extreme financial hardship, it may be possible to offer a small number of free beds near the University. We cannot guarantee this though and urge you to try and apply for funding.

Who

Successful applicants for the FEST10 conference represent one of the following:

1. National and regional organisations
2. A storytelling network/group
3. International or national festival organisers
4. Educational Institutions: Universities with storytelling as subject, Storytelling schools
5. Individuals from countries with little activity or with no organisations and storytellers who have done substantial projects
6. Producers/Promoters/funders

As FEST is primarily aimed at organisations/festivals/institutions (see membership), we envision that the majority of participants will be representatives of 1-4 and a smaller number of 5-6. Also, depending on the amount of applicants, we might have to set a limit to the number of participants per country.

Application form

Attached to this Newsletter you will find the application form. If you are interested in taking part, please fill it out and send it to us at fest.fest10@gmail.com. Deadline for application is 15th April. We will respond by mid May. Successful applicants will then need to confirm their place, accommodation and dietary needs. When you accept the place, we will send you details of payment. (We have had to pay a deposit for the booking so payment will be in advance.)

MEMBERSHIP OF FEST

Definition of membership

The memorandum of FEST, voted upon at the FEST gathering in Lausanne 2009, states:

Membership

Membership is open to any national or regional storytelling association, or other organisation in Europe which unites storytellers and storytelling groups in a collaborative framework and subscribes to the aims and purposes of FEST. Applications are made to the FEST Council's Steering Group and approved by the Council.

FEST is currently doing its baby-steps, so at the moment we do not yet have a council who could approve of memberships. Therefore, to move FEST forward, we have put down some guidelines for us to help build a membership base. The membership base will give us a preliminary Council which can take FEST further at the gathering in Reading.

Criteria for membership:

Successful applicants will be one of the following based in Europe:

- National or regional storytelling organisations with legal status
- Storytelling organisation with legal status
- International Festival organisers of festivals which have been three or more years running and in which the programme consists of at least 70% storytelling events and features two or more foreign storytellers
- Educational Institutions: Universities/Colleges offering storytelling as subject and Storytelling schools which have been two or more years running

Preliminary Council

Any membership application which reaches us by the 31st of March and on which a representative for the council is identified, will be on the preliminary council of FEST at Reading August 2010. All applications after this will be processed in due course but you may not get your Council member onto the council for this year's FEST Conference August 2010.

Application form

You will find the application form for FEST membership as attachment. If your organisation, festival or institution is interested in becoming a member, please return it to fest.fest10@gmail.com.

Why become a member?

You might ask yourself, why your organisation should become a member of FEST, what it means practically and which advantages and/or responsibilities you might have.

At this moment in time few of the practical questions can be answered in detail. In fact, all we know is that a member can have a representative on the Council. The Council governs FEST and the representative is therefore eligible to vote on matters which concern FEST at the annual conference.

So... the biggest reason to join FEST is not what it is *yet*, but what it can become in the future *through its members!!*

VISION FOR FEST

We believe if FEST can gather to itself passionate professionals in the European storytelling world, the federation will become a substantial driving force for priding storytelling in Europe with excellence in practice in all fields.

Maybe, FEST can become what is a vision today:

- FEST is a vehicle to further professional oral storytelling in Europe, to promote storytelling as art form and to enable its members to collectively create a European knowledge bank of storytelling.
- FEST provides a breeding space for collaboration, a place for exchange and inspiration and a source of professional development
- FEST initiates an annual conference at which its members and other professionals affiliated with FEST can meet in person
- FEST is electronically accessible by the FEST website where we collate and display information such as details on storytelling organizations, details of institutions offering training of storytellers, dates and places for annual festivals, a project library.

We are not there yet at this point in time, but we are on the way and we hope you are interested in getting involved!

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

WEBSITE

There is no up-and-running website for FEST yet. Nevertheless, some information is accessible on www.storytelling.eu and we will try and update it as best as we can. At

present, you can download both application forms there, read this newsletter and find some additional information on FEST08 and the process so far.

Please note: the application forms cannot be filled out online, but have to be downloaded and sent to fest.fest10@gmail.com

The development of the website will need to be addressed at the FEST10 conference.

FEST CONFERENCE 2009:

Until further notice, you can find information on FEST 09 on:

- <http://e-mythos.eu/forum/viewforum.php?f=2>

You need to register on the forum to be able to view and comment on posts.
The current password for accessing the main forum is fest1.

FEST CONFERENCE 2011:

At FEST 2009, the participants suggested that, at any given meeting, the location for the FEST gathering in two years time should be voted on.
After voting on Reading in 2010, the participants voted for SPAIN in 2011. The conference is planned to take place in conjunction with the 48 hour marathon storytelling festival in Guadalajara.

Please pass this on to anyone you think might be interested in driving FEST forwards.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.
Best wishes

Martin Manasse (England)
Ragnhild A Mørch (Norway/Germany)
Clare Muireann Murphy (Ireland)
Casilda Regueiro (Switzerland/Spain)
Georgos Evgenikos (Greece)