

MEMBERSHIP AND COUNCIL

Problem 1

As the situation stands at the moment, FEST has no members as no one has made an application yet based on the new memorandum.

Problem 2

Our membership criteria says *"Membership is open to any national or regional storytelling organisation in Europe, which unites storytelling groups in a collaborative framework and subscribes to the aims and purposes of FEST (...)"*

- There are countries, which have no national or regional organisation and no network.
- There are countries in which a large number of individual storytellers chose individual storytellers to represent them at FEST.
- There are also many (individual) storytellers who run substantial projects without being organised in a group.

Problem 3

"(...) Applications are made in writing, nominated by the FEST steering Group and approved by the Council": Without members, there is no Council which could approve the membership.

Problem 4

The memorandum states *"FEST is governed by a Council consisting of one of each of the members (...)"*

There will only be a Council if there are members (see above).

Problem 5

The memorandum states *"FEST is governed by a Council (...) including at least one representative of each (...) interest group network, meeting at the FEST gathering."*

The Interest groups are inconsistent due to being made up of participants at any given FEST gathering. This means that, at every new gathering every group would have to spend time on choosing someone from that year's group to be on the Council. In this scenario, participants at the gatherings lose valuable time for dealing with artistic matters.

Additional issue

Problem 6

When we voted for where the next FEST gathering was to take place, we had no structure in place for dealing with this and it took an unreasonable amount of time.

OUR WAY FORWARD

This is how the Steering Group 2009/10 intends to solve these issues and thereby to ensure the development of FEST:

We have given ourselves guidelines based on the content of the memorandum. The guidelines are to lead us through the process of organising FEST10 as well as registering/accepting members of FEST.

The Guidelines E and F suggest a change/addition to the memorandum which we obviously cannot decide as Steering Group. The Council at FEST10 can vote on this and change the memorandum accordingly if agreed upon.

GUIDELINES FOR THE STEERING GROUP 2009/10

GUIDELINE A (Solution to Problem 1)

When we send out our first Newsletter, there will be two forms attached to the email:

- 1.) The application form for the FEST10 gathering in Reading
- 2.) A separate application form for membership of FEST as a federation

The advantage of this is:

- Everyone will have to apply for membership regardless of whether one took part in Oslo or Lausanne or whether one signed the memorandum.
- One can become a member of FEST even though one cannot attend FEST10 in Reading.

GUIDELINE B (Solution to Problem 2)

Due to the fact that there will be two application forms, we can distinguish between "*participant* at the FEST gathering" and "*member* of FEST"

Our criteria for *participation at the FEST10 gathering* will be:

Successful applicants for FEST10 represent one of the following:

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

We envision the majority of participants to be representatives of 1-3 and a smaller number of 4-6.

The advantage:

- One can be a participant at FEST10 without being a member of the federation. In this way, we can invite individuals with no organisation behind them.
- The currently most rewarding part of FEST – the physical gathering – is open to people who want to collaborate and to drive the storytelling movement forward, regardless of whether they are organised or not.
- The FEST gatherings will consist of countries with established organisations as well as countries which are in the process of developing.
- Individual storytellers will start networking and collaborating.
- We can invite funders, observers or promoters who can add valuable information to FEST without being members of FEST.

GUIDELINE C (Solution to Problem 3)

The Steering group will follow a set of criteria for accepting membership until the next gathering. If the criteria are fulfilled, the applicant will be a member of FEST.

Our criteria for accepting *membership* will be:

- National or regional organisations with legal status
- Storytelling organisations with legal status
- International Festival organisers of festivals which have been three or more years running and in which the programme consist 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

The advantage:

- The Steering Group 2009/10 has very clear guidelines as to who can become members at this moment in time. This will instantly give us a membership base.
- A membership base gives us a preliminary Council (see Guideline D)
- Storytellers who are not yet organised will be motivated to collaborate and to set up new networks/ organisations to become members of FEST.
- FEST as an entity will be stronger if FEST itself consists of legal entities.
- Funders often look for organisations with legal status.

NOTE:

The difference between a *participant at the gathering* and a *member of FEST* is currently that members can have one representative on the Council whilst a participant cannot.

GUIDELINE D (Solution to Problem 4):

The members of FEST which the Steering Group will accept during the application process (Guideline C) have to choose one person each who will be their representative on the Council. This representative has to be named *before* the FEST10 meeting. We would also like to encourage this person to take part at the gathering in Reading.

The advantage:

- Members don't have to spend time at FEST10 to decide upon their representative.
- We can include a section for the Council on the membership application form. This will simplify the work of the Steering Group.
- We get a preliminary Council before FEST10 takes place.
- People can *reflect* a bit about whether they actually *want* to be on the Council (being on the Council will very likely mean more work and that she/he has to be actively involved between the gatherings.)
- The steering group will be able to contact the preliminary Council if necessary.
- Representatives of groups who have not been at either FEST08 or FEST09 have the possibility to be part of the Council through their membership.
- As the representatives on the Council will be named before FEST, they can be petitioned by members of FEST to get certain subjects, problems or issues addressed at the Council meeting at FEST10.

GUIDELINE E (Solution to Problem 5):

As seen at FEST08, FEST09 and the two years in between, most interest groups stop functioning as entities after the physical meeting has taken place. They have to be re-established at every gathering, possibly with completely new participants.

As long as there are no viable structures in place for the interest groups, the Steering Group 2009/10 recommends changing the memorandum so that the interest groups at FEST-gatherings do not have a place on the Council.

GUIDELINE F (Solution to Additional issue)

We believe members should have the time to consider whether they can and want to offer to host a FEST gathering. We therefore suggest the following addition to the memorandum:

FEST gathering

The *location* of the next conference (meaning in two years time of the vote) will be voted on by all participants at the FEST gathering of any given year.

Members who want to put forward a proposal for the next location must have an Action Group in place *before* the vote takes place so that they can prepare their suggestion and present it at the gathering.

Once a location is chosen, the Action Group who presented the location is to be responsible for all practical issues which arise from organising the next gathering. The content/programme of the conference will be developed by liaising / collaborating with the Steering Group of the Council.

CONCLUSION

With these guidelines we believe we will be able to support the creation of a sustainable federation with a solid structure, which offers

- a network
- a platform
- a meeting space

FEST as gathering will

- allow participants to meet, share ideas, network and learn from each other.
- be a place where International Festival organisers can meet and share ideas and databases.
- Provide an “annual meeting” for the Council to make strategic decisions

FEST as federation will thereby be able to

- strengthen the expertise of storytelling in Europe
- give storytelling as an art form higher status towards the public
- be able to support the development of new generations of storytellers
- be a knowledge bank of storytelling

Finally, we have sent this email from fest.fest10@gmail.com which we set up as the FEST10 email address. This email address will be fully in use when we send out our newsletter and the applications.

If you do want to comment on our guidelines or have questions, please DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS EMAIL but do this via the forum:

<http://e-mythos.eu/forum/index.php>

If you haven't registered, please register now. The password is fest1.

The reason for this is:

- as we see it, it is best if the comments are publicly accessible and readable
- we don't have the time to forward them if they are not sent as “reply to all”
- we might not even have the time to respond to all comments depending on the amount of them, but you might get a reaction from other Festians.
- some of you might have the same questions, so you can then go in and look at the answers
- people who were not at FEST09 might want to have a look at the comments at a later stage
- as you know, we are a happy bunch of volunteers. We opt for this option as we are in desperate need of efficiency which is worth the Steering Group's weight in gold!

We are looking forward to continuing with creating a mind-blowingly good FEST 2010!

Best
Casilda
Clare
Georgos
Martin
Ragnhild