

MEDIA Initial Training Programme Projects' meeting 2008



Since 2007, the MEDIA Training Programme has encouraged exchanges and cooperation between higher education institutions, training organisations and partners from the audiovisual industry through financial support for projects implemented by pan-European consortia. So far, 12 projects put in place by 37 partners coming from 18 different European countries have been supported, for a total amount of 2 380 000€ over two years.

Promoters of projects already in place as well as other European schools linked to the audiovisual sector responded very positively to this initiative: 80 participants, coming from 20 European countries, took part in the 12th December 2008 event.

At the opening speech Mr. Gilbert Gascard, Director of the Education, Audiovisual, Culture Executive Agency, reasserted the role of the Agency and the MEDIA programme as a facilitator for a Europe-wide cooperation between education institutions and the industry.

The opening was followed by 3 panels on common issues, with the idea of enhancing the collaboration between all actors.



The first panel moderated by Pauline David from MEDIA training was held on one of the main objectives of the scheme: **"Encouraging exchanges and cooperation between European Higher education institutions linked to the audiovisual sector"**.

4 promoters of projects supported by the MEDIA Initial Training Department explained very concretely how they have thought out and put in place their activities in order to develop coordinated efforts between partners on a single project.

Jean-Philippe Raffard, from Science Com School (FR), presented the project *SWIM* and especially explained the pedagogical approach they chose with the other *SWIM* partners: the **Case study method**, which is widely used in business schools. The idea is to track down

initiatives or promising practices in the audiovisual sector, study them in partnership with the industry and disseminate the information at the European level, via seminars and publications.

This presentation led to a discussion on the **promotion and dissemination tools** that can be used to act as "multiplier effect" of the training activities. This issue was raised again when Ole John Povlsen, from the National Film School of Denmark, presented the project *Fistful of euros*, a conference on low-budget films organised by 4 European film schools. Arnaud Pasquali, head of the MEDIA training sector explained that the dissemination of results of the training activities is important in order to reach a wider audience than only the selected participants. This must be carefully thought out and targeted in order to be effective. This can be done through open sessions for all students of the organising schools.

Jean-Philippe Raffard also pointed out the question of the **participation fees** for the students taking part in the training activities. Participation fees shall be reasonable in order to facilitate the participation of students and trainers in Europe and should also be measured against **the value and benefits offered to students**.



Aiste Kudzyte, from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, presented the project *Summer Media Studio*, which is an annual intensive international two-week workshop, during which teams of students produce together a short film. She also explained the remarkable **credit system** they have put in place with their partners, in order to recognise this summer training activity as part of their studies in their own school.

Nathalie Degimbe, from the IAD (BE), presented the project *Tridoc*. In this project, the partner film schools have set up an exchange students program where two selected participants from each school (director and cinematographer) are invited to spend more than 2 months in a partner school where they realise a short documentary with local students. The

three Tridoc school partners are all very integrated in this project: the exchange students are tutored by local teachers, the films are evaluated by the schools and the mark obtained is taken into account for the students' own school diploma. Nathalie Degimbe also explained that with the Tridoc partners they have decided that the school where the films are produced is the owner of the film rights. The length (2 months) and the quality of the exchange (students were guided by local students and teachers) have allowed a **real integration of the student** in the hosting schools and a remarkable enrichment for individuals.

The second panel was on the other main objective of the MEDIA Initial Training Scheme: **"Facilitating the integration of students in the professional sector"**. 4 promoters of projects supported by the MEDIA Initial Training Department explained how they have coordinated their efforts to create bridges between their schools and the audiovisual industry.

Paul Moody, from the NFTS (UK), presented the project *Passion to market*. Designed for the recent graduates of the partner schools, the project aims at **"reducing the naivety"** of the participants as well as **facilitating their first steps in the professional sector**. The program involves teams of writing, directing and producing former students applying with a project that is to be coached in its development, production, marketing strategies. The confrontation with a demanding "real world" has been both a shock and a real boost for those recent graduates. The response by an impressive list of high level professionals who offered their time and experience confirms the interest by the industry for the upcoming professionals.

The comprehensive presentation of *Passion to market* was followed by the presentation of the project *Engage*, by Robin Mac Pherson, from the Napier University (UK). He especially explained how the partners of the consortium have taken into account the importance of the European dimension of the projects supported by MEDIA, by notably presenting to the participants **the national film industry specificities of each country visited**.

Christian Routh presented the project *Four Corners*, on behalf of the ESCAC (ES). *Four Corners* has developed a four-part project dealing with development, co-production, finance and marketing & distribution. After a promising first year of activities, the partners are consolidating their collaboration in order to **adapt even more their activity to the level of the participants and to the needs of the partner schools**.



The last project presented was *Animation Sans Frontières*, by Timothy Leborgne from VIA University (DK). This well thought out activity is a project based training course in 4 parts, designed to train animation bachelor-level students. Each partner school covers one part of an animated product's development and production process, while also presenting its country-specific production styles, schemes and methods. Timothy Leborgne raised especially the difficult question of the **timing of workshops that should fit within each schools' calendar**. He also pointed out that although the project has been created at the beginning for the students of the partner schools only, they plan to open it to students coming from other European schools in the following years.

The third panel focused on **activities especially designed for training the trainers.**

Cartoon is one of the most influential organizations in the animation industry. With the support of MEDIA Cartoon organizes regular animation schools meetings where schools representatives meet the industry. Yolanda Alonso from Cartoon explained that a **close collaboration between animation schools and studios** at European level is of vital importance for the European animation industry confronted with a shortage of skills, rapid technological changes and international competition. MEDIA suggested that **closer links between animation and film schools** could be a way to address the shortage of qualified producers.

Pascal Borenstein explained that La Femis (FR) organises a meeting of film schools representatives to discuss ways of increasing mobility of students and teachers in Europe and finding solutions to concrete issues such as credit systems for instance.

Several representatives of European schools confirmed the importance of the type of meetings, where trainers / schools meet to discuss and exchanges on common issues.

In the closing remarks Arnaud Pasquali confirmed that the **primary objective of the initial training scheme** is not so much to support the development of film projects from film schools but above all **to help film schools and universities collaborating with each other and with the industry.**

In the design of a project aiming at being supported by the MEDIA Initial Training Scheme, the applicants should answer the following questions: what does the consortium want to achieve with its project? How will the project be put in place? How does the project meet the expectations and needs of the target group (students / trainers)? What will be the impact of the project on the schools? How the project will meet the MEDIA Initial Training objectives.

Arnaud Pasquali confirmed that the next call will be published in January with an increased budget. The whole MEDIA training team and especially Maria Antonia Cuadrado and Aurelie Varin are available to meet potential candidates and answer their questions.

MEDIA Training Team

Contact: Aurélie Varin
+32 229 80939
Aurelie.Varin@ec.europa.eu