

# **EUROPEAN SHOWRUNNER PROGRAMME**

**ROUNDUP 2025**



Internationale  
Filmschule  
Köln

# MISSION

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**W**ith the 2025 edition of the European Showrunner Programme, ifs continued its unique initiative to promote the showrunner position in Europe. The aim of this programme is twofold: to continue the focused conversation amongst European series professionals about this position and to provide experienced series writers with the leadership- and production-related skills and insights needed to successfully take on this demanding position.

The programme consists of three parts:

### 1. The European Showrunner Training

A top-level advanced training and mentoring programme for experienced series writers.

### 2. The European Showrunner Think Tank

A series of industry events focusing on analysing, discussing, and eventually implementing a truly European showrunner model.

### 3. The European Showrunner Network

A series of network meetings for established and aspiring showrunners, scheduled at key industry events.

## Head of Programme



The European Showrunner Programme is headed by Danish writer and showrunner Jeppe Gjervig Gram (»Borgen«, »Follow the Money«).

**F**ounded in 2000, the ifs Internationale Filmschule Köln is one of the leading schools for film and moving images in Germany today. As an internationally focused institution for education and professional training, it provides film and media professionals with a high-quality, future-oriented education in a close combination of theory and practice. The fact that it is located in Cologne – a film, media, and TV hub – is particularly characteristic of its close proximity to the industry. The sole principal partner of the ifs is the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW.

Since 2013, the ifs has been offering the MA Serial Storytelling, the first and only international Master's programme in Europe with a focus on collaborative writing for series. The intensive study programme focuses on both German-language and international series markets, combining screenwriting craft with techniques of cooperative story development (»Writers' Room«) and applied artistic research. In 2022, ifs launched the European Showrunner Programme – a unique initiative aiming to support the discussion and implementation of a truly European showrunner model that has just successfully concluded its fourth edition.



## Funding Partner

As the main funder, the **Creative Europe MEDIA Programme** strongly supports the European Showrunner Programme.

## Cooperation Partner

With the **FOCAL** foundation, we were fortunate to gain an internationally renowned cooperation partner that will continue to support the programme in 2026.

## Partners Think Tanks and Network

And again, we were delighted to find prestigious festivals and industry conferences as partners for Think Tanks, presentations, and networking events. We were delighted to continue our strong partnerships with **TV Drama Vision** at **Göteborg Film Festival** and **Seriencamp Conference**. Additional events included Filmfest München, Iberseries and Serial Killer Festival. For the first time, the ESP also partnered with **EAVE – European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs** and **ACE** for joint workshops.

## Media Partner

The European Showrunner Training was promoted by media partner **Blickpunkt:Film**.

Many thanks to our partners!

Funded by:



Cooperation Partner:



Media Partner:



Partners Think Tanks and Network:



# TRAINING

**A**iming to provide brilliant series writers with key leadership- and production-related skills, the ESP is designed as a six-month blended learning programme featuring both on-site and online sessions. The European Showrunner Training consists of lectures, seminars, interactive workshops, case studies, and masterclasses, as well as mentoring in the form of one-on-one online consultations.

The fourth edition started at the end of May 2025 and ended in November 2025.

## Applicants

For the fourth edition, the European Showrunner Programme again received a vast number of applications from all over Europe, most of them from highly accomplished series writers. Thus, the selection committee had the demanding task of deciding on twelve participants among a large group of writers that would have been just as qualified.

## Participants

The group of participants selected consisted of twelve series writers from ten European countries. The majority of whom – again – came with many years of experience as series writers including numerous head writing positions. However, the committee also decided to take on a younger writer who in spite of his junior years had already led his first shows in the showrunner role.

The positive group dynamics proved that the selection created a good match. From the very first module on the aspiring and first-time showrunners acted in an open, resourceful, and supporting manner, aiming to further the showrunning model in all parts of Europe.

**Mile Božičević** | Croatia  
»Hubble Bubble«, »On the Border«

**Aleksandra Chmielewska** | Poland  
»Glitter«, »Cracow Monsters«

**Nadine Gottmann** | Germany  
»Das Signal / The Signal«, »Echt Friends«

**Tua Harno** | Finland  
»Dead Women Talking«, »The Laws of Man / Pohjolan laki«

**Maria Hinterkoerner** | Austria  
»Die Toten von Salzburg«, »Mandy and the Forces of Evil«

**Kerstin Höckel** | Germany  
»Fritzie – Der Himmel muss warten«, »Polizeiruf 110«

**Dunya Khayame** | The Netherlands  
»De Poli«, »Zina«

**Stéphane Mitchell** | Switzerland  
»Quartier des banques / Banking District«, »Heidi«

**Nikolaj Storgaard Mortensen** | Denmark  
»Alt er tilladt/No Rules«, »En for holdet / One for the Team«

**Andri Óttarson** | Iceland  
»Case«, »Black Sands«

**Thara Popoola** | UK  
»Sex Education«, »Queenie«

**Marko Popović** | Serbia  
»The Call«, »The Only Way Out«



From top left to bottom right: Mile Božičević (Croatia), Andri Óttarson (Iceland), Head of Programme Jeppe Gjervig Gram (Denmark), Marko Popović (Serbia), programme manager Carolin Große Hellmann (Germany), Kerstin Höckel (Germany), Nikolaj Storgaard Mortensen (Denmark), Maria Hinterkoerner (Austria), Dunya Khayame (The Netherlands), Tua Harno (Finland), Nadine Gottmann (Germany), Thara Popoola (UK), Aleksandra Chmielewska (Poland). Not pictured: Stéphane Mitchell (Switzerland)

## Modules

**Module 1:**  
The Showrunner as Creator

**Module 2:**  
The Showrunner as Head Writer

**Module 3:**  
The Producer's Mindset

**Module 4:**  
The Director's Mindset

## Curriculum

On as many as eleven weekends – three of them on site in Cologne – the participants dove deep into the topics leadership and series producing, discussed issues of sustainability and learned from established showrunners as well as from the perspective of their key creative partners what is needed for a successful creative collaboration on eye level. From leading the writers' room to marketing and branding, they touched upon every aspect of the showrunning process.

Throughout the intensive six-month training, many experienced showrunners gave detailed insights into their individual work models, their challenges, and the benefits they see in the showrunner approach.

The seminar-style part of the programme again focused on Creative Leadership, and series producing alongside sessions on related aspects such as editing, visual style, green filmmaking, diversity, and AI.

## Evaluation

From the very first module on, the participants expressed deep appreciation for the insights and support they received throughout the programme. They highlighted not only the diverse and individual approaches to showrunning, but also the long-awaited clarity on budgets and finances, both of which have helped them tackle their projects with greater ease.



# TRAINING

## Quotes



*“My experience with the European Showrunner Training was absolutely amazing. First, the idea behind the programme is smart and highly relevant. The lecturers were top-level European professionals, and the sessions covered all key aspects of the showrunning business.”*

**Marko Popović** | Serbia  
»The Call«, »The Only Way Out«



*“The programme is just what talented head writers need to up their game, raise the bar, and highlight the unique voice of European shows.”*

**Tua Harno** | Finland  
»Dead Women Talking«,  
»The Laws of man / Pohjolan laki«



*“I’m still feeling overwhelmed, in the best possible way, by the breadth of skills and insights I’m taking away from the European Showrunner Programme. Above all, I feel I’ve gained an entirely new sense of myself as a writer and series creator – and I’m excited to put this into practice!”*

**Nadine Gottmann** | Germany  
»Das Signal / The Signal«, »Echt Friends«



*“A programme that broadens your perspective, sparks inspiration, and strengthens your practice. It helped me equally as an artist and as a businesswoman.”*

**Dunya Khayame** | The Netherlands  
»De Poli«, »Zina«



*“This programme was incredibly inspiring, well-organized, and productive. The word ‘showrunner’ now has a deeper meaning for me – it takes far more than being ‘just’ an industry professional to create something that truly resonates with people.”*

**Mile Božičević** | Croatia  
»Hubble Bubble«, »On the Border«



*“The European Showrunner Programme completely surpassed my expectations. It’s been an incredible and informative experience, and I know what I’ve learnt will equip me to confidently showrun my own show when the times comes.”*

**Thara Popoola** | UK  
»Sex Education«, »Queenie«

# TRAINING

## Speakers and Mentors (Selection)



**Abby Ajayi**  
UK | writer, showrunner  
»Riches«, »Inventing Anna«,  
»How to Get Away with  
Murder«



**Wiktor Piątkowski**  
Poland | writer, producer,  
showrunner  
»Morderczynie / Murderesses«,  
»Wataha / The Pack«



**Sabine de Mardt**  
Germany | producer, president  
Gaumont Germany  
»The Interpreter of Silence /  
German House«, »Barbarians«



**Mikko Pöllä**  
Finland | writer, producer  
»White Wall«, »Black  
Widows«, »Easy Living«



**Johan Fasting**  
Norway | writer, showrunner  
»Makta / Power Play«



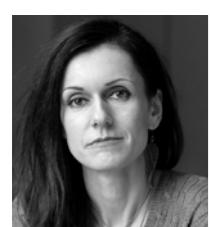
**Marie Roussin**  
France | writer, producer,  
showrunner  
»Mixte / Voltaire High«, »Lupin«,  
»Borgia«, »Les Bracelets  
Rouges / Red Band Society«



**Jantje Friesz**  
Germany | writer, showrunner,  
executive producer  
»1899«, »DARK«



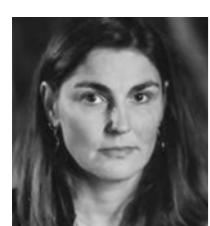
**Danna Stern**  
Israel/Germany | executive  
producer, Global Content  
Executive at In Transit  
Productions



**Teodora Markova**  
Bulgaria | writer, showrunner  
»Soviet Jeans«, »The Last  
Divorce of Communism«



**Frank Spotnitz**  
USA/UK | writer, showrunner,  
executive producer  
»The X-Files«, »The Man in  
the High Castle«, »Leonardo«



**Sanne Nuyens**  
Belgium | writer, showrunner  
»Hotel Beau Séjour«,  
»The Twelve«



**Anna Winger**  
Germany/USA | writer,  
showrunner, executive  
producer  
»Deutschland 83/86/89«,  
»Transatlantic«, »Unorthodox«



**Anna Winger**  
writer, showrunner, executive producer  
»Deutschland 83/86/89«, »Transatlantic«, »Unorthodox«

# THINK TANKS

**4** distinct editions of the European Showrunner Think Tank marked the culmination of our four-year journey exploring showrunning in Europe. Much noted public sessions included a spotlight conversation with Fanny Herrero and an in-depth case study of the Emmy Award-winning series »The Pitt«. Leading experts came together for confidential discussions or contributed to an online survey. Across all editions, the shared goal was clear: to examine both the challenges and opportunities of showrunning in Europe – and to offer a glimpse of what a sustainable, truly European showrunner model could look like.



left: **Marike Muselears** | Head of International Financing & Coproductions at Nordisk Film Production

right: **Fanny Herrero** | writer, showrunner  
»Call My Agent!«, »Standing Up«

## THINK TANK XII

### Showrunning in Europe – Spotlight on: Fanny Herrero

The European Showrunner Think Tank series 2025 launched with its first event, Showrunning in Europe – Spotlight on: Fanny Herrero, held at the TV Drama Vision conference during the Gothenburg Film Festival.

French showrunner and screenwriter Fanny Herrero reflected on her approach to showrunning in a panel moderated by Marike Muselears of Nordisk Film Production. Known for acclaimed series such as »Call My Agent! / Dix Pour Cent« and Netflix's »Standing Up / Drôle«, Herrero also shared insights from her work on the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

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**Tuesday, 28 January 2026**  
**at TV Drama Visions Conference, Gothenburg, Sweden**

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**Speaker**

**Fanny Herrero**

France | writer, showrunner  
»Call My Agent! / Dix Pour Cent«,  
»Standing Up / Drôle«

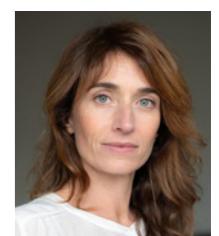
**Moderator**

**Marike Muselears**

Sweden | Head of International Financing & Coproductions at Nordisk Film Production

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A recording of this think tank is available at [www.showrunners.eu](http://www.showrunners.eu)



# THINK TANKS



## THINK TANK XIII Showrunning in Europe: The Producers' Perspective

In March 2025, the European Showrunner Programme continued its exploration of the European showrunner model with a closed-door session dedicated to the producers' perspective. Following the first edition in 2024, which focused on showrunners themselves, this second think tank brought together leading series producers from across Europe to examine how the role of the showrunner is perceived within the European television industry.

The discussion addressed both the general and individual challenges of implementing the showrunner system in Europe, with particular attention to the dynamics of collaboration between producers and showrunners.

The confidential nature of this format encouraged an open and honest exchange among experienced professionals, providing valuable insights into the applicability of the model in diverse production contexts.

The findings from all closed sessions have contributed to the publication *Showrunning in Europe – Skills, Tasks, Responsibilities* (see page 19).

**Monday, 24 March 2025  
at Series Mania, Lille, France**

Moderators

**Jeppe Gjervig Gram**  
Denmark | writer and showrunner  
»Borgen«, »Follow the Money«  
Head of Programme ESP

**Nadja Radojevic**  
Germany | CEO ifs Internationale Filmschule  
Köln, Director of Programme ESP

## THINK TANK XIV Inside »The Pitt« – Creative Collaboration in the US Showrunner Model

The session offered an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the Emmy-winning series »The Pitt«, revealing how U.S. showrunners, directors, and writers collaborate to shape a complex drama. Showrunner R. Scott Gemmill, director Uta Briesewitz, and writer Valerie Chu presented an in-depth case study of their creative process, exploring how they safeguard a shared vision, make key decisions, and navigate power structures to build trust and artistic freedom. A special focus was placed on the position of "writer on set," a practice that is common in the U.S. but remains unusual in the European series market. The discussion examined its impact on creative continuity and collaboration. Moderated by Swedish showrunner and ESP alumna Lisa Ambjörn, the conversation added a European lens to the U.S. showrunner system.

**Tuesday, 25 November 2025, online**

Speakers

**R. Scott Gemmill**  
Canada/USA | writer, producer, showrunner  
»The Pitt«, »ER«, »NCIS:LA«

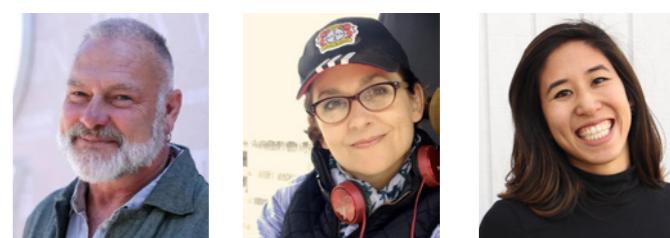
**Uta Briesewitz**  
Germany/USA | director, cinematographer  
»The Pitt«, »Severance«, »Stranger Things«

**Valerie Chu**  
USA | writer, executive story editor  
»The Pitt«, »Nashville«, »Queen Sugar«

Moderator

**Lisa Ambjörn**  
Sweden | writer, showrunner, ESP alumna  
»Young Royals«, »Sjukt / Sick«

A recording of this think tank is available at [www.showrunners.eu](http://www.showrunners.eu)





## THINK TANK XV Online Survey on Showrunning in Europe

To validate the findings from four editions of the European Showrunner Programme, in July 2025 an online survey was conducted among key European showrunners to provide an up-to-date overview of their tasks, responsibilities, and working practices across the continent. The aim was to gather clear, comparable data to support and advance the ongoing discourse on showrunning in Europe.

The survey results were analysed alongside insights from the closed-door Think Tanks and complemented by research carried out by our Director of Programme, Nadja Radojevic. Together, these sources formed the basis of a comprehensive report, *Showrunning in Europe – Skills, Tasks, Responsibilities*, published in January 2026 (see page 19 for details).

## JOINT SESSIONS Producing in the Showrunner Model

2025 marked the launch of an exciting series of events in partnership with some of Europe's most influential series-production initiatives. The journey began with exclusive online sessions hosted together with **EAVE – European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs** and **ACE Producers**. Through compelling case studies, leading European showrunner-producer duos opened the doors to their creative process, showcasing how the showrunner model drives efficient workflows and elevates storytelling. These sessions aimed to invite both seasoned and emerging producers to join the dialogue on sustainable, truly European approaches to the creative collaboration between showrunners and producers.

Featured teams included Danish writer and showrunner **Jeppe Gjervig Gram** (*»Borgen«, »Follow the Money«*) alongside Polish-Norwegian Producer **Jacob Jarek** (*»Follow the Money«, »The Apprentice«*) as well as the German showrunner-producer duo **Annette Hess** (*»We Children from Bahnhof Zoo«*), and **Sabine de Mardt**, CEO of **Gaumont Germany** (*»The Interpreter of Silence/German House«*).

## PUBLICATION Showrunning in Europe – Skills, Tasks, Responsibilities

To mark the conclusion of the fourth edition, ifs is publishing the report *»Showrunning in Europe – Skills, Tasks, Responsibilities«*. The survey examines the professional profile and responsibilities of showrunners in European series production, identifying similarities and differences across Europe.

Drawing on original research and insights from leading industry experts, the publication maps out the current landscape and uncovers a key finding: a distinct European showrunner model is emerging. Unlike the U.S. approach, collaboration between showrunner and producer stands at its core – offering a blueprint for sustainable, high-quality storytelling in a global market. Packed with practical insights and strategic recommendations, this report is essential reading for anyone shaping the future of European series.

Download now at [www.showrunners.eu](http://www.showrunners.eu)



## European Showrunner Network Meetings

28 January 2025  
@TV Drama Vision, Gothenburg

17 February 2025  
@Berlinale, Berlin

25 March 2025  
@Series Mania Forum, Lille

1 December 2025  
@Content London

## Exchange and Support

To strengthen ongoing mutual support among showrunners, the »European Showrunner Network« has evolved into a well-established pillar of the programme. What began as a series of meetings at key industry events has grown into a vibrant, year-round community. Today, the Network offers regular peer consulting sessions and dedicated workshops for alums, alongside its gatherings at major festivals and markets. These activities provide a trusted space for participants, alumni, and lecturers to exchange best practices, share advice, and discuss current developments in the industry.

## ESP on Tour

As in previous years, representatives of the European Showrunner Programme discussed showrunning at key industry events. Notable stops included **Filmfest München** in Munich, Germany, **Serial Killer Festival** in Brno, Czech Republic, and **Iberseries** in Madrid, Spain.

**FILMFEST  
MÜNCHEN**



**IBER  
SERIES & plato**  
**IN  
DUS  
TRIA**

## European Showrunner Programme 2026

After the successful fourth edition in 2025, we are thrilled to continue the European Showrunner Programme in 2026 and beyond!

European Showrunner Think Tank:  
3 public and 1 closed session

European Showrunner Training:  
16 Training Days  
(8 days on location + 8 days online)

European Showrunner Network:  
several meetings throughout the year,  
e.g. at Series Mania, Berlinale, Seriencamp  
and online

To further advance the discussion and implementation of a sustainable showrunner model in Europe, ifs will host three online sessions on Producing in the Showrunner Model in cooperation with ACE producers, EAVE – European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs, and EPI Erich Pommer Institute's SERIES WOMEN.

### Next Think Tank

27 January 2026, 1:45 pm CET  
Spotlight on: Katharina Eyssen  
@ Göteborg Film Festival's TV Drama Vision

### Application Deadline Training

30 March 2026

### Training

29 May – 14 November 2026

### Team

Jeppe Gjervig Gram, Head of Programme  
Nadja Radojevic, Director of Programme  
Carolin Große Hellmann, programme manager  
Hannah Schorr, programme assistant

### Contact

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