



INFORMATION ABOUT THE HOST INSTITUTION

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ABOUT THE CENTRE

Name of Centre Centre of Excellence in Film and Interactive Media (CEFIMA)
Is the Centre already established at the time of the application (yes/no)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Please name any consortium partners for the Centre [text]



ABSTRACT

Describe briefly the aims as well as the current and planned activities of the Centre (150 words)

The vision for **CEFIMA** is innovation in NFS' present teaching and learning programmes in filmmaking to fully incorporate digital technology and interactivity as a means of artistic expression. Digital technology has long been adopted in all phases of film and television production, but artists are just now beginning to explore its full potential. The challenge is to prepare students to exploit the new technologies for telling meaningful stories that help us understand both intellectually and emotionally an increasingly complex world. The core of CEFIMA actions will be students' tests and exercises using new digital media in the creation of innovative storytelling. To this we bring the unique teaching and learning practice in cinematic storytelling developed at NFS over the last 20 years, recognised for its responsiveness to the changing demands of society and a rapidly evolving industry.



APPLICATION DOCUMENT

The application must be written in English and follow the requirements set in this template. It must not contain more than 10 pages in Times New Roman, 12-point types, with lines spaced 1.5 and margins of 2 cm. Within this format, the applicant must provide:

a) Documentation of educational quality in existing provision

The applicant must comment and critically reflect on themes and questions set out in the criteria, and compare their existing provision with similar provision within the same subject/discipline area, both nationally and internationally. Through this, the applicant must document that the academic community qualifies as a Centre for Excellence in Education.

b) A centre plan

The applicant must comment and critically reflect on themes and questions set out in the criteria. The Centre Plan must outline the vision of the Centre, its strategy and plans. It must present the plans for the dissemination of knowledge and practices to its own institution(s) and to other educational communities as well as an evaluation and impact framework.

Appendices

The following appendices must be included (and no other):

1. A list of references
2. A budget for the Centre for the first five-year period, including motivation for costs (see guidelines at www.nokut.no/SFU/utlysninger)
3. An action plan for the Centre, including milestones (no more than three pages)
4. CVs of the proposed Centre Leader and two to five key members of the Centre team (each CV must not exceed two pages)

All appendices must be in English.

Practical information

The rector of the host institution must sign the application.

The deadline for submitting applications is set in the announcement of the call.

All applications will be published on the NOKUT website, alongside the expert panel's feedback.

APPLICATION DOCUMENT

The Norwegian Film School (NFS): Background

The Norwegian Film School (NFS) was founded in 1997 as “an art school of the highest standard in the field of film and television”¹ on a par with international schools, and is an autonomous faculty within Lillehammer University College (LUC). Its mandate from the government is to identify, nurture, and develop the talent of budding filmmakers and prepare them to work effectively in the national and international film industries, while at the same time bringing new inspiration and vigour to the industry.

From the outset, NFS established partnerships with the other Nordic film schools and the international association of film and television schools, CILECT². The Nordic region in CILECT, NORDICIL, presently coordinated by NFS, brings Nordic students and teachers together 3 to 4 times a year to have high profile seminars, to exchange “best practice” and to create a network for both students and teachers. In recent years the exchange of artistic research in film education has developed at the initiative of NFS³. In GEECT - the European branch of CILECT - activities concentrate on teaching and learning practices in specific disciplines. NFS is planning to host a GEECT-seminar in 2017 on educating film teachers (see below). This initiative is a follow-up on the NFS-publication “Training the trainers” (2005, by Richard Ross⁴) that was the first published coherent material within CILECT on how to teach film students in all the different disciplines. In addition to network-based activities, NFS has over the years developed bilateral collaborations and shared workshops in producing, screenwriting and cinematography.⁵

As the only national artistic film education in Norway, NFS seeks collaborations with other national arts educations in Norway. At this time, two MA-students in film music composition from the Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH) are integrated in NFS’s master programme and there are continual collaborations with students from the National Theatre Academy at KHiO, who receive practical training in acting for film on production exercises on NFS’s study. Recently NFS, KHiO and NMH launched an alumni project together with “Talent Norway” and private sponsors called “Art Excellence”⁶. The aim is to support great talents from the art educations in Norway in their challenging transit from school to professional career.

NFS OFFERS:

- **3-year artistic-professional Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) Degree** in 9 disciplines The biennial intake is 54 students. The course is open to Nordic students and students in command of Norwegian and English. 352 students have graduated since the school’s foundation in 1997.⁷
- **2-year artistic-professional Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Degree** in 8 disciplines, open to

Nordic and international students; biennial intake 12-16 students – opened 2015.⁸

- **3-year artistic-professional Diploma, Norwegian Artistic Fellowship Programme** (Doctoral level) - 3 completed, 2 underway.⁹

Input Factors

NFS is an ‘exclusive’ school: only 8.8 % of applicants gain entrance, and it offers an unparalleled track into the industry; and all shortlisted applicants are not only interviewed extensively but participate in assessed workshops at NFS designed to measure individual aptitude for the course of study, levels of achievement, potential and interpersonal skills.

All faculty are experienced film industry professionals hired on 4-year contracts, recruited from the Norwegian and international film industries, who combine teaching with continued professional activity. Professors and Head Tutors work closely with the Head of Studies for BFA and MFA and are supported by dedicated co-ordinators managed by a Head of Administration, all reporting to the Dean. There are a total of 10,9 full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty positions, currently filled by a total of 6 Professors and 22 Associate Professors.¹⁰ NFS devotes approximately 4 FTEs per year on guest tutors - approximately 150-200 individual experts per year. With only 6 students per discipline in the BFA, and a total of 14 in the MFA programme, NFS maintains a high-intensity ratio of 1 tutor to 4,6 students. For NFS both the quality of the teachers and the intensity in follow-up of students are crucial input factors. NFS has from the beginning had close ties to the Norwegian film industry, and this is maintained through industry participation in workshops and exercises, placement for students, and industry representation on the NFS Advisory Board.

Teaching based on artistic research and development (AR)

NFS has succeeded in attracting high-profile filmmakers from the national and international film community to use part of their time as teacher at NFS, ensuring that faculty are continually updated on practices and developments in the industry and bring inspiration and experience back to the school. For example, NFS Head of Cinematography, Professor Kjell Vassdal, cinematographer on Norway’s first 3D-feature *Blue Mountain – the Hunt for the Magic Horn* (2011), led students (and alumni) in exploring the technical and storytelling potential of stereoscopic cinema just 3 weeks after the shooting. Head Tutor in Editing, Professor Niels Pagh Andersen, editor of Joshua Oppenheimer’s Oscar-nominated, widely-screened documentaries, *The Act of Killing* (Denmark 2012) and *The Look of Silence* (Denmark 2014), used these as case-studies to give students insight into the practical and creative processes of finding characters and stories in disturbing material (a depiction of the Indonesian killings of 1965-66).

NFS has actively participated in developing the national Norwegian Artistic Research Programme since its inception in 2005. To date three candidates have successfully completed the

Research Fellowship Programme – screenwriters Ståle Stein Berg (2009)¹¹ and Siri Senje (2013)¹², and director Trygve Allister Diesen (2011)¹³. Currently NFS has two candidates in the Programme: cinematographer Cecilie Semec (*The Modern Movie Image from a Cinematographic Perspective* - 2014-2017) and digital visual designer Rafal Hanzl (*Modes of Expression: The Impact of Digital Tools on Storytelling in the Feature Film* - 2015-2018), both of which have direct relevance to the proposed work of CEFIMA. This form of AR is crucial for ensuring students are receiving the most advanced and up-to-date education.

In 2011, the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme established a Project Programme to fund post-fellowship (post-doctoral level) and advanced artistic research projects of high international standard, at participating institutions.¹⁴ To date, NFS has received support for director Erik Poppe’s research project *The Subjective Lens*¹⁵, on ‘the performance of the self’, completed in 2016; Associate Professor in Editing Einar Egeland’s project *True or False: Mind and Emotion in Film Editing*¹⁶; and Pagh Andersens *Order in Chaos*¹⁷. In 2016, Professor of Directing Rumle Hammerich commenced his research on *The Film Director’s Vision: Tacit Knowledge, Intuition, or Method?* with funding from LUC. All NFS AR projects¹⁸ involve other faculty and students at NFS. Crucially they also inform and enhance student learning through new workshops and courses, maintaining the flow between industry, artistic research and teaching and learning.

Pedagogical input

The choice of using practitioners as teachers at NFS implies a challenge: filmmakers rarely have pedagogical experience and the need to supply their high professional competence with pedagogical insight is obvious. NFS has taken this challenge seriously from the outset and today NFS has a prominent international role in research and dissemination of pedagogy in film school teaching. “Training the trainers” (NFS, 2005, see above) was widely distributed to film schools all over the world – and still is today. In 2013 NFS launched a new international project, that builds on the content of “Training the trainers”: “The Artist as (Film School) Teacher”,¹⁹ which aims to meet new challenges by creating specialised seminars supported by tailor-made study materials for both face-to-face and online exchanges. The initial outcome will be a formally approved course for Nordic film school teachers starting September 2016²⁰. NFS plans to develop this project further on a European level including new pedagogical challenges that will emerge from CEFIMA projects.

Process Factors

Learning approach

The belief that arts education is fundamentally about developing the competence of artistic expression of the individual artist is the driving force behind NFS’ pedagogic and didactic approach²¹. In this context, learning is about the ability to apply skills and knowledge gained in an

increasingly conscious and sophisticated way in the creation of the artistic work. In addition, NFS programmes are informed by the fact that filmmaking is a collaborative process, where individuals working in different artistic disciplines must cooperate in order to realise a coherent artistic vision. A key element in NFS' success is giving the students insight into this and providing a protected space in which to test themselves, gain insight, and find their role in this complicated process.

All common exercises (called "*pen tests*") emphasise students' 'right to make mistakes' and the belief that the conscious application of constraints is a key to freeing creativity²². The faculty set a number of constraints the students must operate within, and the exercises are explicitly not finished films but give the students experience with particular elements of filmmaking²³. A key element of the success of the *pen tests* is the system of feedback used through the *statement of intent*, a document developed both by the team as a whole and the individual team member. It describes, clearly and concisely, what the team/team member wishes to achieve with the story they are telling, how they intend the audience to react when viewing their finished product, and which tools of the craft they intend to employ to achieve this intent. In the screening / evaluation of the exercise these statements of intent are read aloud and all discussion is strictly focused on whether or not it was achieved, and looking at reasons for why/why not.

Culture of learning

Artistic education (and, indeed, artistic activity) requires a unique personal investment. In order to gain a competence of artistic expression, students must open their sensory and emotional centres; areas often considered personal or private. This makes a collaborative artistic work like film, especially challenging, as filmmakers must learn how to communicate and share the contents of their sensory and emotional cores. NFS works systematically with this by creating a *culture of learning* that enables the students to make and share the personal investment necessary to achieve artistic development at a high level. This contains several elements:

- **Sharing:** students and staff develop a common vocabulary for discussing and debating the creative act of production and cultivate a shared understanding of the art of filmmaking through theory and philosophy of art sessions. Expectations of each other and the school are shared systematically in a variety of forums.
- **Trust:** 'The right to make mistakes' and experiment demands security. Productions are never shown outside an educational setting, with the sole exception of the graduation films. All projects are evaluated according to strict criteria, and in the NFS atmosphere of trust students discuss their mistakes and failures frankly with peers and tutors. Some of the most important learning experiences come from discussing how mistakes can be rectified.
- **Achievement:** NFS is an 'exclusive' school and offers an unparalleled track into the industry.

Success at school and career achievement both by alumni and faculty inspire new generations of students to apply and to push themselves to fulfil their potential.

- **Responsibility:** In a relatively small and intimate school, each student can expect all members of the NFS staff and community to support them in their development and learning.

Active involvement of students

A key element in the success of NFS programmes is the extensive feedback and evaluation. Each student gives feedback to every class, workshop, exercise, and other element of their education; in some semesters as many as 8-10 evaluations. Most of this feedback is written, and is designed to encourage the student to reflect on their own participation and learning as well as judge on the effectiveness of learning activity they are giving feedback on. This feedback is continually monitored by faculty, the Dean, and Head of Studies and is actively used to adjust the course of the educational programmes for the class in question, as well as planning the comparable course for the next cohort. A result of this is that no two cohorts at NFS have identical experiences, and students are aware that their feedback has a direct and significant impact on their own course of study.

There is no formula for excellent education in filmmaking. Over the years, the NFS approach has developed through a commitment to *experiential learning*²⁴ throughout all levels of NFS. Not only do students learn from experiences and apply that learning to the next challenge, but the faculty and staff do too. NFS brings approach to teaching and learning into the CEFIMA.

Outcome Factors

Relationship between student achievement / learning aims and learning outcomes

DNF is a sought-after school at home and abroad, and selection has to be exacting. In the period 2001-2015 only the top 8,8 % of applicants for the BFA, showing high artistic achievement and aptitude for the course, were accepted. Most enrolled students have previous experience in production, and all are highly motivated. In the same period, 2001 – 2015, all but one student successfully completed their degrees. The number of international applicants has risen from 9,2% in 2009 to 20,1% in 2015. In May, 2016, 25% of BFA and 50% of MFA students were international.

Evaluation of NFS teaching and learning by the students

Students at DNF are satisfied with their education. According to NOKUTs *Studiebarometeret*²⁵ 2014, NFS-students give 4,7 out of 5,0 for quality of teaching and learning programmes (national average 3,8) and 4,8 out of 5,0 for “general satisfaction” (national average 4,1).

Evaluation of NFS study programme by NOKUT

In 2008-09 the NOKUT Quality Assessment evaluation of LUC states: ‘The committee has, at the bequest of LUC leadership, conducted separate interviews with faculty and students from[NFS].

The impression of the committee is that this department has a good and systematic approach to quality, and is engaged in comprehensive quality assurance of their teaching and learning programme'.²⁶

NFS student achievement of expected learning outcomes

NFS's best external indicator of achieved competence in artistic expression is successful communication with audiences, through the examinable graduation films. These continue to win international awards - e.g.: Nominated/shortlisted for the most prestigious 'Student Academy Award' four times (2003, 2011, 2012, and 2014)²⁷, won 2011 with *Tuba Atlantic*. Other significant awards include first prizes and nominations at leading short film festivals.²⁸

The labour market and wider society

Alumni surveys conducted by NFS in 2008 and 2016²⁹ show that 90% of all alumni are working in the film- and TV-industry or related industries. In 2014-2015 alumni filled 93 main positions in 47 feature films & TV-series productions. Between 2010 and 2015 Alumni won 24 nominations for the Norwegian national professional 'Amanda' film awards, and garnered other international success.³⁰

The industry & press evaluation of DNF

"The School contributes to a revitalising of Norwegian film through the recruitment of professionals in all areas." *"The Film School has, through the addition of around 240 competent heads of department played an important role in first rejuvenating Norwegian film, and second taking Norwegian film to the international market."* (Film producers John M. Jacobsen, Sigve Endresen and Aage Aaberge, *Dagbladet* 7 February 2012).

"It took a surprisingly short time after the first group of students graduated until several of them debuted with feature film and contributed to the revitalization of Norwegian film. [...] You will not find another film school anywhere in the world to measure up to these results." (Kjetil Lismoen, *Aftenposten* 24 november 2011)

In a *Hollywood Reporter* survey of international film schools in 2014 (still to date the only ranking of international film schools published), NFS ranks as the 5th best film school in the world.³¹

"The facilities at the school are at a top level. The teachers are professional....and dedicated. The students are talented, ...dutifully engaged. The school is at world class level, and clearly deserves its status as one of Europe's indispensable film academies." (Pavel Jech, Dean FAMU, Prague Czech Republic)³²,

The Centre of Excellence in Film and Interactive Media Arts (CEFIMA)

Importance of CEFIMA

During the last 20 years, production, distribution and exhibition of film & TV has responded rapidly

to advances in digital technology³⁴, but creators have not yet taken full advantage of the artistic potential of digital media. This is a real challenge to arts education in general and to film schools in particular. The aim of CEFIMA is to enhance teaching and learning so students become capable of embracing the enormous storytelling potential of new digital technology and enriching our understanding of an increasingly complex world. Introducing innovative elements to educational programmes enables students to develop their artistic competence to produce original content for the emerging interactive, immersive and non-linear media, which offer new job opportunities³⁵; and to prepare graduates to contribute creatively to computer-supported linear storytelling for the big screen³⁶, where they are required to fill new artistic as well as technical roles. To meet the needs of our future industry & society, as more people use more new digital delivery-platforms³⁷, the challenge is to *expand storytelling into the emerging digital media*, connecting know-how from the oldest audio-visual format – filmmaking – to the *new interactive media, with their immersive capabilities* and to prepare students for careers in this rapidly-changing landscape.

No equivalent institution has faced this challenge, which an SFU Award will enable NFS to meet through five key steps. CEFIMA will develop a seedbed for a new generation of professionals, with knowledge both of the artistic potential of creative digital media and of the affordances of emerging production practices, with emphasis on *innovative media content forms*. Despite huge advances in the past three decades, the computer is still a relatively new medium with unexplored artistic potential, sustaining diverse content which is currently more familiar to engineers and geeks impelled by ‘technology push’ than to storytellers. CEFIMA will identify enabling technologies and tools to really benefit artists and the production environment - but its work will always be ‘content led’: focusing on creating worthwhile, original stories for a growing market.

Active involvement of Students

The core of CEFIMA actions are students’ tests and exercises using new digital media in the creation of innovative storytelling. The NFS culture of feedback, evaluation, and learning will, alongside expert advisors from the industry, ensure the students’ contributions of extra-curricular experience of interactive media as well as feedback on teaching impact directly on devising and implementing practical exercises in narrative content, interface design, interaction and aesthetics. 3rd-cycle Artistic Research candidates will focus in-depth practice-as research projects on storytelling in the emerging digital media. All this activity will continuously feed back into Head Tutors’ and Heads of Studies’ ongoing review and revision of the curriculum, to keep the NFS at the leading edge of a rapidly changing artistic, production and market environment. The NFS maintains international group exchanges, through which, in addition to professional and artistic insights, students bring home and spread ideas about education. Through CEFIMA, NFS will

monitor student learning and adjust programmes in order to ensure graduates are best prepared for future careers in the evolving national and international industries.

International developments in higher education and the work of CEFIMA

Interactive media and game-design are taught to a high standard in a number of Higher Education Institutions at home and abroad³⁸, but none of these focuses precisely on the practice (as opposed to the theory and history) of interactive storytelling, although Stockholms Dramatiska Högskola and the National Film and Television School, UK, among others, have introduced a measure of interdisciplinary exchange between interactive media and pre-existing courses. NFS will be unique in focusing on storytelling, as it does throughout its programme, in creative digital media. Through CEFIMA, NFS will be able to lead practice-based teaching and learning which integrates immersive and interactive dramaturgies into all 9 existing disciplines at BFA level, and to add specialist BFA and MFA programmes, as well as fostering Artistic Research. Dissemination and discussion of the NFS methodology and outcomes via the CEFIMA online community will lead to their wider impact and adoption in the higher education community (see *Action Plan*).

Key steps in realising the ambitions of CEFIMA

The first CEFIMA project will research and develop the Norwegian Film School's teaching, learning and artistic research through the following (for details, see *Appendix 3: Action Plan*):

- (1) Enhance teaching and learning in filmmaking and digital media by integrating new elements with existing disciplines.
- (2) Develop, through student and staff testing, new programmes in immersive and interactive digital media storytelling.
- (3) Develop a teacher-training programme aimed at artists and professional practitioners to prepare them for the teaching and learning environment, that includes digital media technology and interactive storytelling
- (4) Multiple strategies of dissemination, which also involve feedback aimed at enhancing future activities.
- (5) Implement Artistic Research at all levels into the Art of Immersive and Interactive Storytelling, with direct connection to the study programmes.

Outcomes and impact of SFU Award that would not be achieved without support

The SFU Award will enable NFS to develop the convergence of competences from two subject areas to their mutual benefit - *Film & Television* and *Immersive & Interactive Storytelling* - so far only bordering on each other, from new distribution platforms for linear storytelling to the artistic potential of immersive forms like gaming, virtual reality and augmented reality, to bring about a completely new approach to artistic content creation in teaching and learning and in professional

practice, in this increasingly important market sector. CEFIMA will add new educational AR expertise to existing faculty, to explore, design and support innovative teaching and learning in the new disciplines emerging from digital technologies. It will create a community of students, peers, and stakeholders, enabling participative course design, rapid dissemination of outcomes and feedback. Developing new educational approaches and strands will lift quality and innovation in interactive and audiovisual storytelling and production in Norway and the wider environment as well as giving graduates a stronger entry into professional life. Collaborations and exchange of information and practices with higher education establishments, interactive production companies and television companies at home and abroad will require travel, workshops and to host guest leaders and tutors, all needing support from SFU funding. Sharing plans and experiences, and bringing the results of NFS AR-based curriculum-design, some now only in printed form, into face-to-face sessions and easily updated online formats will impact a new and wider group of stakeholders both nationally and internationally, which cannot be achieved without SFU funding.

Contribution by CEFIMA over time

CEFIMA research and development in teaching and learning will be iterative and continuous over time. The Head of CEFIMA will review activities quarterly, report to the Dean of NFS and brief the Heads of Studies, who will incorporate discussion of progress into curriculum- and staff-meetings, at which Professors and Tutors will present and note student contributions. Project Managers will feed project outcomes back to the development team, so that ideas emerge and evolve, informing the development of teaching and learning and stimulating innovative practices in the wider institution through audio-visual storytelling. Project Managers will monitor closely and co-ordinate the work of artistic researchers investigating educational advances as well as creative and artistic aspects of emerging digital media, industry needs and new tools; and will develop new modes to train tutors. Faculty will chair and record - using both written and novel *audio-visual* means - formal and informal debate in-house, to be enlarged through the CEFIMA dedicated Interactive Website, Discussion Forum, Blog, Vlog and Social Media. Developing and moderating online a community of stakeholders and interested parties, in Norway and worldwide, will bring ongoing input and new insights both to the NFS and to LUC.

Exit strategies: sustainability of CEFIMA post funding

As CEFIMA's initial research for the new BFA and MFA in Immersive and Interactive Storytelling yields results and the curriculum develops, central funding from LUC will cover NFS overheads and provide resources and facilities to support exercises, workshops, rapid prototyping experiments and other projects. Commercial companies with whom links have been developed through CEFIMA are likely to make in-kind contributions of hardware and software, both for beta testing

and to establish brand loyalty. The Award of the SFU is expected to enable NFS to achieve the fundamental paradigm-shift which will place it at the leading edge of anticipated convergences and new practices, merging them seamlessly with the School's teaching and learning. Connections forged under the aegis of CEFIMA with related higher education establishments and commercial companies will continue to bear fruit, and graduates from the new programmes will feed back new knowledge into NFS.

Dissemination

Moving-image based interactive modes of reporting on and engaging others with CEFIMA, and disseminating outcomes and new knowledge will be central. Assoc. Prof Fredrik Graver, Head of Studies BFA, will monitor and update processes and progress. CEFIMA will raise awareness through Reports; Briefings; Audiovisual Documentaries; Newspaper Articles and NFS Graduation Screenings. It will share knowledge, practices and understanding with stakeholders and interested parties through the Interactive Website; Roadshows; Presentations and Demonstrations; Subject-specific Newsletters; Conferences and Expos and published Conference Papers/Refereed Journal Publications/Book Chapters (see *Action Plan* for details of target groups and actions).

Academic leadership's involvement in dissemination

Most of NFS Professors will devote 15% of their time to CEFIMA activities. They will contribute actively to all aspects of the dissemination strategy above, detailed in the *Action Plan*, both directly by presenting and publishing outcomes and more widely by activating professional networks and peers in higher education. They will use their specialised professional skills to produce high-quality short information films, documentaries and teasers about the work of CEFIMA for the Website and wider distribution. Using existing and building new national and international networks will be a key factor in this.

Management of CEFIMA

The Centre will be an integrated part of NFS. The head of Centre will be Assoc. Professor Fredrik Graver, supported by an Advisory Board with student, alumni, staff, and industry representation. The leadership of the Centre will also include the following Project managers Professor Jan Lindvik and the Head of Studies for BFA (TBA), Digital visual designer Peter Hjorth and Professor Henning Camre. The Centre leadership will refer to the dean of NFS and to the Board of NFS. In addition to existing faculty and guest teachers, CEFIMA will draw on international experts within the field, and industry representatives, and international educational partners. Administrative and technical staff at NFS will be backing the Centre activity. The Centre is strongly supported by LUC for whom this development of NFS is an integrated part of "Strategic Plan - LUC"³⁹



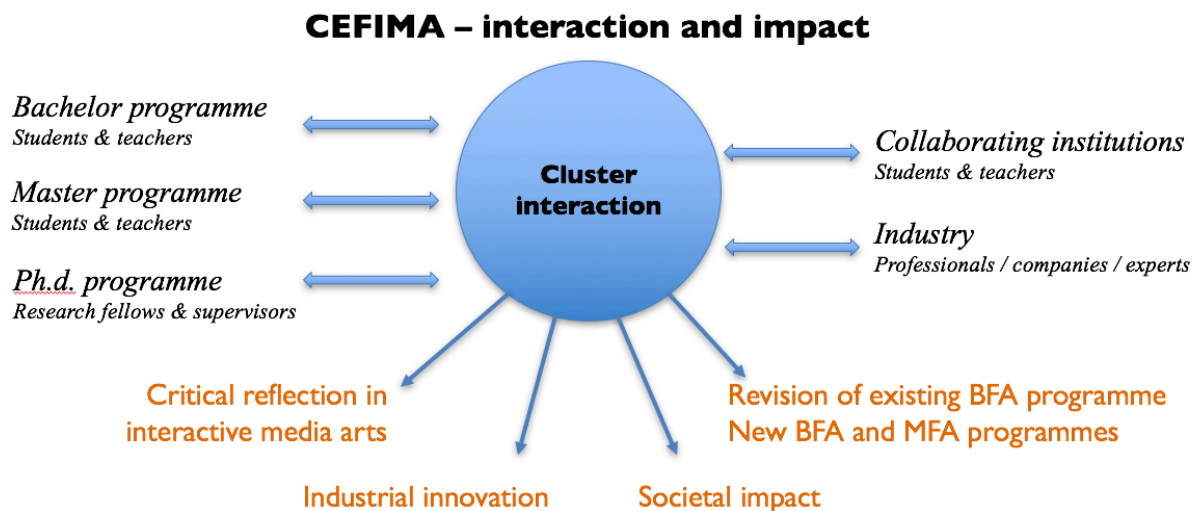
COMMENTS

[Body text (150 words)]

I. Framework for evaluation and impact

If we knew where our endeavours would take us, we wouldn't need CEFIMA.

CEFIMA is innovating and exploring new interactive tools and methodologies for artistic storytelling. CEFIMAs activities are organised in clusters that interact and collaborate both internally in NFS with the existing BFA and MFA courses, and externally with related universities and industry partners. Each cluster is composed of arts students from NFS, technology students from partner institutions, artistic researchers, industry experts and professionals.



The five key priorities in the Action Plan set out the core activities of CEFIMA. The initial clusters will address action 5: Implementation of artistic research at all levels in the Art of Immersive and Interactive storytelling, with direct connection to the study programmes - and action 3: Develop a teacher-training programme aimed at artists and professional practitioners to prepare them for the teaching and learning environment that includes digital media technology and interactive storytelling.

While cluster activity will be coordinated by CEFIMA leadership, each cluster will work independently and be responsible for setting up relevant partnerships domestically and internationally. Typical partners include specialists in interactive digital technology and programming from other universities as well as industry professionals working within the field. Students from partner universities will be offered courses in film disciplines and various forms of narration together with students from NFS.

The Centre Management will be responsible for continuously monitoring the progress of all the clusters. Evaluation of the Clusters' achievements will take place every six months with the participation of external experts. This offers an opportunity to assess, adjust and concretise the specific aims of each Cluster. The evaluations will be carried out according to DNF-procedures that

are based on project descriptions with clearly defined artistic and professional objects and intentions. Evaluations are shared by all parties.

An over-all evaluation of the early results of all cluster-activity (after 10-12 months) will determine the launch of new cluster units addressing actions 1, 2 and 4. This is foreseen to happen in year two of the project – and later new Clusters will be tasked with driving further development and innovation.

We anticipate the lifetime of a Cluster to be one to three years. The findings of the Clusters will feed into the Schools curricula and ongoing qualification of the teaching staff. The end products of the Clusters will typically be PhD-level artistic research projects or Masters projects/visual presentations, leading to reflections on the form and content of new courses in immersive and interactive storytelling.

The Head of the Centre is responsible for driving the development of new courses based on Cluster findings and recommendations – and will be supported by the Centre leadership and the Heads of the Bachelor and Master programmes in dialogue with prominent industry partners.

‘Modernising’ the existing courses to take on board the interactivity complex will take place gradually from the outset. New specialisations in BFA/MFA programmes are anticipated to be offered towards the end of the five-year term. Students from a technical/computer programming background working with students with an audio-visual background will become important pioneers in developing a common language and in exploiting the technologies. The young generations of students are in many ways well-equipped to master the technology and to see the vision in the future exploitation of the media.

The impact of the Centre, its activities and achievements on a long view can be gauged in several ways. A new generation of graduates moving freely across the old technological borderlines will create new meaningful content to the benefit of the society at large, and contribute to a healthy viable industry.

Taking a short range view of the impact of CEFIMA’s activities, we will focus on the visible and measurable results: innovations in content; employment ratio of graduates; establishment of new interactive media companies by graduates – and their ability to market new products. A decisive criterion for success is the School’s capability to continuously attract highly skilled students who bring with them fresh ideas and well-grounded knowledge.

These two, to some extent quantifiable measures of achievement will directly reflect on each other – without excellent students, no contribution to innovation in the industry – without a successful industry, no attraction of first-rate students.

CEFIMA will work to bring balance between the measurable criteria for success.

2. Dissemination and Collaboration

At the Norwegian Film School dissemination and collaboration are intertwined activities, in addition to traditional publications in print and audio-visual form. The primary networks for exchange and collaboration are NORDICIL, GEECT, CILECT (the Nordic, European and international film school associations). The NFS maintains a leading role in NORDICIL and GEECT as initiator of a joint programme for Artistic Research and the training programme “The Artist as (Film School) Teacher”, the latter to be launched in September 2016. The associations and individual film schools will remain important fora for sharing projects, strategies, innovations and pedagogical experience – and we foresee that increasing numbers of schools will take steps to include interactive media in their curricula.

The establishment of CEFIMA will, however, mark a new approach to choosing partners: when artistic audio-visual storytelling tradition meets interactive programming technology, we are in a new realm. A primary collaborator in the exploitation of immersive and interactive media for new purposes will be the Media Technology Lab (MTL) at The Norwegian University of Science and Technology, NTNU-Gjøvik. NFS and MTL have a history of cooperation; in 2013 initial plans for a joint Master’s degree (MFA/MSc) called “The Norwegian Game Lab” were developed, and this informed some elements later incorporated into the MFA launched by NFS in 2015. CEFIMA will build on this experience and move the collaborative ambitions towards new goals. New objectives for collaboration will include short courses, professional development, new disciplines and degrees, and artistic research projects in immersive / interactive media based on the latest developments in digital technology. Sharing evaluations and results from initial projects with partners and stakeholders will ensure both later projects and clusters as well as the academic environments benefit from the learning.

Collaboration and dissemination merge when the formation of artistic research clusters brings together students, artistic researchers, and professionals in new constellations and from different backgrounds. The clusters will carry out artistic research, innovation, and exploration in both educational and artistic research settings, and the different clusters will be put together to meet the challenges of their objects. All will involve some form of collaboration with external actors, ranging from the film and media industries, national educational and research institutions and international partners in education and artistic research.

The NFS will under the umbrella of GEECT take responsibility for organising a European symposium “Training the Trainers: Reboot” (2017). The symposium will take departure in the training programme “The Artist as (Film School) Teacher” and will offer NFS the opportunity to forge new links and exchange agreements with peer schools and begin a direct dissemination of

pedagogical strategies that with the creation of CEFIMA will embrace the interactive domain from an artistic point of view.

Among existing partners, the Danish National Film School, Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts, and Aalto University (Helsinki, Finland) are all potential cluster partners in interactive media. Several European and US schools are also working in related fields including games and virtual reality, and NFS has, in various forums, begun building ties to some of these schools such as National Film & Television School, UK; Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung Karlsruhe, Germany; Filmacademie Baden-Württemberg, Germany; Chapman University, California; Columbia University, Chicago; and The Canadian Film Centre, Toronto among others.

Beyond educational institutions and artistic and academic programmes, partners will be drawn from the public and private sector. In the previous collaboration between NFS and MTL, the Norwegian Film Institute's (NFI) office for games and interactive media was a key partner, as were representatives from Norwegian game producers. New Media companies in Norway and the Nordic countries have a highly developed experience in producing virtual games. From a technological point of view this is related to interactive storytelling and we expect new applications to attract interest in collaboration.

3. Sustainability

The creation of CEFIMA will mark the beginning of a new era for the Norwegian Film School.

During the first 5-year period, work of CEFIMA Clusters will facilitate an inspiring and creative process leading to innovative interactive and immersive storytelling. This new environment will provide the experience and knowledge to:

1. Modernise existing film courses allowing film students to embrace and exploit interactive technologies and storytelling formats
2. Develop new courses at bachelor and master levels specialising in various disciplines of interactive and immersive storytelling.

Achieving these two goals within the first 5 years will obviously strengthen CEFIMA's sustainability. Another 3-5 years ahead the new study programmes and related artistic research activities will have reached a state of consolidation.

The School's international reputation will now comprise the new interactive courses and achievements in research and development of the interactive domain. This will allow us to expand our working relationships with leading international educational institutions, decisive for continuously pushing the technological and artistic borders.

Economic sustainability

- LUC (Lillehammer University College) provides financing for the Film School and has included the CEFIMA extension in its strategic development plan.
- With the establishment and recognition of new courses the Ministry of Education is likely to allot an additional 30-40 student places, directly linked to the annual budget allocations.
- As CEFIMA builds its reputation and usefulness links with leading Norwegian and Scandinavian media companies will be strengthened. CEFIMA will pursue exchange of its achievements with professional and economic resources from the industry.

Risk factors are obviously in play. We need the best talent – students, teachers, experts – in order to meet our ambitious objectives. We cannot achieve this alone; the attractiveness of CEFIMA's endeavours will to some extent depend on the development of the industrial media sector. Talented, highly educated students will consider their employment prospect – are their fresh ideas and risky proposals in demand, will they be allowed to experiment and grow? CEFIMA will build on NFS' excellent track record for graduating highly sought-after talents for the film and media industries, talents who have innovated and changed the face of Norwegian film.

In our aspiration to reach beyond borders, we need to be aware of any potential negative impact on the quality and importance of our existing course programme. Continuous attention and development are needed to keep staying at the forefront internationally.