

READING BETWEEN THE LINES OF THE EURIMAGES REGULATIONS

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EVERYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT EURIMAGES BUT YOU DID NOT DARE ASKING...

- reading “between the lines” of the Eurimages regulations
- does Eurimages have such a thing as an “editorial line” ?
- why should you apply for support? (the lottery rule: if you don't apply, you won't get funding)

decision-making process

- **eligibility criteria** = these are technical objective criteria applied by the Eurimages secretariat
- **selective criteria** = these are subjective criteria applied by the board of management

reading between the lines of the Eurimages regulations....

- this is a selective support scheme: projects are evaluated for their qualities, ie the name of the director is not a guarantee for support
- what is self-evident for a german producer may be unclear for a reader from another country: it is essential that you specify the type of film you are making/producing and carefully prepare your application, paying attention to the details
- the right "packaging" allows a project to stand out from the mass of projects submitted from throughout europe

the script

- the script is the cornerstone of the decision-making process: it must be the final version
- the quality of the script is assessed from all angles: plot, structure, narration, dialogues, rhythm, etc. Eurimages works with professional independent readers
- (the quality of) the translation into english or french must be equivalent to the original linguistic version - projects are evaluated on the basis of their translation (yes, only a few people read german...).

...and other artistic material

- the director's note of intention is essential: a well-drafted director's note can make the difference...it provides information that the script cannot contain
- the synopsis, treatment and description of characters allow for a better understanding of the creative side of projects, especially if the script was read very quickly because of the substantial number of projects submitted... it is therefore essential that these documents be carefully drafted as they may also impact on the decision-making process

non-obligatory audiovisual material...

- previous (audiovisual) work from the director is very useful (long-length feature films, shorts, clips etc). even if the director is very well-known in germany, he/she may not be known at all elsewhere... and it will be people from another countries, who will be deciding which projects should be supported...
- mood books, pictures of locations and cast are non-obligatory, but can nonetheless help to make a project more memorable during a selection procedure that lasts 3 days (8am-8pm with a small lunch break)... it is essential that the decision-makers remember your project

...which stories?

- Eurimages values the quality of the project over the name of the director (several big names have been rejected in the past...)
- a project's level of development is crucial: "we should trust the director although the script is not convincing" never works in eurimages... first-time directors have the same chance as established names
- very local stories are welcome as long as they contain a universal message, which can be understood by an international audience (no europuddings, please)

financial co-productions...

- are eligible, if the relevant treaty allows for it (eg, IT/FR; ES/FR etc)
- ...are not particularly successful: the board prefers it when producers co-operate artistically and technically rather than simply raising financing together
- projects with a limited local interest, with a 100% domestic cast and crew are considered "national films" rather than "co-productions" ... these projects are not interesting for Eurimages

financing

- “at least” 50% of the total financing must be confirmed, but if shooting starts immediately after the board of management meeting, the project is considered risky (ie is not convincing...)
- one single source of financing may weaken the project (eg public support alone can look like the market doesn't believe in the project)
- one MG from the producer/distributor as the only source of financing makes the project eligible but may harm its credibility...

in brief...

- in Eurimages projects compete with each other - those considered "the best" will be supported (there is a lack of financing to support all of the eligible projects)
- a producer's ability to convince the decision-makers that their project is the best one is the key to obtaining Eurimages support... the way the project is put together therefore plays a fundamental role
- geo-politics in Eurimages is a myth – it all depends on the quality of the project and on the ability of the producer to sell a given project to the board of management