

GEECT Leadership Symposium, Brussels

26 May 2023

The aim of this leadership symposium was to reinvigorate the commitment by the GEECT members to participate in activities that are inclusive and representative of the multiple layers of participation from schools (not just of individuals who represent the institutions at decision-making levels) but teachers involved in specialized areas and those involved in administrating collaborations and partnerships.

Three discussion groups were facilitated with the attending members to develop frameworks through which to steer the engagement of the GEECT Executive. GEECT members outlined topics, priority areas and activities to best serve the concerns of the GEECT schools – the leadership/management, administrators and teachers who attended the symposium participated in shaping the proposals listed in each domain.

Three domains were developed further from the previous symposium held in Lisbon:

- i. Governance
- ii. Expanded pedagogies
- iii. Technology

Domain 1: Governance

Objective:

To reflect on current concerns around communication in GEECT and propose innovative ways to improve GEECT/CILECT governance structure. The group collected ideas and designed plans for professionalizing GEECT. As public spending across Europe comes more and more under scrutiny, and member schools closely investigate their expenditure, an organization like GEECT must lay out more clearly what benefits it can bring to its members. The question at the beginning of this roundtable therefore was how to make the organization more transparent, effective, and active, in order to offer clear and convincing benefits to its membership.

Proposals:

1 – GOVERNANCE, COMMUNICATION AND MANAGEMENT:

To professionalize operations and communication and increase visibility of activities of the association by hiring a resource dedicated to project management, communications and to support the board in fulfilling the aspirations and requests of the membership. It was agreed that this would be done in three steps:

- The treasurer will evaluate resources available.
- The board provides requisites and job description for a fixed term contract.
- The final proposal and the budget implications are tabled at the regional meeting in Rome in October 2023.

Effectivity of Communication

The relatively low number of delegates at the meeting sparked a discussion on the effectivity of communication between the board and the membership of GEECT. Given that the different activities of GEECT are mostly visited by the management of the member schools, questions about the effectiveness of both the content and the communication of the organization came up. It was agreed that a greater diversification of the different stakeholders of the schools (staff, students, and teachers) in GEECT events

should be targeted. Several formats for the different target groups within the schools have been mentioned (see also the outcomes of the round table on pedagogy). While acknowledging the need for change, it also became clear that it would be difficult for the board members to invest even more time in tackling these issues.

Project Management

In order to improve the communication therefore, with the membership and to improve the overall quality of GEECT's work, installing a paid project manager appears to be an appropriate measure. The board of GEECT will hereafter define a job description and work on adapting a budget accordingly. It has been agreed that this package will be proposed to the GEECT membership at the upcoming CILECT congress in Rome in November 2023.

2 – STATUTES/MISSION STATEMENT

The working group agreed on the need to revise the statutes of GEECT and develop a mission statement that dedicatedly responds to the challenges of the present. The delegates agreed that the common values of good governance, sustainability, equality and representation should be included in the statement. In addition, the establishment of a task team for the development of the mission statement was suggested. In order to attain this, the board was asked to setup a working group to revise the GEECT statutes and include a clear mission statement that expresses the current context of the association – its role, operation and activities are to be clearly expressed through a remit that may include developing collaborations, projects and seeking funding for activities. Proposals should be ready for the Rome Congress.

3 – GEECT SCHOOLS: (See section below, Domain 2: pedagogy, under “schools”)

To create a working group on pedagogy in all its scope, from curriculum to structural concerns. The increase in PhD candidates in film schools and film programs needs to have greater support through education and to have a forum to address contemporary concerns in higher education – these are a matter of priority for many member institutions. The “schools” proposal for 2024 is an event dedicated to student involvement. The working group would apply for CILECT funding to support the development of this idea.

4 – ANNUAL LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM:

Organizing a yearly symposium undertaken by the executive board that rotates amongst the board members hosted at their schools. This should be approved in Rome in October 2023, as a rule for the future. Agreement amongst the GEECT executive was reached that the next symposium would be hosted in Bratislava in June 2024.

5 – REASSESSMENT OF FEE STRUCTURE:

CILECT takes pride in representing schools from all continents, of the most different sizes, and from a diversity of geographical and political contexts. Yet presently, all of the member schools are being charged the exact same fees. While for some member schools, the fees are not a heavy burden, this policy potentially excludes schools from the organization. Given this heterogenous financial capacity of member institutions within CILECT, and their considerable varieties in size, a reform of the fees structure

seems an appropriate measure. A working group should therefore develop the basis for a fairer calculation of the fees. This proposal shall be submitted to the General Assembly of CILECT for voting during the Congress in Rome in November 2023.

6 –QUESTIONNAIRE:

- (i) Send a concise set of questions to collect information on the status of Erasmus Charter amongst schools with a view to promote further exchanges between schools.
- (ii) Follow up questionnaire on film labs for schools using film stock to broker a “bulk” deal for schools processing film stock.

Domain 2: Pedagogy

Objective:

To determine what teaching support, exchange/sharing and current challenges are experienced in the GEECT membership and to find ways for teachers to engage directly and more frequently with each other through areas of specialization. To have greater focus on topics related directly to pedagogy and the learning environment in the schools.

Proposals:

- 1- PhD FILM Program: Students working in artistic research and/or practice-led research. Create an opportunity for students involved in doctoral/research education to have access and network to broader film research community and supervisors in film education.
Current FILM EU opportunity/potential to collaborate in 2024 needs to be developed.

- 2- GEECT “School”:

The idea of naming it “school” takes its derivation from the etymology of the term meaning “leisure” in Greek but associated with the space and time to think, reflect and exchange ideas and, a meeting place for discussion. The emphasis here with school is for teachers to have a space for deliberated exchange and learning.

The idea of GEECT “School” is to create a forum for more sustained, focused and frequent engagement with questions of teaching and learning that is specifically targeted to teachers in the GEECT membership. There is an increasing need for teachers in specialized areas to meet each other, share ideas about curriculum, challenges with contemporary political issues in the classroom and to have the space for dynamic conversations ranging from questions and concerns about technology, addressing matters of representation and to develop eco/environmentally-aware student productions. It was evident that the thematic days and the CILECT Conference annually were not sufficiently focused or frequent, to address the multiple issues that require engagement in film education. The “school” concept is to create a learning environment for the GEECT membership.

The discussion focused on the range of experiences across different European institutions in experiences of dealing with diversity and changes in the political climate in education. (For example: Eastern European schools in contrast with central European schools in how diversity in the classroom is experienced) or how to work with greater gender representation or inclusion of students who have been racially or ethically marginalized (for example).

- a. Green School – Following from the presentations made by:
Anna Heiskanen, Aalto University (Finland); Maria Hedman Hvitfeldt, UniArts (Stockholm) and

green consultants – Tobias Frühmorgen, Lusófona University (Portugal) and Boris Michalski, HDM-Stuttgart (Germany) –

- propose to develop a special focus on sustainability and environmental awareness in film education and role of green consultant as professional pathway in film.

- b. *“School of uncomfortable feelings”* – With the increased consideration for how representation and subjectivity is operationalized in the classroom and in the development of curriculum – more teachers are interested in how to address issues of subjectivity, diversity, and inclusive discourse and how to address it in the curriculum. How does one navigate the tension between creating a classroom and learning environment of safe spaces versus brave spaces. How to account for content across different historical references in cinema in a current film education?

- c. *Specializations* - Each department in film education has had to radically revise the curriculum and content to address not just the changes in technology but also the curriculum references and the exercises that are developed for areas of specialization: sound, camera, production design and directing (for example with the introduction of intimacy coordinators).
Focus on professional film areas and, presentations by teachers working with their various exercises; to share their approaches, reflections, and experiences.
Opportunity to further address what technology choices and purchases are made in various schools. (See section on Technology below).

“Sharing failed attempts” - is a way of moving away from “best practices” which describes positive experiences and successes. The desire is to address how failure is often more instructive for learning, and while it is often advocated as imperative to learning; these cases or experiences are rarely shared nor made visible at conferences. This proposal is to encourage a collegial environment in which experiences and/or challenges in the classroom; case studies and presentations that maybe considered “failures”, “mistakes” “pedagogical oversights or challenges” are shared – as a way to discuss and to address how they may be “solved” or “retried/re-attempted” with deliberation/dialogue amongst peer group of teachers. The aim of these sessions is to encourage greater dialogue and exchange of experiences.

Proposed timeline for “Schools”:

1. February 2024 – (Topic to be confirmed with inclusion of one two-hour slot for “sharing failed attempts.”)
2. May 2024 - (Topic to be confirmed with inclusion of one two-hour slot for “sharing failed attempts.”)

AIM: to secure TWO schools who each would take responsibility for one school event proposed in February and May 2024 respectively (the school should choose the desired topic of focus).

- a. Responses to these proposals from any of the GEECT members are most welcomed.

SUPPORT: one GEECT board member will serve on the organizing group from the host GEECT member institution to support with the development of the content and the programme.

“Schools” are proposed as one or two-day events depending on the topic and the capacity at the host institution.

Domain 3: Technology

Objective:

To determine how GEECT member institutions can cooperate with technological resources and technological know-how (expertise and experience). Sometimes too old or too new (expensive)

technologies are available at all/different times at schools, and it would be beneficial to know how to share resources. Further, to address the shifting needs of education with regards to technology but not to be caught in a nostalgia of mediums (analogue mediums and/versus digital platforms). Furthermore, to address the different phases: from pre-production (pre-visualisation /pre-calculation) to post-production in the workflow and its facilitation in the teaching environment. (What mediums and platforms are appropriate for what parts of the education and to what end).

The technology objective in summary: (i) To consider the tools of the filmmaking workflow in education and what mediums and technologies are relevant to which processes and/or procedures. (ii) Focus on the decisions that inform and determine the audio-visual environment and its parameters.

Proposed topics:

- i. Film (Pellicule) both cameras AND the film stock + laboratories.
- ii. VFX / AR / VR (led wall, green key, ...)
- iii. Sound: Dolby Atmos studio
- iv. Cinedesk (cfr. Zurich) pre-visualisation
- v. Threats or opportunities of A.I. – f.i. Adobe editing?

Proposal:

- a. **Tour of equipment:** European GEECT members create a roster for “sharing” resources f.i. for only 1 or 2 weeks. (cinedesk, 16mm or 35mm camera, Led wall, visit Dolby Atmos studio)
On a practical level: 3 to maximum 5 member schools cooperate in a regional programme.
- b. **Summer School:** Focus on access to certain film mediums and technology platforms. Link to the proposal of GEECT “school” (see pedagogy above and proposal to have a summer school with a focus on technologies or mediums).
f.i. summer school with an experience of shooting on film at location with laboratory overnight turnaround and to work through film medium workflow (process of film development with editing on digital transfer).
- c. **Database of equipment:** Inventory of resources at various GEECT schools with options for rental and/or sharing.
- d. **Sustainable technologies:** Connected to discussion regarding sustainability: Location, light, lodging or in studio with led-wall (as described above). Adapt technology to storytelling and vice versa. Production classes to address green filming.
(i) Initiate a comparison project of location and/versus studio (f.i. 1 scene of a movie to calculate the sustainability implications on each project in different production contexts).
- e. **Social aspects of technology:** Accessibility of cameras and software which is student owned:
(i) *which students can afford their own equipment.
is technical quality the only standard?*
(ii) *open-source access: would this be considered an option? Or does it have to be ‘market’ standard?*
(iii) *Comparisons of the approaches taken by various schools.*
f.i. GSM filming vs. Arri digital camera > when to use which/what technology?