REPORT

FilmEU D6.4 Joint PhD

WP 6 Research and Innovation
31/10/2022

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filmeu

European Universities Alliance
for **Film and Media Arts**

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1. Introduction

FILMEU – The European University for Film and Media Arts, under Project 101004047 (EPP-EUR-UNIV-2020 — European Universities, EPLUS2020 Action Grant), represents an respected coalition of four prominent European Higher Education Institutions: Lusófona University in Lisbon, Portugal; BFM/TLU – Baltic Film and Media School at Tallinn University in Tallinn, Estonia; LUCA School of Arts in Brussels, Belgium; and the Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology in Dublin, Ireland. United by a shared vision, these institutions strive to enhance education, drive innovation, and promote cutting-edge research within the diverse field of Film and Media Arts. This collaborative initiative aims to reinforce Europe's significance in the creative industries while highlighting the essential role of cultural and aesthetic values in bolstering societal prosperity and enrichment.

Creating a joint PhD programme within this alliance is a significant and ambitious challenge. This initiative is particularly complex due to the inherent difficulties in aligning academic standards, administrative procedures, and cultural practices across multiple institutions and countries. Furthermore, the arts, with their unique emphasis on both creative practice and scholarly research, add another layer of complexity to the endeavour. However, the collaborative nature of FilmEU allows for the pooling of resources and expertise, ensuring a rich and dynamic educational environment for students and researchers alike.

This report, conducted in close collaboration with associated partners Aalto University and Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf benefits significantly from their expertise in the field. Our goal is to define a model that stands out in its scientific-artistic approach, leading to the award of a Dr. Phil in Art. This innovative model, which combines a scientific dissertation with an artistic research[1] project, aims to open a transdisciplinary field of research with significant potential for innovation. Currently, very few universities in

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[1] For a deeper insight into the early work developed by FilmEU in artistic Research please check D6.1 Report on Artistic research.docx (filmeu.eu)

Europe offer such a doctorate, although this combination of science and art greatly enhances the reflective and knowledge-building capacities of both fields. The involvement of the European Association of Universities of the Arts (ELIA)[2] is crucial for establishing intrinsic quality assurance standards for artistic research, following the Florence Principles.[3]

To understand the unique obstacles faced by FilmEU, it is helpful to examine similar initiatives in other European university alliances. For instance, the European University of the Seas (SEA-EU) alliance has developed a joint PhD programme in marine sciences[4]. This programme, like the one proposed by FilmEU, involves multiple institutions from different countries and requires careful alignment of curricula and research agendas. However, the SEA-EU PhD is primarily focused on scientific research, which, while challenging, does not have the added complexity of integrating artistic practice.

In contrast, the European University for Well-Being (EUniWell) offers a joint PhD that includes elements of both scientific research and social practice[5]. This programme shares more similarities with the FilmEU initiative, as it must balance diverse disciplinary approaches and methodologies. The experience of EUniWell highlights the importance of establishing clear structures for interdisciplinary collaboration and creating flexible frameworks that can accommodate various academic and cultural contexts.

The PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU is designed to cultivate advanced academic and artistic skills, foster cutting-edge research, and contribute to the development of new knowledge in film and media arts. Leveraging the strengths of the FilmEU alliance, this joint PhD programme integrates scientific research with artistic practice, with a strong emphasis on artificial intelligence (AI) and sustainability. This dual focus aims to produce highly skilled researchers and practitioners capable of advancing the field of film and media arts while addressing contemporary global challenges.

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[2] Artistic Research (elia-artschools.org)
[3] 26 September Florence Principles for web (ymaws.com)
[4] SEA-EU doctoral courses - SEA-EU
[5] EUniWell Research Communications Programme for Doctoral Candidates

The programme offers a balanced mix of theoretical coursework, practical workshops, and independent research. Structured to provide flexibility, it allows students to tailor their studies to specific research interests while maintaining a solid foundation in core areas. The curriculum includes obligatory units on research methodologies, film and media theories, artistic practice, and interdisciplinary seminars. Additionally, students can select from a diverse range of optional courses across FilmEU institutions, covering topics such as digital media, sustainable filmmaking, machine learning, blockchain narratives, and more.

Central to the PhD experience is the practice-based independent research project, culminating in a doctoral dissertation. This dissertation combines a substantial body of creative work with a critical reflective component, ensuring the integration of practical artistry with academic rigour. The creative work may include films, multimedia installations, interactive media, or other relevant forms, while the reflective component involves a thorough analysis of the creative process and its theoretical underpinnings.

The programme emphasises mobility and inter-institutional supervision, allowing students to benefit from the diverse expertise, facilities, and cultural perspectives offered by each member institution. Exchange programmes, collaborative projects, and cultural immersion are key aspects of the mobility initiative, enriching the students' educational experience and broadening their professional networks.

The FilmEU alliance is committed to fostering academic excellence, innovative research, and professional development. The PhD programme equips students with the skills necessary for successful careers in academia, industry, and the arts, providing opportunities for teaching experience, networking, and global research contributions. By addressing contemporary global challenges and embedding AI and sustainability into the curriculum, FilmEU aims to produce a new generation of researchers and artists who are not only skilled in their fields but also leaders in promoting sustainable and technologically advanced practices in film and media arts.

Incorporating the Samsara model, a challenge-based educational approach, the PhD programme ensures that teaching and curriculum design are aligned with contemporary educational needs. This model supports a holistic and iterative approach to education, combining constructivist and constructionist learning theories with methodologies such as Artistic Research (AR), Challenge Based Learning (CBL), Design Thinking (DT), Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

As part of this initiative, we will produce a proposal for a joint PhD programme to be submitted to local accreditation bodies. Additionally, in the final year of the funding period, we have piloted joint doctoral education through seminars for students and researchers involved in seed projects, promoting various forms of mobility within the alliance.

By integrating these innovative educational practices, the PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU is poised to set new standards in postgraduate education, fostering a vibrant academic community and contributing significantly to the advancement of film and media arts on a global scale.

2. Relevant PhDs in the Arts - Examples

2.1. PhDs in Arts at Aalto University

Overview

Aalto University, located in Finland, is renowned for its comprehensive and innovative approach to higher education in the arts. The university offers several PhD programmes through its School of Arts, Design and Architecture, which are designed to cultivate advanced academic and artistic skills, foster interdisciplinary research, and contribute to the development of new knowledge in the arts.

Programme Structure[6]

Doctoral Programme in Arts, Design and Architecture

The Doctoral Programme in Arts, Design and Architecture at Aalto University is a flagship programme that covers a broad spectrum of disciplines. The programme is structured to provide a balanced mix of theoretical coursework, practical workshops, and independent research. More information can be found on the Aalto University website.

Curriculum and Coursework

The curriculum for this PhD programme typically includes:

- Core Courses: Essential theoretical and methodological foundations in art, design, and architecture.
- Elective Courses: Allowing students to tailor their studies to their specific interests and research needs.
- Workshops and Seminars: Focused on developing practical skills and facilitating peer learning and collaboration.

Research and Dissertation

Central to the PhD experience at Aalto University is the independent research project, culminating in a doctoral dissertation. This project is expected to make a significant contribution to the field and demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct rigorous academic research. The dissertation may include:

- Traditional Monographs: Comprehensive academic studies presenting new research findings.
- Artistic Components: Creative works accompanied by a critical reflective component, integrating practice-based research with theoretical inquiry.

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[6] Aalto Doctoral Programme in Arts, Design and Architecture | Aalto University

Specific PhD Examples

Doctoral Programme in Film, Television, and Scenography

The Doctoral Programme in Film, Television, and Scenography focuses on advanced research in the audiovisual arts and scenography. This programme encourages students to explore the intersections between creative practice and academic research. Detailed information is available on the Aalto University website.

Structure and Organisation

Students in this programme engage in a combination of coursework and independent research. The structure includes:

- Specialised Courses: Covering topics such as film theory, production techniques, and scenographic design.
- Practical Workshops: Hands-on sessions in film production, directing, and stage design.
- Research Seminars: Regular meetings to discuss research progress and receive feedback from peers and faculty.

Objectives and Ambitions

The primary objectives of this programme are to develop students' ability to conduct high-level research in the audiovisual arts and to foster innovative practices in film and scenography. The ambitions include:

- Pioneering Research: Encouraging new approaches and methodologies in film and scenographic studies.
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Promoting projects that integrate insights from various artistic and academic fields.

Doctoral Programme in Art and Media

The Doctoral Programme in Art and Media is designed for artists and researchers interested in the intersections of contemporary art practices and media studies. This programme supports a wide range of research topics, from digital media art to interactive installations. More information can be found on the Aalto University website.

Curriculum and Coursework

The programme's curriculum includes:

- Core Courses in Media Theory: Providing a foundation in contemporary media theory and its applications in art.
- Elective Courses in Digital Art Practices: Allowing students to explore various media, including video art, virtual reality, and interactive installations.
- Collaborative Workshops: Facilitating cross-disciplinary projects and collaborations.

Research and Dissertation

Students in this programme undertake a substantial independent research project, culminating in a dissertation that may combine theoretical analysis with practical art projects. The dissertation aims to contribute to both academic knowledge and artistic innovation.

Organisation and Supervision

Supervisory Team

PhD candidates are supported by a supervisory team comprising experienced faculty members. This team provides guidance on research design, methodology, and academic writing, ensuring that students receive comprehensive support throughout their doctoral journey.

Progress Reviews

Regular progress reviews are conducted to monitor the candidate's development and ensure timely completion of the degree. These reviews include:

- Annual Evaluations: Assessing academic progress, research achievements, and future plans.
- Mid-Term Reviews: Offering feedback on the dissertation work and identifying any areas needing improvement.

Objectives and Ambitions

Academic Excellence

Aalto University aims to produce highly skilled researchers and artists capable of advancing knowledge in their fields. The objectives include:

- Innovative Research: Encouraging groundbreaking research that pushes the boundaries of traditional art and design disciplines.
- Interdisciplinary Approaches: Promoting cross-disciplinary collaborations that integrate perspectives from various fields.

Professional Development

The PhD programmes also focus on equipping students with the skills necessary for successful careers in academia, industry, and the arts. This includes:

- Teaching Experience: Providing opportunities to teach and develop pedagogical skills.
- Networking Opportunities: Facilitating connections with industry professionals, academic peers, and research communities.

Global Impact

Aalto University aspires to have a global impact through its PhD programmes by:

- International Collaboration: Engaging in partnerships with leading institutions worldwide.
- Global Research Contributions: Producing research that addresses global challenges and contributes to international discourse in the arts.

By offering a range of specialised PhD programmes in the arts, Aalto University provides a supportive and dynamic environment for doctoral candidates. These programmes are designed to foster academic excellence, innovative research, and professional development, preparing students for diverse career paths in academia, industry, and beyond.

2.2. PhDs in Arts at Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf

Overview

Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf, located in Germany, is one of the leading institutions for film and media studies in Europe. The university offers PhD programmes designed to advance academic and artistic skills, foster interdisciplinary research, and contribute to the development of new knowledge in film and media arts.

Programme Structure[7]

Doctoral Programme in Film and Television

The Doctoral Programme in Film and Television at Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf covers a broad spectrum of disciplines within the audiovisual arts. The programme is structured to provide a balanced mix of theoretical coursework, practical workshops, and independent research. More information can be found on the Film University website.

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[7] PhD Programs – Filmuniversität Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF (filmuniversitaet.de)

Curriculum and Coursework

The curriculum for this PhD programme typically includes:

- Core Courses: Essential theoretical and methodological foundations in film and television studies.
- Elective Courses: Allowing students to tailor their studies to their specific interests and research needs.
- Workshops and Seminars: Focused on developing practical skills and facilitating peer learning and collaboration.

Research and Dissertation

Central to the PhD experience at Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf is the independent research project, culminating in a doctoral dissertation. This project is expected to make a significant contribution to the field and demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct rigorous academic research. The dissertation may include:

- Traditional Monographs: Comprehensive academic studies presenting new research findings.
- Artistic Components: Creative works accompanied by a critical reflective component, integrating practice-based research with theoretical inquiry.

Specific PhD Examples

Doctoral Programme in Media Studies

The Doctoral Programme in Media Studies focuses on advanced research in media theory, digital culture, and audiovisual media. This programme encourages students to explore the intersections between creative practice and academic research. Detailed information is available on the Film University website.

Structure and Organisation

Students in this programme engage in a combination of coursework and independent research. The structure includes:

- Specialised Courses: Covering topics such as media theory, digital culture, and production techniques.
- Practical Workshops: Hands-on sessions in media production, digital art, and interactive media.
- Research Seminars: Regular meetings to discuss research progress and receive feedback from peers and faculty.

Objectives and Ambitions

The primary objectives of this programme are to develop students' ability to conduct high-level research in media studies and to foster innovative practices in digital and audiovisual media. The ambitions include:

- Pioneering Research: Encouraging new approaches and methodologies in media studies.
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Promoting projects that integrate insights from various artistic and academic fields.

Doctoral Programme in Film Production and Directing
The Doctoral Programme in Film Production and Directing is designed for filmmakers and researchers interested in the advanced study of film production processes and directing techniques. This programme supports a wide range of research topics, from narrative film to experimental media. More information can be found on the Film University website.

Curriculum and Coursework

The programme's curriculum includes:

- Core Courses in Film Theory: Providing a foundation in contemporary film theory and its applications in film production.
- Elective Courses in Directing Techniques: Allowing students to explore various methods, including narrative, documentary, and experimental film.
- Collaborative Workshops: Facilitating cross-disciplinary projects and collaborations.

Research and Dissertation

Students in this programme undertake a substantial independent research project, culminating in a dissertation that may combine theoretical analysis with practical film projects. The dissertation aims to contribute to both academic knowledge and artistic innovation.

Organisation and Supervision

Supervisory Team

PhD candidates are supported by a supervisory team comprising experienced faculty members. This team provides guidance on research design, methodology, and academic writing, ensuring that students receive comprehensive support throughout their doctoral journey.

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Objectives and Ambitions

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Film University Babelberg Konrad Wolf aims to produce highly skilled researchers and artists capable of advancing knowledge in their fields. The objectives include:

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Professional Development

The PhD programmes also focus on equipping students with the skills necessary for successful careers in academia, industry, and the arts. This includes:

- Teaching Experience: Providing opportunities to teach and develop pedagogical skills.
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Film University Babelberg Konrad Wolf aspires to have a global impact through its PhD programmes by:

- International Collaboration: Engaging in partnerships with leading institutions worldwide.

- Global Research Contributions: Producing research that addresses global challenges and contributes to international discourse in the arts.

By offering a range of specialised PhD programmes in the arts, Film University Babelberg Konrad Wolf provides a supportive and dynamic environment for doctoral candidates. These programmes are designed to foster academic excellence, innovative research, and professional development, preparing students for diverse career paths in academia, industry, and beyond.

2.3. Other relevant PhDs in the Arts

2.3.1. Tokyo University of the Arts, Japan[8]

Doctoral Programme in Fine Arts

Tokyo University of the Arts offers a Doctoral Programme in Fine Arts that aims to develop researchers and artists capable of contributing to the advancement of contemporary art. This programme emphasises both practical artistic creation and theoretical research, fostering an environment where students can engage in innovative and interdisciplinary projects. More information can be found on the Tokyo University of the Arts website.

Curriculum and Coursework

The curriculum includes:

- Core Courses: Covering fundamental theories and methodologies in fine arts.
- Elective Courses: Allowing for specialisation in areas such as painting, sculpture, and media arts.
- Workshops and Seminars: Facilitating practical skills development and peer collaboration.

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[8] Fine Arts – Tokyo University of the Arts Admissions (geidai.ac.jp)

Research and Dissertation

Students undertake a major research project that combines artistic practice with academic research, culminating in a dissertation that includes both a creative component and a written thesis.

2.3.2. Royal College of Art, United Kingdom[9]

PhD in Fine Art

The Royal College of Art in London offers a PhD in Fine Art that emphasises practice-led research and the integration of artistic practice with academic study. This programme supports artists in developing their work while contributing to scholarly discourse in the arts. More information can be found on the Royal College of Art website.

Curriculum and Coursework

The curriculum includes:

- Core Courses: Focused on research methodologies and critical theory in fine art.
- Elective Courses: Allowing for exploration of various media and artistic practices.
- Workshops and Seminars: Providing practical skills development and peer critique.

Research and Dissertation

The dissertation involves a significant body of creative work accompanied by a written thesis that contextualises the work within contemporary artistic and theoretical frameworks.

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[9] Arts & Humanities MPhil/PhD | Royal College of Art (rca.ac.uk)

2.3.3. University of Melbourne, Australia[10]

PhD in Visual Art

The University of Melbourne offers a PhD in Visual Art that aims to develop advanced research skills and artistic practices. The programme encourages interdisciplinary research and fosters a supportive environment for creative and scholarly work. More information can be found on the University of Melbourne website.

Curriculum and Coursework

The curriculum includes:

- Core Courses: Covering research methodologies and contemporary art theory.
- Elective Courses: Allowing for specialisation in various artistic media.
- Workshops and Seminars: Facilitating practical skills development and collaborative projects.

Research and Dissertation

Students undertake an independent research project that combines creative practice with academic research, culminating in a dissertation that includes a substantial creative component and a written thesis.

By examining these examples from institutions around the world, it becomes evident that there are diverse approaches to PhD programmes in the arts. These programmes share a commitment to integrating artistic practice with academic research, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the arts.

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[10] Doctor of Philosophy - Arts - The University of Melbourne (unimelb.edu.au)

3. Research Supervision at FilmEU Institutions

3.1. Lusófona University[11]

The Degree of Doctor

Lusófona University (LU) awards the degree of doctor to students who demonstrate systematic understanding in their field, research competencies, and the ability to conceive and carry out significant research. This degree requires a meaningful set of original research studies, contributing to expanding the frontiers of knowledge, and necessitates critical communication with peers and society. The study cycle leading to the degree of doctor comprises 180 ECTS, with three semesters of coursework and three semesters dedicated to thesis preparation.

Structure and Admission

The doctoral programme includes a curricular part (90 ECTS) and a thesis part (90 ECTS). Applicants must hold a master's degree or equivalent qualifications, and admission involves submission of a research proposal, an interview, and an evaluation process. Selection and admission are based on criteria defined by the institution's regulations.

Supervision and Thesis Requirements

Supervisors at LU must guide students in their scientific preparation, research project, and thesis writing, while students are responsible for regularly informing their supervisors of their progress. The thesis can be a monograph, a project/artwork with an explanatory memorandum, or a compilation of research studies. The language for the thesis is primarily Portuguese, although English, French, and Spanish are also acceptable.

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[11] PhD | Universidade Lusófona (ulusofona.pt)

Public Defence and Examination

The doctoral exam includes a public defence of the thesis, and the examination process involves a jury constituted by the Rector of LU and other PhD-holding members. The examination assesses the thesis through discussion, and the final grade is decided by majority vote, expressed as either "Failed" or "Approved," with possible distinctions.

3.2. LUCA School of Arts[12]

Doctoral Committee and Admission

The doctoral programme at LUCA School of Arts, in collaboration with KU Leuven, enrols doctoral students at KU Leuven, which also awards the degree. The doctoral committee, composed of senior academic staff and representatives of PhD researchers, authorises enrolment and monitors progress. Admission requires a Flemish master's degree or equivalent, a research proposal, and annual re-enrolment.

Supervision and Progress

PhD researchers are supervised by a team of one to four supervisors, including a corresponding supervisor who coordinates the team. The supervisory committee, appointed by the doctoral committee, monitors progress through annual reports and evaluations. The doctoral programme includes a truncus communis and a supplementary part, both of which must be completed before submitting the thesis.

Thesis and Public Defence

The thesis, combining artistic creations and a dissertation, is evaluated by an examination committee. The public defence involves a presentation and discussion with committee members. The committee decides on awarding the doctoral degree based on the quality of the thesis and the artistic work presented.

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[12] Research | LUCA (luca-arts.be)

3.3. Tallinn University[13]

Admissions and Study Structure

Tallinn University offers 13 PhD programmes, including audiovisual arts studies and empirical media studies, focusing on contemporary media phenomena and media production research. The doctoral candidate position consists of four years of full-time study, including a course section and a documented research project.

Supervision

Supervision at Tallinn University requires supervisors to hold a PhD or equivalent qualification and have published significant research. A doctoral student may have one supervisor and up to two co-supervisors. The progress review committee, consisting of qualified university staff, assesses the student's progress annually based on the individual study plan.

Thesis and Public Defence

The doctoral thesis, which can be a monograph or an article-based dissertation, must be presented at international conferences and published in scientific publications. The public defence includes a presentation and discussion with the examination committee. The committee evaluates the thesis and decides on awarding the degree.

3.4. IADT

Programme Overview[14]

IADT offers a Masters by Research degree, available in both faculties: Film, Art, and Creative Technologies; and Enterprise and Humanities. The programme includes two years of full-time or three years of part-time study, with a focus on practice-based research. The

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[13] [PhD Admissions at Tallinn University, Estonia (tlu.ee)](#)
[14] [courses - postgraduate - IADT](#)

application process involves submitting a research proposal, meeting specific entry requirements, and undergoing a validation process.

Supervision

Supervisors at IADT must hold a master's degree and are responsible for guiding students through their research projects. Two supervisors are appointed for each student to ensure continuity. Supervisors meet regularly with students to discuss progress and produce reports.

Examination Procedures

The degree is awarded based on the successful completion of a thesis, which may include a creative component. The examination involves an internal and external examiner, and a viva voce may be required. Examiners assess the thesis based on Level 9 learning outcomes and make recommendations for awarding the degree.

4. Harmonising Higher Education Practices: A Unified Approach for Excellence

Creating a joint PhD programme within the FilmEU alliance requires extensive harmonisation of various higher education practices, from admissions to assessment and mobility procedures. The institutions involved have to align their academic standards, regulatory requirements, and cultural practices to ensure a cohesive educational experience. This includes developing unified admission criteria, standardising assessment methods, and establishing robust mobility protocols to facilitate seamless student and staff exchanges.

By integrating diverse pedagogical approaches and leveraging the strengths of each partner institution, FilmEU has created a robust framework that supports innovative and interdisciplinary research in film and media arts. This collaborative effort positions FilmEU

as a leader in postgraduate education, offering unique opportunities for students and fostering a vibrant academic community.

4.1. FilmEU Masters

4.1.2. Doc Nomads: A Journey Through Documentary Filmmaking[15]

Originality and Innovation

The Doc Nomads Joint Master Degree (JMD) in Documentary Filmmaking stands out for its unique mobility scheme, interdisciplinary approach, and hands-on training in documentary film production. Funded by the Erasmus Mundus programme, this two-year course has been running since 2012. The programme's innovation lies in its structured mobility that requires students to study and produce work in multiple countries, providing a diverse cultural and academic experience.

Strengths and Structure

Doc Nomads is a collaboration between two prominent FilmEU institutions: **Lusófona University (Portugal)** and **LUCA School of Arts (Belgium**) plus the University of Theatre and Film Arts (Hungary. Each academic year is divided into three semesters, with students spending each semester at a different partner institution, culminating in a final semester dedicated to thesis work. This structured mobility fosters adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and a broad professional network.

Mobility and Academic Workflow

The programme begins in Lisbon, where students focus on the fundamentals of documentary filmmaking, including narrative theory, research methods, and project development. The second semester takes place in Budapest, concentrating on hands-on production techniques and creative documentary forms. The third semester in Brussels

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[15] Home (docnomads.eu)

emphasises post-production, distribution, and preparing the final graduation film. Each phase integrates local industry professionals and culminates in practical projects.

Recognition and Awards

Doc Nomads has garnered international acclaim, with numerous student films winning awards at prestigious festivals such as IDFA and DOK Leipzig. This recognition highlights the programme's excellence and the high calibre of its graduates.

4.1.3. Kino Eyes: The European Movie Masters[16]

Originality and Innovation

Kino Eyes offers a distinctive approach to fiction film production, focusing on narrative, visual style, and innovative storytelling techniques. Funded by the Erasmus Mundus programme, it has been operational since 2015. The master's course is renowned for its cross-disciplinary curriculum that merges theory and practice in a collaborative international environment.

Strengths and Structure

This programme is a partnership between three FilmEU institutions, **Lusófona University (Portugal), Baltic Film Media Arts and Communication School (Estonia), Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dún Laoghaire (Ireland)** and Screen Academy Scotland at Edinburgh Napier University (UK), . It offers a well-rounded education in screenwriting, directing, and producing, enriched by the diverse perspectives of its partner institutions.

Mobility and Academic Workflow

Students begin their studies in Lisbon with a focus on scriptwriting and pre-production. The second semester in Edinburgh covers directing and cinematography, blending traditional techniques with cutting-edge technology. The third semester in Tallinn

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[16] KINOEYES KEM The European Film Masters - Kinoeyes | KEM The European Film Masters

emphasises post-production and special effects, integrating digital tools and innovative methodologies. The final semester allows students to develop their graduation film, benefiting from the resources and expertise of all three institutions.

Recognition and Awards

Kino Eyes alumni have achieved significant success, including awards at major film festivals like Cannes and Berlinale. This international recognition attests to the programme's quality and the preparedness of its graduates for the global film industry.

4.1.4. Re:Anima - Animation Across Europe[17]

Originality and Innovation

Re:Anima is a pioneering Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree focusing on animation, integrating traditional techniques with modern digital practices. The programme is celebrated for its comprehensive curriculum that spans artistic expression and technical proficiency in animation.

Strengths and Structure

The programme is a collaboration between two FilmEU Institutions **Lusófona University (Portugal)** and **LUCA School of Arts (Belgium**) plus Aalto University (Finland). It offers a balanced education in animation theory, storytelling, and technical skills, ensuring students gain expertise in both 2D and 3D animation.

Mobility and Academic Workflow

Students start in Lisbon, where they study animation history, theory, and introductory production techniques. The second semester in Brussels focuses on advanced animation production, including character design and motion graphics. The third semester in Viborg

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[17] Homepage - RE:Anima - European Joint Master in Animation (reanima.eu)

integrates new media and interactive storytelling. The final semester is dedicated to the thesis project, allowing students to leverage the resources of the partner institutions.

Recognition and Awards

Re:Anima graduates have been recognised with awards at international festivals such as Annecy and Ottawa, showcasing the programme's success in nurturing top-tier animation professionals.

4.1.5. Replay: Advanced Game Experiences[18]

Originality and Innovation

The Replay Master's programme stands out for its unique focus on advanced post-production techniques and technologies, offering an in-depth education in the art and science of gaming. Funded by the Erasmus+ programme, Replay addresses the increasing demand for skilled professionals in the evolving landscape of this field of work.

Strengths and Structure

This programme is a collaborative effort between two FilmEU institutions **Lusófona University (Portugal)** and **LUCA School of Arts (Belgium)** plus Aalto University (Finland). Replay is designed to equip students with comprehensive skills in editing, sound design, visual effects (VFX), and colour grading, combining theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Mobility and Academic Workflow

Replay is structured to offer a seamless integration of mobility and learning across its partner institutions. The first semester at Lusófona University focuses on the fundamentals of editing and sound design, where students gain hands-on experience with industry-standard software and equipment. The second semester at LUCA School of Arts

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[18] Home - REPLAY MASTERS

delves deeper into design, emphasising creative and technical proficiency. The third semester at Aalto University Arts covers learning with gaming industry professionals, co-creation and game project seminars. The final semester is dedicated to a thesis project that synthesises the knowledge and skills acquired, culminating in a professional-standard work.

4.1.6. Film Memory: Preserving and Requalifying Cinematic Heritage[19]

Originality and Innovation

The Film Memory Master's programme is dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and archiving of film heritage. It will be funded by the Erasmus+ programme and it will start in 2024, it stands out for its interdisciplinary approach combining film studies, archival science, and digital restoration techniques.

Strengths and Structure

This master's programme involves four FilmEU institutions, **Lusófona University (Portugal), LUCA School of Arts (Belgium), Baltic Film School, Tallinn University (Estónia)** and **the Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dún Laoghaire (Ireland)**. It provides in-depth knowledge and practical skills in film preservation, digital archiving, and historical research.

Mobility and Academic Workflow

Students begin their studies in Lisbon, learning the fundamentals of film history and archival practices. The second semester in Brussels focuses on digital restoration techniques and the ethics of film preservation. The third semester in Budapest covers the practical aspects of archiving and curating film collections. The final semester involves a thesis project that allows students to engage in a comprehensive restoration or archival project.

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[19] FilmMemory

4.1.7. Positioning for a PhD in the Arts: A Strong Foundation

The successful implementation of these innovative master's programmes demonstrates FilmEU's capability to manage complex educational initiatives and foster academic excellence. The alliance's commitment to interdisciplinary research, cultural exchange, and practical training equips it with the necessary expertise to develop a pioneering PhD programme in the arts. By harmonising academic practices and embracing a collaborative approach, FilmEU institutions are well-positioned to offer a PhD that meets the highest standards of academic and artistic excellence, contributing significantly to the advancement of film and media arts education globally.

4.2. FilmEU Doctoral Summer Seminars: Testing Collaborative Partnerships at PhD level

Impact and Objectives

The FilmEU Alliance,, emphasises integrating PhD students into its artistic research activities. This initiative aims to establish a Joint PhD degree that aligns quality assurance principles across the alliance. Central to this effort are the Doctoral Summer Seminars, which serve as a platform for PhD candidates to present their work, receive feedback, and engage in interdisciplinary discourse. These seminars foster collaboration, enhance third-cycle education, and promote shared PhD supervision and training activities.

4.2.1. Doctoral Summer Seminar 2022: Dublin, Ireland

Schedule and Selection Process

The inaugural Doctoral Summer Seminar was held on 10th June 2022 during the FilmEU Summit at IADT in Dublin. The seminar featured paper and poster presentations from PhD students, followed by expert panel feedback and peer review sessions. An open call for submissions was announced through internal channels like Moodle and external platforms

such as the FilmEU website and social media. Selection criteria focused on the quality of proposals and their relevance to Film and Media Arts, ensuring a diverse mix of disciplinary emphases and PhD stages.

Doctoral Presentations and Poster Sessions

Selected presentations covered a wide range of topics, such as the cultural politics of the Irish surf film genre and the implications of interactive feature films. Poster sessions included research on the reflexive relationship between disease and visual media and the affective functions of different camera movement techniques. Feedback was provided by a panel of experts, including Dr. Sherra Murphy (IADT, Ireland), Dr. David Novack (Lusófona University, Portugal) and Prof. Indrek Ibrus (Tallinn University, Estonia) fostering a rigorous academic environment.

Testimonials

Participants praised the seminar for its unique opportunity to share work and receive valuable feedback. Fiona Hallinan from LUCA School of Arts remarked, *Participating in the seminar allowed me to gain new perspectives on my research and make valuable connections with fellow researchers*. Vera Pirogova from Tallinn University added, *The seminar was instrumental in refining my research question and introduced me to the broader scope of artistic research.*

4.2.2. Doctoral Summer Seminar 2023: Lisbon, Portugal

Schedule and Selection Process

The second Doctoral Summer Seminar was hosted by Lusófona University on 2nd June 2023 during the FilmEU_RIT Summit. The event followed a similar format to the previous year, with an open call for submissions and a rigorous selection process. Announcements were made through internal emails, Moodle, and the FilmEU newsletter, reaching a broad audience.

Doctoral Presentations and Poster Sessions

Presentations addressed topics like eco-connectedness in design practice and gender politics in comedy. The poster sessions featured research on internet videos and queer studies, and the contextualisation of Portuguese cinema through costume design. The event provided a platform for young researchers to discuss their work with peers and experts, including keynote speakers Teemu Mäki and Sara Driver.

Testimonials

Participants, including Ívar Erik Yeoman from Lusófona University and Ella Fitzpatrick from IADT, expressed their appreciation for the seminar, noting the inspiration and valuable insights gained from the event. Ívar Erik Yeoman stated, *The doctoral seminar in Lisbon was an inspirational event. It was of great importance to attend the presentations of experienced researchers and exchange ideas with PhD students from other countries*.

Significance for Future Development The FilmEU Doctoral Summer Seminars have proven to be an effective test bed for partnership and collaboration between the alliance's institutions. By facilitating interdisciplinary research, providing critical feedback, and fostering a supportive academic community, these seminars have laid the groundwork for the development of a Joint PhD programme. The collaborative activities, rigorous selection processes, and high-quality presentations highlight the alliance's commitment to academic excellence and innovation. These efforts position FilmEU institutions as strong contenders for establishing a comprehensive and pioneering Joint PhD in the Arts, leveraging their collective strengths to create a robust educational framework.

4.3. FilmEU_RIT: A Collaborative Initiative for Research, Innovation, and Transformation[20]

Introduction

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101035820. FilmEU_RIT is a pivotal initiative within the FilmEU Alliance, aiming to bolster research, innovation, and educational transformation in the fields of Film and Media Arts. This collaborative effort involves all FilmEU foundation institutions, Lusófona University (Portugal), LUCA School of Arts (Belgium), Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (Ireland), and Tallinn University (Estonia).

Objectives and Impact FilmEU_RIT is designed to:

- Promote the relevance of artistic research.
- Enhance research activities across the alliance.
- Benchmark successful models for institutional transformation.
- Equip students, staff, and teachers with critical, technical, and methodological skills.
- Support the restructuring of funding policies at various levels.
- Promote practice-based third-cycle studies in Higher Arts Education.
- Implement a network of competence centres called **FILMEU HUB**.
- Develop common virtual spaces and digital tools for collaboration.
- Increase the alliance's ability to attract and retain talent.
- Establish joint management and governance structures for research.
- Implement a common framework for IP management and knowledge transfer.
- Act as a critical cultural intermediary on both local and global scales.

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[20] FilmEU_RIT - FilmEU European University

Collaborative Strategies

FilmEU_RIT focuses on developing joint strategies and action plans to transform FilmEU into an institution that prioritises research and innovation in Film and Media Arts. By 2025, the goal is to make FilmEU an exemplary collaborative structure, capable of fostering deep cooperation between member institutions and enhancing their ability to impact the cultural and creative industries both locally and globally.

Research and Innovation

The initiative emphasises the creation and support of artistic practice-based research projects. It aims to critically and reflectively exploit new technologies, consolidate alternative pathways for PhDs in the arts, and reinforce the societal impact of the knowledge produced within the alliance. This approach ensures that the research environment is conducive to interdisciplinary advancements in artistic work, supervision, and dissemination.

Implementation and Activities

The implementation of FilmEU_RIT involves:

- Jointly designed policies and action plans to increase the profile of Film and Media Arts innovation and research.
- Cooperative projects supported by a common agenda for artistic practice-based research.
- Structured programs to embed practice-based third-cycle studies in Higher Arts Education.
- Development and maintenance of the "FILMEU HUB", a network of centres of competence.
- Design and implementation of digital tools and virtual spaces to facilitate collaboration.

● Establishment of joint management and governance structures for research activities.

4.3.1 Relevance for a Future Joint PhD

Building a Strong Foundation

The activities and structures established under FilmEU_RIT provide a robust foundation for developing a future joint PhD programme. By fostering a collaborative research environment and establishing common policies and frameworks, the alliance is well-equipped to tackle the complexities of a joint PhD.

Interdisciplinary Research

FilmEU_RIT's emphasis on interdisciplinary research and innovation prepares the ground for a PhD programme that integrates diverse academic traditions and research paradigms. This interdisciplinary focus is crucial for developing a comprehensive and flexible PhD curriculum that can accommodate various research interests and methodologies.

Governance and Management

The joint management and governance structures developed through FilmEU_RIT ensure that the alliance can effectively oversee a collaborative PhD programme. These structures facilitate coordinated efforts across different institutions, ensuring that the PhD programme maintains high academic standards and rigorous research practices.

Strengthening Collaborative Research for Future Success

FilmEU_RIT is a transformative initiative that enhances the research and innovation capabilities of the FilmEU Alliance. By developing joint strategies, fostering interdisciplinary research, and establishing robust governance structures, FilmEU_RIT lays the groundwork for a successful joint PhD programme. This initiative positions the alliance

as a leader in Film and Media Arts education, poised to make significant contributions to the field through collaborative and innovative research.
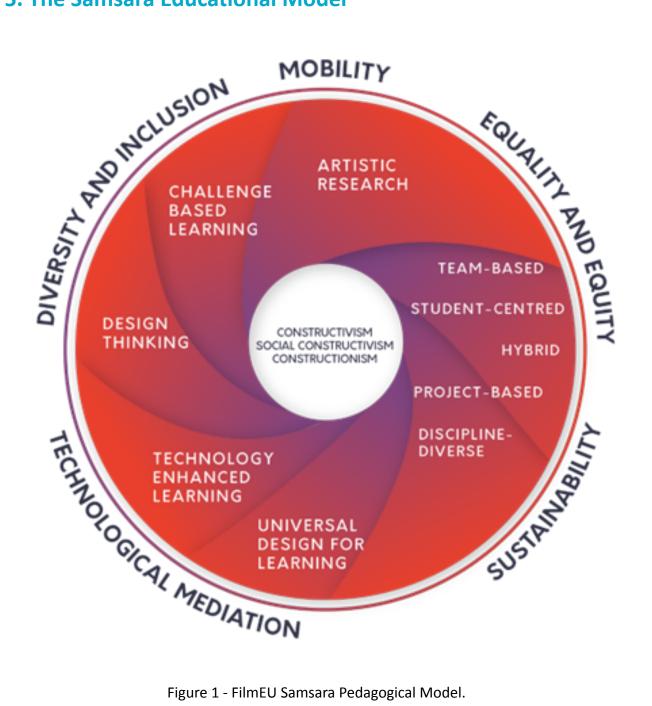
5. The Samsara Educational Model

Figure 1 - FilmEU Samsara Pedagogical Model.

The FilmEU Pedagogical approach formally introduces Samsara, a challenge-based educational model designed to support our mission of fostering excellence in film and media arts higher education. This initiative is a pragmatic response to the need to transform teaching and learning practices amidst rapidly changing social and technological conditions, which affect the creation, production, distribution, and reception of audio-visual culture, industries, research, and education.

The Samsara model presented here is primarily aimed at guiding practices in teaching and curriculum design but is also relevant to other areas of educational intervention, including admissions, assessments, research, professional development, staff capacitation, student affairs, and quality assurance.

5.1. Pedagogical Guidelines

5.1.1. Core Principles

Diversity and Inclusion

FilmEU is fully engaged in creating a diverse community of learners, educators, researchers, and stakeholders. Diversity refers to the presence of a range of identities in the people working, studying, and collaborating in FilmEU, reflecting aspects of identity that directly impact a person's access to opportunities, resources, power, and decision-making. Inclusive strategies and practices are implemented to promote meaningful social, creative, and academic interactions among its diverse persons and groups, aiming to involve them in devising solutions and ensuring no one is left behind.

Equality and Equity

FilmEU is committed to creating and fostering a culture of equality and fairness, free from discrimination, bias, favouritism, and harassment. Equity involves providing resources and removing barriers for underserved members of society to equalise opportunities and help students reach their goals and expectations. This approach is vital for achieving diversity

and inclusion goals and plays a role in assessments, admission, mobility, and staff capacitation.

Mobility

Mobility refers to the free and frequent movement of people, exchange of ideas, and transfer of knowledge and research. It provides opportunities to collaborate in learning, teaching, research, and cultural appreciation and production amongst and beyond our partnering institutions and communities. FilmEU promotes inclusive mobility policies and schemes to support and encourage students and staff who have not yet taken part in physical/blended mobility, fostering a more internationalised and culturally aware community.

Sustainability

FilmEU is committed to promoting, developing, and implementing sustainable practices in artistic higher education and research and in the cultural and creative industries. This includes supporting initiatives to make the film industry more sustainable and striving for sustainability in staff and student mobilities and the use of technology. Sustainable pedagogical approaches have been found to positively affect collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

Technological Mediation

Technological mediation encompasses the use of technology in film and media arts as both natural and fundamental to the creative process. Technologies enable students to create work, are integral to the experience of learning and teaching, and play a key role in collaboration and communication. Ethical and social components, such as policies, privacy, equity, and human health, must be critically evaluated when using technology.

5.1.2 Learning Theories

Constructivism

Constructivist theories propose that knowledge is actively constructed through direct experience rather than passively absorbed or transmitted. Key principles include the uniqueness and complexity of teachers and learners, the importance of context, active engagement in the learning process, and learning through doing and reflecting on doing.

Social Constructivism

Social constructivism extends constructivism by positing that knowledge is constructed through interaction with others. It emphasises the collaborative nature of learning, where peer interaction is mediated and structured by the teacher, and the importance of dialogic approaches and facilitation.

Constructionism

Constructionism, heavily influenced by constructivist theories, emphasises making and experiential learning. It proposes that knowledge is constructed through the creation of meaningful artefacts. This approach is characterised by hands-on creative experimentation, iteration, and collaboration, motivating students through real-world problem-solving.

5.1.3 Methodologies

Artistic Research (AR) and Practise as Research (PaR)

Artistic Research (AR) recognises the creative outputs of art practice as a source of knowledge. Practice as Research (PaR) involves simultaneous practice and theory, influencing each other. It values tacit and implicit knowledge alongside explicit academic knowledge, ideally suited for postgraduate, PhD, and doctoral candidates.

Challenge Based Learning (CBL)

CBL involves addressing, solving, or proposing solutions to real societal problems. It combines constructivist and constructionist pedagogical concepts with real-world applications, emphasising social impact. CBL in arts education encourages students to critically evaluate the social impact of their creative work and explore how it can transform society positively.

Design Thinking (DT)

Design thinking methods, originating from product and industrial design, are now applied to all types of problem-solving. DT involves empathy, ideation, and iteration to develop human-centric solutions, challenging assumptions and redefining problems.

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)

TEL uses educational software to enhance or enable creative interaction, collaboration, and learning. It integrates technology as a natural part of the learning process, evaluated critically, and requires training and support for teachers and students.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

UDL offers a framework for creating equitable learning conditions, recognising the variability of students. It calls for adjustments within the learning environment to remove learning barriers, promoting inclusion and equity.

5.2. Samsara Pedagogical Framework

Goals

The Samsara framework is designed to foster excellence, innovation, and collaboration in audio-visual artistic higher education. The methods and goals of Samsara emerged from an investigation into the conditions and practices underpinning contemporary film and

media arts higher education, resulting in the identification of several transformational practices and the challenges they address.

Theoretical and Historical Context - European Film and Media Art Education in a Changing World

European film and media art schools are traditionally linked to music and art conservatories, focusing on technical and artistic elements of cinema in a master/disciple relationship. However, this individualising model does not accommodate the collaborative nature of cinematic communication. The Bologna reform and the European Qualifications Framework have pressured institutions to incorporate structural changes, leading to new pedagogical approaches that address these challenges.

The Construction of Meaning in Film and Media Arts

The construction of meaning in film and media arts involves mastering multiple artistic and technical skills and creating processes that construct meaning through text, image, sound, time, and interaction. The complexity of these structures and elements requires students to deeply understand manipulative processes and comprehend how meaning arises from the narrative and discursive structures of the medium. Samsara addresses this challenge through its constructionist approach and methodologies, integrating creative processes with critical thinking.

Adapting to Emergent Digital Practices

The ascendency of digital technologies and new storytelling platforms have changed the way moving images relate to society, education, and teaching practices. Samsara embraces these new forms of cinematic expression through Artistic Research, Practice as Research, Mobility, Technological mediation, and Technology Enhanced Learning, preparing FilmEU for an ever-changing future.

Ethics in the Creative Industries

FilmEU aims to become more culturally and environmentally aware, promoting ethical and sustainable practices in film and media arts education. Samsara's core principles of Equality and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and Sustainability, along with its Universal Design for Learning methodology, create a diverse and inclusive community of artists who can support and work together throughout their careers. Sustainability in education aims to create a film and media arts university that is environmentally conscious and innovative, fostering new pathways for the future.

The Samsara Pedagogical Framework is a holistic and iterative approach to film and media arts education, integrating core principles, learning theories, methodologies, and approaches to foster excellence, innovation, and collaboration. By addressing historical and theoretical contexts and adapting to emergent digital practices, Samsara aims to transform teaching and learning practices and contribute significantly to advancing European cinematic arts education.

6. The PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU

Overview

The PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU is an innovative and interdisciplinary programme designed to cultivate advanced academic and artistic skills, foster cutting-edge research, and contribute to the development of new knowledge in film and media arts. Leveraging the strengths of the FilmEU alliance, which comprises leading institutions across Europe, this joint PhD programme integrates scientific research with artistic practice, with a strong emphasis on artificial intelligence (AI) and sustainability. This dual focus aims to produce highly skilled researchers and practitioners capable of advancing the field of film and media arts while addressing contemporary global challenges.

6.1. Programme Structure

The PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU offers a balanced mix of theoretical coursework, practical workshops, and independent research. The programme is designed to be flexible, allowing students to tailor their studies to their specific research interests while maintaining a solid foundation in core areas.

Duration and Credits

The programme typically spans three to four years and requires the completion of 180 ECTS credits. This includes coursework, research activities, and the dissertation project.

6.1.2. Curriculum and Coursework

Obligatory Curricular Units

- **Research Methodologies in Film and Media Arts (10 ECTS)** This course covers essential research methodologies and techniques specific to film and media arts, including qualitative and quantitative methods, practice-based research, interdisciplinary approaches, and the application of AI in media research.

- **Theories of Film and Media (10 ECTS)** This course provides a comprehensive overview of key theoretical frameworks in film and media studies, including semiotics, psychoanalysis, feminist theory, postcolonial studies, and the impact of AI and digital technologies on media theory.

- **Artistic Practice and Reflection (10 ECTS)** Focusing on integrating artistic practice with critical reflection, this course encourages students to develop a reflective and analytical approach to their creative work, with an emphasis on sustainable practices in film production and media art.

- **Interdisciplinary Research Seminars (10 ECTS)** These seminars facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and discussion, allowing students to engage with peers and faculty from various fields within the arts, humanities, and sciences, particularly in AI and sustainability.

Possible Optional Curricular Units Across FilmEU Institutions

Students must select a minimum of four optional courses (40 ECTS) to tailor their studies to their research interests. Options include:

- **Digital Media and Interactive Art (10 ECTS)** Exploring the intersections of digital technology and artistic practice, this course covers topics such as virtual reality, interactive installations, digital storytelling, and the integration of AI in creating interactive media.

- **Documentary Film and Social Change (10 ECTS)** This course examines the role of documentary film in addressing social issues and promoting sustainability, exploring both theoretical perspectives and practical approaches to documentary filmmaking.

- **Advanced Screenwriting Techniques (10 ECTS)** Focusing on advanced techniques in screenwriting, this course covers narrative structures, character development, and the integration of AI-driven tools in scriptwriting processes.

- **Cinematography and Visual Aesthetics (10 ECTS)** This course delves into the art and technique of cinematography, exploring the aesthetic and technical aspects of visual storytelling, with a focus on sustainable filmmaking practices.

- **Transmedia Storytelling (10 ECTS)** Examining the expanding field of transmedia storytelling, this course covers the creation and distribution of narratives across multiple platforms and media, incorporating AI technologies to enhance audience engagement.

- **Sustainable Filmmaking (10 ECTS)** This course focuses on integrating environmental sustainability into the filmmaking process. Students will explore eco-friendly production techniques, sustainable resource management, and ethical filmmaking practices. The curriculum includes analysis of green productions, workshops on reducing carbon footprints, and strategies for implementing sustainable practices on set. Through practical projects and case studies, students

will learn to produce films that are environmentally responsible, promoting sustainability within the industry.

- **Machine Learning Applied to Media Arts (10 ECTS)** Examining the application of machine learning technologies in media arts. Students will delve into machine learning algorithms, data-driven art, and interactive media systems. The curriculum covers practical uses of AI in content creation, including generative art, automated editing, and intelligent sound design. Through hands-on projects and theoretical discussions, students will learn to harness machine learning for innovative artistic expressions and explore ethical considerations in AI-driven media art.

- **Blockchain Narrative (10 ECTS)** Introducing blockchain technology and its potential to revolutionise storytelling and media distribution. Students will learn about blockchain fundamentals, smart contracts, and decentralised applications. The curriculum explores the creation of interactive narratives, audience engagement through tokenization, and new models for intellectual property and content monetisation. Practical projects involve designing blockchain-based narrative experiences, examining the impact of decentralised networks on future storytelling and media ownership.

- **Archiving Memory: The Intersection of Film and History (10 ECTS)** Exploring the role of film and media in preserving and interpreting historical memory. Students will engage with archival theory, practices of digitisation, and the ethics of historical representation. Through analysis of archival footage and creation of personal archives, the curriculum emphasises the impact of media on collective memory and the importance of preserving audiovisual heritage.

- **Cinematic Memory: Archives and Digital Preservation (10 ECTS)** Focused on the integration of memory and archives in film, this course delves into digital preservation techniques and the reconstruction of historical narratives through media. Students will explore case studies, engage in hands-on archiving projects, and critically analyse the ethical dimensions of archival work. The course aims to

equip students with skills to manage and curate digital archives, ensuring the longevity of cinematic heritage.

- **Unseen Stories: Exploring Peripheral Narratives in Film (10 ECTS)** Investigating the role of marginalised and invisible narratives in film and media. Through theoretical frameworks and practical projects, students will examine how peripheral stories challenge dominant discourses. The curriculum includes studies of underrepresented communities, experimental film techniques, and the development of new narrative forms to bring these stories to the forefront.

- **Beyond the Margins: Invisible Narratives in Media (10 ECTS)** Centred on the power of invisible narratives, this course explores stories from the periphery of society. Students will engage with critical theory, ethnographic filmmaking, and participatory media practices. Through creative projects and critical essays, the course encourages the discovery and amplification of voices often excluded from mainstream media, fostering a deeper understanding of diverse human experiences.

- **Decolonising the Lens: Theory and Practice in Film and Media (10 ECTS)** Examining decolonial approaches in film and media, addressing historical biases and promoting inclusive storytelling. Students will engage with postcolonial theory, indigenous media practices, and anti-colonial narratives. The curriculum includes critical analysis, workshops on decolonial film techniques, and projects that challenge and reframe traditional media narratives.

- **Reframing Media: Decolonial Approaches to Film (10 ECTS)** Focusing on the decolonisation of film and media, this course explores alternative narrative structures and production practices. Students will study critical theory, engage in hands-on projects, and collaborate with communities to create films that resist colonial frameworks. The course aims to empower students to produce media that reflects diverse perspectives and promotes social justice.

- **Sonic Narratives: The Art and Science of Film Sound (10 ECTS)** Exploring the integral role of sound in film and media. Students will delve into sound design,

audio engineering, and the psychological effects of sound on audiences. The curriculum includes practical workshops, theoretical analysis, and the creation of soundscapes, aiming to enhance storytelling through innovative audio techniques.

- **Soundscapes in Cinema: Theory and Practice(10 ECTS)** Examining the creative and technical aspects of sound in film. Students will study the history of film sound, engage in sound design projects, and analyse the impact of audio on narrative structure. Through practical exercises and critical discussions, the course fosters a comprehensive understanding of how sound shapes cinematic experiences.

- **Interactive Worlds: Game Design and Theory(10 ECTS)** This course investigates the intersection of film and computer gaming, focusing on game design, narrative development, and interactive storytelling. Students will explore game theory, create prototypes, and analyse the cultural impact of gaming. The curriculum emphasises the role of interactivity in modern media, fostering skills to innovate in both gaming and cinematic contexts.

- **Game Narratives: From Concept to Creation(10 ECTS)** Focusing on narrative development in computer gaming, this course covers game mechanics, storytelling techniques, and user experience design. Students will engage in hands-on projects to create compelling game narratives, integrating cinematic elements with interactive media. The course aims to equip students with the skills to produce immersive and engaging gaming experiences.

- **Immersive Realities: Virtual Filmmaking and Art (10 ECTS)** This course explores the innovative field of virtual and immersive filmmaking. Students will learn about VR/AR technologies, immersive storytelling, and interactive media art. The curriculum includes practical workshops, theoretical discussions, and projects that push the boundaries of traditional filmmaking, preparing students to create immersive cinematic experiences.

- **Virtual Visions: Exploring Immersive Media Arts (10 ECTS)** Centred on the integration of virtual reality in film and art, this course examines the techniques and theories behind immersive media. Students will engage in the creation of

VR/AR projects, study the impact of immersive technologies on audience perception, and explore the future of virtual storytelling. The course aims to equip students with the tools to innovate in the rapidly evolving field of immersive media.

- **Gender Perspectives: Theory and Practice in Film and Media (10 ECTS)**This course delves into the complexities of gender theory and its application in film and media. Students will explore foundational and contemporary gender theories, examining how these concepts influence and shape cinematic and media narratives. Through critical analysis, practical projects, and theoretical discussions, the curriculum emphasises the role of gender in media representation and production, encouraging students to challenge traditional norms and promote diverse, inclusive storytelling.

6.1.3. Workshops and Practical Components

In addition to coursework, the programme includes practical workshops and collaborative projects designed to enhance students' technical skills and artistic practice. These workshops cover areas such as:

1. **Eco-Friendly Production Techniques**
   - Explore sustainable methods in film production to minimise environmental impact.
2. **AI in Scriptwriting**
   - Learn to integrate AI tools for innovative screenwriting and story development.
3. **Blockchain for Media Distribution**
   - Discover how blockchain technology can revolutionise media ownership and distribution.
4. **Virtual Reality Filmmaking**
   - Hands-on VR production, from concept to post-production.
5. **Sound Design for Immersive Media**

- Create complex soundscapes for VR/AR and interactive media.

6. **Interactive Storytelling Techniques**

   - Develop narratives that engage audiences through interactive elements.

7. **Ethical Filmmaking Practices**

   - Focus on ethics in production, from representation to sustainability.

8. **Archival Techniques for Digital Media**

   - Learn digital preservation methods for audiovisual archives.

9. **Peripheral Narratives Workshop**

   - Explore techniques to bring marginalised stories to the forefront.

10. **Decolonizing Media Production**

    - Workshop on decolonial theory applied to film and media practices.

11. **Experimental Animation Techniques**

    - Dive into non-traditional animation methods and storytelling.

12. **Gender Dynamics in Media**

    - Analyse and produce media through the lens of gender theory.

13. **Documentary Filmmaking for Social Change**

    - Practical workshop focused on documentaries that drive social impact.

14. **Game Design for Filmmakers**

    - Explore the crossover between film narrative and game design.

15. **Augmented Reality Art Installations**

    - Create AR art pieces that interact with physical environments.

16. **Film Production and Directing**

    - Hands-on workshop covering all stages of film production and directing techniques.

17. **Editing and Post-Production Techniques**

    - Focus on advanced editing skills, colour correction, and visual effects for a polished final product.

18. **Sound Design and Music for Film**

○ Techniques for designing impactful soundscapes and integrating music to enhance cinematic storytelling.

19. **Experimental Media and New Technologies**

○ Explore the latest innovations in media technologies and their applications in experimental film and art.

20. **AI Applications in Media Arts**

○ Implement AI tools in media creation, from automated editing to generative art and interactive systems.

21. **Sustainable Practices in Film Production**

○ Strategies for incorporating sustainability into every aspect of film production, from pre-production to post-production.

Practice-Based Research and Dissertation

6.2. Innovative Practice-Based Research and Dissertation

Central to the PhD programme in Film and Media Arts is the practice-based independent research project, culminating in a doctoral dissertation. This dissertation uniquely combines a substantial body of creative work with a critical, reflective component, ensuring the integration of practical artistry with academic rigour.

Creative Work

The creative work constitutes the core of the dissertation, where candidates produce innovative projects within film and media arts. These projects can include, but are not limited to, films, multimedia installations, interactive media, VR/AR experiences, or any other relevant media forms. The creative work must demonstrate originality, technical proficiency, and a significant contribution to the field, particularly focusing on themes such as AI and sustainability.

Critical Reflective Component

Alongside the creative work, the dissertation includes a critical, reflective component. This part of the dissertation is essential for contextualising the creative project within academic and theoretical frameworks. It involves a thorough analysis of the creative process, methodologies employed, and the conceptual underpinnings of the work. Candidates are expected to engage deeply with relevant literature, critically reflecting on their practice and its implications within the broader context of film and media arts.

6.2.1 Assessment Criteria

The assessment of the practice-based dissertation is comprehensive, evaluating both the creative work and the reflective component. Key criteria include:

- **Originality and Innovation:** The extent to which the creative work contributes new insights or approaches within film and media arts.
- **Technical Proficiency:** The technical quality and execution of the creative project, demonstrating mastery of relevant skills and techniques.
- **Theoretical Engagement:** The depth of critical reflection and theoretical analysis in the reflective component, showing engagement with contemporary debates and literature.
- **Interdisciplinary Integration:** The successful integration of interdisciplinary approaches, particularly involving AI and sustainability.
- **Contribution to Knowledge:** The overall contribution of the dissertation to advancing knowledge and practice within the field of film and media arts.

6.2.2. Supervision and Support

PhD candidates are supported by a supervisory team, including experienced faculty members from multiple FilmEU institutions. This collaborative approach ensures comprehensive guidance throughout the research process. Regular progress reviews and

feedback sessions are conducted to ensure that the research aligns with the highest academic standards and that candidates receive constructive input to refine their work.

6.2.3. Presentation and Defence

The final stage of the PhD involves the presentation and defence of the dissertation. Candidates present their creative work and reflective analysis to a panel of experts, followed by a rigorous discussion and examination. This process ensures that the research meets the academic and artistic standards expected of a doctoral degree and provides an opportunity for candidates to articulate and defend their contributions to the field.

By integrating creative practice with critical reflection, the PhD programme fosters a dynamic and innovative research environment. This approach not only advances individual artistic and academic careers but also contributes significantly to the evolving discourse in film and media arts, with a keen focus on contemporary challenges and technological advancements.

6.3 Mobility and Inter-Institutional Supervision

Mobility of PhD Students

One of the unique features of the FilmEU PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU is the emphasis on student mobility across the different member institutions. This mobility allows students to benefit from the diverse expertise, facilities, and cultural perspectives offered by each institution. Key aspects of the mobility programme include:

- **Exchange Programmes:** Students can spend one or more semesters at partner institutions, taking advantage of specialised courses and resources.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Mobility fosters collaboration on research projects that draw on the strengths of multiple institutions.

- **Cultural Immersion:** Exposure to different academic cultures and practices enriches the students' educational experience and broadens their professional networks.

Benefits of Inter-Institutional Supervision

PhD candidates benefit from inter-institutional supervision, involving faculty members from multiple FilmEU institutions. This collaborative approach ensures comprehensive support and guidance. Key components include:

- **Supervisory Team:** Each student has a primary supervisor from their home institution and co-supervisors from other partner institutions, providing diverse expertise and perspectives.
- **Joint Progress Reviews:** Regular reviews involve all supervisors, facilitating comprehensive feedback and ensuring the research aligns with the highest academic standards.
- **Resource Sharing:** Students have access to resources and facilities across all member institutions, enhancing their research capabilities.

6.4. Objectives and Ambitions

Academic Excellence

The PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU aims to produce highly skilled researchers and artists capable of advancing knowledge in their fields. Objectives include:

- **Innovative Research:** Encouraging groundbreaking research that pushes the boundaries of traditional film and media disciplines, incorporating AI and sustainability.
- **Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Promoting cross-disciplinary collaborations that integrate perspectives from various fields.

Professional Development

The PhD programme also focuses on equipping students with the skills necessary for successful careers in academia, industry, and the arts. This includes:

- **Teaching Experience:** Providing opportunities to teach and develop pedagogical skills.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Facilitating connections with industry professionals, academic peers, and research communities.

Global Impact

FilmEU aspires to have a global impact through its PhD programme by:

- **International Collaboration:** Engaging in partnerships with leading institutions worldwide.
- **Global Research Contributions:** Producing research that addresses global challenges and contributes to international discourse in the arts, particularly in AI and sustainability.

6.5. Innovation in the PhD Programme

The PhD in Film and Media Arts at FilmEU stands out for integrating scientific research with artistic practice, creating a unique interdisciplinary model that leverages the strengths of its member institutions. The programme's flexible structure, diverse curricular options, and emphasis on both theoretical and practical components ensure that students can tailor their studies to their specific interests and career goals. By embedding AI and sustainability into the core of the curriculum, FilmEU addresses contemporary global challenges, fostering a new generation of researchers and artists who are not only skilled in their fields but also leaders in promoting sustainable and technologically advanced practices in film and media arts. The programme's emphasis on mobility and inter-institutional supervision further enhances its innovative potential, providing students with a rich, diverse, and dynamic educational experience.

Incorporating the Samsara Model

The Samsara model, a cornerstone of FilmEU's pedagogical approach, is embedded throughout the PhD programme. Samsara is a challenge-based educational model designed to transform teaching and learning practices amidst rapidly changing social and technological conditions. It focuses on fostering excellence, innovation, and collaboration through core principles of diversity and inclusion, equality and equity, mobility, sustainability, and technological mediation.

By integrating Samsara, the PhD programme ensures that teaching and curriculum design are aligned with contemporary educational needs, supporting admissions, assessments, research, professional development, staff capacitation, student affairs, and quality assurance. This model encourages a holistic and iterative approach to education, combining constructivist and constructionist learning theories with methodologies such as Artistic Research (AR), Challenge Based Learning (CBL), Design Thinking (DT), Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). These methodologies are pivotal in addressing the historical and theoretical contexts of film and media arts education, adapting to emergent digital practices, and promoting ethical and sustainable practices within the creative industries.

7. SWOT Analysis of the FilmEU Joint PhD Programme

7.1. Strengths

1. **Interdisciplinary Approach**: The integration of scientific research and artistic practice, with a strong emphasis on AI and sustainability, offers a comprehensive educational experience.
2. **Collaborative Network**: Leveraging the strengths of leading institutions across Europe enhances resource availability, expertise, and diverse perspectives.

3. **Flexible Curriculum**: The programme's structure allows students to tailor their studies to specific research interests, promoting personalised academic and artistic growth.

4. **Innovative Coursework**: Courses covering contemporary and emerging topics, such as machine learning, blockchain narratives, and sustainable filmmaking, prepare students for future industry challenges.

5. **Practice-Based Research**: The emphasis on practice-based research fosters creativity and innovation, ensuring students produce both theoretical and practical contributions to the field.

7.2. Weaknesses

1. **Complex Coordination**: Managing a joint PhD programme across multiple institutions can be challenging, requiring efficient communication and administration.

2. **Resource Intensive**: The need for advanced technology and resources, especially for AI and VR-related coursework, may strain institutional budgets.

3. **Diverse Standards**: Aligning academic standards and practices across different institutions can be difficult, potentially affecting the consistency of the programme.

4. **Limited Optional Course Availability**: While the programme offers diverse courses, students may face limitations in course availability based on their home institution's offerings.

7.3. Opportunities

1. **Technological Advancements**: The focus on AI and other cutting-edge technologies positions the programme at the forefront of innovation, attracting top-tier students and faculty.

2. **Global Collaborations**: The potential for international partnerships can enhance the programme's reputation and provide additional opportunities for research and funding.

3. **Industry Integration**: Strong connections with the film and media industry can offer students practical experience and improve employability.

4. **Expanding Digital Archives**: The inclusion of courses on archiving and digital preservation can address growing needs in the media industry, creating niche expertise.

5. **Sustainability Focus**: Emphasising sustainable practices aligns with global trends, attracting students interested in environmental responsibility.

7.4. Threats

1. **Funding Instability**: Reliance on external funding sources, such as EU grants, can be uncertain, affecting programme sustainability.

2. **Technological Obsolescence**: Rapid technological changes may render certain course content outdated, requiring continuous curriculum updates.

3. **Market Competition**: Other institutions offering similar interdisciplinary programmes could attract potential students, increasing competition.

4. **Regulatory Challenges**: Differing educational regulations and standards across countries may complicate programme implementation and student mobility.

5. **Cultural Barriers**: Variations in cultural and academic expectations across institutions could impact student experiences and programme cohesion.

By conducting this SWOT analysis, the FilmEU Joint PhD Programme can strategically leverage its strengths and opportunities while addressing its weaknesses and mitigating potential threats.

8. FilmEU Joint Phd - Overall Assessment

The design of the FilmEU PhD in Film and Media Arts marks a significant advancement in integrating scientific research with artistic practice. Supported by Aalto University and Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf, this report aims to culminate in a Dr. Phil in Art, representing a pioneering step in transdisciplinary higher education. By combining a scientific dissertation with an artistic research project, the FilmEU programme addresses the growing need for innovative approaches in academia, significantly enhancing reflective and knowledge-building capacities in both fields.

This unique PhD model is designed to leverage the collective expertise of the partner institutions and adhere to the highest quality standards, such as the Florence Principles as defined by ELIA. Through this collaboration, the programme aims to define a model that stands out in its scientific-artistic approach, opening a transdisciplinary field of research with significant potential for innovation.

FilmEU's initiative is informed by an awareness of potential challenges, such as coordinating a joint PhD programme across multiple institutions, managing diverse academic standards, and ensuring resource availability. However, these challenges are met with strategic solutions, such as the harmonisation of academic practices and the development of robust mobility protocols. Activities that have led to further harmonisation within FilmEU include the standardisation of admission criteria, the alignment of assessment methods, and the establishment of shared mobility protocols. These efforts ensure a cohesive and seamless educational experience across the alliance.

The PhD programme's curriculum offers a balanced mix of theoretical coursework, practical workshops, and independent research, with a strong emphasis on contemporary issues like AI, sustainability, and blockchain narratives. Central to the programme is the practice-based independent research project, which integrates creative outputs with critical analysis. This approach not only advances individual artistic and academic careers but also contributes significantly to the evolving discourse in film and media arts.

The emphasis on mobility and inter-institutional supervision enriches the educational journey, allowing students to benefit from the diverse expertise and facilities offered by each member institution. Exchange programmes, collaborative projects, and cultural immersion are key aspects of this initiative, fostering a rich and dynamic educational environment. The integration of the Samsara model, which focuses on challenge-based learning and interdisciplinary methodologies, further enhances the programme's innovative potential.

The Samsara model is designed to transform teaching and learning practices amidst rapidly changing social and technological conditions. It focuses on fostering excellence, innovation, and collaboration through core principles of diversity and inclusion, equality and equity, mobility, sustainability, and technological mediation. By integrating Samsara, the PhD programme ensures that teaching and curriculum design are aligned with contemporary educational needs, supporting admissions, assessments, research, professional development, staff capacitation, student affairs, and quality assurance.

FilmEU's commitment to innovation is evident in its approach to integrating scientific research with artistic practice. The programme's flexible structure allows students to tailor their studies to their specific research interests, promoting personalised academic and artistic growth. Courses covering contemporary and emerging topics, such as machine learning, blockchain narratives, and sustainable filmmaking, prepare students for future industry challenges.

The programme's collaborative nature allows for the pooling of resources and expertise, ensuring a rich and dynamic educational environment for students and researchers alike. By addressing contemporary global challenges and embedding AI and sustainability into the curriculum, FilmEU aims to produce a new generation of researchers and artists. PhD candidates are supported by a supervisory team from multiple FilmEU institutions, ensuring comprehensive guidance throughout their research process. Regular progress reviews and feedback sessions help align their research with the highest academic standards. The final stage involves presenting and defending their dissertation, which

uniquely combines creative work with critical reflection. This rigorous process ensures that graduates contribute significantly to the field of film and media arts.

Through the design of this innovative PhD programme, FilmEU demonstrates its commitment to fostering a vibrant academic community and advancing the field of film and media arts on a global scale. By leveraging the strengths of its member institutions and integrating cutting-edge methodologies, the alliance is poised to set new standards in postgraduate education. This initiative will not only prepare students for successful careers in academia, industry, and the arts but also positions them as leaders in promoting sustainable and technologically advanced practices, ensuring a significant impact on the future of film and media arts education.

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