

A photograph of two men in a digital art installation. The man on the left is wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants, looking through a handheld device. The man on the right has dreadlocks and is wearing a white t-shirt and shorts, looking towards the first man. The background is a large wall covered in blue-toned digital sketches and patterns, including a dollar sign and the word 'LATINO'.

MA  
digital  
narratives

**International Master's Program**

Call for Applications 2020

Does the power of great stories and digital storyworlds fascinate you? Are you interested in contributing your own ideas and projects to the digital culture? Are you ready to think critically about the impact of digitization on our societies?

The international MA Digital Narratives program offers dedicated media and cultural professionals an opportunity to develop and produce stories with and for the future of digital media.

The program combines creative processes exploring dramaturgy and design with theoretical investigations in the fields of media and cultural studies. Students will study and practice creative digital development and production methods that will enable them to create innovative and immersive narrative forms of communication for digital platforms and genres such as VR/AR, web series, apps, graphic novels, and games – to name a few.

The MA Digital Narratives supports young creatives to develop their artistic, practical and theoretical skills in the evolving business scene of digital culture.

The central elements of the MA Digital Narratives curriculum are:

- **The Study of Digital Culture**

Media-theoretical knowledge and research on digital transformation and disruption processes in society, economics, and the arts.

Investigation of the social responsibility in arts and media for a participatory society in the digital age.

- **The Study of Narratives**

Research and development of immersive narratives based on contemporary technologies and audience engagement strategies in digital media.

- **The Study and Practice of Creative Methods**

Analysis and implementation of aesthetic strategies and creative development methods in artistic projects and creative businesses.

Analysis and training of creative and agile methods for ideation, development, prototyping, and production in a highly interdisciplinary and collaborative working environment.

- **Projects**

Collaborative and individual work on artistic, entrepreneurial, and research projects together with external partners and supervised by professors and tutors.

In the second year of study, the program also offers students classes to facilitate their professionalization, which include the study of business modelling, project financing,

project marketing, deal making, and the practical aspects of intellectual property law. In addition, they can receive coaching and mentoring for their projects and for their professional life after their studies.

The program language is English. Studying in a small group of no more than twelve students ensures an intensive and collaborative work. During the first three semesters, the courses are aimed at self-study phases to support individual and shared research as well as project development. For this, the students can use a co-working space at the ifs. Excursions to internationally relevant conferences and festivals, such as Re:Publica, Transmediale and Clash of Realities are an integral part of the curriculum. It is also possible for students to visit cross-institutional events and create partnerships for research and project work in order to expand their networks.

## Professors and Lecturers

The leading professors responsible for the program are Prof. Dr. Nanna Heidenreich (media & cultural studies scholar) for the subject area »Theory«, and Prof. Lena Thiele (writer & creative director) for the subject area »Art & Design«.

Additional lecturers are renowned personalities in the fields of art, science and media economics such as: Joel Dittrich (artist & teacher), Jörg Ihle (writer & director), Paul Tyler (project mapping consultant), Prof. Dr. Gundolf S. Freyer-muth (co-director Cologne Game Lab), Clemens von Wedemeyer (experimental film and installation artist), Prof. Dr. Joachim Friedmann (writer and creative producer), Christoph Brosius (digital media producer), Alistair Alexander (producer and publisher), Tank Thunderbird (VR/AR expert), Jörg Bange (intellectual property lawyer), Michael Comyn (business coach), Arne Oltmann (business modelling and financing consultant), Karin Lingnau (media installation and exhibition expert).

## Professional Orientation

Graduates will be able to initiate and realize progressive artistic research and viable entrepreneurial digital projects in creative, artistic, and scientific positions. They may work in leading creative positions independently or team up for pioneering projects within digital culture and for a variety of narrative formats and platforms including VR/AR, interactive web series, games, and other non-linear narrative formats. They will be able to conduct research in digital culture and art and well prepared to enter lecturing positions in these fields.

# master's program

# digital narratives

Possible professional fields for graduates of the Digital Narratives MA program are:

- Creative director/creative producer
- Storyworld developer/story editor/content designer/narrative designer
- UX designer
- Media artist
- Media researcher/doctoral student
- Curator/media critic

## Number of Participants

Max. 12

## Degree

Master of Arts (MA; 120 ECTS)

## The ifs

The ifs internationale filmschule köln is a full study and further education institution with an artistic-academic focus serving aspiring media professionals. Based on its outstanding student support, excellent teaching and project work, and active festival participation, including a Student Academy Award, the ifs is consistently ranked one of the best film schools in Germany.

The ifs portfolio covers Bachelor's programs in Screenwriting, Directing, Creative Producing, Director of Photography, Editing Picture & Sound, VFX & Animation, and Production Design, as well as international Master's programs in Serial Storytelling, Digital Narratives, and 3D Animation for Film & Games.

The study programs are carried out in cooperation with the TH Köln (University of Applied Sciences). The ifs is currently developing new Master's programs.

In addition, the ifs offers several further education programs for media professionals held by internationally renowned artists and business leaders. The school is a member of CILECT, the International Association of Film and Television Schools, and cultivates partnerships with a global network of film schools and universities.

Students of the English-language MA programs come from all over the world to study in one of Europe's leading media environments. Students gain access to a network of European media professionals and experts of digital production and culture and will be part of the ifs Alumni Network.

## Schedule (subject to change)

Application deadline: 2 March, 2020

Interviews: 30/31 March, 2020

Start of studies: 1 October, 2020

End of 1st semester: 28 February, 2021

The two-year MA Digital Narratives is a full-time Master's program (120 ECTS). It is divided into attendance time and self-study time. The attendance time during the first and second semester is twelve weeks (usually every day from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm). During the third semester, there are eight weeks of attendance time. The fourth semester is dedicated to writing the Master's thesis, so the attendance time is only three weeks. Admission takes place every two years in the winter semester.

## Fees, Study Grants and Financial Support

### Fees

#### Tuition fee

Paid in full before the start of studies (for two years):

15,000 € International Students

11,000 € EU Students

Or paid per semester:

4,250 € International Students

3,250 € EU Students

One-time registration fee: 400 €

Semester fee at TH Köln: approx. 275 €  
(includes the ticket for local public transportation)

## Scholarships

»The Friends of the ifs internationale filmschule köln Society« offers one scholarship to one student of the »Digital Narratives« program for outstanding academic achievement. The scholarship runs from the second semester until the end of the Master's program. It includes covering the tuition fees as well as a monthly contribution towards the cost of living until the end of the Master's program.

Beyond the ifs, several German and international foundations offer scholarships to support tuition fees and costs of living during studies.

More Information on financial support for German and international students is available at

[www.filmschule.de/financing-scholarships](http://www.filmschule.de/financing-scholarships)

## Student Loans

For financial assistance to cover tuition fees and/or living expenses, students may apply for an interest-free loan from »The Friends of the ifs internationale filmschule köln Society«. Loan approval depends on the applicant's financial situation as well as the funds available.

Repayment of the loans begins six months after graduation/termination of studies and is capped at 200 €/month. Master's students may apply from their first semester for the loan program.

## Project Support

To complete their Master's projects, students have access to the technical equipment of the ifs and will receive financial project support (max. 5,000 € / student) for the Master's projects.

## Entry Requirements

The program is aimed at talented and dedicated media and culture professionals in the fields of film, games, journalism, online communication, design, architecture, theatre and similar areas, who have gained relevant experience in creating and producing narrative formats in digital media. They are expected to use interdisciplinary and collaborative methods.

The requirements for the Master's degree are a Bachelor's degree or a similar academic degree with proof of at least 180 ECTS or a higher degree, at least one year of specialized professional practice or similar professional project experience after the Bachelor's degree, as well as a very good knowledge of English. You will find further information in the application documents.

## Additional Information / Application Documents

You can find the application documents and additional information about the program at [www.filmschule.de/ma-digitalnarratives](http://www.filmschule.de/ma-digitalnarratives)

## Contact

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Janina Jansen  
Office of Student Affairs  
T +49 221 920188-222  
[application@filmschule.de](mailto:application@filmschule.de)

# MA digital narratives application details

## Formal Admission Requirements

To obtain a Master's degree, applicants must have an undergraduate degree (Bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree) with a minimum of 180 ECTS credits or a higher degree (e.g. a German »Magister« or »Diplom«) from an accredited university and have worked in the field of art and media production or software development for at least one year. The ifs welcomes applicants who have received degrees in unrelated fields. In addition, applicants need to provide proof of their English language skills (B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, e.g. with a TOEFL score of 87 points (internet-based) or equivalent test results.) Native English speakers are exempted from this.

## Application Procedure

Applicants must send all material listed below (Part 1 AND Part 2) by **2 March, 2020**.

## Part 1: Digital Application

Please submit **via email to [application@filmschule.de](mailto:application@filmschule.de)** (format: PDF file, file size: 10 MB max.)

### Forms

1. Application form and Declaration of Commitment (scan)
2. CV showing at least one year of subject-related professional practice or comparable experience
3. A translated (German or English) and certified copy of your degree certificate (scan)
4. A translated (German or English) and certified copy of your examination certificate – alternatively translated (German or English) and certified copies of your transcript of records and your diploma supplement (scan)
5. Proof of very good English language skills (level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). Native English speakers are exempted from this.

### Assignments

**Important: Please include your name and identify the respective task on each page of each document!**

1. Write a letter of motivation answering the following questions:  
Why do you want to take part in this program? What is your professional/educational background? Please explain which of your previous experiences and interests are relevant for the program? What skills/competencies would you bring to a collaborative working environment? What are your future professional/artistic goals and how would participating in this program help you achieve them?  
Please try to be as clear and comprehensive as possible in presenting your expectations and interests.  
(max. 750 words)
2. Links to four work samples  
These can range from individual work sample such as interactive works, installations, games, films, photos, and writing samples to works in which the participant had a particular role or task such as narrative designer, creative or artistic director, UX designer, creative technologist, among others. In case of the latter, please specify your role in the project.  
(If possible, one link will lead to a portfolio page that showcases a selection of the candidate's work)
3. Suggest up to three topics in which you would be interested to artistic and or academic research during the program and which could strengthen the content for your project work.
4. Case studies: Select up to three projects that are exceptional for their innovative use of storytelling in digital media. Describe each one and explain why and how they are outstanding.  
(250 words per project)
5. Write an essay on a topic relevant to this program. Alternatively, you can also submit a previously written article, blogpost or scholarly paper from your BA studies program, with the appropriate references of publication.  
(1500 to max. 5000 words)

## Part 2: Paper Application

Please submit **via regular mail to ifs internationale filmschule köln**, Office of Student Affairs, Schanzenstrasse 28, 51063 Cologne, Germany

1. Application form and Declaration of Commitment (fully completed and signed)
2. A translated (German or English) and certified copy of your degree certificate
3. A translated (German or English) and certified copy of your examination certificate – alternatively translated (German or English) and certified copies of your transcript of records and your diploma supplement

(FYI: In case you are accepted to the program you will need a second pair of certified copies of your degree certificate and your examination certificate in order to enroll at the TH Köln.)

**Please note: Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

## Interviews

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to come to Cologne for an interview that will take place between 30 and 31 March, 2020.

In exceptional cases, the interview may be conducted via Zoom.

## Dates (subject to change)

**Application deadline:** 2 March, 2020  
Interviews in Cologne: 30/31 March, 2020  
Start of program: 1 October, 2020

## Information for International Applicants

International applicants should note the following information:

- To ensure that the education certificates and diplomas acquired abroad comply with the admission requirements of the ifs (higher education qualifications), applicants can consult the following database: <http://anabin.kmk.org/>
- Enrollment at the TH Köln, the cooperation partner of the ifs, is mandatory for Non-EU students due to legal regulations concerning German residence permits. (Tuition fee for the winter semester 2019/20: 274,90 euros)
- To obtain a residence permit, international students have to demonstrate sufficient funds to secure their livelihood. The amount required is equivalent to the Bafög (Federal Education and Trainings Assistance Act for university students) maximum rate of 853 euros per month.

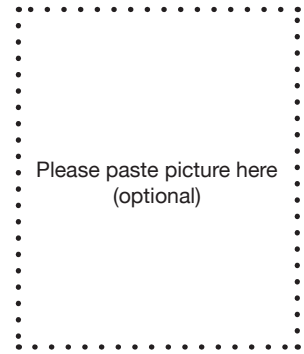
## Contact

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T +49 221 920188-0 | F + 49 221 920188-99  
[www.filmshule.de](http://www.filmshule.de) | [www.facebook.com/filmshule](https://www.facebook.com/filmshule)

**ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh  
Office of Student Affairs  
Janina Jansen  
Schanzenstr. 28  
51063 Cologne  
Germany



## Application Form

I hereby apply for admission to the following program:  
**MA Digital Narratives (Fall 2020 – Summer 2022)**

### Personal Details (Please print clearly in CAPITAL LETTERS)

First Name	Last Name
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	Place of Birth
Nationality	Street / No.
Postal Code / City	Country / State
E-mail	Phone No. / Mobile Phone No.
Highest Degree Achieved	Language Skills

How did you learn about our film school and/or the MA Digital Narratives at the **ifs**?

I agree to receive information via email or post from the **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh about future study and further education programs as well other activities of the **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh. I also agree that the aforementioned personal data may be processed and used for such purposes also after the end of the study program/ further education program. I can revoke this consent at any time without any reason and without reprisal. The **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh guarantees that it will safeguard data privacy without any restriction and that my personal data will not be transmitted to any third parties.

Please find here our data protection notice: [www.filmschule.de/en/ds](http://www.filmschule.de/en/ds)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Place, Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

## Declaration of Commitment of the Applicant

I hereby declare that in the case I am accepted for the 2-years Master's program »Digital Narratives (M.A.)« starting winter semester 2020/2021, my participation in the program shall be subject to the »General Conditions for Study Programs and Further Education Programs at **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh« included with this Declaration of Commitment. I hereby undertake to pay the corresponding tuition fee. The tuition fee is payable in full before the start of studies or per semester (in this case it will be due before the beginning of a semester) after receipt of an invoice by **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh within fourteen days. In addition, a one-time registration fee of 400 euros will be charged before the beginning of the program. The registration fee will be due after receipt of an invoice by **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh within fourteen days.

I hereby undertake to pay a cancellation processing fee of 125 euros should I decide not to participate in the Master's program »Digital Narratives (M.A.)« after having signed the Training Contract for Students.

I am aware that this Declaration of Commitment or my application or my participation in the entrance examination does not in any way entitle me to participate in the Master's program »Digital Narratives (M.A.)«. A selection committee decides at its discretion. **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh does not have to give reasons for a negative decision.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information and instructions regarding the application procedure and requirements. I confirm that I have also read and understood the above-mentioned conditions for participation and the »General Conditions for Study Programs and Further Education Programs at **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh« included with this Declaration of Commitment and I fully accept them and agree to abide by them.

I further declare that I agree that my application documents and application material including data carriers will not be returned or deleted. The **ifs** internationale filmschule köln gmbh reserves the right to archive one copy of the application documents and personal data for its records.

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Place, Date

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Name of Applicant

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Signature of Applicant



# General Conditions for Study Programs and Further Education Programs at ifs internationale filmschule köln gmbh

## 1 Scope

The "ifs internationale filmschule köln gmbh" (hereinafter referred to as "ifs") provides young filmmakers with initial and further training for the film and television industry. For this purpose ifs offers workshops, study programs, and other further education programs (hereafter referred to as "Program" or "Programs").

These "General Conditions for Study Programs and Further Education Programs at ifs internationale filmschule köln gmbh" (hereafter referred to as "General Conditions") regulate the relation between ifs and the participants and students of the Programs (hereinafter referred to as "Participant/Student" or "Participants/Students"). The General Conditions shall apply in the version valid at the time of conclusion of the contract between ifs and the Participant/Student (hereinafter referred to as "Contract"). Any deviating provision shall only be deemed valid, if ifs has expressly agreed in writing. This also applies to any waiver of this written form requirement.

In cases of any inconsistency between the Contract and these General Conditions, the regulations stipulated in the Contract shall prevail.

## 2 General provisions

### 2.1 Contract Period/Contents

2.1.1 The duration of the contract shall be determined by the Contract between the Participant/Student and ifs.

2.1.2 ifs represented by its managing directors or representatives appointed by the managing directors, shall lay down program times, submission deadlines and other terms that shall be binding for the Participant/Student and shall notify the Participant/Student thereof in writing in a timely manner. The outline, structure and contents of the Programs shall be specified in the program description, which the Participant/Student shall receive at the start of the Program.

2.1.3 All stated contract times and deadlines by ifs shall be binding on the Participant/Student. The attendance of the Participant/Student is compulsory. In rare cases this duty of compulsory attendance includes classes on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) and public holidays. Any unjustified absence, even if only temporary, shall entitle ifs after admonishing the Participant/Student to declare extraordinary termination of the Contract.

2.1.4 In case of failure to comply with the defined submission deadlines and other contract times without excuse or in the event of other absence without excuse or approval ifs is entitled to extraordinary termination of the Contract. In the event of repeated non-compliance, ifs shall also be entitled to declare extraordinary termination of the Contract without warning and without notice period.

### 2.2 Inability to Attend

2.2.1 The Participant/Student must obtain the prior consent of ifs for any absence – even if only temporarily – and for the anticipated duration of the same. If the Participant/Student is absent due to illness, Participant/Student must notify ifs immediately on the day of absence. In case of longer absences due to illness, the Participant/Student must submit a medical certificate indicating the anticipated duration of the illness, no later than the end of the third calendar day after the period of absence has begun. Should the illness last longer than indicated in the medical certificate, further medical certificate must be submitted within three days of the date the Participant/Student was initially supposed to return. In all cases of absence the Participant/Student is responsible to catch up its omissions.

2.2.2 If a medical certificate has not been submitted within 14 days after the beginning of a Participant's/Student's absence, the absence will be considered unexcused.

### 2.3 Press and Public Relations Work, Naming, Data Protection, Confidentiality, Development of Topics

2.3.1 The ifs shall be entitled to distribute and make available to the public images/photos of the Participant/Student in its own publications and/or on web pages/Social Media of the ifs, as long as no conflicting legitimate interests of the Participant/Student exist. The aforementioned applies to such images/photos, which have been taken during ifs events and/or during the Program and/or to images/photos which have been provided by the Participant/Student, and also after termination of the contractual relationship between ifs and the Participant/Student.

At the specific request of ifs, the Participant/Student shall be available to a reasonable extent for press conferences and other public relations appointments.

2.3.2 The Participant/Student and ifs mutually empower each other to quote the name of the other party even after termination of the Program for their own advertising purposes. There is no obligation in this respect. This naming empowerment may be cancelled without giving any reasons.

2.3.3 The ifs is only entitled to store, process or communicate to other Participants/Students of the Programs, lecturers, or staff of the ifs the personal data of the Participant/Student (e.g. name, address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address, date of birth, academic degree and area of study), as long there is a direct context with the participation of the Participant/Student in the Program.

2.3.4 During the duration of the Contract and also after expiry thereof the Participant/Student undertakes to observe strict confidentiality concerning any business and corporate secrets of the ifs that may become known to the Participant/Student.

2.3.5 For reasons of clarification, ifs emphasizes that topics developed by the Participants/Students in the course of the Programs, which are below the status of a work as per section 2 of the German Copyright Act are not protected by copyright. Therefore, ifs is not liable for other Participants/Students and/or other persons involved in the Program and/or third parties seizing and developing these topics. Thus, it cannot be excluded that it comes to doubling of topics.

### 2.4 Attendance Fee/Tuition Fee

The attendance fee/tuition fee is laid down in the Contract and must be paid after receipt of the invoice into the bank account specified in the invoice. The ifs is entitled to exclude a Participant/Student from the Program until complete payment of the attendance fee/tuition fee, or to terminate the Contract extraordinarily after expiry of the payment deadline, thereby enabling third parties to participate in the Program.

### 2.5 Cancellation of the Program

2.5.1 If the Program fails to take place completely or in parts, a proportionate refund of the attendance fee/tuition fee shall only be made by ifs, if ifs is responsible for the full or partial cancellation of the Program. The ifs shall only be liable for deliberate intent or gross negligence.

2.5.2 In the event of partial or predominant absence of a Participant/Student, in particular, if the Participant/Student is responsible for such absence, a refund of the attendance fee/tuition fee is excluded. The ifs may in individual cases decide otherwise at its own discretion, the Participant/Student has no claim to such exemption.

### 2.6 Production

All productions carried out with the support of ifs are to follow the production guidelines handed out to the Participants/Students at the beginning of the Program.

### 2.7 Contract Termination

2.7.1 Notwithstanding the extraordinary termination right, the Contract shall terminate upon completion of the Program without requiring further declaration.

2.7.2 Each party has the right to terminate the contractual relationship extraordinarily without notice for a compelling reason. In particular, in those cases when a Participant/Student is unable to complete the Program due to grave personal reasons, the Participant/Student has the right of extraordinary termination. The ifs has right of extraordinary termination, in particular, in cases of sections 2.1.3, 2.1.4 and 2.4 and with regard to Programs that are study programs in cases of section 3.5. The termination requires the written form.

2.7.3 All Programs that are workshops and further education programs are excluded from ordinary termination. For all Programs that are bachelor and master study programs section 3.5 applies.

### 2.8 Property/Liability

2.8.1 All teaching materials and other documents made available to the Participants/Students by ifs shall remain property of ifs. The Participants/Students shall take due care of the teaching materials etc. and shall return them immediately and to its full extent to ifs upon request or at the latest after termination of the Contract.

2.8.2 The ifs shall only be liable for damage and loss of objects owned by the Participant/Student or which have been in the possession of the Participant/Student, if ifs acted grossly negligent or deliberately.

### 3 Special Conditions for Study Programs

3.1 The provisions of this section apply exclusively to all Programs which are bachelor and master study programs at ifs (hereinafter referred to as "Study Program" or "Study Programs").

3.2 The Student must take intermediate exams during the Study Program and final exams at the end of the Study Program. Scope and process of these exams are laid down in detail in the ifs examination regulations. The Student must pass the intermediate exams to continue with the rest of the Study Program.

3.3 The tuition fee must be paid at the beginning of each semester of the Study Program after receipt of an invoice.

3.4 Records of attendance may be set out for courses of the Study Programs. They can be found in the current course directory. Determined times and deadlines are binding for Students.

3.5 Notwithstanding the right of extraordinary termination as per section 2.7.2 both parties are entitled to terminate the Contract at the end of each semester with a notice period of one month in advance. The termination must be in writing and must indicate the reasons for the termination. Thereby the parties have to orientate on section 51 of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia.

In addition to the examples for reasons of extraordinary termination listed in section 2.7.2, ifs is particularly entitled to declare extraordinary termination of the Contract after admonishing the Student, if the continuation of the Study Program is infeasible for ifs due to a repeated failure of the Student. In particular, the continuation of the Study Program is infeasible for ifs, if the current achievements of the Student do not allow an expectation of successful participation in the Study Program any longer as a result of a repeated breach of Student's duties arising from the Contract.

If a Student decides to terminate the Study Program before the end of the current semester, ifs decides at its own discretion about a proportionate refund of the tuition fee for the current semester.

### 4 Final Provisions

4.1 If any individual provisions of these General Conditions and/or of the Contract are or become null or invalid or contain errors of form or omissions, the validity of the remainder of these General Conditions and of the Contract shall not be affected thereof.

4.2 The contractual relations between the parties shall be governed by German law. Insofar as legally permissible, the parties hereby agree that Cologne shall be the exclusive place of performance and jurisdiction for all disputes arising from these general conditions and/or the Contract.