



# MA serial storytelling

**International Master's Program**  
Application Details 2020

The Master's program »Serial Storytelling« guides young professionals in exploring, conquering, and expanding forms and methods of serial narration for TV and digital platforms. Accompanied by renowned series creators, script consultants, and media scholars, the students analyze the secrets behind the success of popular series and develop their own innovative series concepts. Series dramaturgy, character development, and collaborative writing processes (»Writers' Room«) are at the center of their practical work.

In addition to narrative and media-theoretical content, the program conveys the basics of transnational markets and new media platforms, and it supports the students in exploring innovative narrative forms, work structures, and distribution channels. For their major writing assignments, students have the opportunity to write either in English or in German, focusing on international or German series markets respectively. The program is supported by partners such as RTL, ZDF, SKY Deutschland, Series Mania, and the Film Festival Cologne.

**For more information see: [www.filmshule.de/ma-serialstorytelling](http://www.filmshule.de/ma-serialstorytelling)**

## Application Requirements

### Academic 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. The ifs welcomes talented applicants who have received degrees in unrelated fields. In justified exceptional cases, applicants with exceptional artistic skills whose CVs lack one or more of these formal requirements may request to enroll in the program as advanced training participants.

### Work Experience

Applicants must have worked in the field of media production for at least one year.  
(visit the FAQ section for more details)

### Language Skills

Applicants need to provide proof of sufficient English language skills (B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, e.g. by a TOEFL score of 87 points (internet-based) or equivalent test results. Native English speakers are exempted from this requirement. German language skills are only required for students in the German track.

### Screenwriting Skills

A solid understanding of the basics of screenwriting and dramaturgy in theory and practice is a prerequisite for this program. This is assessed in the application process. If an applicant's knowledge and skills in this field prove to be yet insufficient at the time of selection, the applicant may be required to enroll in the ifs' »Summer School Screenwriting« (or in a comparable course) before the start of the Master's Program (additional costs apply). In these cases, admission is pending until the missing proof has been provided.

# Application Procedure

Applicants are required to send all material listed below (**Part 1 and Part 2**) by **January 4, 2021**.

## Part 1: Digital Application

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

### Forms

1. Application Form and Obligation Declaration (scan)
2. Tabular CV including work and training 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)

### Assignments

**!! Please include your name and identify the respective task in the header of each document !!**

#### • Task 1

Indicate whether you are applying for the international track (where writing projects are submitted in English language aimed at an international market) or for the German track (where writing projects are submitted in German language aiming at German language markets).

#### • Task 2

Write a short statement on why you are interested in participating in the MA Serial Storytelling. (*max. 1 p.*)  
*English language*

#### • Task 3

Write a short essay: Which qualities do you consider to be quintessential for a screenwriter when working in a team? How do you see yourself in a highly collaborative environment when developing, plotting and writing with other creatives is key? What do you think are your personal strengths and weaknesses in a collaborative story development process? What do you bring to the table? What do you expect to receive from your writing partners? Do you have any previous experiences with the professional and emotional aspects of giving and receiving feedback – of »killing your darlings« and »killing the darlings of other writers«? (*max. 2 pp. altogether*)  
*English language*

#### • Task 4

Pick one of the series listed below.

- How to Sell Drugs Online (Fast) (Germany)
- 4 Blocks (Germany)
- Druck (Germany)
- Better Call Saul (USA)
- Pose (USA)
- This is Us (USA)
- La Casa de Papel (Spain)
- Metumtemet (Israel)
- 3 Percent (Brazil)

Create three brief scenes including two or more characters from this show and introduce an additional character that you have created yourself. One of these characters has a dilemma and must struggle to achieve a goal in the scene, against the resistance of one or more of the other characters. Show how each character strives to reach their individual goals, revealing something about their inner life and feelings through behavior and dialogue. (*2-3 pp. each*)

In addition, describe the new character and his/her relations to the storyworld and the ensemble of the series. (*1 p.*)  
*Please use your preferred language stated above (task 1) for this exercise.*

- **Task 5**

Develop an idea for an original series. This short paper should include details on characters, main plot lines, character orchestration, format, genre, and audiences. Limit yourself to the first season. (2-3 pp.)

*Please use your preferred language stated above (task 1) for this exercise.*

- **Task 6**

Answer the following questions about the series you presented in task 5:

Why is this story best told in the serial format? What is unique about your series? What are your reference points with regards to existing series? When you think about national or international TV or streaming broadcasters, where do you think your series would best be situated and why? Why are you the ideal writer for this story? (max. 1 p.)

*Please use your preferred language stated above (task 1) for this exercise.*

## Part 2: Paper Application

Please submit the following documents **via regular mail** to:

ifs internationale filmschule köln  
Janina Jansen / Office of Student Affairs  
Schanzenstrasse 28  
51063 Cologne  
Germany

1. Application Form and Obligation Declaration (scan)
2. Application Form and Obligation Declaration (fully completed and signed)
3. A translated (German or English) and certified copy of your degree certificate
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

**Please note:** In case you are accepted to the program, you will be asked to hand in one more translated and certified copy each (2. + 3.) for the mandatory enrolment at the TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences Cologne.

**Incomplete applications will not be considered!**

## Entrance Exams

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an entrance exam in the **second week of February**. The exams will consist of interviews and writing tasks. Because of the pandemic, these exams will take place online (e.g. via Skype or Zoom) in 2021.

## Dates (subject to change)

<b>Application deadline:</b>	January 4, 2021
<b>Announcement shortlist:</b>	January 22, 2021
<b>Entrance exams:</b>	February 8-9, 2021
<b>Start of program:</b>	September 2021
<b>Duration:</b>	2 years (4 semesters)
<b>Residency:</b>	14 weeks in semesters 1-3, 6 weeks in semester 4
<b>Admission:</b>	every other year

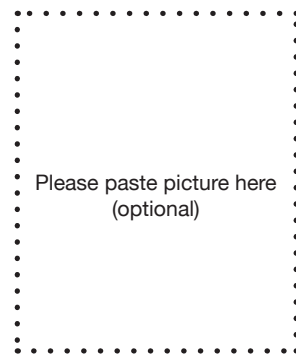
## Contact

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ifs internationale filmschule köln gmbh  
Schanzenstr. 28 | 51063 Cologne / Germany  
T +49 221 920188-0 | F + 49 221 920188-99  
www.filmshule.de

ifs internationale filmschule köln  
Janina Jansen / Office of Student Affairs  
Schanzenstrasse 28  
51063 Cologne  
Germany



## Application Form

I hereby apply for admission to the following program:  
**MA Serial Storytelling (Fall 2021 – Summer 2023)**

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

I apply for the following track:

International       German

I learned about the ifs internationale filmschule köln and the MA Serial Storytelling through:

\_\_\_\_\_

For the ifs data protection notice, please see: [www.filmschule.de/en/ds](http://www.filmschule.de/en/ds)

I hereby authorize the ifs internationale filmschule köln gmbh to send me information via email or post about future study and further education programs as well as 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 seminar. 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.

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

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

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

## Obligation Declaration of the Applicant

I hereby declare that in the case I am accepted for the 2-years Master's program »MA Serial Storytelling« starting winter semester 2021/2022, 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 Obligation Declaration. I hereby undertake to pay the corresponding tuition fee. The tuition fee is payable for each semester and 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 »MA Serial Storytelling« after having signed the Training Contract for Students.

I am aware that this Obligation Declaration or my application or my participation in the entrance examination does not in any way entitle me to participate in the Master's program »MA Serial Storytelling«. 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 Obligation Declaration, 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.