

# Operational Proposals for the new EU Culture Programme (2014 - 2020) to improve the support of mobility in the cultural sector in Europe

from the Arts Mobility Pilot Projects

Changing Room – Practics - Space

**December 2010**



## **Changing Room**

Trans Europe Halles (Sweden), Melkweg, Amsterdam (Netherlands), and Sibelius Academy, Helsinki (Finland)



## **PRACTICS**

Teatterin Tiedotuskeskus ry - Finnish Theatre Information Centre (Finland), Kunstenloket (Belgium), Stichting Internationale Culturele Activiteiten - SICA (The Netherlands), Arts Council of Wales/Wales Arts International ACW/WAI (United Kingdom), Fundació Interarts per a la Cooperació Cultural Internacional (Spain), Fondazione Fitzcarraldo (Italy), Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe - Pearle\*, Association Européenne des Conservatoires AEC, European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), IETM-international network for contemporary performing arts, and the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO)



## **SPACE - Supporting Performing Art Circulation in Europe**

ONDA - French office for Performing Art circulation (France), VTi - Institute for the performing arts in Flanders (Belgium), TIN - Theater Instituut Nederland (The Netherlands), British Council (Great-Britain), MiBAC – Direzione Generale per lo spettacolo dal vivo (Italy), Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia (Switzerland), Red House (Bulgaria), Institut umění - Divadelní ústav - Arts and Theatre Institute (Czech Republic), Latvijas Jaunā teātra institūts - New Theatre Institute of Latvia, German Centre of the International Theatre Institute/ITI (Germany) and IETM-international network for contemporary performing arts, Enicpa, La Belle Ouvrage.

## Introduction

The need to financially support the mobility of artists, cultural professionals and art is widely shared amongst artists and arts organisations in Europe. Mobility is still identified by arts professionals as an essential tool to inspire, communicate, share, learn, explore, network, exchange, cooperate, impulse, raise awareness and promote the benefit of European citizens and society at large. Many cultural organisations and professionals across Europe believe that the future EU Culture Programme should continue supporting mobility of art, artists and cultural professionals and thus actively contribute to ensuring Europe develops a vibrant cultural scene and a common cultural identity rooted in diversity and mutual respect, in the context of a globalising world.

Much concern has been voiced in recent years as regards the current Culture Programme, especially its bureaucratic requirements which are difficult to meet for small and medium sized operators. In addition, the percentage of co-funding required for cooperation projects under the current Culture Programme is often considered as being too difficult to meet, especially for small and medium sized organisations and for organisations whose operational running costs are not financed by the EU or national authorities. Also the current programme - for various reasons - does not support directly the mobility of individual artists. Another question is how the Culture Programme could be more effective in dealing with different types of imbalances and asymmetries in the cultural exchange in Europe.

As the organisations involved in the 4 mobility pilot projects, we are dealing on a daily basis with the mobility of art, artists and cultural professionals in all its diverse forms. We all strongly believe that an EU Culture Programme supporting mobility is important and needs to be maintained in the future; we are also all convinced that there is room for improving the modalities of how Europe should support cultural mobility and on what type of mobility and support it should focus primarily.

We have put together the following operational proposals on how the future Culture Programme could support in a simple and straightforward way the mobility of small and medium-sized cultural operators, individual artists and non-artistic cultural professionals. This proposal is the 4 pilot projects' contribution to the European Commission's public consultation on the future Culture Programme.

Finally, we wish to underline the positive impact culture-based actions can have beyond the cultural sector ranging from economic (income generation, growth and employment) to social (skills development, social inclusion) and environmental (sustainable local development). A future Culture Programme cannot and should not address all of these issues, but it should support the transition for cultural operators and cultural organisations to cross into other sectors with greater ease. Therefore, in the light of the Europe 2020 Strategy, a important key concern for the next budget period must also be to maximize the opportunities and the impact of culture-based actions in all other EU programmes post 2013 (in particular the Structural Funds and the European Social Fund) and to develop better synergies for cultural operators between a future EU Culture Programme and other EU programmes.

## I. Supporting the mobility of individual artists and small and medium-scale projects

This first proposal deals with the financial support required to increase and support the mobility of artists within Europe and, having identified a gap within the current European Commission funding programme, suggests an additional funding strand be added within the future Culture Programme 2014 – 2020. This new funding strand would contribute specifically to a **sustainable programme for the circulation of art works in Europe** – including mobility projects aiming at the professional development and capacity building of artists and cultural professionals - and deals explicitly with tackling the current imbalances and asymmetries within the European art sector. Sitting alongside the existing programme strands within the Culture Programme, this new funding strand would allow the EU Commission to make decisions which take advantage of opportunities supporting the mobility of artists within Europe within a **more flexible framework**. In particular it focuses on ways to increase **opportunities to support individuals, small and medium-scale projects** who at this moment find it difficult to engage with the European Commission's Culture Programme, since they lack the right administrative support to qualify for EU grants.

The proposition is to support **networks of intermediary organisations** that already have strong connections with the professional arts field in their own country and a proven track record of experience working on **international collaborations**. The intermediary organisations would form a network, similar in structure to the SPACE membership<sup>1</sup>. This network primarily works in the performing arts sector, but believes this proposal could be applied to other art disciplines.

The aims of the intermediary organisations networks (ION's) would primarily be twofold: to manage **small-scale EU grants** (see pag. 4-5 for further detail) and **to develop professionals' skills focused on international mobility**. This would be done by the national organisations acting as an intermediary between the EU and the smaller organisations/ individuals in their own countries. The ION's would provide the European Commission an opportunity to encourage European cultural practitioners to **access new markets, increase visibility, provide new networking opportunities and enhance EU policy development**, without making them directly accountable to the EU Commission. It is our belief that the ION's would meet the needs and demands of both local professional constituencies as well as the European arts market, bringing accountability, transparency and visibility to the operations as well as bringing greater responsiveness and flexibility into the EU's decision-making processes. It would also release the EU Commission's Executive Agency from detailed engagement with decision-making of grant allocation.

### **Functions of the intermediary organisation networks:**

- **Organisation of training sessions** - To organise regular training sessions for arts professionals, in order to improve their knowledge and networking capacity on a European level (including seminars, hands on training activities and study research). A core fund would be required for the ION's to provide this training. Due to their closeness to cultural operators and decentralised activities, ION's would be able to tailor the content of training activities to the specific needs and weaknesses experienced on the ground.

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<sup>1</sup>" SPACE is a network dedicated to Support the Performing Arts Circulation in Europe (SPACE) and includes 9 national cultural institutions which share a position in between Government and the artistic field in their own countries, working as centres of information, promoting the arts on a national and international level and are experienced in supporting and running European cultural projects. The objective of SPACE is to give priority to the mobility of arts productions and to combine cultural mobility with cultural diversity, European citizenship and investing in emerging generations.

- **Grant programme** - To build funding programmes to improve the mobility tools within the intermediary organisations in relation with national and international cultural policies.
- To establish a grant selection committee, including external professional advisers.
- To build up financial systems in cooperation with local governments to support individuals and small organisations.
- To facilitate the financial reporting of individuals and small organisations.
- To provide legal accountability on behalf of individuals and small organisations.
- **Policy development** - To provide general advice regarding different aspects concerning European arts mobility. Training & policy advice would be responsive to the need of the art sector and the changing economic landscape providing the possibility and flexibility to revise priorities in the light of current research and data analyses through programmes such as Travelogue.<sup>2</sup>

### General criteria of the programme:

1. The programme is aimed at individual, small and medium-scale projects.
2. Submitted projects are selected on the basis of their artistic quality and audience impact and reach.
3. The training programmes and proposals submitted for the funding programme must deal with cultural mobility and cultural diversity particular dealing with the existing asymmetries and imbalances within Europe
  - dealing with barriers for small -scale/independent cultural professionals.
  - imbalances due to differences in national cultural policies and local funding programmes;
  - imbalances due not only to different geographic asymmetries but generational divisions.
  - exploring exchanges and partnerships between North/South/East/West Europe;
  - Developing external relationships with third countries.

### Selection Process:

The proposal is for an online open-submission scheme, open to individuals or cultural operators across Europe. We propose that the assessments of applications are made three times a year, using a rotating panel of external experts and members of the ION's. This will ensure that peer review is integral to the scheme and the deliberation process is open and clear. All administration of bursaries will be the legal responsibility of the ION's who rather than the individuals or organisations in receipt of the bursaries will be accountable to the EU commission.

### Funding grants:

#### 1. Project grants

The grant provides a percentage of the financial contribution required to help cross-European collaborations seeking to create new artistic work which will have a broader transnational audience.

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<sup>2</sup> Travelogue is an online prototype mapping the international mobility of the performing arts sector and has been developed to help policy makers gauge accurately the flow of performing arts productions in Europe

## 2. Distribution grants

The grant is intended to help extend the geographical reach of an art project and will provide a percentage of the financial contribution required to tour existing artistic work. This can include covering the costs of translation of works which will be performed in another European country.

## 3. Residency grants

Residency grants provide time, space and support for artists to develop their ideas within a different European country to their own. The aim is to support creative individuals who demonstrate openness about sharing their vision with others and enthusiasm about engaging within a Europe context.

## 4. Go & See grants

Go & See grants aim to facilitate exchange, dialogue and collaboration amongst cultural practitioners whatever their practice and location and are designed to support exchange between artists and art organisations throughout Europe in order to explore new projects and provide an incentive for potential artistic exchange and networks.

## II. Supporting the capacity of the cultural sector to deal with mobility

The second operational proposal of the 4 pilot projects deals with the support the future EU Culture Programme could provide to build the capacity of the cultural sector to deal with mobility. Two main types of activities should be supported through a new, specific strand: increasing the capacity of non-artistic cultural professionals to better deal with the mobility of arts works and artists, and improving access to information on mobility for artists and cultural professionals.

For both types of activities it is crucial to ensure that the rate of co-funding required for applicants is significantly lower than the 50% required for cooperation projects under the current Culture Programme, in order to encourage applications from small and medium sized organisations and organisations whose operational running costs are not financed by the EU or national authorities.

### 1. Increasing the capacity of non-artistic cultural professionals

Currently the independent cultural sector generally does not invest in professional development and training for their non-artistic staff to deal with cross-border mobility. The possible explanations for this are multiple:

- Financial resources are limited in the cultural sector,
- Most non-artistic professionals feel constantly under pressure with little or no spare time and feel guilty if they leave their organisation for more than a few days,
- Many cultural organisations have only a few members of staff to run their operations and cannot function if any were to leave for an extended period,
- Professional development and training has a low priority, is often seen as a 'luxury', and is often the first area to be cut from budgets when money has to be saved.

An additional explanation is that although investment in the capacity building of the organisations and their staff is crucial, it is generally not yet part of the organisational culture of the wider independent cultural sector. Furthermore, personal professional development is often less valued than organisational professional development.

The current possibilities and opportunities for mobility of non-artistic cultural professionals (such as cultural leaders, managers, producers, programmers, curators, technicians, administrators and those working in marketing, finance and catering) are few and the importance of their mobility is less valued both internally and externally. However, enabling non-artistic cultural professionals to exchange, move, share and learn will undeniably facilitate and increase the mobility of art and artists, and contribute to the strengthening of the European cultural sector as a whole. Mobility of non-artistic professionals in many cases has a longer-lasting effect on cultural organisations than mere artistic mobility, because both the staff and their organisations often act as intermediaries and knowledge access points.

The *Changing Room* mobility pilot project has drawn a rich experience of the exchange of non-artistic cultural professionals from young volunteers to leaders of cultural organisations.

We strongly believe that the new EU Culture Programme should include a specific strand providing multi-annual funding for trans-national professional development and capacity building schemes for non-artistic cultural professionals with the aim to contribute to the professionalisation of the cultural sector across Europe to better deal with cross-border mobility.

This trans-national professional development and capacity building schemes supported by the EU Culture Programme should be delivered and managed by individual European cultural networks and/or European organisations or a partnership of them. In addition, European networks and organisations who are delivering capacity building schemes on mobility for non-artistic cultural

professionals should be encouraged to exchange amongst them the knowledge and the lessons learnt from these schemes. Larger European networks could also be in charge of a small mobility fund enabling cultural operators from mainly the new EU Member States and neighbouring countries to attend meetings and professional development schemes. Increased benefits would result if such programmes were open to participants and organisations from outside of the cultural network (or networks) that deliver them.

As shown in the experience gained in the *Changing Room* Staff Exchange Programme, the length of an exchange is not crucial, it is rather the quality of the exchange that has long lasting effects and a mixture of support for both short-term mobility and long-term mobility of non-artistic professionals is therefore needed.

## **2. Improving access to information on mobility for artists and cultural professionals**

The OMC Expert Group on mobility has underlined the importance of information on mobility. The Expert Group has stressed the need to improve information services for artist and cultural professionals and recommended that Member States, in cooperation with the European Commission, should establish and finance national mobility information services for artists and cultural professionals and build a network of these services.

The new EU Culture Programme should include a specific strand to co-finance the start-up and maintenance of a network of national Mobility Information Services for artists and cultural professionals, based on the experiences learned from the *Practics* project. The national Mobility Information Services should aim to support the trans-national mobility of people working in the cultural sector and to encourage the trans-national circulation of artistic and cultural works and products through tailor-made and personalised information provision. It is crucial to ensure that the national Mobility Information Services are provided by already existing cultural organisations firmly anchored within the cultural sector of the Member States.

The co-funding from the EU should also be available to help the organisational start-up of the national Information Services and the setting up and maintenance of the network of national Information Services. Funding should enhance a harmonised high-quality approach to mobility information provision across Europe, including the support to the exchange of good practices and to the capacity building of the cultural sector to deal with regulatory obstacles. The network should also set up a coherent EU-wide system of monitoring regulatory shortcomings and obstacles to the mobility of cultural professionals, as well as developing strong links with the cultural sector across Europe.