Releasing the Potential for Arts & Design Research in Europe - Proposals for the Future Research Programmes

Introduction

The Green Paper ‘From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation funding’ launches a public debate on the key issues to be taken into account for future EU research. On behalf of the European arts universities and higher arts education institutes engaged in research, the European League of Institutes of the Arts – ELIA and the Academic Network SHARE, would like to take the opportunity to put forward ideas and proposals to better develop and fund creative arts and design research & development through future EU research and innovation funding programmes within the frame of the Europe 2020 objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. We are encouraged by your statement that ‘additional ideas are welcome’. In particular, we will expand on question 14: ‘Proposals and ideas to incorporate in the new programme’. Our proposals focus on the contribution of creative research & development to technological, non-technological, social and cultural/creative innovation in the frame of the next generation of EU Research and Innovation Funding.

What is Arts and Design Research & Development1?

Our proposals build on the definition of artistic (or arts) research as defined by the British Research Assessment Exercise that understands artistic (or arts) research & development as ... Original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction.

Arts & Design Research is practiced both inside and outside the institutional framework of arts universities. However, the key locus for arts and design research development is in the interaction between the institutions of higher education, the creative economy sector and the various national, regional and European cultural agencies. Operating at the intersection of cultural production, education, research and innovation, creative arts and design research is experimental and often trans-disciplinary in nature. Arts and design research results in new arts and cultural practice, media formats and content development; it generates innovative products and services across the culture, entertainment, and education sectors; it is an engine for intellectual cross-fertilisation, for inter-disciplinary cognitive insight and for bridging speculative enquiries with practical implementations and commercial application. The research ecology integrates end-user needs and includes participatory design, rapid prototyping, practice-led research, real-world situated and responsive enquiry, and creative content development.

1 Across Europe, slightly different general terms such as Artistic Research, Research in and through the Arts, Creative (Arts) Research, ArtScience and Practice-Based Research are being used. For typologies of different types of research, see Frayling 1993, Borgdorff 2006, Elkins 2003/2009.
Within the diverse research ecology of Arts & Design both science/technology-oriented and humanities-oriented approaches develop. An over-arching specificity to the domain exists provided by viable creative practices and solutions in direct engagement with users, audiences and publics. Some examples of approaches particular to each artistic discipline include:

- **Design**: participatory design; service design; embedded technologies; design for development; experience-based design interface design; new media art; bio-art; electronic art; advanced product development; Ars Electronica, Linz; Aalto University, Helsinki; Planetary Collegium Plymouth/Milan;

- **Fine Art**: a broad range of contemporary arts practice including painting, photography etc, three dimensional work, interactive installations; electronic art; sound art, public interventions & community art, new media art and network culture, interdisciplinary practices, curatorial experiments with cultural heritage; expanded documentary; language art; archive/archaeology-based work; alternative economies; micro-urbanism; experimental urbanism; and mobile content / locative media experiments; as well as traditional practices;

- **Theatre**: documentary theatre, interactive (multimedia) theatre, scenography RITS, Brussels; PhD programme Scenography, Zurich University of the Arts;

- **Dance**: movement / cognition studies, dance technology Laban Centre, London; PARTS, Brussels; dance research is often conducted by companies/choreographic centres, such as the Forsythe Company, Wayne McGregor/Random Dance, Emio Greco | PC;

- **Music**: music technology, sonology, notation systems, (historical) musicology Leading institutions are the Orpheus Institute, Ghent; IRCAM, Paris; Institute for Sonology, University of the Arts The Hague.

- **Architecture**: research by design with strong interaction with architectural practice; universal design; RTS (Research Training Sessions) as organised by Sint-Lucas (W&K), Belgium; Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg and University College London, Bartlett School of Architecture.

**Advancement in Arts & Design Research during the last decade**

There has been a decisive shift across Europe as manifested in:

- Contemporary artists and designers adopting a research orientation, starting from a key problem-base rather than from a specific material or art form;

- A dramatic expansion of concerns addressed and means employed, as artists and designers increasingly explore social, economic and public challenges across health, education, housing, urbanism, employment and environmental sustainability;

- New artistic opportunities created by the synergy with advanced technological approaches and the adaptation of various knowledge production models;

- Proliferation of methodological innovations in practice-based and practice-led research in art & design, performing arts, architecture, media, and communications;

- The emergence of research centres within academic as well as in industrial settings;
The Bologna process leading to art academies increasingly acquiring university status and the
concurrent emphasis on PhD programmes within arts universities;
- The growth of national and European platforms for creative arts research supported by
targeted national research funding schemes;
- The globalization of artistic distribution circuits.

Across Europe, there is a large variety in the institutionalization of Arts & Design Research and in the
numbers of researchers. In trendsetting countries such as the United Kingdom and Finland, more
than 1500 (UK) and 400 (Finland) PhD researchers are active at art universities. This variety indicates
the relatively under-developed European coordination of national support initiatives in the UK,
Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and elsewhere. National research
funding initiatives have been pro-active in galvanizing creative arts and design research initiatives
while the key enabler at a European level has been the stimulus for programme innovation provided
by the inclusion of the third cycle in the Bologna Process. A more pro-active European dimension is
needed to capitalize upon national support initiatives.

Arts & Design Research still nonexistent within the current Framework Programme

Arts & Design Research increasingly gains recognition within national research settings (see also the
brief overview of national policies and arrangements). This has not happened yet on the European
level, although some research projects initiated by higher arts education receive European funding.
As far as known only two references within the 7th Framework Programme relate to culture and
cultural challenges in a general sense.

- ‘DigiCULT’ in the frame of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
Programme funds ‘research on access to cultural heritage, digital libraries and digital
preservation for expanding the availability of Europe’s rich cultural and scientific resources
and for enhancing user experiences with them’;
- The 2011 Work Programme on the Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities (SSH)
speaks about ‘generating an in-depth, shared understanding of complex and related socio-
economic challenges Europe is confronted with: (e.g. growth, employment, innovation, social
cohesion, cultural and educational challenges in an enlarged EU’.

Neither of these references mentions Arts & Design Research and Development nor refer to
research approaches related to the arts and culture. Our proposals for the next Research Programme
aim to create new opportunities for the further development and enhancement of European
collaboration.

Why a European investment in Arts & Design Research is important

In a time of profound economic uncertainty, we are obliged to think and act creatively, to achieve
innovation, so as ultimately to re-invent sustainable ways of living and working in the contemporary
world. This is the essence of the Europe 2020 strategy and its impact on the arts and culture.
Normally, a distinction is being made between invention and innovation: invention is the first
occurrence of an idea for a new product or process, while innovation is the first attempt to carry it
out into practice. Arts & Design Research is clearly well-placed to serve as a seedbed for invention
and innovation. Four main arguments underpin this role in technical and non-technical innovation
for all sectors of society, but especially for the fast growing sector of the cultural and creative industries in Europe.

1. **Innovation of the cultural and creative industries;** Arts & Design Research increasingly works as a catalyst for advancement of the cultural and creative industries: Beyond their contribution to cultural richness and cultural diversity, cultural and creative industries represent a great economic and social innovative potential. Cultural and creative industries help to boost local economies, stimulate new activities, create new and sustainable jobs, have important spill-over effects on other industries and enhance the attractiveness of regions and cities. Creative quarters in cities and sectors such as design, media entertainment, fashion, gaming and architecture make cities attractive places for people to live and work, as well as for business and for tourists. In order to take full advantage of this potential, there is a need to combine arts, research and creativity with entrepreneurship and innovation. Increasingly this needs European exchange and co-creation of concepts and solutions;

2. **A new generation of artist-researchers;** Emerging artist and design researchers are increasingly trained to work in complex environments and often acquire advanced technology skills. They are able to intervene and to come up with 'out-of-the-box' solutions that innovate products, processes and attitudes. In the context of knowledge-intensive and technology enabled industries and social and cultural environments, the artist/designer can no longer be construed as an isolated or emotive genius but rather must be viewed as a collaborative investigator, observer, mediator, innovator, producer and multi-disciplinary professional. In exploring and addressing advanced technological applications and complicated social issues through artistic means, the artist engages him or herself with a wider community of scientific experts and of new publics. Artist-researchers are often involved as experts and consultants in different commercial and industrial fields in team-based research projects, which prioritise not the question of an aesthetic output in the outcomes of a research project, but rather an integrated aesthetic dimension to problem setting and problem solving in the construction of the research project;

3. **Collaboration;** An important contribution of research in the arts to the contemporary knowledge economy is the construction of a dynamic research ecology that fosters innovation in terms of individual and collective agency and in terms of overarching operational culture. Research activity across the arts and design increasingly gives rise to international collaborations between artists and the public/users/participants and connects artist-researchers with social and natural scientists, system developers, engineers, and scholars and theorists from across the humanities.

4. **International competitiveness;** Globalisation constitutes an important element in the further development of creative research. Increasingly, the research profiles of higher arts institutions and the research competencies of their graduates form a defining factor for highly talented art students in choosing an art university for study or for a research programme. In order to be able to compete on a world-class level, European art universities need to develop their research activities and PhD programmes at a high level of excellence, attracting the most talented artist-researchers from Europe and the rest of the world. In addition, high-level scholars capable of advancing practice and knowledge in their fields often pursue an international career. Ambitious innovation driven research in a European setting in interaction with other scientific disciplines and enterprise is crucially important to increase Europe’s reputation in these fields.
Proposals for the new Research Framework Programme

The art universities in Europe have recently agreed to unite their forces in the coming years to:

- Strengthen the research dimension in their curricula and programmes;
- Initiate research centres and collaborative research programmes;
- Build up a European infrastructure, aligning standards and assurance of quality;
- Strengthen international collaboration;
- Strengthen the relationship between research, teaching in the arts and innovation;
- Strengthen partnerships at a regional, national and European level with enterprise, research centres, cultural and creative industries etc.

The European art universities are convinced that the time is ripe for a next step and for European recognition that Arts & Design Research and Development increasingly forms an integral part of the diverse international research landscape. The art universities, graduate schools and research programmes cannot realize these commitments without the support from national education & research bodies and from the European Union. Therefore, we feel entitled to submit the following proposals for the future Research Programmes:

1. Recognition for the role of Arts & Design Research and Development as a legitimate part of the European research landscape;
2. Development of a specific Work Programme for Arts & Design Research and Development, also including a focus on collaboration between Arts and Science;
3. The introduction of a specific priority on Arts & Design Research and Development within Work Programmes on Social-Economic and Humanities research;
4. The introduction of a specific Work Programme and/or priority on Arts & Design Research in ICT Programmes;
5. The introduction of a priority on Arts & Design Research and Development within the DigiCULT programme or a similar programme;
6. Support to set up a world-class research infrastructure;
7. Support to set up Knowledge Triangles between art universities, research centres and innovative business and widen opportunities for coherent and efficient joint programming;
8. Improve and enlarge the opportunities for international mobility of researchers and artist-researchers through the Marie Curie Fellowships and similar programmes.

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ELIA President Project leader SHARE Network

SHARE Academic Network – Step Change in Higher Arts Research and Education is an international networking project, comprising 33 arts graduate schools, arts research centers, arts educators, supervisors, researchers, working together on enhancing the 3rd cycle of arts research and education, and creating a European-wide exchange framework for experiences, practices and ideas that make up the lively domain of artistic and creative research. It also functions as a network of existing networks in Arts & Design Research.

European League of Institutes of the Arts – ELIA is an independent membership organisation representing approximately 350 higher arts education institutions from over 45 countries, founded in 1990. ELIA represents all disciplines in the arts, including architecture, dance, design, fine art, media arts, music and theatre. Through its members, ELIA represents unique bodies of knowledge and facilitates dialogues, mobility and activities between artists, teachers, administrators, senior managers, key decision makers and more than 250 000 students.
Appendix: Brief overview of current national provisions

In the United Kingdom, research in the arts is largely conducted at faculties of art at universities. One art school conglomerate (University of the Arts London) has independent university status. Often research is brought together in graduate schools (CultureLab, Newcastle; CRD, Brighton; CCW Graduate School, London; Cerenem, Huddersfield; ADRC, Sheffield); the postgraduate Royal College of Art hosts over a hundred doctoral students. Fees for PhD research are substantial, around GBP 5000 a year; funding often comes from the AHRC and other Research Councils.

In Finland, there are five HAE institutions with university status. The majority of doctorates is awarded by Aalto University and by Sibelius Academy. Of the more than 400 registered third-cycle students, less than half study full-time and 30-40 obtain a PhD annually. This is because study is free of charge, but funded positions are scarce. There have been postgraduate studies at Finnish art universities since 1981/1982, full doctorates since 2003.

In Austria, the six largest higher arts education institutions have independent university status since 1998, hosting philosophy and humanities research. For research in the arts, however, a specific Dr. Artium degree has been established in 2009 and a specific ‘Programme for Arts-Based Research (PEEK)’ started in 2010 promoting both increased internationalisation and networking between different branches of the arts. A Graduate School at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and other programmes started in 2010. University of Art & Design Linz already hosts doctoral students in media-art in the Interface Culture programme, in cooperation with University of the Arts Zurich. In 2009, the Austrian Science Council published the report Empfehlung zur Entwicklung der Kunstuniversitäten in Österreich, stressing that doctoral programme are needed to keep and attract artistic talent.

In Ireland all PhDs in the arts have been concentrated at GradCAM (Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media, Dublin), in which institutes from Cork, Dublin, Dun Laoghaire and Belfast take part. HAE in Ireland takes place at institutes of technology, i.e. not universities; the right to award doctorates has been delegated to GradCAM, which opened in 2008. Approximately 40 PhD students and associate researchers doing a PhD at GradCAM.

Norway has a funded national programme for third-cycle study in the arts that leads to a diploma at PhD level – though explicitly not a doctorate. It is hosted by Bergen National Academy of the Arts, and includes 28 students from 8 HAE institutes and departments. The programme has been running since 2003. Funding within the National Norwegian Artistic Research Fellowships Programme is for three years.

Sweden has PhD programmes at Gothenburg University, which contains a cluster of art schools (45 students, 2000), and at Malmö Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts as part of Lund University (15 students, since 2008). A National research school in the arts has been created in 2010, combining all higher arts education in Sweden, coordinated by Gothenburg and Malmö/Lund. At the same time, the Doctor of the Arts PhD degree has been created, existing alongside the PhD but with a stronger emphasis on the artistic product. PhD students in Sweden are fully employed for four years.

In Germany only some of the Kunsthochschulen have right of promotion. HfG Offenbach and HFBK Hamburg run a PhD programme in art, with a strong emphasis on theory; University of the Arts Berlin has started a two-year Graduate School for artists and scientists. The HfG Karlsruhe cooperates with the ZKM (Centre for Culture and Media) on research in media-arts and technology; Merz Academy Stuttgart hosts research projects in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. The German Research Council (DFG) provides third-level fellowships.
In Belgium, HAE institutions as hogescholen do not have university status, but have entered into associations with universities and are together with the universities able to deliver PhD degrees in the arts. The Orpheus Institute is an important collaboration in the field of music. The Faculty of Architecture and the Arts (FAK) unites five art schools, hosted within the K.U. Leuven Association. The international doctoral programme in music DocARTES operates in a network with Dutch and UK partners, with the aim to realise a European doctoral curriculum in musical arts. FAK, likewise, has links with the Dutch PhDArts programme.

In the Netherlands, HAE institutions as hogescholen do not have university status. The Royal Academy and Conservatoire, The Hague and Leiden University cooperate in an Academy for the Creative and Performing Arts, which hosts the PhDArts programme and participates, along with the Amsterdam Conservatoire, in the DocARTES programme. The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research is funding two artistic research projects as a pilot.

In France there are no doctoral programmes at art academies, though there are two-year postgraduate programmes at ENSBA, Paris and ESADSE, Saint-Étienne. At IRCAM, Paris, which is a music lab, 27 doctoral students are pursuing their PhD through cooperation with Université Paris VI. French universities (Sorbonne 1, Montpellier 3) offer doctorates in visual and plastic arts, with a strong emphasis on art history and art education. In 2008, the Ministry of Culture and Education published its overview report État de la Récherche 2001-2008: Délégation aux Arts Plastiques.

Switzerland does not allow art academies to grant doctoral degrees and the 2009 report Forschung an Schweizer Kunsthochschulen gave priority to developing and consolidating Masters’ programmes and research. Zurich University of the Arts runs several PhD programmes in partnerships with University of Art & Design Linz (Interface culture), University of Vienna (Scenography), University of Plymouth (“Z-Node” of the Planetary Collegium), University of Applied Arts Vienna (research platform and PhD programme in Higher Arts Education) and University of Art Graz (Music).